

XLVII

MUHAMMAD

محمد

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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MUḤAMMAD

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INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah derives its name from the sentence *wa āmanū bi-mā nuzzila 'alā Muḥammad-in* of verse 2, thereby implying that it is the Sūrah in which the holy name of Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has occurred. Besides, it has another well-known name *"al-Qitāl"* also, which is derived from the sentence *wa dhukira fi-hal-qitāl* of verse 20.

Period of Revelation

The contents of this Sūrah testify that it was sent down after the Hijrah at Madīnah at the time when the fighting had been enjoined, though active fighting had not yet been undertaken. Detailed arguments in support of this view have been given in E.N. 8 below.

Historical Background

The conditions at the time when this Sūrah was sent down were such that the Muslims were being made the target of persecution and tyranny in Makkah in particular and in Arabia in general, and life had become miserable for them. Although the Muslims had emigrated to the haven of Madīnah from every side, the disbelieving Quraish were not

prepared to leave them alone and let them live in peace even there. Thus, the small settlement of Madīnah was hemmed in by the enemy, who was bent upon exterminating it completely. The only alternative left with the Muslims were that either they should surrender to the forces of ignorance, giving up their mission of preaching the true Faith, or even following it in their private lives, or should rise to wage a war at the cost of their lives to settle finally and for ever whether Islam would stay in Arabia or the creed of ignorance. On this occasion Allah showed the Muslims the same way of resolution and will, which is the only way for the true believers. He first permitted them to fight in Sūrah Al-Ḥajj : 39 and then enjoined fighting in Al-Baqarah: 190. But at that time everyone knew fully well what it meant to wage a war in those conditions. There were only a handful of Muslims in Madīnah, who could not muster even a thousand soldiers; yet they were being urged to take up the sword and clash against the pagan forces of the whole of Arabia. Then the kind of the weapons needed to equip its soldiers for war could hardly be afforded by the town in which hundreds of emigrants were still homeless and un-settled even by resort to starving its members at a time when it had been boycotted economically by the Arabs on all sides.

Theme and Subject Matter

Such were the conditions when this Sūrah was revealed. Its theme is to prepare the believers for war and to give them preliminary instructions in this regard. That is why it has also been entitled *al-Qitāl.* It deals with the following topics:

At the outset it is said that of the two groups confronting each other at this time, one has refused to accept the Truth and has become an obsruction for others on the way of Allah, while the other group has accepted the Truth which had been sent down by Allah to His servant, Muḥammad (Upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). Now, Allah's final decision is that He has rendered fruitless and vain all the works of the former group and set right the condition and affairs of the latter group.

After this, the Muslims have been given the initial war instructions: they have been reassured of Allah's help and guidance: they have been given hope for the best rewards on offering sacrifices in the cause of Allah: and they have been assured that their struggle in the

cause of the Truth will not go to waste, but they will be Abundantly rewarded both in this world and in the Hereafter.

Furthermore, about the disbelievers it has been said that they are deprived of Allah's support and guidance: none of their designs will succeed in their conflict with the believers, and they will meet a most evil fate both in this world and in the Hereafter. They thought they had achieved a great success by driving the Prophet of Allah out of Makkah, but in fact by this they had hastened their own doom.

After this, the discourse turns to the hypocrites, who were posing to be sincere Muslims before the command to fight was sent down, but were confounded when this command actually came down, and began to conspire with the disbelievers in order to save themselves from the hazards of war. They have been plainly warned to the effect that no act and deed is acceptable to Allah of those who adopt hypocrisy with regard to Him and His Prophet. Here, the basic issue against which all those who profess the Faith are being tried is whether one is on the side of the Truth or Falsehood, whether one's sympathies are with Islam and the Muslims or with disbelief and the disbelievers, whether one keeps one's own self and interests dearer or the truth which one professes to believe in and follow. One who fails in this test is not at all a believer; his Prayer and his Fasting and his discharging of the *zakāt* deserve no reward from Allah.

Then the Muslims have been exhorted not to lose heart for being small in numbers and ill-equipped as against the great strength of the disbelievers: they should not show weakness by offering peace to them, which might still further embolden them against Islam and the Muslims, but they should come out with trust in Allah and clash with the mighty forces of disbelief. Allah is with the Muslims: they alone shall triumph; and the might of disbelief will be humbled and vanquished.

In conclusion, the Muslims have been invited to spend their wealth in the cause of Allah. Although at that time they were economically very weak, the problem that they confronted was the very survival of Islam and the Muslims. The importance and delicacy of the problem demanded that the Muslims should not only risk their lives for safeguarding themselves and their Faith from the dominance of disbelief and for exalting Allah's Religion but should also expend their economic

resources as far as possible in the preparations for war. Therefore, they were clearly warned to the effect: Anyone who adopted a niggardly attitude at the time, would not, in fact, harm Allah at all, but would result in his own destruction, for Allah does not stand in need of help from men. If one group of men shirked offering sacrifices in the cause of His Religion, Allah would remove it and bring another group in its place.

سُوْرَةُ مُحَمَّدٍ ٣٨ — اٰيَاتُهَا ٤ — رُوْعُهَا ٢ — مَدَنِيَّةٌ (٩٥)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَصَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ اَضَلَّ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ۝١ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا
وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَاٰمَنُوْا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّهُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۙ
كَفَّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ وَاَصْلَحَ بَالَهُمْ ۝٢ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوا اتَّبَعُوا
الْبَاطِلَ وَاَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۭ كَذٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللّٰهُ
لِلنَّاسِ اَمْثَالَهُمْ ۝٣ فَاِذَا لَقِيْتُمُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ ۭ حَتّٰٓى اِذَآ
اَثْخَنْتُمُوْهُمْ فَشُدُّوا الْوَثَاقَ ۙ فَاِمَّا مَنًّۢا بَعْدُ وَاِمَّا فِدَاۗءً حَتّٰى تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ
اَوْزَارَهَا ۚ ذٰلِكَ ۛ وَلَوْ يَشَاۗءُ اللّٰهُ لَانْتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلٰكِنْ لِّيَبْلُوَا بَعْضَكُمْ
بِبَعْضٍ ۭ وَالَّذِيْنَ قُتِلُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ فَلَنْ يُّضِلَّ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ۝٤ سَيَهْدِيْهِمْ
وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ ۝٥ وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ ۝٦ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنْ
تَنْصُرُوا اللّٰهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ اَقْدَامَكُمْ ۝٧ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا فَتَعْسًا لَّهُمْ وَ
اَضَلَّ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ۝٨ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوْا مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ فَاَحْبَطَ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ۝٩ اَفَلَمْ
يَسِيْرُوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوْا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۭ دَمَّرَ اللّٰهُ
عَلَيْهِمْ ۭ وَلِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ اَمْثَالُهَا ۝١٠ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ مَوْلَى الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَاَنَّ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ لَا
مَوْلٰى لَهُمْ ۝١١ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْاَنْهٰرُ ۭ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يَتَمَتَّعُوْنَ وَيَاْكُلُوْنَ كَمَا تَاْكُلُ الْاَنْعَامُ وَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ ۝١٢ وَ

XLVII

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Verses: 38 *Revealed at Al-Madinah*

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

Those who disbelieved[1] and debarred (others) from Allah's Way,[2] Allah rendered their works fruitless.[3] As for those who believed, and did good works, and accepted that which has been sent down to Muḥammad[4]—and it is the very Truth from their Lord—Allah removed their evils from them[5] and set their condition right.[6] This is because the disbelievers followed falsehood and the believers followed the Truth which has come from their Lord. Thus does Allah make the people aware of their true state.[7] 1-3

Therefore, when you meet the disbelievers in the battle-field, first smite their necks; then, when you have crushed them completely, bind the prisoners tight. After that (you have the choice) whether you show them favour or accept ransom, until the war lays down its arms.[8] So shall you do. Had Allah willed, He would Himself have dealt with them. But (He has adopted this way so that) He may test some of you by means of others.[9] And those who are killed in the way of Allah, Allah will never let their deeds go waste.[10] He will guide them, set their condition right, and will admit them to the Paradise with which He has acquainted them.[11] 4-6

O you who have believed, if you help Allah, Allah will help you[12] and make your footsteps firm. As for those who have disbelieved, for them is destruction[13] and Allah has rendered their deeds astray, because they have disapproved of what Allah has sent down;[14] therefore, Allah rendered their deeds fruitless. Have they not travelled in the earth that they could see the end of those who had gone before them? Allah destroyed them utterly and the disbelievers are destined for 7-12

a similar end.[15] This is because Allah is the Protector and Helper of the believers and the disbelievers have no protector and helper.[16] Allah shall admit those who have believed and done good works into Gardens underneath which rivers flow. As for the disbelievers, they are only enjoying the temporary life of this world, and eating as the animals eat,[17] and their final abode is Hell.

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1. "Those who disbelieved": Those who refused to accept the teachings and guidance presented by Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).

2. The verb *ṣadd* (from which *ṣaddū* of the original is derived) is used both as a transitive and as an intransitive verb in Arabic. Therefore, the sentence would mean "they themselves refrained from adopting Allah's Way" as well as "they prevented others from adopting this way."

There are several ways of preventing others from adopting Allah's Way: (1) That one should forcibly prevent another from believing; (2) that one should so persecute the believers that it should become difficult for them to remain steadfast on the Faith and for others to embrace the Faith in view of the dreadful conditions; (3) that one should mislead the people against the Religion and its followers in different ways and create doubts in the hearts so that the people may become suspicious of the Religion itself. Besides, every disbeliever prevents others from the way of Allah in the sense that he brings up his children on the way of disbelief, and then it becomes difficult for his future generation to give up the ancestral faith and accept Islam. Likewise, every unbelieving society is an obstruction to the Way of Allah, for it creates obstacles in the way of the progress of the Faith by its system of education and training, its government and its customs and prejudices.

3. The words *aḍalla a'mālahum* (led their deeds astray, let them go to waste) are very comprehensive in meaning. Their one meaning is: Allah deprived them of the grace that their efforts and their labours should be spent in the right way: now, whatever they do, they will do that for wrong aims and objects in wrong ways: all their endeavours will be directed to the way of error and deviation instead of guidance. Their second meaning is: The works that they have been performing as pious deeds, e.g. guardianship of the Ka'bah, entertaining the guests, treating the kindred well, and such other works, which are counted among religious services and noble actions morally, were rendered fruitless by Allah; they will get no reward for them, for when they refuse to accept *Tauḥīd* and to adopt the way of Allah's service and worship and stop others also from adopting Islam, none of their works can be acceptable to Allah. The third meaning is Allah

rendered fruitless and vain the efforts they were making to obstruct the way of the Truth and to keep their creed of disbelief alive in Arabia as against the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings): all their designs and endeavours now are aimless: they will never attain their goals by these designs.

4. Although after saying *alladhīna āmanū* (those who believed) there was no need to say *wa āmanū bi-mā nuzzilā 'alā Muḥammad-in* (and accepted that which has been sent down to Muhammad), for belief by itself implies believing in the Holy Prophet Muḥammad and in the teachings sent down to him, yet making a separate mention of it is particularly meant to assert this: After the appointment of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) to Prophethood, a person's belief in Allah and the Hereafter and the former Messengers and the Books cannot be beneficial until he also believes in him and the teachings brought by him. This explanation was necessary because after the emigration, the Muslims had also to deal with those people, who recognized and accepted all the requirements of the Faith but refused to acknowledge and accept the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).

5. This has two meanings: (1) That Allah wiped off from their record all those sins which they had happened to commit in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance: now, they will not at all be held accountable for them; and (2) that Allah removed from them the evils of creed, thought, morals and action in which they were involved. Now their minds were changed; their creed and ideas were changed; now there was faith in their hearts instead of ignorance and righteous acts instead of the immoral evil.

6. This also has two meanings: (1) That Allah changed their previous condition and put them on the right path and improved and bettered their lives for them; and (2) that Allah has taken them out of the condition of weakness and helplessness and oppression in which they were placed till then; now He has created for them such conditions in which instead of being persecuted they will defend themselves against the oppressors; instead of living as subjects, they will now live and order their lives as free people, and will have the upper hand instead of being subdued and suppressed.

7. That is, "He makes both the parties aware of their positions. One party insists on following falsehood; therefore, Allah has brought all its endeavours to naught; and the other party has adopted obedience of the Truth; therefore, Allah has purified it of its evils and corrected its condition."

8. The words of this verse as well as the context in which it occurs clearly show that it was sent down after the revelation of the command for fighting and before the actual fighting began. The words, "When you meet the disbelievers in

the battlefield ...", indicate that the fighting has not yet taken place and the Muslims are being instructed that when it does take place, what they should do.

The words of verse 20 below testify that this Sūrah was sent down at a time when the command for fighting had already been given in Sūrah Al-Ḥajj: 39 and Al-Baqarah: 190, and the hypocrites of Madīnah and the people of the weak faith had been so upset that it seemed as if they were actually facing death.

Besides, vv. 67-69 of the Sūrah Al-Anfāl also testify that this verse had been sent down before the Battle of Badr. There it has been said:

"It does not behove a Prophet to have captives until he has crushed down the enemies in the land. *You desire the gains of this world, but Allah desires the Hereafter*, and Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. Had not a decree already been issued by Allah, you would have incurred a severe chastisement in consequence of what you have done. So eat of what you have taken as spoils because it is lawful and pure."

A careful study of this passage, especially of its italicised portions, shows that what had displeased Allah on this occasion was that before crushing down the enemy completely in the Battle of Badr, the Muslims had started taking the enemy soldiers as captives, whereas the instruction given them in Sūrah Muḥammad before the actual fighting was this: "When you have crushed them completely, then bind the captives tight." However, as the Muslims had been permitted, among other things in Sūrah Muḥammad, to accept ransom from the prisoners, Allah declared the money taken from the captives of Badr as lawful and did not punish them for that. The words "Had not the decree already been issued by Allah." are clearly pointing to the fact that the command for permission to accept ransom had already been given in the Qur'ān before this event, and obviously, there is no other verse in the Qur'ān beside this verse of Sūrah Muḥammad, which contains this command. Therefore, it will have to be admitted that this verse had been sent down before the above-cited verse of the Sūrah Al-Anfāl. (For explanation, see E. N 49 on Al-Anfāl).

This is the first verse of the Qur'ān in which preliminary instructions have been given about the laws of war. Below is given a resume of the injunctions that are derived from this verse and the Holy Prophet's and his Companions' practice according to it and the juristic inferences as based on this verse and the Sunnah:

(1) The real aim of the Muslim army in war is to break the fighting power of the enemy till it is crushed and the war lays down its arms. Under no circumstances, should the Muslim's lose sight of this aim and start taking the enemy soldiers as captives. Captives should be taken after the enemy has been completely crushed and its numbers thinned down. The

Arabs have been so instructed at the outset lest in the greed for ransom and taking slaves they should forget and overlook the real aim of the war.

(2) About the prisoners taken in war it has been said: "You have the option whether you show them favour or accept ransom from them." This gives the general law that the prisoners of war should not be put to death. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, Ḥasan Baṣrī, 'Atā' and Ḥammād bin Abī Sulaimān favour this view, which is quite valid. They say that a man can be killed only during the war. When the war is over and one has been made a prisoner, it is not lawful to kill him. Ibn Jarīr and Abū Bakr al-Jassās have related that Ḥajjāj bin Yūsuf handed over one of the prisoners of war to Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and commanded him to put him to death. He refused to obey and cited this verse and said: "We are not allowed to kill a man when he is a prisoner." Imām Muhammad in *As-Siyar al-Kabīr* also has related that 'Abdullah bin 'Āmir had commanded Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar to kill a prisoner of war, and he had refused to obey the command for this reason.

(3) But since in this verse it has neither been clearly forbidden to kill the prisoner the Holy Prophet understood this intention of Allah's Command, and also acted accordingly, that if there was a special reason for which the ruler of an Islamic government regarded it as necessary to kill a particular prisoner (or prisoners), he could do so. This is not the general law, but an exception to it, which would be applied only when necessary. Thus, the Holy Prophet put to death only 'Uqbah bin Abī Mu'aiṭ and Naḍr bin al-Ḥārith from among the 70 prisoners taken at Badr, and only the poet Abū 'Azzah from the prisoners taken at Uhud. Since the Banī Quraizah had surrendered on the condition that they would accept whatever decision Hadrat Sa'd bin Mu'ādh would give in their regard, and he had decreed that all the males of the Quraiẓah should be killed, the Holy Prophet had them executed. From among the prisoners taken at Khaiber only Kinānah bin Abī al-Ḥuqaiq was put to death because of his violating the agreement. At the conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet commanded in respect of only a few particular persons from among all the inhabitants of Makkah that any one of them who was captured should be put to death. Apart from these exceptions, the Holy Prophet never killed prisoners of war, and the same also continued to be the practice of the righteous Caliphs. During their times also killing of prisoners of war was rare, which was resorted to only for a special reason. Ḥadrat, 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Azīz also during his caliphate put to death only one prisoner of war for the reason that he had persecuted the Muslims very cruelly. On this very basis the majority

of the jurists have held the view that the Islamic government can put a prisoner to death if necessary. But it is for the government to take such a decision; every soldier is not permitted to kill any prisoner he likes. However, if there is the danger of a prisoner's running away or of his committing a dangerous mischief, the guard can kill him. In this connection, the jurists of Islam have also made three other points: (a) That if a prisoner accepts Islam, he cannot be killed; (b) that the prisoner can be killed only as long as he is in the government's custody; if he has been allotted to, or given in somebody else's possession by sale, he cannot be killed; and (c) that if the prisoner has to be killed, he should be killed in a straightforward way; he should not be tortured to death.

(4) The general command that has been given about the prisoners of war is: "Show them favour, or accept ransom from them."

Favour includes four things: (a) That they should be treated well as prisoners; (b) that instead of killing them or keeping them in captivity for lifetime, they should be handed over to the individual Muslims as slaves; (c) that they should be put under *jizyah* and made *dhimmīs;* and (d) that they should be set free without ransom.

There are three ways of ransoming them: (a) That they should be set free on payment of a ransom; (b) that they should be set free after taking some special service from them; and (c) that they should be exchanged for the Muslim prisoners of war who are in the possession of the enemy.

The Holy Prophet and the Companions at different times acted in one or the other way as the occasion demanded. The Divine Law has not bound the Islamic government to act in only one particular way. The government can take any action it deems appropriate on a particular occasion.

(5) The practice of the Holy Prophet and the Companions confirms that as long as a prisoner of war is in the government's custody, the government will be responsible for his food and clothing, and his treatment if he is ill or wounded. Islamic Law does not permit prisoners to be kept without food or clothing, or be subjected to torture. On the contrary, instructions also have been given to treat them well and generously, and precedents of this very practice are found in the *Sunnah*. The Holy Prophet distributed the prisoners of Badr in the houses of different Companions and gave the instruction: "Treat these prisoners well." One of those prisoners, Abū 'Azīz, has reported: "The Anṣār Muslims, in whose house I was kept, gave me bread morning and evening, but as for themselves they had only dates to eat." About another prisoner, Suhail bin 'Amr, the Holy Prophet was told: "He is a fiery speaker, and has been making speeches against you: please have

his teeth broken." The Holy Prophet replied: "If I have his teeth broken, Allah will break my teeth, although I am a Prophet." (Ibn Hishām). When Thumāmah bin Uthāl, the chief of Yamāmah, was brought as a prisoner, he was provided with good food and milk on the Holy Prophet's orders as long as he remained a captive. (Ibn Hishām). The same was the practice in the time of the Companions. No precedent is found when a prisoner might have been mistreated in their time.

(6) Islam has not permitted that the prisoners be kept in captivity for ever so that the government may subject them to forced labour as long as it likes. If they are not exchanged for other prisoners of war, or ransomed, the method enjoined of doing them favour is that they should be made slaves and given in possession of individuals, and their masters instructed to treat them well. This method was acted upon during the time of the Holy Prophet as well as of the Companions, and the jurists of Islam have unanimously upheld it as permissible. In this regard, it should be borne in mind that a person who might have accepted Islam before being taken as prisoner, and then is somehow made a prisoner, will be set free, but the acceptance of Islam by a person who accepts it after being taken prisoner, or after being given in possession of somebody, will not gain him freedom automatically. A tradition has been related in Musnad Aḥmad, Muslim and Tirmidhi on the authority of Hadrat 'Imrān bin Husain that a person from among the Banī 'Uqail was brought as a prisoner and he said: "I have accepted Islam." Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "If you had said this when you were free, you would certainly have attained to success. The same thing was said by Ḥadrat 'Umar: "When a prisoner becomes a Muslim after falling into the hands of the Muslims as a captive, he will not be killed, but will remain a slave." On this very point, the jurists of Islam have unanimously ruled that the prisoner who becomes a Muslim after being taken captive cannot escape slavery. (Imām Muḥammad, *As-Siyar al-Kabīr).* And this also is quite reasonable. If our law had been that anyone who embraced Islam after being taken a captive, would be set free, no prisoner would be so foolish as not to win his freedom by pronouncing the *Kalimah.*

(7) The third manner of doing favour with the prisoners according to the Law of Islam is that they may be put under *jizyah* and made *dhimmī* subjects of the Islamic state and allowed to live as free citizens of *dār al-Islām* (abode of Islam) just like the Muslims. Imām Muḥammad writes in his *As-Siyar al-Kabīr:* "Any person who can be made a slave, can also be made a *dhimmī* and put under *jizyah.*" At another place he says: "The ruler of the Muslims has the right to levy *jizyah* on them and a tax on their lands and set them absolutely free." This method has been practised generally in the condition when the territory of the people who

have been made prisoners, is conquered and annexed to the Islamic state. The Holy Prophet, for instance, practised this method in the case of the people of Khaiber, and then Ḥaḍrat 'Umar followed and practised it extensively on the conquest of 'Irāq and other territories. Abū 'Ubaid writes in his *Kitāb al-Amwāl*: "After the conquest of 'Irāq a deputation of the leading men of that country came before Ḥaḍrat 'Umar and submitted: 'O Commander of the Faithful, before this the people of Iran had subdued us; they subjected us to harsh treatment and committed all sorts of excesses against us. Then, when God sent you, we became very pleased, and we neither put up any resistance against you nor participated in the war. Now, we hear that you want to make us slaves.' Ḥaḍrat 'Umar replied: 'You have the option either to become Muslims, or accept to pay *jizyah* and remain free.' They agreed to pay the *jizyah* and they were granted full freedom." At another place in the same book, Abū 'Ubaid says: Ḥaḍrat 'Umar wrote to Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī: Set free every farmer and peasant from among the people who have been captured in the war."

(8) The fourth favour is that the prisoner be set free without ransom. This is a special concession that the Islamic government can give only in case the special conditions of a prisoner demand it, or when it is expected that the concession will win the prisoner's gratitude for ever, and help turn him a friend from an enemy, or a believer from a disbeliever; otherwise, obviously it would in no way be a wise thing to set free a person of the enemy camp, who could again return to fight the Muslims. This is why the Muslim jurists generally have opposed it, and imposed the condition: "If the ruler of the Muslims finds it expedient to set the prisoners, or some of them, free as a favour, there is no harm in doing so." (*As-Siyar al-Kabīr*). Many precedents of this are found in the time of the Holy Prophet, and in almost every case expediency seems to be the reason.

About the prisoners taken at Badr, he said: "If Muṭ'im bin 'Adī were alive, and had spoken to me in respect of these treacherous people, I would have let them go for his sake." (Bukhārī, Abū Da'ūd, Musnad Aḥmad). The Holy Prophet said this because when he had returned from Tā'if to Makkah, Muṭ'im at that time had given him refuge, and his armed sons had escorted him to the Ka'bah. Therefore, he wanted to repay his debt of gratitude in this way.

According to Bukhārī, Muslim and Musnad Ahmad, when Thumāmah bin Uthāl, the chief of Yamāmah, was brought as a prisoner, the Holy Prophet asked him: "Thumāmah, what do you say?" He replied: "If I am killed, then such a one would be killed, whose blood has some value; if I am shown favour, then favour would be shown to a person, who appreciates favour; and if you want wealth, ask for it, you will be given it." For three days the Holy Prophet asked him the same

thing and he gave the same reply. At last, the Holy Prophet ordered that Thumamah be set free. On attaining freedom, he went to a nearby oasis, washed himself and came back, pronounced the *kalimah* and became a Muslim, saying: "Before this day nobody was more detestable than you and no religion more odious than your religion in my sight, but now for me no man is more lovable than you and no religion more lovable than your religion." Then he went to Makkah for 'Umrah and gave the people of Quraish a notice to the effect: "After this no grain will reach you from Yamāmah unless Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) permits it." So, he stopped the grain supply and the people of Makkah had to request the Holy Prophet that he should not stop the supply of grain for them from Yamāmah.

From among the prisoners of the Banī Quraiẓah, the Holy Prophet forgave Zabīr bin Bāṭā and 'Amr bin Sa'd (or Ibn Su'dā), the former because he had given refuge to Ḥaḍrat Thābit bin Qais Anṣārī in the Battle of Bu'āth, in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance; therefore, he handed him over to Hadrat Thābit that he may repay him for his favour. And he forgave 'Amr bin Sa'd because it was he who was exhorting his tribe not to be treacherous when the Banī Quraizah were committing breach of the trust with the Holy Prophet.

After the Battle of Banī al-Mustaliq, when the prisoners were brought and distributed among the people, the Holy Prophet paid Hadrat Juwairiyah's ransom to the person to whom she was allotted to secure her freedom and then married her himself. At this all the Muslims set their own prisoners free, saying: "Now they have become the Holy Prophet's relatives." Thus, the prisoners of a hundred families became free. (Musnad Aḥmad, Tabaqāt Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hishām).

On the occasion of the treaty of Ḥudaibiyāh, at about dawn, 80 men came from the direction of Tan'īm with the intention of launching a sudden attack on the Muslim camp, but were all captured, and the Holy Prophet set all of them free lest it became a cause of war on that critical occasion. (Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Nasā'ī, Tirmidhī, Musnad Aḥmad).

At the conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet forgave all the people of Makkah except only a few men, and did not kill more than three or four of even those who had been made an exception. The whole of Arabia was well aware of what atrocities the people of Makkah had committed against the Holy Prophet and the Muslims; yet the large-heartedness with which he forgave them after attaining complete victory over them, gave the Arabs the satisfaction that they had not been overpowered by a tyrant but by a merciful, affectionate and generous leader. That is why after the conquest of Makkah the Arabian peninsula did not take longer than two years to be completely subdued.

After the Battle of Hunain, when the Hawāzin deputation came to secure the freedom of their prisoners, the prisoners had already been distributed. The

Holy Prophet called the Muslims together and said: "These people have come with repentance, and I am of the opinion that their men should be returned to them. The one who would like to set the prisoner allotted to him free willingly without ransom, should set him free, and the one who would like to take ransom, shall be paid it out of the first income that is received in the Public Treasury." Thus, six thousand prisoners were set free, and those who wanted to take ransom, were given it by the government. (Bukhārī, Abū Da'ūd, Musnad Aḥmad, Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa'd). This also shows that the government is not authorised to set the prisoners free after they have been distributed; this can be done by the willing approval of those in whose possession the prisoners have been given, or by paying them the ransom.

After the Holy Prophet, precedents of setting the prisoners free as a favour continue to be found throughout the period of the Companions also. Hadrat Abū Bakr set free Ash'ath bin Qais al-Kindī and Ḥaḍrat 'Umar granted freedom to Hurmuzān and the prisoners of Manādhir and Maisān. (Abū 'Ubaid, *Kitāb al-Amwāl).*

(9) The precedent of setting the prisoners free on payment of the ransom in the time of the Holy Prophet is found only on the occasion of Badr, when the prisoners were set free on payment of one thousand to four thousand dirhams each. (Tabaqāt Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-Amwāl).* No precedent of this is found in the time of the Companions; and the jurists of Islam have generally disapproved it, for it means that we should take money and set a man free so that he may again rise against us with the sword. But since taking of ransom has been permitted in the Qur'ān, and the Holy Prophet also acted according to it once, it is not absolutely forbidden. Imām Muḥammad writes in his *As-Siyar al-Kabir* that if the need arises the Muslims can free their prisoners on payment of the ransom.

(10) The criterion of freeing a prisoner for a service rendered is also found in connection with the Battle of Badr. For those of the Quraish prisoners who had no ransom the Holy Prophet imposed the condition that they should teach reading and writing to ten Anṣār children each to win their freedom. (Musnad Aḥmad, Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-Amwāl.*

(11) Several instances of the exchange of prisoners are found in the time of the Holy Prophet. Once he dispatched Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr on an expedition and he brought some captives, including a beautiful woman, who fell to the lot of Ḥaḍrat Salamah bin Akwa'. The Holy Prophet urged him to give her back, then sent her to Makkah and had several Muslim prisoners released, in exchange for her. (Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Ṭaḥāwī *Kitāb al-Amwāl* of Abī 'Ubaid, *Tabaqāt* Ibn Sa'd). Ḥaḍrat

'Imrān bin Husain relates that once the tribe of Thaqīf arrested two men of the Muslims. Some time later, a man of the Banī 'Uqail, who were allies of the Thaqīf, was arrested by the Muslims. The Holy Prophet sent him to Tā'if and got both the Muslims released in exchange for him. (Muslim, Tirmidhī, Musnad Ahmad). From among the jurists Imām Abū Yūsuf, Imām Muḥammad, Imām Shāfe'ī, Imām Mālik and Imām Ahmad hold the exchange of the prisoners as permissible. A ruling of Imām Abū Hanīfah is that exchange should not be practised, but according to another ruling of his exchange can be practised. However, there is a consensus that the prisoner who becomes a Muslim should not be handed over to the disbelievers for the purpose of exchange.

This explanation makes it abundantly clear that Islam has formulated a comprehensive code in respect of the prisoners of war, which contains provision for this problem in every age under all sorts of conditions. Those people who take this Qur'ānic verse in its simple meaning that the prisoners of war should "either be shown favour and set free or freed for ransom", do not know what different aspects the question of the prisoners of war has, and what problems it has been creating in different ages and can create in the future.

9. That is, "If Allah had only wanted to crush the worshippers of falsehood, He did not stand in need of your help for this. He could have done this through an earthquake or a tempest in no time. But what he wills is that the followers of the Truth among the people should enter into a conflict with the worshippers of falsehood and fight them so that the qualities and characteristics of each are brought out clearly by means of the test and each is given the place and rank that he deserves according to his conduct."

10. It means this: "A person's being slain in the way of Allah does not mean that he lost his life and as far as his person was concerned all his lifework was wasted. It is wrong to think that the sacrifices of the martyrs are not beneficial for themselves but only for those who live after them in the world, and take advantage of their sacrifices. The fact is that even for the martyrs themselves it is a bargain of profit, not of loss at all."

11. This is the profit that the martyrs falling in the way of Allah will gain. Its three grades have been stated: (1) That Allah will guide them; (2) that He will set their condition right; and (3) that He will admit them to the Paradise with which He has acquainted them beforehand. Guidance here obviously implies guiding to Paradise; setting the condition right implies that before their entry into

[Contd. on p 22

كَاَيِّنْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ هِيَ اَشَدُّ قُوَّةً مِّنْ قَرْيَتِكَ الَّتِيْٓ اَخْرَجَتْكَ ۚ اَهْلَكْنٰهُمْ فَلَا نَاصِرَ لَهُمْ ﴿١٣﴾ 13
اَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلٰى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّهٖ كَمَنْ زُيِّنَ لَهٗ سُوْٓءُ عَمَلِهٖ وَاتَّبَعُوْٓا اَهْوَآءَهُمْ ﴿١٤﴾ 14
مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِيْ وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُوْنَ ۭ فِيْهَآ اَنْهٰرٌ مِّنْ مَّاۗءٍ غَيْرِ اٰسِنٍ ۚ وَاَنْهٰرٌ مِّنْ
لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهٗ ۚ وَاَنْهٰرٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشّٰرِبِيْنَ ۚ وَاَنْهٰرٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ
مُّصَفًّى ۭ وَلَهُمْ فِيْهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرٰتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۭ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ
فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوْا مَاۗءً حَمِيْمًا فَقَطَّعَ اَمْعَاۗءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾ 15 وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَّسْتَمِعُ اِلَيْكَ ۚ
حَتّٰٓى اِذَا خَرَجُوْا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قَالُوْا لِلَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْعِلْمَ مَاذَا قَالَ اٰنِفًا ۭ
اُولٰۗىِٕكَ الَّذِيْنَ طَبَعَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰي قُلُوْبِهِمْ وَاتَّبَعُوْٓا اَهْوَاۗءَهُمْ ﴿١٦﴾ 16 وَالَّذِيْنَ اهْتَدَوْا
زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَّاٰتٰىهُمْ تَقْوٰىهُمْ ﴿١٧﴾ 17 فَهَلْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ اِلَّا السَّاعَةَ اَنْ تَاْتِيَهُمْ
بَغْتَةً ۚ فَقَدْ جَاۗءَ اَشْرَاطُهَا ۚ فَاَنّٰى لَهُمْ اِذَا جَاۗءَتْهُمْ ذِكْرٰىهُمْ ﴿١٨﴾ 18 فَاعْلَمْ اَنَّهٗ
لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْۢبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ
مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوٰىكُمْ ﴿١٩﴾ 19 وَيَقُوْلُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ سُوْرَةٌ ۚ فَاِذَآ اُنْزِلَتْ
سُوْرَةٌ مُّحْكَمَةٌ وَّذُكِرَ فِيْهَا الْقِتَالُ ۙ رَاَيْتَ الَّذِيْنَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ يَّنْظُرُوْنَ
اِلَيْكَ نَظَرَ الْمَغْشِيِّ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ ۭ فَاَوْلٰى لَهُمْ ﴿٢٠﴾ 20 طَاعَةٌ وَّقَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوْفٌ ۭ
فَاِذَا عَزَمَ الْاَمْرُ ۚ فَلَوْ صَدَقُوا اللّٰهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ﴿٢١﴾ 21 فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ اِنْ
تَوَلَّيْتُمْ اَنْ تُفْسِدُوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوْٓا اَرْحَامَكُمْ ﴿٢٢﴾ 22 اُولٰۗىِٕكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَعَنَهُمُ
اللّٰهُ فَاَصَمَّهُمْ وَاَعْمٰٓى اَبْصَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٣﴾ 23 اَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُوْنَ الْقُرْاٰنَ اَمْ عَلٰي قُلُوْبٍ
اَقْفَالُهَا ﴿٢٤﴾ 24 اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ ارْتَدُّوْا عَلٰٓى اَدْبَارِهِمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَى ۙ
الشَّيْطٰنُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَاَمْلٰى لَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْا لِلَّذِيْنَ كَرِهُوْا مَا

O Prophet, how many habitations have there been that were much stronger in power than this habitation of yours that has expelled you. We destroyed them so utterly that there was none to save them.[18] Can it ever be that he who is on a clear guidance from his Lord, be like those whose evil deed has been made seem fair to them, and who are following their lusts?[19] The Paradise that has been promised to the righteous is such that canals will be flowing in it of pure water,[20] and canals will be flowing in it of milk of unchanged flavour,[21] and canals will be flowing in it of wine which will be delightful to the drinkers,[22] and canals will be flowing in it of honey, clear and pure.[23] In it there will be fruits of every kind for them and forgiveness from their Lord.[24] (Can the person who will be admitted to this Paradise) be like those who will dwell in Hell for ever and who will be given to drink boiling water that will cut their bowels into pieces? 13-15

There are some among them who give ear to what you say, and then when they leave you, they ask those who have been blessed with knowledge, "What did he say just now?"[25] These are they upon whose hearts Allah has set a seal, and who are following their lusts.[26] As for those who have received guidance, Allah increases their guidance[27] and grants them their due share of piety.[28] Do they now only await Resurrection that it should come upon them suddenly?[29] Its portents indeed have already come.[30] But when it does overtake them, what chance will be there for them to accept admonition ? 16-18

Therefore, O Prophet, know it well that there is none worthy of worship but Allah, and ask forgiveness for your fault and for the believing men and women, too,[31] for Allah is aware of your busy movements and also of your resting places. 19

Those who have believed, were saying, "Why is not a Sūrah sent sent down (to enjoin fighting)?" But when a decisive Sūrah was sent down in which fighting had been mentioned, you saw those in whose hearts was a disease, looking towards you like the one under the shadow of death.[32] Alas for them ! (On their tongue is) the promise of obedience and good works, but if they had proved true in their compact with Allah when the final Command was given, it would have been better for them. Now, what else can be expected of you than this that if you turned about,[33] you would again spread mischief in the land and 20-25

break asunder the ties of blood?[34] These are they whom Allah has cursed and made them deaf and blind. Have they not pondered over the Qur'ān, or are there locks upon their hearts?[35] The fact is that those who turned back, after guidance had become clear to them, for them Satan has made this way easy and prolonged for them the prospects of false hopes.

Contd. from p. 19]

Paradise. Allah will adorn them with robes of honour and remove every filth which had polluted them in the life of the world; and the third stage means that even in this world they have been told through the Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet what kind of Paradise it is that has been prepared for them; when they enter that Paradise they will enter a place with which they will already be familiar and they will come to know that they have been blessed precisely with the same that had been promised to them in the world.

12. "If you help Allah": "If you participate in the work of raising Allah's Word with your life and wealth." But this has a deeper meaning too, which we have explained in E. N. 50 of Sūrah Āl-'Imrān above.

13. Literally, *ta's* is to stumble and fall down on the face.

14. That is, "They preferred the whims, superstitions, customs and moral perversion of their former ignorance and did not like the teaching that Allah had revealed to guide them to the right way.

15. This sentence has two meanings: (1) "The same destruction that was met by those disbelievers now awaits these disbelievers, who are not accepting the invitation of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings); and (2) "the ruin of those people does not end with the torment of the world; the same doom also awaits them in the Hereafter."

16. After being wounded at Uhud when the Holy Prophet was resting in a hill pass with a few Companions, Abū Sufyān shouted: "We have 'Uzzā and there is no 'Uzzā for you." Thereupon the Holy Prophet told his Companions to respond, saying: "Our Protector and helper is Allah, and you have no protector and helper at all." This reply of the Holy Prophet was derived from this very verse.

17. That is, "Just as an animal eats and does not think wherefrom the food it eats has come, who has created it, and what rights of the creator are imposed on it for providing it with food, so are these people also eating and have no higher values or ideals beyond eating."

18. The Holy Prophet was sorely distressed on leaving Makkah. When he was compelled to emigrate, he had stood facing the city outside it and said: "O Makkah, you are the most beloved city in the sight of Allah, and I have the greatest love for you out of all the cities of Allah; if the polytheists had not driven me out, I would never have left you." About this it has been said: "After driving you out of the city the people of Makkah think that they have achieved a great success, whereas, in fact, they have hastened only their own ruin by this evil act." The style of the verse clearly indicates that it must have been sent down close after the *Hijrah*.

19. That is, "How is it possible that when the Prophet and his followers have been guided by God to a clear and straight path and they have started following it in the light of full knowledge and vision, they should walk along, with those who are still persisting in their ways of ignorance, who regard their deviation as guidance and their evildoing as a praiseworthy thing, and who judge on the basis of their personal desires, and not by argument as to what is the truth and what is falsehood. Now, neither can the lives of these two groups be alike in this world nor can their end be alike in the Hereafter."

20. Literally, *āsin* is the taste and colour of water which has changed, or which gives a bad smell. In the world the water of rivers and canals is generally muddy; its taste and colour change due to the mixture of sand and dust and of different kinds of vegetation in it, and it also gives off a kind of bad smell. Therefore, the quality of the water of the rivers and canals of Paradise will be that it will be pure and clear, without any adulteration.

21. In a *Ḥadīth* directly reported from the Holy Prophet, it has been explained thus: "It will not be the milk squeezed from the teats of animals." That is, it will be the milk which Allah will bring out in the form of springs from the earth and cause it to flow into canals; it will not be squeezed from the teats of animals and then made to flow into the canals of Paradise. About this natural milk it has been said: "Its flavour will not have changed at all;" that is, it will not give even the slightest offensive smell that is found in every kind of milk squeezed from the animal teats.

22. In another *Ḥadīth* reported directly from the Holy Prophet, it has been explained, thus: "This wine will not have been distilled from rotten fruit by beating and crushing it under feet," like the wine in the world, but Allah will produce it also in the form of springs and cause it to flow into canals; then its quality will be that "it will be delightful for the drinkers"; that is, it will not be bitter and foul-smelling like the wines of the world, which cannot be drunk even by the most habitual drinker without showing some distaste. In Sūrah As-Sāffāt, another quality of it has been described: "Neither will the drinker be harmed

physically thereby nor become drunk." (v. 47) In Sūrah Al-Wāqi'ah it has been said: "... which will neither cause them giddiness nor affect their sense." (v. 19) This shows that wine will not intoxicate, but will only give pleasure and delight.

23. In the *Ḥadīth* it has been explained, thus: "The honey will not have been drawn from the bees' bellies," but it also will come out from springs and flow into canals; therefore, it will not have wax, and pieces of the honey-comb and legs of dead bees mixed in it, but it will be absolutely pure.

24. The mention of forgiveness from Allah after the blessings of Paradise can have two meanings: (1) That the greatest blessing by far will be that Allah will forgive them; and (2) that the errors and faults that they happened to commit in the world, will not even so much as be mentioned before them, but Allah will cover them up for ever so that they are not put to shame in Paradise.

25. This is concerning those disbelievers and hypocrites and unbelieving followers of the former Books, who sat in the assemblies of the Holy Prophet, listened to his discourses, or the verses of the Qur'ān, but since in their hearts they were averse to the themes presented by him, they would understand nothing in spite of listening to him. Therefore, when they came out, they would ask the Muslims, "What was he saying just now?"

26. This was the real cause because of which their inner ears had become deaf to the teachings of the Holy Prophet; they were the slaves of their lusts, and the teachings that the Holy Prophet was presenting fell against their lusts. Therefore, if ever they sat in the assemblies of the Holy Prophet and listened to him, they would understand nothing.

27. That is, the same revelations about which the disbelievers and hypocrites ask, "What was he (the Holy Prophet) saying just now?" become a cause of further guidance for the rightly-guided people, and from the same assembly from which these unfortunate people rise without gaining anything, the fortunate ones return with a new treasure of knowledge and insight.

28. That is, Allah grants them the grace to develop in themselves the kind of piety *(taqwā)* that they have the capability to develop.

29. That is, as far as the explanation and clarification of the truth is concerned, it has been explained fully well by argument and reasoning, the miraculous discourses of the Qur'ān, the pure character of the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and the revolution in the lives of his Companions. Now, are these people awaiting that Resurrection itself should take place and then only they will believe?

30. The portents of Resurrection imply those signs which indicate that its approach is near. One such important sign is the advent of God's Last Prophet after whom no other prophet will come till Resurrection. Traditions have been related in Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī and Musnad Ahmad on the authority of Hadrat Anas, Hadrat Sahl bin Sa'd As-Sā'idī and Hadrat Buraidah, saying that the Holy Prophet raised his index finger and the middle finger and said: "My advent and Resurrection are like these two fingers." That is, "Just as there is no other finger between these two fingers, so no other prophet will be raised between me and Resurrection; after me only Resurrection now will occur."

31. One of the morals taught to man by Islam is also this: However hard and sincerely may man be trying to serve and worship his Lord and fighting and struggling in the cause of His Religion, he should never be involved in the misunderstanding that he has done and accomplished whatever he was required to do. Rather, on the contrary, he should have the feeling that he has not been able to do full justice to what was expected of him by his Lord and Master. Therefore, he should confess his errors constantly and pray to Allah, saying: "Lord, forgive me for whatever fault and error I may have committed in Your service." This is indeed the essence of Allah's Command: "O Prophet, ask forgiveness for your fault...". This does not mean that, God forbid, the Holy Prophet had actually committed an error wilfully, but its correct meaning is that it did not even behove the servant who was the greatest worshipper of his Lord that he should harbour even a tinge of the pride of accomplishment in his heart, but his true position also was that in spite of all his great and glorious services he should continue confessing his shortcomings before his Lord. It was under this state of the mind that the Holy Prophet often implored his Lord for forgiveness. According to Abū Da'ūd and Nasā'ī, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "I implore Allah for forgiveness one hundred times every day.

32. That is; "In view of the conditions through which the Muslims were passing and the attitude that the disbelievers had adopted towards Islam and the Muslims at that time the believers were generally of the opinion that they should be permitted to fight even before fighting was actually enjoined by Allah. Rather they were asking Allah's Command in this regard impatiently and were awaiting again and again: "Why are we not permitted to fight these wicked people ?" But the condition of the people who had joined the ranks of the Muslims hypocritically was quite different from that of the believers. They held their lives and their properties as dearer to themselves than Allah and His Religion, and were not prepared to risk them at any cost. Therefore, as soon as fighting was enjoined they were clearly sorted out from the true believers. Till the time fighting had not been

[Contd. on p.27

نَزَّلَ اللّٰهُ سَنُطِيْعُكُمْ فِيْ بَعْضِ الْاَمْرِ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ اِسْرَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَكَيْفَ اِذَا [26]
تَوَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُوْنَ وُجُوْهَهُمْ وَاَدْبَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٧﴾ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمُ اتَّبَعُوْا مَآ [27]
اَسْخَطَ اللّٰهَ وَكَرِهُوْا رِضْوَانَهٗ فَاَحْبَطَ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٢٨﴾ اَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِيْنَ فِيْ [28]
قُلُوْبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ اَنْ لَّنْ يُّخْرِجَ اللّٰهُ اَضْغَانَهُمْ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَاَرَيْنٰكَهُمْ [29]
فَلَعَرَفْتَهُمْ بِسِيْمٰهُمْ ۭ وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِيْ لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ اَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٠﴾ [30]
وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتّٰى نَعْلَمَ الْمُجٰهِدِيْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَالصّٰبِرِيْنَ ۙ وَنَبْلُوَا۟ اَخْبَارَكُمْ ﴿٣١﴾ [31]
اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَصَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَشَاۗقُّوا الرَّسُوْلَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا
تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدٰى ۙ لَنْ يَّضُرُّوا اللّٰهَ شَيْـــًٔا ۭ وَسَيُحْبِطُ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٣٢﴾ [32]
يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِيْعُوا الرَّسُوْلَ وَلَا تُبْطِلُوْٓا اَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٣﴾ [33]
اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَصَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ مَاتُوْا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يَّغْفِرَ اللّٰهُ
لَهُمْ ﴿٣٤﴾ فَلَا تَهِنُوْا وَتَدْعُوْٓا اِلَى السَّلْمِ ۠ وَاَنْتُمُ الْاَعْلَوْنَ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ مَعَكُمْ وَ [34]
لَنْ يَّتِرَكُمْ اَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٥﴾ اِنَّمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَّلَهْوٌ ۭ وَاِنْ تُؤْمِنُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا [35]
يُؤْتِكُمْ اُجُوْرَكُمْ وَلَا يَسْـَٔـلْكُمْ اَمْوَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٦﴾ اِنْ يَّسْـَٔـلْكُمُوْهَا فَيُحْفِكُمْ تَبْخَلُوْا وَ [36]
يُخْرِجْ اَضْغَانَكُمْ ﴿٣٧﴾ هٰٓاَنْتُمْ هٰٓؤُلَاۗءِ تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنْفِقُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۚ فَمِنْكُمْ [37]
مَّنْ يَّبْخَلُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّبْخَلْ فَاِنَّمَا يَبْخَلُ عَنْ نَّفْسِهٖ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ الْغَنِيُّ وَاَنْتُمُ
الْفُقَرَاۗءُ ۚ وَاِنْ تَتَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ۙ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُوْنُوْٓا اَمْثَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٨﴾ [38]

That is why they said to those who showed aversion to what Allah had revealed, "We shall obey you in some matters."[36] Allah knows their secret affairs too well. Then, how shall it be when the angels take their souls, and take them away, smiting their faces and their backs ?[37] This would be because they followed the way that made Allah angry, and hated to adopt the way of His pleasure. So, He rendered all their works fruitless.[38] 26-28

Do those in whose hearts is a disease think that Allah will not expose the impurity of their hearts? If We will, We can show them to you and then you may recognize them by their faces. But you will certainly know them from the manner of their speech. Allah is fully aware of all your actions. We shall certainly put you to the test in order to appraise your state and to see who among you are struggling strenuously and enduring patiently. 29-31

Those who disbelieved and hindered (others) from Allah's way and disputed with the Messenger, after the Right Way had become clear to them, can in no way harm Allah, but Allah indeed will render all their works vain.[39] O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and let not your works end in futility[40]. As for those who have disbelieved, and hindered (others) from Allah's Way and have died disbelieving, Allah will never pardon them. Therefore, do not be faint-hearted, and do not beg for peace,[41] for you will surely gain the upper hand. Allah is with you and will never let your works be wasted. The life of this world is only a sport and a pastime.[42] If you believe and follow the way of piety, Allah will give you your rewards, and will not ask of you your possessions.[43] If ever He asks of you your possessions, and demands all of them, you would be niggardly, and He would bring your malice out.[44] Look, you are being called upon to expend in Allah's Way, yet some of you are being niggardly, whereas the one who is niggardly is, in fact, being niggardly only to himself. Allah is Self-Sufficient: it is you who are the needy. If you turn away, Allah will replace you by another people, and they will not be like you. 32-38

Contd. from p. 25]

enjoined, the hypocrites and the common believers could not be distinguished one from the other. The hypocrites offered the Prayer just as the true believers did; they observed the Fast just like them, and practised every article of the Faith as

made no demand of a sacrifice on them. But when time came for making the supreme sacrifice of life for the sake of Islam, their hypocrisy was exposed and their veil of false display of the Faith was rent asunder. In Sūrah An-Nisā', their this state has been described thus: "Have you marked those to whom it was said: Withhold your hands a while and establish the *salāt* and pay the *zakāt?* Now that the fighting has been enjoined for them, some of them fear the people as they should fear Allah, or even more than that; they say: Our Lord, why have You enjoined fighting for us? Why have You not given us a brief respite?" (v. 77)

33. Another translation of the words in the original can be: "If you became rulers over the people."

34. Its one meaning is: "If at this time you shirk supporting and defending Islam and refrain from fighting with your life and wealth for the cause of the great reformist revolution which the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and his Companions are struggling to bring about, there will be no other consequence of this than that you would return to the same system of ignorance in which you have been cutting each other's throat since centuries, burying your children alive and filling God's earth with injustice and wickedness." Its other meaning is: "You are a people of depraved character. You are not at all sincere in your claim of having affirmed the Faith, because you are not prepared to make any sacrifice in its cause. Now, is Allah gives you power in the land and entrusts the affairs of the world to you when morally you are unsound and unreliable, what else can be expected of you than that you would commit tyranny and mischief and resort to killing of your own near and dear ones.

This verse clearly points out that Islam forbids severing of relations with the kindred. On the other hand, in positive terms also, at several places in the Qur'ān, treating the relatives kindly and well has been enjoined and counted among the major virtues. (For instance, see Al-Baqarah: 83, 177; An-Nisā': 8, 36; An-Naḥl: 90, Banī Isrā'īl: 26; An-Nūr: 22). The word *raḥm* in Arabic is used for kinship and relationship by blood metaphorically. All the relations of a person, whether near or distant, are his kinsmen *(dhwil-arḥām)*. The nearer the relationship the greater the right one has upon the other and graver the sin of severing the ties of blood. To treat the kindred well implies that one should do one's utmost in doing whatever good one possibly can to one's relative, should avoid doing any ill or harm to him. Reasoning from this very verse Ḥaḍrat 'Umar had forbidden as unlawful selling of the slave girl who had given birth to a child from her master, and the Companions had concurred with him in this. Ḥākim in his *Mustadrik* has related on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Buraidah that one day when he was sitting among the audience of Hadrat 'Umar, suddenly a clamour arose in the street. On inquiring it was known that a slave girl was being sold and her daughter was crying. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar immediately got the *Anṣār* and the *Muhājirīn* together and

put before them the question: "Do you find in the Religion that Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) has brought any room for severing of relations between the blood relationships?" Everybody replied in the negative. Thereupon, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar said: Then, how is it that in your houses a mother is being separated from her daughter? Could there be a greater and more serious instance of the cutting of these relationships? Then he recited this verse. The people said: You may adopt whatever measure you deem fit to stop this practice. At this Ḥaḍrat 'Umar issued this decree for enforcement in all the Islamic territories: "No slave-girl who has given birth to a child from her master is to be sold because this is breaking of kinship ties which is not lawful."

35. That is, "Either these people do not ponder over the Qur'ān at all, or if they try to ponder over it, its teachings and meaning do not enter their hearts, because they have put locks on them." As for this that "there are their locks upon the hearts," it means this: "There are such locks on them as are specially meant for the hearts which are not susceptible to the truth."

36. That is, "In spite of professing the Faith and being counted among the Muslims, they went on conspiring secretly with the enemies of Islam and even pledged to support them in certain matters."

37. That is, "In the world they adopted this attitude so that they may safeguard their interests and may protect themselves from the dangers of the conflict between Islam and infidelity, but how will they escape Allah's wrath after death? At that time no device of theirs will prove helpful for them to remain safe from the punishment by the angels."

This verse also is one of those verses that point to the torment of *barzakh* (i.e. torment of the grave). It clearly shows that the unbelievers and hypocrites start being afflicted with the torment right from the time of death, and this torment is different from the punishment which they will get on Resurrection after their cases will have been decided by Allah. (For further explanation, see An-Nisā': 97; Al-An'ām: 93-94; Al-Anfāl: 50; An-Nahl: 28, 32; Al-Mu'minūn: 99 100; Yā Sīn: 26-27 and E.N.'s 22, 23; Al-Mu'min: 46 and E. N. 63).

38. This refers to all those works that they performed as "Muslims." Their Prayers, their fasting, their payments of the *zakāt*, and all other acts of worship and virtue, which in appearance and form are counted among good works, were rendered void, for they failed to adopt the attitude of sincerity and loyalty towards Allah and Islam and the Muslim community even though they professed to be Muslims; but, on the contrary, they went on conspiring with the enemies of Islam for the sake of small worldly gains, and started devising schemes to save themselves from any possible risks as soon as time came for *Jihād* in the cause of Allah.

These verses are absolutely decisive and conclusive in this regard that in the conflict between Islam and un-Islam the faith of the person whose sympathies are not with Islam and the Muslims, or are with disbelief and the disbelievers, cannot at all be reliable, not to speak of any of his works being acceptable before Allah.

39. This sentence has two meanings: (1) That Allah will render vain and fruitless all those works which they had performed as "good works", and they will get no reward whatever for them in the Hereafter; and (2) that all the devices that they are adopting to obstruct the way of Allah and His Messenger's Religion will prove ineffective and fruitless.

40. In other words, the deeds' being beneficial and yielding of good results depends wholly on one's obedience to Allah and His Messenger. After one has turned away from obedience, no deed remains a good deed so that one may deserve any reward for it.

41. Here, one should bear in mind the fact that when this discourse was revealed only a handful of the Muslims consisting of a couple of hundreds of the *Muhājirūn* and *Ansār* living in the small town of Madīnah were upholding the standard of Islam and they were not only faced by the powerful Quraish but also by the whole of pagan Arabia. Such were the conditions when they were exhorted "not to be faint-hearted and not to beg (the enemy) for peace", but to make preparations for the decisive conflict. This does not mean that the Muslims should never negotiate for peace, but it means that in a state like this it is not right to initiate peace negotiations when it shows the Muslims' weakness, for it will still further embolden the enemy. The Muslims should first establish their superiority in power and strength; then if they negotiate peace there will be no harm.

42. That is, "As against the Hereafter, this world is no more than a means of temporary entertainment. The success or failure here is not anything real and enduring, which might in any way be important. The real life is life hereafter success in which should be man's main concern. (For further explanation, see E.N. 102 of Sūrah Al-'Ankabūt).

43. That is, "Allah is Self-Sufficient: He does not need taking anything from you for His own Self. If He tells you to expend something in His way, He does so not for Himself but only for your own good."

44. That is, "He does not put you to any severe trial that may bring out your weaknesses."


XLVIII
AL-FAT-H
الفَتح

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

XLVIII

AL-FAT-Ḥ

الفَتح

INTRODUCTION

Name

It is derived from the words *Innā fataḥ-nā laka fat-ḥan mubīnā* of the very first verse. This is not only a name of the Sūrah but also its title in view of the subject-matter, for it deals with the great victory that Allah granted to the Holy Prophet and the Muslims in the form of the Truce of Ḥudaibiyah.

Period of Revelation

Traditions concur that it was sent down in Dhil-Qa'dah, A.H. 6, at a time when the Holy Prophet was on his return journey to Madīnah after concluding the Truce of Ḥudaibiyah with the disbelievers of Makkah.

Historical Background

The events in connection with which this Sūrah was sent down began like this: One day the Holy Prophet saw in a dream that he had gone to Makkah with his Companions and had performed the 'Umrah there. Obviously, the Prophet's dream could not be a mere dream and fiction; for it is a kind of Divine inspiration as Allah Himself has

confirmed in verse 27 below and said that He Himself had shown that dream to His Messenger. Therefore, it was not merely a dream but a Divine inspiration which the Holy Prophet had to obey and follow.

Apparently, there was no possible way of acting on this inspiration. The disbelieving Quraish had debarred the Muslims from proceeding to the Ka'bah for the past six years and no Muslim had been allowed during that period to approach the Ka'bah for the purpose of performing Ḥajj and 'Umrah. Therefore, it could not be expected that they would allow the Holy Prophet to enter Makkah along with a party of his Companions. If they had proceeded to Makkah in the pilgrim garments with the intention of performing 'Umrah, along with their arms, this would have provoked the enemy to war, and if they had proceeded un-armed, this would have meant endangering his own as well as his Companions' lives. Under conditions such as these nobody could see and suggest how the Divine inspiration could be acted upon.

But the Prophet's position was different. It demanded that he should carry out whatever Command his Lord gave fearlessly and without any apprehension and doubt. Therefore, the Holy Prophet informed his Companions of his dream and began to make preparations for the journey. Among the tribes living in the suburbs also he had the public announcement made that he was proceeding for 'Umrah and the people could join him. Those who could only see the apparent conditions thought that he and his Companions were going into the very jaws of death; none of them therefore was inclined to accompany him in the expedition. But those who had true faith in Allah and His Messenger were least bothered about the consequences. For them this information was enough that it was a Divine inspiration and Allah's Prophet had made up his mind to carry it into effect. After this nothing could hinder them from accompanying the Messenger of Allah. Thus, 1,400 of the Companions became ready to follow him on this highly dangerous journey.

This blessed caravan set off from Madinah in the beginning of Dhil Qa'dah, A.H. 6. At Dhul-Ḥulaifah[1] they entered the pilgrims robe

1. A place 6 miles south of Madinah on the road to Makkah, which is now called Bi'r 'Alī; the pilgrims coming from the direction of Madinah enter the pilgrim's robe for Hajj and 'Umrah here.

with the intention of 'Umrah, took 70 camels with collars round their necks indicating that they were sacrificial animals; kept only a sword each in sheaths, which the pilgrims to the Ka'bah were allowed to carry according to the recognized custom of Arabiá, but no other weapon. Thus, the caravan set out for the Ka'bah, the House of Allah, at Makkah, chanting the prescribed slogan of *Labbaik, Allahumma labbaik.*

The nature of the relations between Makkah and Madinah in those days was known too well to every Arab. Just the previous year, in Shawwāl A.H. 5, the Quraish mustering the united strength of the Arab tribes had invaded Madinah and the well-known Battle of the Trench had taken place. Therefore, when the Holy Prophet along with such a large caravan set off for the home of his blood-thirsty enemy, the whole of Arabia looked up with amazement, and the people also noticed that the caravan was not going with the intention to fight but was proceeding to the House of Allah in a forbidden month in the pilgrims garb carrying sacrificial animals and was absolutely un-armed.

The Quraish were confounded at this bold step taken by the Holy Prophet. Dhil-Qa'dah was one of those forbiddén months which had been held as sacred for pilgrimage in Arabia for centuries. Nobody had a right to interfere with a caravan which might be coming for Ḥajj or 'Umrah in the pilgrims garb in this month; so much so that even an enemy tribe could not hinder it from passing through its territory according to the recognized law of the land. The Quraish therefore were caught in a dilemma, for if they attacked this caravan from Madinah and stopped it from entering Makkah, this would arouse a clamour of protest in the whole country, and all the Arab tribes would have the misgiving that the Quraish had monopolised the Ka'bah as exclusively their own, and every tribe would be involved in the mistrust that now it depended on the will of the Quraish to allow or not to allow anyone to perform Ḥajj or 'Umrah in the future and that they would stop any tribe with which they were angry from visiting the Ka'bah just as they had stopped the Madinese pilgrims. This they thought would be a grave mistake, which would cause the entire Arabia to revolt against them. But, on the other hand, if they allowed Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and his large caravan to enter their city safely, they would lose their image of power in Arabia and the people would say that they were afraid of Muḥammad. At last, after a great deal of confusion,

perplexity and hesitation they were overcome by their false sense of honour and for the sake of their prestige they took the decision that they would at no cost allow the caravan to enter the city of Makkah.

The Holy Prophet had despatched a man of the Banī Ka'b as a secret agent so that he may keep him fully informed of the intentions and movements of the Quraish. When the Holy Prophet reached 'Usfān[1], he brought the news that the Quraish had reached Dhī-Tuwā[2] with full preparations and they had sent Khālid bin Walīd with two hundred cavalry men in advance towards Kurā'al Ghamīm[3] to intercept him. The Quraish wanted somehow to provoke the Holy Prophet's Companions into fighting so that they may tell the Arabs that those people had actually come to fight and had put on the pilgrims garments for 'Umrah only to deceive others.

Immediately on receipt of this information the Holy Prophet changed his route and following a very rugged, rocky track reached Hudaibiyah,[4] which was situated right on the boundary of the sacred Makkan territory. Here, he was visited by Budail bin Warqā' the chief of the Banī Khuzā'ah, along with some men of his tribe. They asked what he had come for. The Holy Prophet replied that he and his Companions had come only for pilgrimage to the House of Allah and for going round it in worship and not for war. The men of Khuzā'ah went and told this to the Quraish chiefs and counselled them not to interfere with the pilgrims. But the Quraish were obstinate. They sent Ḥulays bin 'Alqamah, the chief of the Aḥābīsh,[5] to the Holy Prophet to persuade him to go back. Their object was that when Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) would not listen to Ḥulays, he would come back disappointed and then the entire power of the Aḥābish would be on their side. But when Ḥulays went and saw that the whole caravan had put on the pilgrims garments, had brought sacrificial camels with festive collars round their necks, and had come for doing reverence to the House of

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1. A place at two days journey on the road to Makkah.
2. A place, outside Makkah, on the way to 'Usfān.
3. A place 8 miles from 'Usfān towards Makkah.
4. Ḥudaibiyah, now called Shumaisī, situated about 13 miles from Makkah on the road to Jeddah.
5. A collection of a few tribes living in the outskirts of Makkah who were allies of the Quraish.

Allah and not to fight, he returned to Makkah without having any dialogue with the Holy Prophet and told the Quraish chiefs plainly that those people had no other object but to pay a visit to the Ka'bah; if they debarred them from it, the Aḥābish would not join them in that, because they had not become their allies to support them even if they violated the sacred customs and traditions.

Then the Quraish sent 'Urwah bin Mas'ūd Thaqafī; he had lengthy negotiations with the Holy Prophet in an effort to persuade him to give up his intention to enter Makkah. But the Holy Prophet gave him also the same reply that he had given to the chief of the Khuzā'ah, that they had not come to fight but to do honour to the House of Allah and carry out a religious duty. 'Urwah went back and said to the Quraish: "I have been to the courts of the Caesar and Khosroes, and the Negus also, but by God, never have I seen any people so devoted to a king as are the Companions of Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) to him. If Muhammad makes his ablutions they would not let the water thereof fall on the ground but would rub it on their bodies and clothes. Now you may decide as to what you should do."

In the meantime when the messages were coming and the negotiations were going on, the Quraish tried again and again to quietly launch sudden attacks on the Muslim camp in order to provoke the Companions and somehow incite them to war, but every time they did so the Companions' forbearance and patience and the Holy Prophet's wisdom and sagacity frustrated their designs. On one occasion forty or fifty of their men came at night and attacked the Muslim camp with stones and arrows. The Companions arrested all of them and took them before the Holy Prophet, but he let them go. On another occasion 80 men came from the direction of Tan'im[1] right at the time of the Fajr Prayer and made a sudden attack. They were also caught, but the Holy Prophet forgave them, too. Thus, the Quraish went on meeting failure after failure in every one of their designs.

At last, the Holy Prophet sent Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān (may Allah be pleased with him) as his own messenger to Makkah with the message

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1. A place near Makkah, outside the sacred territory. The people generally go out to Tan'im to don the pilgrim garments for 'Umrah and then return to Makkah to perform 'Umrah.

that they had not come to fight but only for pilgrimage and had brought their sacrificial camels along, and they would go back after performing the rite of pilgrimage and offering the sacrifice. But the Quraish did not agree and withheld Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān in the city. In the meantime a rumour spread that Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān had been killed; and when he did not return in time the Muslims took the rumour to be true. Now they could show no more forbearance. Entry into Makkah was different for there was no intention to use force. But when the ambassador was put to death, the Muslims had no alternative but to prepare for war. Therefore, the Holy Prophet summoned all his Companions together and took a solemn pledge from them that they would fight to death. In view of the critical occasion it was not an ordinary undertaking. The Muslims numbered only 1,400 and had come without any weapons, were encamping at the boundary of Makkah, 250 miles away from their own city, and the enemy could attack them in full strength, and could surround them with its allies from the adjoining tribes as well. In spite of this, none from the caravan except one man failed to give his pledge to fight to death, and there could be no greater proof of their dedication and sincerity than that in the cause of Allah. This pledge is well known in the history of Islam as the pledge of Ridwān.

Later it was known that the news about Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān was false. Not only did he return but under Suhail bin 'Amr from the Quraish also arrived a deputation to negotiate peace with the Holy Prophet. Now, the Quraish no more insisted that they would disallow the Holy Prophet and his Companions to enter Makkah. However, in order to save their face they only insisted that he went back that year but could come the following year to perform the 'Umrah. After lengthy negotiations peace was concluded on the following terms:

(1) War would remain suspended for ten years, and no party would indulge in any hostility, open or secret, against the other.

(2) If any one during that period from among the Quraish went over to Muḥammad, without his guardian's permission, he would return him to them, but if a Companion of Muḥammad came over to the Quraish, they would not return him to him.

(3) Every Arab tribe would have the option to join either side as its ally and enter the treaty.

(4) Muhammad and his men would go back that year and could come the following year for 'Umrah and stay in Makkah for three days, provided that they brought only one sheathed sword each, and no other weapon of war. In those three days the Makkans would vacate the city for them (so that there was no chance of a clash), but they would not be allowed to take along any Makkan on return.

When the conditions of the treaty were being settled, the whole of the Muslim army was feeling greatly upset. No one understood the expedience because of which the Holy Prophet was accepting the conditions. No one was far-sighted enough to foresee the great benefit that was to result from this treaty. The disbelieving Quraish looked at it as their victory, and the Muslims were upset as to why they should be humiliated to accepting those mean conditions. Even a statesman of the calibre of Hadrat 'Umar says that he had never given way to doubt since the time he had embraced Islam but on this occasion he also could not avoid it. Impatient he went to Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr and said: "Is he (the Holy Prophet) not Allah's Messenger, and are we not Muslims?, and are they not polytheists? Then, why should we agree to what is humiliating to our Faith ?" He replied: "O 'Umar, he is, surely Allah's Messenger and Allah will never make him the loser." Unsatisfied he went to the Holy Prophet himself and put the same questions to him, and he also gave him the same replies as Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr had given. Afterwards Hadrat 'Umar continued to offer voluntary prayers and give alms so that Allah may pardon his insolence that he had shown towards the Holy Prophet on that occasion.

Two things in the treaty were highly disturbing for the Muslim; first, the second condition, about which they said that it was an expressly unfair condition, for if they had to return a fugitive from Makkah, why should not the Quraish return a fugitive from Madinah? To this the Holy Prophet replied: "What use would be he to us, who fled from us to them? May Allah keep him away from us! And if we return the one who flees to us from them, Allah will create some other way out for him." The other thing that was rankling in their minds was the fourth condition. The Muslims thought that agreeing to it meant that they were going back unsuccessful and this was humiliating. Furthermore, the question that was causing them feel upset was that they had accepted the condition of going back without performing the

pilgrimage to the Ka'bah, whereas the Holy Prophet had seen in the vision that they were performing *tawāf* at Makkah. To this the Holy Prophet replied that in his vision the year had not been specified. According to the treaty conditions, therefore, they would perform the *tawāf* the following year if it pleased Allah.

Right at the time when the document was being written, Suhail bin 'Amr's own son, Abū Jandal, who had become a Muslim and been imprisoned by the pagans of Makkah somehow escaped to the Holy Prophet's camp. He had fetters on his feet and signs of violence on his body. He implored the Holy Prophet that he help secure his release from imprisonment. The scene only increased the Companions' dejection, and they were moved beyond control. But Suhail bin 'Amr said the conditions of the agreement had been concluded between them although the writing was not yet complete; therefore, the boy should be returned to them. The Holy Prophet admitted his argument and Abū Jandal was returned to his oppressors.

When the document was finished, the Holy Prophet spoke to the Companions and told them to slaughter their sacrificial animals at that very place, shave their heads and put off the pilgrim garments, but no one moved from his place. The Holy Prophet repeated the order thrice but the Companions were so overcome by depression and dejection that they did not comply. During his entire period of apostleship on no occasion had it ever happened that he should command his Companions to do a thing and they should not hasten to comply with it. This caused him a great shock, and he repaired to his tent and expressed his grief before his wife, Ḥaḍrat Umm Salamah. She said, "You may quietly go and slaughter your own camel and call the barber and have your head shaved. After that the people would automatically do what you did and would understand that whatever decision had been taken would not be changed." Precisely the same thing happened. The people slaughtered their animals, shaved their heads or cut their hair short and put off the pilgrim garb, but their hearts were still afflicted with grief.

Later, when this caravan was returning to Madīnah, feeling depressed and dejected at the truce of Hudaibiyah, this Sūrah came down at Dajnān (or according to some others, at Kurā'al-Ghamīm), which told the Muslims that the treaty that they were regarding as their defeat, was

indeed a great victory. After it had come down, the Holy Prophet summoned the Muslims together and said: "Today such a thing has bean sent down to me, which is more valuable to me than the world and what it contains." Then he recited this Sūrah, especially to Ḥadrat 'Umar, for he was the one who was feeling most dejected.

Although the believers were satisfied when they heard this Divine Revelation, not much longer afterwards the advantages of this treaty began to appear one after the other until every one became fully convinced that this peace treaty indeed was a great victory:

(1) In it for the first time the existence of the Islamic State in Arabia was duly recognized. Before this in the eyes of the Arabs the position of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his Companions was no more than of mere rebels against the Quraish and other Arab tribes, and they regarded them as the outlaws. Now the Quraish themselves by concluding this agreement with the Holy Prophet recognized his sovereignty over the territories of the Islamic State and opened the way for the Arab tribes to enter treaties of alliance with either of the political powers they liked.

(2) By admitting the right of pilgrimage to the House of Allah for the Muslims, the Quraish also admitted that Islam was not an anti-religious creed, as they had so far been thinking, but it was one of the admitted religions of Arabia, and like the other Arabs, its followers also had the right to perform the rites of Ḥajj and 'Umrah. This diminished the hatred in the Arabs' hearts that had been caused by the propaganda made by the Quraish against Islam.

(3) The signing of a no-war pact for ten years provided full peace to the Muslims, and spreading to every nook and corner of Arabia they preached Islam with such spirit and speed that within two years after Hudaibiyah the number of the people who embraced Islam far exceeded those who had embraced it during the past 19 years or so. It was all due to this treaty that two years later when in consequence of the Quraish's violating the treaty the Holy Prophet invaded Makkah, he was accompanied by an army 10,000 strong, whereas on the occasion of Hudaibiyah only 1,400 men had joined him in the march.

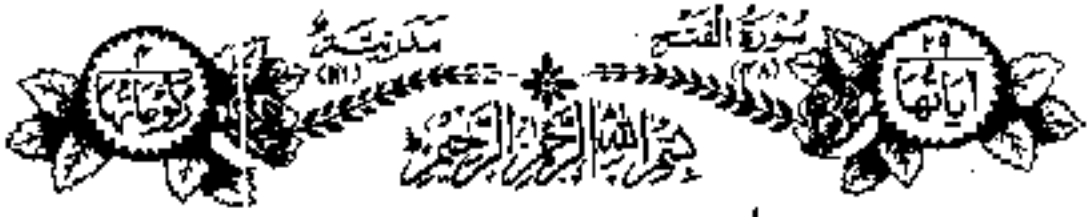
(4) After the suspension of hostilities by the Quraish the Holy Prophet had the opportunity to establish and strengthen Islamic rule in the territories under him and to turn the Islamic society into a full-fledged civilization and way of life by the enforcement of Islamic law. This is that great blessing about which Allah says in verse 3 of Sūrah Al-Mā'idah: "Today I have perfected your Religion for you and completed My blessing on you and approved Islam as the Way of Life for you." (For explanation, see Introduction to Sūrah Al-Mā'idah and its E.N. 15).

(5) Another gain that accrued from the truce with the Quraish was that being assured of peace from the south the Muslims overpowered all the opponent forces in the north and central Arabia easily. Just three months after Hudaibiyah, Khaiber, the major stronghold of the Jews, was conquered and after it the Jewish settlements of Fadak, Wād-il Qurā', Taimā' and Tabūk also fell to Islam one after the other. Then all other tribes of central Arabia, which were bound in alliance with the Jews and Quraish, came under the sway of Islam. Thus, within two years after Hudaibiyah the balance of power in Arabia was so changed that the strength of the Quraish and pagans gave way and the domination of Islam became certain.

These were the blessings that the Muslims gained from the peace treaty which they were looking upon as their defeat and the Quraish as their victory. However, what had troubled the Muslims most in this treaty, was the condition about the fugitives from Makkah and Madīnah, that the former would be returned and the latter would not be returned. But not much long afterwards this condition also proved to be disadvantageous for the Quraish, and experience revealed what far-reaching consequences of it had the Holy Prophet fore-seen and then accepted it. A few days after the treaty a Muslim of Makkah, Abū Basīr, escaped from the Quraish and reached Madīnah. The Quraish demanded him back and the Holy Prophet returned him to their men who had been sent from Makkah to arrest him. But while on the way to Makkah he again fled and went and sat on the road by the Red Sea shore, which the trade caravans of the Quraish took to Syria. After that every Muslim who succeeded in escaping from the Quraish would go and join Abū Basīr instead of going to Madīnah, until 70 men gathered there. They

would attack any Quraish caravan that passed that way and cut it into pieces. At last, the Quraish themselves begged the Holy Prophet to call those men to Madinah, and the condition relating to the return of the fugitives of itself became null and void.

The Sūrah should be read with this historical background in view in order to fully understand it.



إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا ۝ لِّيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِن ذَنبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ

XLVIII

AL-FAT-Ḥ

الفَتح

Verses: 29 *Revealed at Al-Madinah*

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

O Prophet, We have indeed granted you a manifest victory[1] so that Allah may pardon you your former and latter faults,[2] and may perfect His blessing upon you[3] and show you 1-7

1. When after the treaty of Hudaibiyah this good news of the victory was announced, the people wondered as to how the treaty could be called a victory. The Muslims did believe in this Divine Revelation as true on the basis of their Faith, but no one could understand what aspect of the victory it had. On hearing this verse, Hadrat 'Umar asked: "Is it a victory, O Messenger of Allah?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes." (Ibn Jarir) Another Companion came before the Holy Prophet and he also put the same question, whereupon the Holy Prophet replied: "By Him in Whose hand is the life of Muhammad, this indeed is a victory." (Musnad Ahmad, Abū Da'ūd) On arriving at Madīnah still another person said to his companions: "What sort of a victory is it? We were debarred from the House of Allah; our sacrificial camels also could not go to their right places; the Holy Messenger of Allah had to halt at Ḥudaibiyah, and in consequence of this truce two of our oppressed brothers (Abū Jandal and Abū Baṣir) were handed over to their oppressors." When this thing reached the Holy Prophet, he said:

"A very wrong thing has been uttered: it indeed is a great victory. You reached the very home of the polytheists, and they had to persuade you to go back

by soliciting you to perform 'Umrah the following year; they themselves expressed the desire to suspend hostilities and have peace with you, whereas their malice and enmity against you is too well-known. Allah has granted you the upper hand over them. Have you forgotten the day when you were fleeing from Uhud and I was calling you back from behind? Have you forgotten the day when the enemy had descended on us from every side in the Battle of the Trench and the hearts were coming up to the throats?" (Baihaqī on the authority of 'Urwah bin Zubair) . But not long after this the truce's being a victory began to become manifest, and everyone realized that the triumph of Islam had begun with the treaty of Hudaibiyah. Almost one and the same thing has been related from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, Hadrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah and Ḥadrat Barā' bin 'Āzib. They are reported to have said: "The people look upon the Conquest of Makkah as the victory, but we regard the truce of Hudaibiyah as the real victory." (Bukhārī, Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarir).

2. If the context in which this sentence occurs is kept in view, one will certainly feel that the faults referred to here imply those shortcomings and weaknesses that had remained in the struggle that the Muslims had been making for the success and victory of Islam, under the leadership of the Holy Prophet, for the past nineteen years or so. These shortcomings are not known to any one because the intellect is absolutely helpless to find out any weakness in that struggle. But according to the highest standards of perfection in the sight of Allah there had remained some such weakness in it because of which the Muslims could not attain a decisive victory so soon over the pagans of Arabia. What Allah means to say is this: "If you had carried on your struggle along with those weaknesses, it would have taken you much longer to subdue Arabia, but We have overlooked all those weaknesses and shortcomings and compensated for them only through Our grace, and opened for you at Hudaibiyah the door to victory and conquest which you could not have achieved only by your ordinary endeavours".

Here, this thing also should be understood well that for the weaknesses that might occur and remain in the struggle and endeavour that a group might be making for an object, the leader and guide of the group only is addressed. This does not mean that the weaknesses are the leader's personal weaknesses. Those are, in fact, the weaknesses of the struggle that the group is making as a whole; but the address is made to the leader to tell him that his work suffers from such and such a weakness.

However, as the address is directed to the Holy Prophet and declared that Allah has forgiven him all his former and latter faults, the general words also give this meaning that Allah pardoned all the shortcomings (which were the shortcomings in view of his high position) of His Holy Messenger. That is why when the Companions saw that he took extraordinary pains over his worship, they

would say: "Why do you subject yourself to such hardships when all your former and latter errors and shortcomings have been pardoned ?" the Holy Prophet would reply: "Should I not behave as a grateful servant ?" (Ahmad, Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Da'ūd).

3. "Perfection of his blessings" implies that the Muslims should become wholly free to live their lives in accordance with Islamic civilization, Islamic law and commandments, secure from every fear, every resistance and every external interference, and they should also be blessed with the power that they may uphold Allah's Word throughout the world. Dominance of disbelief and wickedness which may be a hindrance in the way of Allah's worship and an obstacle in the struggle in propagating Allah's Word, is the greatest calamity for the believers; the Qur'ān calls it *"fitnah"* (mischief). Delivered and freed from this calamity when they are able to achieve an abode of Islam *(dār al-Islam)* in which the Divine Religion is enforced in its entirety, and alongwith that they are also provided with the means and resources by which they may establish faith and righteousness on Allah's earth in place of disbelief and wickedness, this would be the perfection of Allah's blessing on them. As this blessing was achieved by the Muslims only through the Holy Prophet, Allah addressed only him and said: "We willed to complete Our blessing on you; therefore we have granted this victory to you."

وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهٗ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيَكَ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيْمًا ۙ﴿٢﴾ وَّيَنْصُرَكَ اللّٰهُ نَصْرًا
عَزِيْزًا ﴿٣﴾ هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلَ السَّكِيْنَةَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ لِيَزْدَادُوْٓا اِيْمَانًا مَّعَ
اِيْمَانِهِمْ ۗ وَلِلّٰهِ جُنُوْدُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ۙ﴿٤﴾ لِّيُدْخِلَ
الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا وَيُكَفِّرَ
عَنْهُمْ سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ ۭ وَكَانَ ذٰلِكَ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ فَوْزًا عَظِيْمًا ۙ﴿٥﴾ وَّيُعَذِّبَ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ وَ
الْمُنٰفِقٰتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِيْنَ وَالْمُشْرِكٰتِ الظَّاۗنِّيْنَ بِاللّٰهِ ظَنَّ السَّوْءِ ۭ عَلَيْهِمْ دَاۗىِٕرَةُ
السَّوْءِ ۚ وَغَضِبَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَنَهُمْ وَاَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ ۭ وَسَاۗءَتْ
مَصِيْرًا ۙ﴿٦﴾ وَلِلّٰهِ جُنُوْدُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَزِيْزًا حَكِيْمًا ۙ﴿٧﴾
اِنَّآ اَرْسَلْنٰكَ شَاهِدًا وَّمُبَشِّرًا وَّنَذِيْرًا ۙ﴿٨﴾ لِّتُؤْمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَتُعَزِّرُوْهُ
وَتُوَقِّرُوْهُ ۭ وَتُسَبِّحُوْهُ بُكْرَةً وَّاَصِيْلًا ۙ﴿٩﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يُبَايِعُوْنَكَ اِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُوْنَ
اللّٰهَ ۭ يَدُ اللّٰهِ فَوْقَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ ۚ فَمَنْ نَّكَثَ فَاِنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلٰي نَفْسِهٖ ۚ وَمَنْ
اَوْفٰى بِمَا عٰهَدَ عَلَيْهُ اللّٰهَ فَسَيُؤْتِيْهِ اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ۙ﴿١٠﴾ سَيَقُوْلُ لَكَ الْمُخَلَّفُوْنَ
مِنَ الْاَعْرَابِ شَغَلَتْنَآ اَمْوَالُنَا وَاَهْلُوْنَا فَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ۚ يَقُوْلُوْنَ بِاَلْسِنَتِهِمْ
مَّا لَيْسَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ ۭ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَّمْلِكُ لَكُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْـــًٔا اِنْ اَرَادَ بِكُمْ
ضَرًّا اَوْ اَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًا ۭ بَلْ كَانَ اللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرًا ۙ﴿١١﴾ بَلْ ظَنَنْتُمْ
اَنْ لَّنْ يَّنْقَلِبَ الرَّسُوْلُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ اِلٰٓى اَهْلِيْهِمْ اَبَدًا وَّزُيِّنَ ذٰلِكَ فِيْ
قُلُوْبِكُمْ وَظَنَنْتُمْ ظَنَّ السَّوْءِ ۚ وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًۢا بُوْرًا ۙ﴿١٢﴾ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنْۢ بِاللّٰهِ
وَرَسُوْلِهٖ فَاِنَّآ اَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ سَعِيْرًا ۙ﴿١٣﴾ وَلِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ
يَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۭ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿١٤﴾ سَيَقُوْلُ

the right way,[4] and bestow on you a mighty help.[5] He it is Who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers[6] so that they may have another Faith added to their Faith.[7] To Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and He is All-Knowing, All Wise. [8] (He has done this) so that He may admit the believing men and the believing women[9] into the Gardens underneath which canals flow, there to live for ever, and may remove their evils from them.[10]—This is indeed the greatest success in the sight of Allah.—And that He may punish the hypocritical men and women and the *mushrik* men and women, who entertain evil thoughts about Allah.[11] They themselves have been encircled by the evil.[12] They came under the wrath of Allah and He cursed them and prepared for them Hell, which is a most evil abode. To Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and He is All-Mighty, All-Wise.[13]

O Prophet, We have sent you as a witness,[14] as a bearer of good news and as a warner,[15] so that you, O people, may believe in Allah and His Messenger, and may help him (i.e. the Messenger) and honour him, and glorify Allah morning and evening.[16] 8-9

O Prophet, those who were swearing allegiance to you,[17] were indeed swearing allegiance to Allah. Allah's hand was over their hands.[18] Now whosoever breaks this pledge breaks it at his own peril, and whosoever keeps his pledge that he has made with Allah,[19] Allah will soon grant him a great reward. 10

O Prophet, the desert Arabs who were left behind,[20] will surely come and say to you, "Our properties and our households kept us occupied; so ask forgiveness for us." They say with their tongues that which is not in their hearts.[21] Say to them: "If it is so, who then can have any power to withhold Allah's decree in your behalf if He intends to do some harm to you or bring some good to you? Allah is well aware of all your actions.[22] (But the real thing is not what you say :) Nay, you rather thought that the Messenger and the believers would never return to their families and this fancy delighted your hearts[23] and you harboured evil thoughts and you are a people, most wicked."[24] 11-12

Whoever does not believe in Allah and His Messenger, for such disbelievers We have prepared a blazing Fire.[25] To Allah belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He may pardon whomever He wills and punish whomever He wills, and He is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful .[26] 13-14

4. "The right way": the way to conquest and success. In other words, it implies that by causing the treaty to be concluded at Hudaibiyah Allah paved the way for and inspired the Holy Prophet with the plan by which he could subdue all the forces that were resisting Islam.

5. Another translation can be: "Bestow on you an unprecedented victory," for the word *'aziz* in the original may mean mighty as well as unprecedented and unparalleled. According to the first meaning, the sentence means: "By means of this treaty Allah has helped you in a way as to make your enemies helpless"; and according to the second, it means: "Seldom has this novel method ever been adopted to help somebody, that a thing which apparently is a mere peace treaty, and that too a treaty concluded from a weak position, would turn into a decisive victory."

6. *"Sakinat"* in Arabic is calmness and tranquillity and peace of mind. Here Allah calls its being sent into the hearts of the believers an important factor in the victory that Islam and the Muslims achieved at Hudaibiyah. From a study of the conditions of the time one comes to know what kind of a *Sakinat* it was that was sent down into the hearts of the Muslims during that period and how it became a source of victory. If at the time when the Holy Prophet expressed his intention to go for 'Umrah to Makkah, the Muslims had become terror-stricken and started behaving like the hypocrites as if they were going into the very jaws of death, or if at the time when they heard the news on the way that the disbelieving Quraish were coming out in great strength to fight them, they had been alarmed as to how they would face the enemy un-armed, and thus become panic-stricken, obviously no benefits would have resulted from Hudaibiyah at all. Then, if at the time when at Hudaibiyah the disbelievers had stopped the Muslims from going any further, and when they had tried to provoke them by launching against them repeated sudden attacks, and when the rumour of Hadrat 'Uthmān's martyrdom had spread, and when Abū Jandal had appeared on the scene as the very image of oppression and persecution, the Muslims had actually become provoked and broken the discipline that the Holy Prophet had instilled in them, the result would have been disastrous. Above all, if at the time when the Holy Prophet was going to conclude the treaty on the conditions which were un-acceptable to the entire party of the Muslims, the Muslims had happened to disobey him, the great victory of Hudaibiyah would have turned into a humiliating defeat. Thus, it was all because of Allah's bounty that on all these critical moments the Muslims were blessed with full peace of mind with regard to the leadership and guidance of the Holy Prophet, the truth of Islam and the truthfulness of their mission. This is why they decided with a cool mind that they would face and accept whatever hardships they would encounter in the way of Allah; that is why they remained safe from fear, confusion, provocation and despair; that is why perfect discipline continued

to prevail in the camp; and that is why, in spite of being deeply grieved at the conditions of peace, they submitted to the decision taken by the Holy Prophet. This was the *sakīnat* that Allah had sent down into the hearts of the Muslims, and it was all because of this that the dangerous step of undertaking a journey for performing 'Umrah became the prelude to a unique victory.

7. That is, "One Faith they already had before they set out on this expedition; they attained the additional Faith when they remained steadfast on the way of sincerity, piety and obedience in every trial that they faced in connection with the expedition." This verse is one of those verses which show that Faith is not a static state which is incapable of growth, but it develops as well as decays and deteriorates. After embracing Islam till death the believer at every step in his life continues to be confronted with such tests and trials in which he has to take a decision whether in following the Divine Religion he is prepared to sacrifice his life, his wealth, his sentiments, desires, time, comforts and interests or not. If at the time of every such trial he adopts the way of sacrifice, his Faith progresses and develops, and if he turns away his Faith decays and deteriorates till a time may also come when the initial state of the Faith with which he had entered Islam is even endangered to be lost and destroyed. (For further explanation, see E.N. 2 of Sūrah Al-Anfāl and E.N. 38 of Al-Ahzāb).

8. It means this: Allah has such hosts by which He can destroy and exterminate the disbelievers completely whenever He wills, but He has deliberately and by wisdom only placed this responsibility on the believers that they should enter a conflict with the disbelievers and struggle to make the Religion of Allah prevail and prosper in the world. In this way alone does a door to the enhancement of their ranks and successes in the Hereafter open as is being indicated in the following verse.

9. In the Qur'ān generally mention of the rewards for the believers is made collectively and separate mention is not made of the rewards for the men and the women. But here, since the general mention of giving the rewards could cause the doubt that this reward may perhaps be only meant for the men, Allah has made a separate mention of the believing women, saying that they too would be equal partners in this reward with the believing men. The reason is obvious. Those God-fearing women who encouraged their husbands, sons, brothers and fathers to proceed on the dangerous journey instead of stopping them from it and discouraging them by crying and wailing, who looked after their houses, their properties, their honour and children in their absence faithfully, who did not even feel the alarm lest at the sudden departure of 1,400 of the Companions the disbelievers and hypocrites of the surrounding areas would attack the city, should certainly have become equal partners with their men in the reward of *Jihād* although they stayed behind in their homes.

10. That is, that He may pardon whatever errors they might have committed because of human weaknesses, remove every trace and mark of the errors from them before admitting them into Paradise so that they may enter Paradise absolutely free from every evil that may cause them embarrassment.

11. The hypocrites living in the suburbs of Madīnah were thinking, as has been stated in verse 12 below, that the Holy Prophet and his Companions would not return alive from that journey. As for the polytheists of Makkah and their pagan companions, they were thinking that they had successfully put to rout the Holy Prophet and his Companions by preventing them from performing 'Umrah. In fact, whatever these two groups had thought they had this misunderstanding about Allah that He would not help His Messenger and in the conflict between the Truth and falsehood would allow falsehood to defeat and frustrate the Truth.

12. That is, "They were encompassed by the same evil fate which they wanted to avoid and against which they had devised all those plans, and their same plans caused the evil fate to be hastened."

13. Here the theme of verse 4 has been reiterated for another object. There, the object was to state that Allah instead of employing His supernatural hosts to fight the disbelievers had employed the believers for it only because He willed to favour them. Here, the theme has been repeated to say that in order to punish the one whom Allah wills to punish He can employ whichever of His countless hosts He likes for the purpose; no one has the power to avert His punishment by his own plans.

14. Shah Wallyullah has translated *shāhid* as "a bearer of witness to the truth", and other translators translate it as "a bearer of the witness". The word *shahādat* comprehends both these meanings. For explanation, see E.N. 82 of Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb.

15. For explanation, see E.N. 33 of Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb.

16. According to some commentators the verse means: ".... and help the Messenger, and honour him, and glorify Allah morning and evening", and according to others: "... and help Allah, and honour Him and glorify Him morning and evening."

Glorifying Allah morning and evening does not mean glorifying Him only in the morning and the evening but at all times. It is just like saying about something that it is well-known in the east and the west when one actually means to say that it is well-known everywhere in the world.

17. The reference is to the pledge that the Holy Prophet took from his Companions at Hudaibiyah at the rumour that Ḥadrat 'Uthmān had been killed at

Makkah. According to some traditions it was a pledge unto death, and according to others it was an undertaking that they would not run away from the battlefield. The first thing has been reported from Ḥaḍrat Salamah bin Akwa' and the second from Ḥaḍrat Ibn 'Umar, Jābir bin 'Abdullah and Ma'qil bin Yasār. The purport of both is the same. The Companions had pledged allegiance on the Holy Prophet's hand with the express object that if the news of Hadrat 'Uthmān's martyrdom proved to be true, they would settle the matter with the Quraish there and then even if they were cut to pieces in the clash. As on this occasion it was not yet certain whether Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān actually had been killed or was still living, the Holy Prophet placed one of his own hands on the other and pledged allegiance on his behalf, and thus bestowed a unique honour on Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān in that he made Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān a partner in the pledge by making his own sacred hand represent the hand of Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān. The Holy Prophet's taking the pledge of allegiance on his behalf necessarily meant that he had full confidence that if Hadrat 'Uthmān had been present he would certainly have pledged the allegiance.

18. That is, the hand on which the Muslims were swearing allegiance was not the hand of the Prophet's person but of Allah's representative, and this allegiance was in fact being sworn to Allah through His Messenger.

19. Here, instead of *'alaih-Illah* the words used in the original are *'alaih-ullah*, which is a departure from the general rule of Arabic. 'Allāma Ālūsī has given two reasons for the unusual use of the vowel points here. First, the object on this special occasion is to express the great glory, eminence and majesty of the Being to Whom the pledge was being sworn for which *alaih-u* is more appropriate than *'alaih-i;* second, the *hā* in *'alaih-i* actually represents *huwa;* therefore, adhering here to the vowel points of the original goes well with the theme of the allegiance.

20. This refers to the people living in the suburbs of Madīnah whom the Holy Prophet had invited to accompany him in his march out for 'Umrah, but they had not left their homes in spite of their claim to Faith just because they were afraid of death. Traditions show that these were the people of the tribes of Aslam, Muzainah, Juhainah, Ghifār, Ashja', Dīl and others.

21 This has two meanings: (1) "That after your returning to Madinah the excuse that these people will present for not going out with you, would only be a lame excuse, because they know in their hearts why they had stayed behind"; and (2) "that their imploring the Messenger of Allah for a prayer of forgiveness would only be an empty word of mouth, for in fact, they are neither feeling remorse for

[Contd. on p. 53]

الْمُخَلَّفُوْنَ اِذَا انْطَلَقْتُمْ اِلٰى مَغَانِمَ لِتَاْخُذُوْهَا ذَرُوْنَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ ۚ يُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ
يُّبَدِّلُوْا كَلٰمَ اللّٰهِ ۭ قُلْ لَّنْ تَتَّبِعُوْنَا كَذٰلِكُمْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ فَسَيَقُوْلُوْنَ
بَلْ تَحْسُدُوْنَنَا ۭ بَلْ كَانُوْا لَا يَفْقَهُوْنَ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ۝15 قُلْ لِّلْمُخَلَّفِيْنَ مِنَ
الْاَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعَوْنَ اِلٰى قَوْمٍ اُولِيْ بَاْسٍ شَدِيْدٍ تُقَاتِلُوْنَهُمْ اَوْ يُسْلِمُوْنَ ۚ
فَاِنْ تُطِيْعُوْا يُؤْتِكُمُ اللّٰهُ اَجْرًا حَسَنًا ۚ وَاِنْ تَتَوَلَّوْا كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلُ
يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ۝16 لَيْسَ عَلَى الْاَعْمٰى حَرَجٌ وَّلَا عَلَى الْاَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَّ
لَا عَلَى الْمَرِيْضِ حَرَجٌ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّطِعِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّتَوَلَّ يُعَذِّبْهُ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ۝17 لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ
عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اِذْ يُبَايِعُوْنَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ فَاَنْزَلَ
السَّكِيْنَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَاَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيْبًا ۝18 وَّمَغَانِمَ كَثِيْرَةً يَّاْخُذُوْنَهَا ۭ وَ
كَانَ اللّٰهُ عَزِيْزًا حَكِيْمًا ۝19 وَعَدَكُمُ اللّٰهُ مَغَانِمَ كَثِيْرَةً تَاْخُذُوْنَهَا فَعَجَّلَ
لَكُمْ هٰذِهٖ وَكَفَّ اَيْدِيَ النَّاسِ عَنْكُمْ ۚ وَلِتَكُوْنَ اٰيَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ
صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيْمًا ۝20 وَّاُخْرٰى لَمْ تَقْدِرُوْا عَلَيْهَا قَدْ اَحَاطَ اللّٰهُ بِهَا ۭ وَكَانَ
اللّٰهُ عَلٰي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرًا ۝21 وَلَوْ قٰتَلَكُمُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَوَلَّوُا الْاَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا
يَجِدُوْنَ وَلِيًّا وَّلَا نَصِيْرًا ۝22 سُنَّةَ اللّٰهِ الَّتِيْ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ
لِسُنَّةِ اللّٰهِ تَبْدِيْلًا ۝23 وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ كَفَّ اَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَاَيْدِيَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ
بِبَطْنِ مَكَّةَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ اَنْ اَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۭ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرًا ۝24
هُمُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَصَدُّوْكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْهَدْيَ مَعْكُوْفًا اَنْ يَّبْلُغَ
مَحِلَّهٗ ۭ وَلَوْلَا رِجَالٌ مُّؤْمِنُوْنَ وَنِسَاۗءٌ مُّؤْمِنٰتٌ لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوْهُمْ اَنْ تَطَـــُٔوْهُمْ

When you set out to take the spoils, those who were left behind, will surely say to you, "Allow us too to go with you."[27] They wish to change Allah's decree.[28] Tell them plainly, "You shall not come with us. Allah has already said this before."[29] They will say, "Nay, but you are jealous of us." (Whereas there is no question of jealousy), but they little understand the truth. Tell the desert Arabs who were left behind, "You shall soon be called upon to fight a mighty people. You shall have to fight them, or they will submit.[30] Then if you carried out the Command of *Jihād*, Allah will give you a good reward, and if you turned your backs as you did before, Allah will punish you with a painful torment. However, there is no harm if the blind and the lame and the sick person does not come forth for *Jihād*.[31] whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, Allah will admit him into Gardens underneath which canals flow; and the one who turns away, him He will punish with a painful torment. 15-17

Allah was well pleased with the believers when they were swearing allegiance to you under the tree.[32] He knew what was in their hearts; therefore, He sent down tranquillity upon them[33] and rewarded them with a victory near at hand, and many spoils which they will (soon) take.[34] Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. Allah promises you rich spoils which you will acquire.[35] Presently He has granted you this victory,[36] and has restrained the hands of the people from you[37] so that it may be a sign to the believers,[38] and Allah may guide you to the right way.[39] Besides, He promises you other spoils as well, which you are not as yet able to take, and Allah has encompassed them:[40] Allah has power over everything. 18-21

If the disbelievers had fought you then, they would certainly have turned their backs and would have found no protector or helper.[41] This is the Way of Allah that has been followed in the past,[42] and you will find no change in the Way of Allah. It is He Who restrained their hands from you and your hands from them in the valley of Makkah, whereas He had granted you victory over them, and Allah saw what you were doing. 22-24

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their failure to accompany you, nor have they any feeling that they committed a sin by not going out with the Messenger, nor are they seeking forgiveness

sincerely. As for themselves they think that they did a wise thing by not going on the dangerous journey; had they any desire for Allah and His forgiveness, they would not have stayed behind at home."

22. That is, "Allah's decision will be on the basis of the knowledge that He has about the reality of your actions. If your actions deserve the punishment and I pray for your forgiveness, my this prayer will not save you from Allah's punishment; and if your actions do not deserve the punishment, and I do not pray for your forgiveness, my failure to pray will not do any harm to you. Everything is in Allah's control, not mine, and no one's empty words can deceive Him. Therefore, even if I accept as true what you say and then also pray for your forgiveness on its basis, it will be vain and without result."

23. That is, "You were delighted to think that you had saved yourselves from the danger into which the Messenger and his believeing supporters were going. You thought you had done so by dint of your great wisdom; and you also did not feel any compunction in rejoicing at the thought that the Messenger and the believers would not return alive from their expedition. You did not feel uneasy in spite of your claim to the Faith but were pleased to think that you did not put yourselves in the danger by accompanying the Messenger."

24. The word *bā'ir* (pl. *būr* in the original) has two meanings: (1) A sinful, perverted and evil-minded person, who is incapable of doing anything good; and (2) one who is doomed to an evil end, who is following the path of destruction.

25. Here, Allah in clear words is declaring all such people disbelievers and devoid of the faith, who are not sincere with regard to Allah and His Religion, who shirk endangering their interests, their lives and wealth for the sake of Allah's Religion when the time comes of their trial and test. But one should remember that this is not the sort of disbelief on the basis of which somebody in the world may be regarded as excommunicated from Islam, but this is the disbelief because of which he will be declared a disbeliever in the Hereafter. The reason is that the Holy Prophet even after the revelation of this verse did not regard as outside Islam those people in respect of whom it was sent down, nor treated them like the disbelievers.

26 The mention of Allah's being All-Forgiving and All-Merciful after the foregoing warning, contains in it a subtle aspect of admonition. It means this: "Even now if you give up your insincere attitude and way of life and adopt sincerity, you will find Allah All- Forgiving and All-Merciful. He will forgive you your previous shortcomings and will treat you according to the quality of your sincerity in the future."

27. That is, "The time is approaching when these very people who were shirking accompanying you on the dangerous journey, would see you going on an expedition in which there would be the possibility of attaining easy victory and much booty. Then they would come running and request you to take them also along." Such a time came just three months after the truce of Hudaibiyah, when the Holy Prophet invaded Khaiber and took it easily. At that time everyone could see that after the truce with the Quraish not only Khaiber but the Jewish settlements of Taimā, Fadak, Wādi-al-Qurā' and others also of northern Arabia would not be able to withstand the might of the Muslims and would easily fall to the Islamic State. Therefore, Allah in these verses forewarned the Holy Prophet that the opportunists of the suburbs of Madīnah would come up to take part in and receive their share when they would see easy victories being attained, and that he should tell them plainly: "You will never be allowed to take part in these, because only those who had gone forth to offer their lives in the conflict at Ḥudaibiyah regardless of every danger would be entitled o them."

28. "Allah's decree" implies the decree that only those people would be allowed to accompany the Holy Prophet in the expedition to Khaiber, who had taken part in the expedition to Ḥudaibiyah and sworn the pledge there for Allah has reserved the spoils of Khaiber exclusively for them; as has been stated clearly in verse 18 blow.

29. The words "Allah has already said this before" caused the people the misunderstanding that this refers to some other command bearing upon the same subject that might have been sent down before this verse, and since no such command is found in this Sūrah before this verse, they started looking for it at other places in the Qur'ān till they found verse 84 of Sūrah At-Taubah, in which this very subject has been dealt with for another occasion. But that verse, in fact, does not apply to this, for it was sent down in connection with the Battle of Tabūk, and its period of revelation is three years after the period of revelation of Sūrah Al-Fat-ḥ. The fact of the matter is that this verse refers to vv. 18-19 of this Sūrah itself, and Allah's already having said this does not mean its having been said before this verse but its having been said to the laggards before this conversation. This conversation with the laggards about which advance instructions are being given to the Holy Prophet was to take place at the time of the expedition to Khaiber, and this whole Sūrah, including vv. 18-19, had been sent down three months earlier on return from Ḥudaibiyah on the way. A careful study of the context shows that Allah here is giving this instruction to His Messenger: "When after your return at Madīnah the laggards come to you with their excuses, you should give them this reply, and when they express their desire to accompany you in the expedition to Khaiber, you should tell them this."

30. The words *au yuslimūn* in the original can have two meanings and both are implied: (1) "That they should accept Islam"; and (2) "that they should submit to the Islamic rule."

31. That is, the one who has a genuine excuse for not joining *Jihād* is not accountable, but if the able-bodied, strong people make excuses for not joining it, they cannot be regarded as sincere with regard to Allah and His Religion, and they cannot be given the opportunity to take advantage of the gains as members of the Muslim community; but when time comes for making sacrifices for Islam, they should lag behind and seek the safety of their lives and properties."

Here, one should know that two kinds of the people have been exempted from *Jihad* duty by the *Sharī'ah*: (1) Those who are not physically fit for *Jihād*, e.g. young boys, women, the insane, the blind and such patients as cannot perform military duties, and such disabled people as cannot take part in war; and (2) those for whom it may be difficult to join *Jihād* for other sound reasons, e.g. the slaves, or those persons who may be ready for *Jihād* but may not afford weapons of war and other necessary equipment, or such debtors who may have to pay their debts at the earliest opportunity and the creditors may not be willing to allow them more time, or such people whose parents (or a parent) might be alive, who stand in need of the children's help. In this regard, it should also be known that the children should not join *Jihād* without the permission of their parents if they are Muslims, but if they are non-Muslims it is not permissible for a person to stay away from *Jihād* in case they refuse permission.

32. Here again the pledge taken from the Companions at Ḥudaibiyah has been mentioned. This is called *Bai'at Riḍwān*, for Allah in this verse has given the good news that he became well pleased with those who on this dangerous occasion did not show the least hesitation in offering their lives for the cause of Islam and gave an express proof of their being true in their faith by taking the pledge on the hand of the Holy Prophet. The Muslims at this time were equipped only with a sword each, numbered only 1,400, were unprepared for warfare, but were donning the pilgrim garments, were 25 miles away from their military headquarters (Madīnah), while the enemy's stronghold (Makkah) wherefrom it could get any kind of help was just 13 miles off. Had these people been lacking in their sincerity for Allah and His Messenger and His Religion in any degree, they would have abandoned the Messenger on this extremely dangerous occasion, and Islam would have been vanquished for ever. Apart from their own sincerity there was no external pressure under which they might have been compelled to take the pledge. Their becoming ready at that time to fight in the cause of Allah's Religion regardless of the dangers, is a clear proof that they were true and sincere in their Faith and loyal to the cause of Allah and His Messenger in the highest degree. That is why Allah honoured them with this certificate of His good pleasure. Now

if some one becomes angry with them after they have been honoured with this certificate of Allah's good pleasure, or slanders and vilifies them, his enmity is with Allah, not with them. Those who say that at that time when Allah honoured them with this certificate of His good pleasure, they were sincere, but afterwards they became disloyal to Allah and His Messenger, perhaps harbour a mistrust about Allah that while sending down this verse He was unaware of their future; therefore, He awarded them this warrant only in view of their state at that time, and probably due to the same unawareness inscribed this verse in His Holy Book as well so that afterwards also, when those people have turned disloyal, the world should continue reading this verse about them and praising the knowledge of the unseen of that Allah Who, God forbid, had granted those faithless and disloyal people the warrant of His good pleasure.

About the Tree under which this pledge was taken Ibn 'Umar's slave Ḥaḍrat Nāfi's tradition has generally spread saying that the people had started visiting it and offering Prayers by it, so that when Ḥaḍrat 'Umar came to know of it, he rebuked and warned the people and ordered it to be cut down. (*Ṭabaqat* Ibn Sa'd, vol. II, p. 100). But there are several other traditions which contradict it. A tradition from Ḥaḍrat Nāfi' himself has been reported in *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn S'ad to the effect, that many years after the *Bai'at Ridwān* the Companions looked for the Tree but they could not recognize it and differed as to which tree it was. (p. 106). The second tradition has been reported in Bukhārī, Muslim, and *Tabaqāt* on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Sa'īd bin al-Musayyab. He says that his father was one of those who had participated in the *Bai'at Ridwān*. He told him that when they had gone for *'Umrah al-Qaḍā'* the following year, they had forgotten the Tree, and they could not locate it even after looking for it. The third tradition is from Ibn Jarīr. He says that when Ḥaḍrat 'Umar during his caliphate passed by Ḥudaibiyah, he enquired about the Tree under which the pledge had been sworn. Someone pointed to one tree and another one to another tree. At this Ḥaḍrat 'Umar told the people to forget it as there was no real need to bother about it.

33. Here, *sakīnat* means that state of the heart on whose strength a man throws himself into dangers with complete calm and peace of mind for the sake of a great objective and resolves without fear and consternation to undertake it regardless of the consequences.

34. The reference is to the conquest of Khaiber and its rich spoils and this verse expressly points out that Allah had reserved this reward only for those

[Contd. on p. 61]

فَتُصِيبَكُمْ مِّنْهُمْ مَّعَرَّةٌۢ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۚ لِيُدْخِلَ اللّٰهُ فِيْ رَحْمَتِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۚ لَوْ
تَزَيَّلُوْا لَعَذَّبْنَا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ﴿٢٥﴾ اِذْ جَعَلَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا
فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمُ الْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَاَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ سَكِيْنَتَهٗ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهٖ وَ
عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَاَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوٰى وَكَانُوْٓا اَحَقَّ بِهَا وَ اَهْلَهَا ۚ وَكَانَ
اللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمًا ﴿٢٦﴾ لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللّٰهُ رَسُوْلَهُ الرُّءْيَا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ لَتَدْخُلُنَّ
الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ اِنْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ اٰمِنِيْنَ ۙ مُحَلِّقِيْنَ رُءُوْسَكُمْ وَ مُقَصِّرِيْنَ ۙ
لَا تَخَافُوْنَ ۗ فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوْا فَجَعَلَ مِنْ دُوْنِ ذٰلِكَ فَتْحًا قَرِيْبًا ﴿٢٧﴾
هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَرْسَلَ رَسُوْلَهٗ بِالْهُدٰى وَدِيْنِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهٗ عَلَى الدِّيْنِ كُلِّهٖ ۗ
وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ شَهِيْدًا ﴿٢٨﴾ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَالَّذِيْنَ مَعَهٗٓ اَشِدَّآءُ عَلَى
الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَآءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرٰىهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَّبْتَغُوْنَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللّٰهِ
وَ رِضْوَانًا ۖ سِيْمَاهُمْ فِيْ وُجُوْهِهِمْ مِّنْ اَثَرِ السُّجُوْدِ ۗ ذٰلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي
التَّوْرٰىةِ ۚ وَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْاِنْجِيْلِ ۚ كَزَرْعٍ اَخْرَجَ شَطْئَهٗ فَاٰزَرَهٗ
فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوٰى عَلٰى سُوْقِهٖ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيْظَ بِهِمُ
الْكُفَّارَ ۗ وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ مِنْهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةً وَّ
اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

They are the ones who disbelieved and debarred you from the 25-26
Masjid al-Ḥarām and hindered the sacrificial animals from reaching their place of sacrifice.[43] Had there not been certain believing men and women (in Makkah) whom you do not know and the fear that you would trample them under foot without knowing it and incur blame on that account, (the fighting would not have been allowed to stop. It was stopped), so that Allah may admit into His mercy whom He will. Had the believers stood apart (from the people of Makkah), We would have severely punished the disbelievers among them.[44] (That is why) when the disbelievers set in their hearts the arrogance of paganism,[45] Allah sent down His peace upon His Messenger and the believers,[46] and obliged the believers to adhere to the word of piety, for they were most worthy and deserving of it. Allah has knowledge of everything.

Indeed, Allah had shown His Messenger a true vision, which 27
was precisely according to the truth:[47] "You shall surely enter the *Masjid al-Ḥarām,* if Allah so wills,[48] in full security ;[49] you will have your heads shaved, your hair cut,[50] and you will have nothing to fear. He knew what you did not know. Therefore, He granted you this near victory before the fulfilment of the vision".

It is Allah Who has sent His Messenger with the Guidance and 28-29
the religion of Truth that He may make it prevail over all religion, and Allah is sufficient as a Witness in this regard.[51] Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are hard[52] on the disbelievers and merciful among themselves.[53] When you see them you will find them bowing down and falling prostrate and craving for Allah's bounty and His good-will. They have the marks of prostrations on their faces by which they are distinguished[54] from others. This is their description in the Torah,[55] and in *the Gospel* they have been likened[56] to a crop which put out its shoot, then strengthened it, then swelled and then stood on its own stem, filling the sowers with delight and the disbelievers with jealousy of them. Allah has promised those of them, who have believed and done good works, forgiveness and a great reward.[57]

Contd from p.59]

people who had taken part in the *Bai'at Ridwān;* apart from them no one else was entitled to take part in the victory and have a share in the spoils. That is why when

the Holy Prophet marched out to attack Khaiber in Ṣafar, A.H. 7, he took only those people with him. No doubt afterwards he gave some of the spoils of Khaiber to those emigrants also who returned from Ḥabash and to some Companions from the Dūs and Ash'ar tribes as well, but this was given either from Khums (one fifth of the spoils of war given into the public treasury), or with the approval of the Companions who had taken the pledge of *Riḍwān;* no one else was given any share of it.

35. This refers to the other victories that the Muslim achieved successively after Khaiber.

36. This implies the treaty of Ḥudaibiyah which has been described as "a manifest victory" in the beginning of the Sūrah.

37. That is, "He restrained the disbelieving Quraish from attacking you at Hudaibiyah although from all appearances they were in a much better position and yours was a much weaker side militarily." Furthermore, it also implies that no enemy power could muster courage to attack Madīnah in those days, whereas after the departure of 1,400 soldiers the Madīnah front had become very weak, and the Jews, the polytheists and hypocrites could take advantage of the situation.

38. Sign of this as to how Allah helps the one who remains steadfast on obedience to Allah and His Messenger and comes out to support and defend the Truth and righteousness with his trust and faith in Allah.

39. "To the right way": "To the way of greater insight and faith so that you may remain steadfast on obedience to Allah and His Messenger in the future and may go on marching on the way of truth with trust in Allah, and may learn this lesson from these experiences that the believer should take practical steps to do whatever is demanded by Allahs Religion with his trust in Him, and should not overestimate either his own strength or the strength of the unbelievers."

40. Most probably this is a reference to the Conquest of Makkah. The same is the opinion of Qatādah and Ibn Jarīr. It seems to mean this: "Though Makkah has not yet fallen to you, Allah has encircled it, and as a result of this victory at Ḥudaibiyah, it will also fall to you."

41. That is, "Allah did not prevent fighting at Ḥudaibiyah because there was a possibility of your being defeated there, but there were other reasons for it, which are being stated in the following verses. Had that factor not been there and Allah had allowed the war to take place, the disbelievers would surely have been routed and Makkah would have fallen to you at that very time."

42. Here, "the Way of Allah" means: Allah disgraces the disbelievers who fight His Messenger and helps His own Messenger.

43. That is, "Allah was seeing the sincerity and the selfless devotion with which you had become ready to lay down your lives in the cause of the true Faith and were obeying the Prophet without any question. Allah was also seeing that the disbelievers were being unfair and high-handed. The demand of this situation was that they should have been punished there and then through you, but in spite of that, Allah restrained your hands from them and their hands from you."

44. This was the reason why Allah did not allow fighting to take place at Ḥudaibiyah. This has two aspects: (1) That at that time there were quite a number of the Muslim men and women living in Makkah, who were either hiding their faith, or were being persecuted because of their faith as they had no means to emigrate. Had there been fighting and the Muslims had pushed back the disbelievers and entered Makkah, these Muslims also would have been killed in ignorance along with the disbelievers. This would not only have grieved the Muslims but the Arab polytheists also would have got an opportunity to say that the Muslims did not even spare their own brethren in faith during wartime. Therefore, Allah took pity on the helpless Muslims and averted the war in order to save the Companions from grief and infamy. The other aspect of the expedience was that Allah did not will that Makkah should fall to the Muslims as a result of the defeat of the Quraish after a bloody clash but He willed that they should be encircled from all sides so that within two years or so they should become absolutely helpless and subdued without offering any resistance, and then the whole tribe should accept Islam and enter Allah's mercy as it actually happened on the Conquest of Makkah.

Here the juristic dispute has arisen that if during a war between the Muslims and the disbelievers, the disbelievers should bring out some Muslim men and women, children and old men, in their possession and put them in the forefront as a shield for themselves, or if there is some Muslim population also in the non-Muslim city under attack by the Muslim forces, or if in a warship of the disbelievers, which is within our gun-fire, the disbelievers have taken some Muslims also on board, can the Muslim army open fire on it? In answer to it the rulings given by different jurists are as follows:

Imām Mālik says that in such a case fire should not be opened, and for this he cites this very verse as an argument. He contends that Allah prevented the war at Ḥudaibiyah only in order to save the Muslims. (Ibn al-'Arabi, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).* But this in fact is a weak argument. There is no word in the verse which may support the view that launching an attack on the enemy in this case is unlawful and forbidden. At the most what one can say on the basis of this verse is that the launching of an attack in such a case should be avoided in order to save the Muslims, provided that it does not put the disbelievers in an advantageous

position against the Muslims militarily, or does not diminish the Muslims' chances of gaining an upper hand in the conflict.

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām Abū Yūsuf, Imām Zufar and Imām Muḥammad say that it is lawful to open fire in such a case; so much so that even if the disbelievers use the children of the Muslims as a shield by putting them in the forefront, there is no harm in shooting at them, and it is not obligatory for the Muslims to expiate and pay any blood-money for the Muslims thus killed, (Al-Jaṣṣās, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān;* Imām Muḥammad, *:Kitāb as-Siyar).*

Imām Sufyān Thaurī also in this case regards opening of the fire as lawful, but he says that although the Muslims will not pay the blood-money of the Muslims thus killed, it is obligatory for them to expiate the sin. (Al-Jassās, *Ahkām al-Qur'ān).*

Imām Auzā'ī and Laith bin Sa'd say that if the disbelievers use the Muslims as a shield, fire should not be opened on them. Likewise, if it is known that in their warship our own prisoners also are on board, it should not be sunk. But if we attack a city of theirs and we know that there are Muslims also in the city, it is lawful to open fire on the city, for it is not certain that our shells will only hit the Muslims, and if a Muslim becomes a victim of this shelling, it will not be wilful murder of a Muslim but an inadvertant accident. (Al-Jaṣṣās, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).*

Imām Shāfe'ī holds the view that in such a case if it is not inevitable to open fire it is better to try to save the Muslims from destruction; although it is not unlawful to open fire in this case, it is undesirable. But if it is really necessary and it is feared that in case fire is not opened it will put the disbelievers in a better position militarily against the Muslims, it is lawful to resort to shelling, but even then every effort should be made to save the Muslims as far as possible. Furthermore, Imām Shāfe'ī also says that if during a conflict the disbelievers put a Muslim in front as a shield and a Muslim kills him, there can be two possible alternatives: either the killer knew that the murdered person was a Muslim, or he did not know that he was a Muslim. In the first case, he will be under obligation to pay compensation for manslaughter as well as do expiation; in the second case he will only do expiation. *(Mughnī al-Muḥtāj).*

45. The words *ḥamiyyat al-jāhiliyyah* mean that a man should wilfully do something unworthy and improper only for the sake of his honour and prestige. The ditsbelievers of Makkah themselves acknowledged and admitted that everybody had a right to visit the Ka'bah for performing Ḥajj and 'Umrah, and that they had no right to stop anyone from this duty. This was an ancient admitted law of Arabia. But in spite of knowing that they were absolutely in the wrong and the Muslims in the right, they prevented the Muslims from performing 'Umrah

only for the sake of their prestige. The righteous even among the polytheists also were saying that preventing the people who had come in the pilgrim garbs along with sacrificial camels from performing pilgrimage was an improper act. Yet the Quraish leaders persisted in their resistance only under the idea that if Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) entered Makkah along with a large number of his followers, it would mean loss of prestige for them among the Arabs. This was their arrogance.

46. Here, *sakīnat* means the patience and dignity with which the Holy Prophet and the Muslims resisted the disbelievers' rancour and spirit of paganism. They did not get provoked at their stubborn and insolent behaviour and did not do anything which might have violated the spirit of Truth and righteousness, or which might have further complicated the situation instead of settling it amicably.

47. This is the answer to the question that was constantly agitating the minds of the Muslim. They said, "The Holy Prophet had seen in his vision that he had entered the *Masjid al-Ḥarām* and moved round the Ka'bah in worship. Then how is it that they were returning without performing 'Umrah?" In answer to this, although the Holy Prophet had told them that in his vision he had not seen that they would perform the 'Umrah that very year, still there remained some suspicion in the hearts. Therefore, Allah Himself explained that it was He Who had shown the vision and it was a true vision and it would certainly be fulfilled.

48. Here, about the words *inshā'-Allah* (if Allah so wills), which Allah Himself has used with His promise, one can raise the objection that when Allah Himself is making this promise, what is the meaning of making it conditional upon His own willing it? The answer is: Here the words *inshā'-Allah* have not been used in the sense that if Allah does not will, He will not fulfil His promise, but in fact these relate to the background in which this promise was made. The presumption on the basis of which the disbelievers of Makkah had played the drama of preventing the Muslims from 'Umrah was that only he whom they would allow would perform 'Umrah, and would perform it only when they would allow it. At this Allah has said: "This depends on Our, not on their, will. The reason why 'Umrah has not been performed this year is not because the disbelievers of Makkah did not allow it to be performed, but because We did not will it to be performed; in the future 'Umrah will be performed if We will, no matter whether the disbelievers allow it or disallow it." Besides, these words also contain the meaning that the Muslims too, will perform 'Umrah not by their own power but because We would will that they should perform it; otherwise if We do not will, they do not possess any power to perform it by themselves."

49 This promise was fulfilled in the following year in Dhil-Qa'dah A. H. 7. This 'Umrah is well known in history as *'Umrah al-Qadā'*.

50. The words clearly point out that it is not obligatory to get the head shaved in 'Umrah and Ḥajj, but it is also right to get the hair cut short. However, it is better to have the head shaved, for Allah has mentioned it first and then mentioned having the hair cut short.

51. The reason why this thing has been mentioned here is that when at Ḥudaibiyah the peace treaty was going to be written down, the disbelievers had objected to the use of the words *Rasūl-Allah* (Messenger of Allah) with the name of the Holy Prophet, and on their insistence the Holy Prophet himself had wiped off these words from the document. At this Allah says: "Our Messenger's being a Messenger is a reality which remains unaffected whether someone believes in it or not. If some people do not believe in it, they may not, for "Allah is enough for a witness" over it. Their denial will not change the reality, but the Guidance and the true Faith which this Messenger has brought from Us, shall prevail over all religion, no matter how hard the deniers try to obstruct its progress."

"All religion" implies all those ways of life which include the nature of *dīn* (religion). We have explained it fully in E.N. 3 of Sūrah Az-Zumar and E.N. 20 of Sūrah Ash-Shūrā above. Here what Allah has stated in clear words is: The purpose of the Holy Prophet's appointment as a Prophet was not merely to preach this Religion but to make it prevail over all others. In other words, he did not bring this Religion so that it might survive in a limited compartment of life which is allowed it by the dominant religion, while the rest of the spheres of life, by and large, should remain under the relentless control of some false religion. But he had brought it so that it should be the dominant Religion of life and any other religion should survive, if at all it survives, only within the limits in which it allows it to survive. (For further explanation, see E.N. 48 of Sūrah Az-Zumar).

52. "The Companions (of the Holy Prophet) are hard on the disbelievers": they are not wax that the disbelievers may mould them as they like; they can neither be cowed nor purchased by any inducement. The disbelievers have no power to turn them away from the great objective for the sake of which they have joined and followed the Holy Prophet even at the cost of their lives."

53. That is, "Whatever their hardness and severity, it is only for the disbelievers, not for the believers. As regards the believers they are soft, merciful, affectionate, sympathetic and compassionate. Their unity of aim and object has produced in them love and harmony and complete accord among themselves."

54. This does not imply the mark that appears on the forehead of some people on account of prostrations, but it implies the marks and traces of the fear of God, munificence, nobility and goodness of manner that naturally appears on the face of a person on account of bowing down before God. Man's face is an open book on the pages of which different states of a man's self can be seen easily. A

vain and arrogant person's face is different from the face of a humble, modest and unassuming person; an immoral person's face is clearly distinguished from the face of a righteous and well-mannered person; and there is a marked difference between the facial appearance of a wicked man and of a noble and virtuous man. What Allah means to say is: "The Companions of Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) are such that one can recognize them on first sight to be the best of mankind, because their faces shine forth with the light of God-worshirp and God-consciousness." This is the same thing about which Imām Mālik has said that when the armies of the Companions entered Syria, the Syrian Christians remarked: "These people possess the very same qualities and characteristics of the disciples of the Prophet Jesus Christ."

55. The allusion probably is to Deuteronomy, 33: 2-3, in which the Holy Prophet's advent has been foretold and the word "saints" has been used for his Companions. Apart from this, if some other quality of the Companions has been mentioned in the Torah, it is not found in the existing, corrupted Torah.

56 This parable is found in a sermon of the Prophet Jesus that has been reported in the New Testament, thus:

> "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground: And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come. And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it."

The last portion of this sermon is also found in Matthew, 13: 31-32.

57. A section of the Muslims translates this verse, thus: "Allah has promised forgiveness and a great reward to those from among these people who have believed and done good works." Thus, they invent a way to vilify and slander the Companions, and claim that according to this verse many people among the Companions were not believers and righteous. But this commentary goes against vv. 4, 5, 18 and 26 of this very Sūrah, and does not even accord with the initial sentences of this verse itself. In vv. 4-5, Allah has made mention of sending down *sakīnat* (tranquillity) and of effecting increase in the Faith of all those Companions who were present with the Holy Prophet at Ḥudaibiyah, and

given them without any exception the good news of admission into Paradise. In verse 18, Allah has expressed His good pleasure for all those who took the pledge to the Holy Prophet under the Tree, and in this also there is no exception. In verse 26 also Allah has used the word *mu'minīn* (believers) for all the Companions, has made mention of sending down His *sakīnat* to them, and obliged them to be righteous and pious, for they were most worthy and deserving of all mankind. Here also it was not said that the news was being given only about those who were believers among them. Then in the initial sentences also of this verse itself the characteristics mentioned are of all those people who were with the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). The words are to the effect that all the people who are with him have this and this quality and characteristic. After this, suddenly in the last sentence there could be no excuse to say that some of them were the believers and others were not.


XLIX
AL-ḤUJURĀT
الحُجُرات

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

XLIX

AL-ḤUJURĀT

الحُجُرات

INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah takes its name from verse 4 in which the word *ḥujurāt* has occurred.

Period of Revelation

Traditions show and the subject-matter of the Sūrah also supports the same that this Sūrah is a collection of the commandments and instructions sent down on different occasions, which have been put together because of the relevancy of the theme. Moreover, the traditions also show that most of these commandments were sent down during the final stage of the Holy Prophet's life at Madīnah. For instance, about verse 4 the commentators state that it was sent down concerning the Banī Tamīm whose deputation had arrived in Madīnah and started calling out to the Holy Prophet from outside the apartments (*ḥujurāt*) of his wives, and according to all biographical books on the Holy Prophet's life this deputation had visited Madīnah in A.H. 9. Likewise, about verse 6 a large number of the traditions of *Hadīth* confirm that it was sent down concerning Walīd bin 'Uqbah whom the Holy Prophet had sent to collect the *zakāt* from the Banī al-Muṣṭaliq, and it is well known that Walīd bin 'Uqbah had become a Muslim on the conquest of Makkah.

Subject-Matter and Topics

The subject-matter of this Sūrah is to teach the Muslims the manners worthy of true believers.

In the first five verses they have been taught the manners they should observe with regard to Allah and His Messenger.

Then, they have been given the instruction that it is not right to believe in every news blindly and to act according to it, without due thought. If information is received about a person, a group or a community, it should be seen carefully whether the means of the information is reliable or not. If the means is not reliable, it should be tested and examined to see whether the news is authentic or not before taking any action on it.

Then, it has been told what attitude should the other Muslims adopt in case two groups of the Muslims fall to mutual fighting.

Then the Muslims have been exhorted to safeguard against the evils that corrupt collective life and spoil mutual relationships. Mocking and taunting each other, calling others by nicknames, creating suspicions, prying into other people's affairs and backbiting are the evils which are not only sins in themselves but they also corrupt society. Allah has mentioned all these evils separately and forbidden them as unlawful.

After this, the national and racial distinctions that cause universal corruption in the world have been condemned. Nations' and tribes' and families' pride of ancestry and their looking down upon others as inferior to themselves and their pulling down others only for the sake of establishing their own superiority is an important factor that has filled the world with injustices and tyranny. Allah in a brief verse has cut at the root of this evil by stating that all men are descendants of the same one pair and their division into tribes and communities is only for the sake of recognition, not for boasting and pride, and there is no lawful basis of one man's superiority over the other except on the basis of moral excellence.

In conclusion, the people have been told that the real thing is not the verbal profession of the Faith but to believe in Allah and His Messenger truly, to obey them in practical life and to exert sincerely

with one's self and wealth in the cause of Allah. True believers are only those who adopt this attitude. As for those who profess Islam merely orally without affirmation by the heart and then adopt an attitude as if they had done someone a favour by accepting Islam, may be counted among the Muslims in the world, may even be treated as Muslims in society, but they cannot be counted as believers in the sight of Allah.



يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تُقَدِّمُوْا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۭ اِنَّ
اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَرْفَعُوْٓا اَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ

XLIX

AL-ḤUJURĀT

الحُجُرات

Verses: 18 *Revealed at Al-Madinah*

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

O you who have believed, do not go in advance of Allah and His Messenger,[1] and fear Allah: Allah is All-Hearing, All-knowing.[2] 1

O you who have believed, do not raise your voices above the Prophet's voice, nor speak to him loud as you speak loud to one another[3] lest all your works be rendered void, while you do not know.[4] Those who lower their voices in the presence of the Messenger of God, are, in fact, those whose hearts Allah has disposed to piety.[5] For them is forgiveness and a great reward! 2-3

النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوْا لَهٗ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ اَنْ تَحْبَطَ اَعْمَالُكُمْ
وَاَنْتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُوْنَ ۝ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَغُضُّوْنَ اَصْوَاتَهُمْ عِنْدَ رَسُوْلِ اللّٰهِ اُولٰٓئِكَ
الَّذِيْنَ امْتَحَنَ اللّٰهُ قُلُوْبَهُمْ لِلتَّقْوٰى لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَّاَجْرٌ عَظِيْمٌ ۝ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ
يُنَادُوْنَكَ مِنْ وَّرَآءِ الْحُجُرٰتِ اَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُوْنَ ۝ وَلَوْ اَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوْا
حَتّٰى تَخْرُجَ اِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنْ جَاۗءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَاٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوْٓا اَنْ تُصِيْبُوْا قَوْمًۢا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوْا عَلٰي
مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نٰدِمِيْنَ ۝ وَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ فِيْكُمْ رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ ۭ لَوْ يُطِيْعُكُمْ فِيْ كَثِيْرٍ مِّنَ
الْاَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ حَبَّبَ اِلَيْكُمُ الْاِيْمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهٗ فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ
اِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوْقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ الرّٰشِدُوْنَ ۝ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللّٰهِ
وَنِعْمَةً ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ۝ وَاِنْ طَاۗىِٕفَتٰنِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اقْتَتَلُوْا
فَاَصْلِحُوْا بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ فَاِنْۢ بَغَتْ اِحْدٰىهُمَا عَلَي الْاُخْرٰى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِيْ تَبْغِيْ حَتّٰى
تَفِيْۗءَ اِلٰٓى اَمْرِ اللّٰهِ ۚ فَاِنْ فَاۗءَتْ فَاَصْلِحُوْا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَاَقْسِطُوْا ۭ اِنَّ
اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِيْنَ ۝ اِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ اِخْوَةٌ فَاَصْلِحُوْا بَيْنَ اَخَوَيْكُمْ وَ
اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَوْمٍ

ع ۱ ۱۰ ۱۳

عَسٰٓى اَنْ يَّكُوْنُوْا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاۗءٌ مِّنْ نِّسَاۗءٍ عَسٰٓى اَنْ يَّكُنَّ خَيْرًا
مِّنْهُنَّ ۚ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوْا بِالْاَلْقَابِ ۭ بِئْسَ الِاسْمُ الْفُسُوْقُ
بَعْدَ الْاِيْمَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا
اجْتَنِبُوْا كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ ۡ اِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ اِثْمٌ وَّلَا تَجَسَّسُوْا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ
بَّعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا ۭ اَيُحِبُّ اَحَدُكُمْ اَنْ يَّاْكُلَ لَحْمَ اَخِيْهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوْهُ ۭ وَاتَّقُوا

O Prophet, those who call out to you from outside the apartments, most of them have no sense. If only they had had patience until you came out to them, it would be better for them.[6] Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.[7] 4-5

O you who have believed, if a wicked person brings you some news, inquire into it carefully lest you should harm others unwittingly and then regret what you have done.[8] Know it well that the Messenger of Allah is among you. If he were to obey you in most affairs, you would certainly be in trouble.[9] But Allah has endeared the Faith to you and made it seem fair in your hearts and made disbelief, wrongdoing and disobedience abhorrent to you. Such are those who are rightly guided through Allah's grace[10] and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[11] 6-8

And if two parties of the believers fall to mutual fighting,[12] make peace between them.[13] Then if either of them transgresses against the other, fight the one that has transgressed[14] till it returns to Allah's Command.[15] Then if it returns, make peace between them with justice,[16] and be just because Allah loves those who do justice.[17] The believers are brothers of one another; so set the relations right between your brothers,[18] and fear Allah; it is expected that you will be shown mercy. 9-10

O you[19] who have believed, neither should men mock other men, it may be that these are better than they; nor should women mock other women, it may be that these are better than they.[20] Do not taunt one another among yourselves,[21] nor call one another by nicknames.[22] It is an evil thing to be called by a bad name after faith.[23] Those who fail to avoid this are wrongdoers. 11

O you who have believed, avoid much suspicion, for some suspicions are sins.[24] Do not spy,[25] nor should any of you backbite the other.[26] Is there any among you who would like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?[27] Nay, you yourselves abhor it. Fear Allah, for Allah is Acceptor of repentance and All-Merciful. 12

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1. This is the foremost and basic demand of the Faith. If the person who regards Allah as his Lord and accepts Allah's Messenger as his guide and leader, is true in his belief, he can never have the attitude that he should give his own opinion and view precedence over the decision of Allah and His Messenger, or should adopt an independent opinion in the matters, and pass his own judgements

without caring to find out whether Allah and His Messenger have given any guidance in those matters or not, and if they have given it, what it is. That is why it has been said "O believers, do not go 'in advance' of Allah and His Messenger." That is, "Do not go ahead of them, but follow behind: Do not precede them, but be subordinate to them." This Command is, in its application and effect, a step further to verse 36 of Al-Aḥzāb. There it was said: "It does not behove a believing man and a believing woman that when Allah and His Messenger have given their decision in a matter, they should exercise an Option in that matter of theirs", and here it is said that the believers should not decide their matters themselves by their own initiative, but should look for guidance in Allah's Book and His Prophet's Sunnah concerning those matters.

This Command is not confined only to individual matters of the Muslims but it also applies to their collective affairs. This is in fact the fundamental article of the Islamic Law, which can neither be set aside or ignored by a Muslim government, nor by a Muslim court, nor by a parliament. A tradition has been reported in Musnad Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah, with authentic chains of transmitters, saying that when the Holy Prophet was sending Hadrat Mu'ādh bin Jabal to the Yaman as a judge, he asked him: "By what will you decide the matters?" He submitted: "By the Book of Allah." The Holy Prophet said: "If you do not find the Command concerning a matter in the Book of Allah, what will you turn to?" He replied "To the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger." The Holy Prophet asked "If this also fails you?" He replied: "Then I shall exert and find out a solution by myself." Thereupon the Holy Prophet placed his hand on Ḥadrat Mu'ādh's chest and said: "Thank God Who has helped His Messenger's deputy to adopt the way that is approved by His Messenger." This giving of precedence to the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger over one's own exercise to find out a solution and to turn to them first to obtain guidance is the thing that marks the distinction between a Muslim judge and a non-Muslim judge. Likewise, in the matter of legislation also there is absolute consensus that the first and foremost source of the law is the Divine Book and after it the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah. Even the consensus of the entire *Ummah* cannot go against or remain independent of them, not to speak of the individual Muslims reasoning and endeavour to interpret the law.

2. That is, "If ever you adopted an attitude of independence as against Allah and His Messenger, or gave priority to your own opinion and view over their Command, you should know that you have to deal with that God Who is hearing whatever you utter and is even aware of your secret intentions."

3. This is the etiquette that was taught to the people who sat among the audience of the Holy Prophet or came to visit him. Its intention was that the believers should treat the Holy Prophet with the highest respect and reverence

when visiting him and talking to him. Nobody should raise his voice louder than his; the people should not be unmindful of the fact that they are addressing the Messenger of Allah, and not a common man, or a person of equal rank; therefore, there should be a marked difference between one's tone of conversation with the common people and one's tone of conversation with the Holy Prophet, and no one should talk to him in a voice louder than his.

Although this etiquette was taught for sitting in the Holy Prophet's assembly and its addressees were the people who were living in his time, the people of the later ages also should observe the same respect and reverence on the occasion when the Holy Prophet's name is mentioned, or a command of his is stated, or his sayings are explained. Besides, this verse also points out what attitude the people should adopt when talking to persons of a higher rank and status than themselves. A person's talking before the men of a higher rank in a way as he talks before his friends or the common men, is in fact a sign that he has no respect for them in his heart, and he does not recognize any difference between them and the common people.

4. This shows what high position the person of the Holy Prophet occupies in Islam. No one beside the Holy Prophet, whatever his rank and status, has a position that unmannerly behaviour towards him should deserve in the sight of Allah the same punishment which is, in fact, the punishment for disbelief. In respect of ordinary people it is at the most a sort of rudeness, an uncivilized conduct, but in respect of the Holy Prophet a little lack of reverence is such a grave sin as can destroy all the services of one's lifetime. For the reverence of the Holy Prophet is indeed reverence of that God Who has sent him as His Messenger and lack of reverence for him amounts to lack of reverence to God Himself.

5. That is, "Only those people give due reverence to the Messenger of Allah, who have passed succesfully through the tests and trials set by Allah and proved by their steadfastness that their hearts indeed possess *taqvā* (piety)." From this it follows automatically that the heart which is devoid of reverence for the Holy Prophet is, in fact, devoid of *taqvā*, and a person's raising his voice louder than the Holy Prophet's is not only an uncivilized act outwardly but also a sign of the absence of *taqvā* in his heart.

6. The people who in the blessed time of the Holy Prophet had received training in Islamic etiquette and manners under the Holy Prophet himself had a full regard for his person. They fully realized how busy he remained in performing the mission entrusted to him by Allah; they also understood full well that during those tiresome activities he must necessarily have some time for rest, time for his important occupations and also time for attending to his domestic affairs. Therefore, they would come to visit him only at the time when he was available

outside his house, and if ever they did not find him outside his living quarters among his Companions, they would sit and await his emergence and would avoid giving him the trouble of coming out of his house unless there was a special need for it. But many a time it so happened that the people from far flung areas, who had had no opportunity to receive training in good manners, would come to visit the Holy Prophet with the idea that the one who invited others to Allah and was working for the reformation of the people had no right to have rest at any time, and they had the right to visit and see him any time they pleased in the day or night and it was his duty that whenever they happened to arrive he should be ready to receive them. Some of these people who came to see the Holy Prophet from different parts of Arabia, were so uncouth and impolite that they would not take the trouble to inform him of their arrival through some attendant, but would start shouting from outside the apartments of his wives to call him out. Several such incidents have been reported by the Companions in the *Ḥadīth*. This sort of behaviour troubled him much, but he was tolerant on account of his natural clemency. At last, Allah had to intervene, Who reproved the people for their uncivilized behaviour and gave this instruction: whenever they came to see the Holy Prophet and did not find him, they should wait for him patiently until he came out to them himself, instead of shouting to call him out, from the house.

7. This is, "Whatever had happened until then will be over-looked and forgiven by Allah and He will not hold those people accountable for the trouble they had been causing to His Messenger on account of His mercy and kindness, but they should not repeat such behaviour in the future.

8. Most of the commentators have expressed the view that this verse was sent down concerning Walīd bin 'Uqbah bin Abī Mu'aiṭ. Its background is this: When the tribe of the Banī al-Muṣṭaliq embraced Islam, the Holy Prophet sent Wālid bin 'Uqbah to collect the *zakāt* from them. When he arrived in their territory, he became scared due to some reason and without visiting the people of the tribe returned to Madīnah and complained to the Holy Prophet that they had refused to pay the *zakāt* and had even wanted to kill him. On hearing this the Holy Prophet became very angry and he made up his mind to dispatch a contingent to punish those people. According to some traditions he had despatched the contingent, and according to others, he was about to despatch it. In any case all agree that in the meantime the chief of the Banī al Muṣṭaliq, Ḥārith bin Ḍirār (father of Juwairiyah, wife of the Holy Prophet), arrived at the head of a deputation, and submitted: "By God, we did not at all see Walīd; therefore, there could be no question of refusing to pay the *zakāt* and wanting to kill him. We are steadfast to the Faith and have no intention to withhold the *zakāt*." At this, this verse was sent down. With a little variation in wording this incident has been related by Imām Aḥmad, Abī Ḥātim, Ṭabarānī, and Ibn Jarir, on the authority of

Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, Ḥārith bin Ḍirār, Mujāhid, Qatādah, 'Abdur Reḥmān bin Abī Lailā, Yazīd bin Rūmān, Ḍaḥḥāk and Muqātil bin Ḥayyān. In the tradition reported by Ḥaḍrat Umm Salamah this whole story has been related likewise but there is no reference to the name of Walīd.

On this critical occasion when on account of believing in a baseless report a grave blunder was about to be committed, Allah gave the Muslims this guiding principle to be followed on receipt of news: "Whenever you receive important news bearing upon a vital matter, you should not accept it immediately but should first examine the man who has brought it. If he is an evil man whose report may not be authentic normally, you should inquire into it carefully to ascertain the truth instead of accepting it and acting on it immediately." From this Divine Command an important legal principle is deduced, the sphere of application of which is very vast. According to it, it is not permissible for a Muslim government to take any action against a person or a group or a nation on the basis of the reports provided by the secret agents whose character might be doubtful. On the basis of this very principle the traditionists introduced the art of critical appraisal in the science of *Ḥadīth* in order to determine the value and worth of the people through whom traditions of the Holy Prophet reached the later generations, and the jurists established this principle in the law of evidence that in a matter from which a *Sharī'ah* value can be deduced, or a duty imposed on a person; the evidence of an evil man would be unacceptable. However, all scholars agree that as far as the common worldly matters are concerned it is not necessary to ascertain the truth of every news and the reliability of every informer. For the word used in the verse is *naba'*, which does not apply to every news but only to the news of consequence. That is why the jurists say that this principle does not apply in the case of ordinary matters. For example, if a person goes to visit somebody and seeks permission to enter the house, and a person comes out and conveys the permission, he can enter the house accordingly no matter whether the one conveying the permission from the master of the house was good or bad. Likewise, the scholars are also agreed that the evidence, as well as the report, of the people whose evil does not relate to lying and immorality, but they are regarded as unrighteous only on account of false beliefs, will also be acceptable. Only the falsehood of their creed cannot be a hindrance to accepting their evidence or reports.

9. This is evident from the context as well as understood by several commentators from this verse that the Holy Prophet was hesitant to take any military action against the Banī al-Muṣṭaliq on the report given by Wālid bin 'Uqbah in their case, but some of the people insisted that they should be attacked at once. At this those people were warned that they should not forget that the Holy Prophet was present among them, who understood them better than they did. Therefore, their thinking that the Holy Prophet should act according to their

counsel in important matters was undue boldness. For if he started acting according to what they counselled it would generally lead to blunders for which they themselves would have to suffer.

10. It means this: The whole community of the believers has not committed the error that was committed by those few people who wanted the Holy Prophet to act as they counselled, and the believing community's remaining steadfast on the right path was due to the reason that Allah by His bounty and grace had endeared to them the path of the Faith and made unbelief, wrongdoing and disobedience abhorrent to them. The addressees in the two parts of this verse are two separate groups. The sentence beginning with *lau yuṭī'ukum* is not addressed to the entire class of the Companions but only to those particular Companions who were insisting that the Banī al-Muṣṭaliq should be attacked at once, and the sentence beginning with *wa lākin-nallāha* ... is addressed to the general class of the Companions who would never dare insist on their own opinion and view before the Holy Messenger of Allah, but had full faith in his leadership and remained steadfast on the path of obedience, which is, and should be, the demand of true Faith. From this it cannot be concluded that those who had insisted on their own opinion were devoid of the love of the Faith, but what becomes obvious from this is that they had become forgetful of this demand of the Faith because of which they made the error of insisting on their own opinion in the presence of the Holy Prophet. Therefore, Allah first warned them of their error, then of its evil consequences, and finally stated that the right attitude for a believer was the one that had been adopted by the generality of the Companions.

11. That is, "Allah does not bestow His bounty and favour blindly, but He grants this great blessing to whomever He grants on the basis of wisdom and His knowledge that he is worthy of it."

12. Instead of saying: "When two parties of the believers fight mutually", it has been said: "If two parties of the believers fall to mutual fighting." From these words it by itself follows that mutual fighting is not the character of the Muslims, nor should it be. It is not expected that being the believers they would fight mutually. However, if such a thing ever happens, the procedure that follows should be adopted. Moreover, the word *ṭā'ifah* has been used for a group instead of *firqah;* the words *ṭā'ifah* and *firqah* in Arabic are used for a large group and a small group respectively. This also shows that it is indeed a highly offensive state in the sight of Allah in which large groups of the Muslims cannot be expected to be involved.

13. The recipients of this Command are all those Muslims who may not be a party to either of the groups and for whom it may be possible to try to make peace between them. In other words, Allah does not approve that the other

Muslims should just sit and watch the clash when two groups of their own community have fallen to mutual fighting. But whenever such a sad situation arises all the believers should become concerned and should do whatever they can to bring about peace and reconciliation between the parties. They should urge the parties to desist from fighting; they should exhort them to fear God; their influential people should go and talk to the responsible men of the two sides, should find out the causes of the dispute and do whatever they can to effect reconciliation between them.

14. That is, "The Muslims also should not allow the aggressor to continue his aggression and leave the victim alone, or, still worse, join hands with the aggressor. But their duty is that if all their efforts at reconciliation between the parties fail, they should find out as to who is in the right and who is the aggressor. Then they should join hands with the one who is in the right and fight the aggressor. As this fighting has been enjoined by Allah, it is obligatory and comes under *Jihād;* it is not the *fitnah* (mischief) about which the Holy Prophet has said: "It is a situation in which the one standing is better than the one moving, and the one sitting is better than the one standing" For that *fitnah* implies the mutual fighting of the Muslims in which the parties might be fighting out of bigotry, or for a false sense of honour and worldly possessions and neither may be having the truth on its side. As for the fight that is undertaken in support of the group who is in the right against the aggressor, it is not taking part in the *fitnah* but carrying out Allah's Command. All the jurists are agreed on its being an obligation, and there was no difference of opinion among the Holy Prophet's Companions about its being obligatory. (Al-Jassās, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).* Some jurists even regard it as superior to *Jihād* itself and their reasoning is that Ḥaḍrat 'Alī spent the entire period of his caliphate in fighting against the rebels instead of performing *Jihād* against the disbelievers. *(Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī).* If a person argues that it was not obligatory because Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and some other Companions had not participated in the wars fought by Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, he would be in the wrong. Ibn 'Umar himself says: "I have never been so much grieved at heart on anything as on account of this verse as to why I did not fight the rebels as enjoined by Allah." (Ḥākim, *al-Mustadrik).*

The Command to "fight" the aggressor does not necessarily mean that he should be fought with the weapons and killed, but it implies the use of force against him, the real object being the removal of his aggression. For this object whatever force is necessary should be used, and no more and no less force should be used than what is absolutely necessary.

The addressees of this Command are the people who have the power to repel the aggression by the use of force.

15. This shows that the fighting is not meant to punish the rebel (the aggressing party) for his rebellion (aggression), but to force him to return to the Command of Allah. Allah's Command implies that the rebel group should submit to what is right according to the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah, and should give up the attitude and conduct that amounts to aggression according to this criterion of the truth. As soon as a rebel group becomes ready and willing to follow this Command, use of force against it should be stopped, for this is the actual object of the fighting and its target. The one who commits an excess after this would himself become the aggressor. As for this as to what is the truth and what is the aggression in a dispute according to the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger, its determination is inevitably the job of those people of the *Ummah*, who have the ability to carry out research by virtue of their knowledge and insight

16. The Command is not only to make peace but to make peace with justice and equity. This shows that in the sight of Allah the peace (and reconciliation) which is brought about only to stop fighting, overlooking the distinction between the truth and falsehood, and in which pressure is used against the party that is in the right to come to terms with the aggressor, is not commendable. True peace is that which is based on justice. This alone can avert disaster and mischief; otherwise the inevitable result of pressing those in the right and encouraging the aggressors would be that the real causes of the evil would remain as they were, rather would go on adding up, and cause the mischief to appear and re-appear over and over again.

17. This verse forms the actual basis of the Islamic law about the mutual fighting between the Muslims. No explanation of this law is found in the *Sof* the Holy Prophet except one *Ḥadīth* which we shall take up below. For in the time of the Holy Prophet no war took place between the Muslims; hence nothing is found in his practice and sayings that could throw light on the commandments concerning it. Afterwards when during the caliphate of Ḥaḍrat 'Alī wars took place between the Muslims themselves authentic explanation of this law became possible. At that time since a large number of the Companions were still living, a detailed code of this aspect of the Islamic law was compiled in the light of their practice and statements. Ḥaḍrat 'Alī's personal example in particular has been the real source in this matter for all the jurists. Below we give a brief resume of this code:

(1) There are several forms of mutual fighting between Muslims and each has its own separate injunctions:

(a) When both the fighting groups may be the subjects of a Muslim government: In this case it is the duty of the government to make peace

between them, or to decide as to who is the aggressor between them, and to compel him by use of force to revert to the truth.

(b) When the parties may be two powerful groups, or two Muslim governments, and both may be fighting for the sake of the world: In this case, the believers should absolutely refrain from taking part in the *fitnah* and should exhort the parties concerned to fear God and desist from fighting.

(c) When one of the belligerent parties as mentioned under (b) above may be in the right and the other the aggressor, who may not be listening to counsel nor be inclined to make peace: In this case believers should side with and support the party that is in the right against the aggressor.

(d) When one of the parties may be the subjects, who may have revolted against the government, i.e. the Muslim government: The jurists use the term *"bāghī"* (rebel) for this very party which is guilty of rebelling.

(2) The rebels against the government may also be of several kinds:

(a) Those who may have risen only to create chaos and confusion, and may have no legal ground for their revolt. There is consensus that against such people it is lawful for the government to wage war, and it is obligatory for the believers to side with it, no matter whether it is a just government or not.

(b) Those who may revolt against a government in order to depose it from power, and may have no legal ground for this, and may also appear to be unjust and evil. In this case, if the government is just, it is obligatory to side with it without any question, but even if it is unjust, it is obligatory to fight in order to sustain it, for there is peace and order in the country because of it.

(c) Those who may revolt against a government on the basis of a legal ground, but their ground may be false and their belief vicious and perverse, e.g. the Khwārij. In this case also a Muslim government, whether it is just or unjust, has a lawful right to fight them and it is obligatory to side with it.

(d) Those who may revolt against a just government when its head might have assumed power lawfully. In this case whether they have a legal ground or do not have any, the government in any case is justified to wage war against them and it is obligatory to side with it.

(e) Those who may revolt against an unjust government, which might have come to power by coercion and whose leaders might be wicked and the rebels might have risen to establish justice and enforce articles of the

Divine Law, and they might appear to be righteous. In this case, acute difference of opinion has appeared among the jurists as to whether they should be declared the "rebels"(i.e. transgressors) and whether it is obligatory to fight them or not. This we state below briefly:

The generality of the jurists and the Ahl al-Ḥadīth hold the view that it is unlawful to rise in revolt against a ruler whose government has once been established and there is complete peace and order in the land under him, no matter whether he is just or unjust, and he has come to power in any way whatever, except in case he commits disbelief openly. Imām Sarakhsi writes: "In a case when the Muslims are agreed on a ruler and they enjoy peace under him and the roads are safe, if a group of the Muslims rises in revolt against him, everyone who has power is under obligation to side with the ruler of the Muslims and wage war against the rebels." *(Al-Mabsūṭ, Bāb al-Khwārij).* Imām Nawawī writes in his commentary of Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: "It is forbidden to rise in revolt and fight against the Imāms (i.e. the Muslim rulers) even if they are wicked and unjust." Imām Nawawī claims that there is consensus on this.

But this claim of the consensus is not correct. A large group of the jurists of Islam which includes some major scholars, declares those rising in revolt as "rebels" only in case they rise in revolt against a just ruler. They do not regard as "rebellion" in the Qur'ānic terminology the rising in revolt of the righteous against the unjust and wicked rulers, nor declare the waging of war against them as obligatory. The view of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah about fighting against unjust rulers is well known among the scholars. Abū Bakr al Jaṣṣāṣ clearly writes in his *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* that the Imām regarded this fighting not only as permissible but as obligatory in favourable conditions. (Vol. I, p. 81; Vol. II, p. 39). In Zaid bin 'Alī's revolt against the Umayyads he not only provided financial help but urged others also to do the same. (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, Vol I, p. 81). In Nafs al-Zakiyah's revolt against Manṣūr he went on earnestly supporting Nafs al-Zakiyah, and he declared this war as superior to a war against the disbelievers. (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, Vol. I, p. 81; Al-Kardarī, *Manāqib Abī Ḥanīfah,* Vol. II, pp. 71-72). Then the view as stated by Imām Sarakhsī is not unanimous even among the Ḥanafī jurists. Ibn Humām writes in *Fatḥ al-Qadīr* (commentary of *Hedāyā):* "In the parlance of the jurists the rebel is he who gives up obedience of the just ruler." Ibn 'Aqīl and Ibn al-Jawzī from among the Ḥanbalīs regard rising in revolt against an unjust ruler as lawful and present Hadrat Husain's revolt as an argument. *(Al-Inṣāf,* Vol. X, *Bāb Qitāl Ahl al-Baghyi).* Imām Shāfe'ī in his *Kitāb al-Um* regards as rebel the one who fights against a just ruler (Vol. IV, p. 135). Imām Mālik's view as cited in *Al-Mudawwanah* is: "If the rebels come out to fight against a just ruler, they should be forcibly opposed." (Vol. I, p. 407). Qāḍī Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī has cited his this view in *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān:* "When a person rises in revolt against a

just ruler like 'Umar bin Abdul 'Aziz, it is obligatory to resist and repel him; as for some other kind of the ruler, he should be left alone. Allah will punish him through some other unjust person and then both of them through some third unjust person." Another saying of Imām Mālik that has been cited is: "When the pledge has been sworn to a ruler, and then his brothers rise in revolt against him, they will be fought against, if he is a just ruler. As for the rulers of our time, there is no pledge for them, for pledge to them has been taken by coercion." Then the view of the Mālikī scholars that the Qāḍī has cited with reference to Saḥnūn is: "Fighting will be undertaken only under the just ruler, whether the just ruler is the former one or the one who has risen in revolt against him later, but if neither is just, one should keep away from both. However, if one's own self is attacked, or the Muslims are being subjected to tyranny, one should put up resistance." After citing these different views, Qāḍī Abū Bakr says: "We will not fight except on the side of the just ruler, whom the truth-loving people have made their head of their own free will."

(3) If the ones rising in revolt are small in number, and may have no large party on their back, nor be possessing any substantial war equipment, the law of rebellion will not be applied against them, but they will be proceeded against under the common penal law, i.e. if they kill, they will be subjected to the law of retaliation, and if they damage property, they will be required to pay the penalties. The law of sedition is applied only against those rebels who might be powerful, and rise in revolt in large numbers and with substantial military equipment.

(4) As long as the ones rising in revolt only express their false and perverse beliefs or hostile and seditious ideas against the government or its head, they cannot be killed or imprisoned. War will be waged against them only when they actually rise in armed revolt and start shedding blood. *(Al-Mabsūt, Bāb al-Khwārij; Fatḥ al-Qadīr, Bāb al-Bighāt;* al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Ahkām al-Qur'ān).*

(5) Before starting war against the rebels they will first be invited, according to the Qur'ānic instructions, to give up the way of rebellion and adopt the way of justice; if they have some doubts and objections, effort will be made to remove them; even then if they do not listen, and fighting begins from their side, force will be used to deal with them. *(Fath al-Qadīr;* al Jassās, *Ahkām al-Qur'ān).*

(6) The code of regulations that has to be observed in the war against the rebels is based on the Holy Prophet's following Command that has been related by Ḥākim, Bazzār and al-Jaṣṣāṣ on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar:

"The Holy Prophet asked Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd: O Ibn Umm 'Abd: Do you know what is Allah's Command concerning the rebels of this

Ummah? He replied: Allah and His Messenger have the best knowledge. The Holy Prophet said: Their wounded ones will not be laid hands on and their captives will not be killed, and the one who flees, will not be pursued, and their properties will not be distributed as spoils."

The second source of this code which has been held as trust-worthy by all the jurists is the word and deed of Ḥaḍrat 'Alī. After attaining victory in the Battle of the Camel, he announced; "Do not pursue him who flees; do not attack the wounded; do not kill the captives; give shelter to him who surrenders; do not make forcible entry into the people's houses; and do not raise your hands at the women even if they are abusing and cursing you." Some of his soldiers made the demand that the opponents and their family members be taken prisoners and distributed. At this he became furious and said: "Who among you will take 'Ā'ishah, mother of the Faithful, as his share?"

(7) The injunction concerning the properties of the rebels as derived from the good example of Ḥaḍrat 'Alī is that no part of it, whether it is found on the battlefield or behind them in their houses, and whether they are living or have been killed, will be declared as the spoils nor distributed among the army. However, no compensation will be necessary for the properties that have been damaged or destroyed. As soon as the war comes to an end and rebellion has been put down, their properties and belongings will be returned to them. Their weapons and conveyances, if seized during the war, will be used against them, but will not be made the possession of the victors and distributed as the spoils; and if there is no more fear of a rebellion from them, their these things also will be returned to them. Only Imām Abu Yūsuf has expressed the opinion that the government will declare them to be the spoils. (*Al-Mabsūṭ; Fatḥ al-Qadīr;* al-Jaṣṣāṣ).

(8) Their prisoners of war, after they have pledged not to rise in rebellion again, will be set free. *(Al-Mabsūt).*

(9) To cut off the heads of the slain rebels and to take them about the streets is a highly undesirable thing, for this is mutilation which the Holy Prophet has strictly forbidden. When the head of a Roman patriarch was brought before Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr, he expressed great displeasure at it, and said: "We are not here to imitate the Romans and Iranians." When it is not allowed to meet out such a treatment to the unbelievers, how much more so should it be with regard to the Muslims. *(Al-Mabsūṭ).*

(10) Whatever damage might have been caused to life and property by the rebels during the war, no retaliation and recompense for it will be imposed on them after the war has come to an end and peace has been restored. Neither will there be any retaliation for a slain person nor any recompense for the lost property, so as to avoid any chance of the recurrence of the sedition. This

same law was observed in the mutual fighting between the Companions. *(Al-Mabsūṭ;* al-Jaṣṣāṣ; Ibn al-'Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).*

(11) After the government has recaptured the territories which had gone under the rebels and where they had established their rule and order and collected the *zakāt* and other taxes, it will not demand the *zakāt* and the taxes from the people once again. If the rebels have spent the money thus collected lawfully, the payers will be deemed to have paid them off lawfully in the sight of Allah as well, but if the rebels have spent the money unlawfully, it will be a matter between the payers and their God; if they so like they may pay their zakāt dues once again. *(Fat-ḥ al-Qadīr;* al-Jaṣṣāṣ; Ibn al-'Arabī).

(12) The decisions of the judges, who may be just and may have given the decisions according to the *Sharī'ah* in the courts established by the rebels in the territories under them, will be up-held although the ones who appointed them might be guilty of sedition. However, if their decisions are against the *Sharī'ah*, and they are brought before the courts of the government after the rebellion has been put down, they will not be enforced. Moreover, no warrant or summons issued by the courts established by the rebels will be acceptable in the courts of the government. (*Al-Mabsūṭ;* al-Jaṣṣāṣ).

(13) The evidence of the rebels will not be acceptable in the Islamic courts, for it is iniquitous to fight against the just. Imām Muḥammad says: "As long as they do not fight and actually rise in revolt against the people of justice, their evidence will be acceptable, but when they have already fought, I will not accept their evidence." (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ).

From these rulings it becomes plain as to what is the difference between the law of fighting against the disbelievers and of fighting against the Muslim rebels.

18. This verse establishes a universal brotherhood of all the Muslims of the world, and it is by virtue of this that the sort of fraternity that exists among the Muslims exists among the followers of no other religion and creed. The importance of this Command and its demands have been explained by the Holy Prophet in many of his Traditions from which one can understand its full significance and spirit.

Ḥaḍrat Jarīr bin 'Abdullah says: "The Holy Prophet took a pledge from me on three things: That I will establish the Prayer; that I will continue to pay the *zakāt;* and that I will remain a well-wisher of every Muslim." (Bukhārī: *Kitāb-al-Imān).* According to Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, the Holy Prophet said: "To abuse a Muslim is sinful and to fight him disbelief." In Musnad Aḥmad a tradition bearing on the same subject has also been related by Ḥaḍrat Sa'īd bin Mālik on the authority of his father.

Ḥaḍrat-Abū Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet said: "The life, property and honour of every Muslim is forbidden to every other Muslim." (Muslim: *Kitāb-al-Birr waṣ Ṣilah;* Tirmidhī: *Abwāb-al-Birr was-Ṣilah).*

Ḥaḍrat Abū Sa'id Khudrī and Hadrat Abū Hurairah say that the Holy Prophet said: "A Muslim is a brother to the other Muslim: he does not treat him unjustly; he does not leave him alone; and he does not dishonour him. There is no greater evil than that one should hold a Muslim in contempt." (Musnad Ahmad).

Ḥaḍrat Sahl Bin Sa'd as-Sā'idī has related this saying of the Holy Prophet: "A believer's relation with the community of the believers is just like the head's relation with the body. He feels their afflictions as the head feels the pain of every part of the body." (Musnad Aḥmad). In another Ḥadīth bearing on the same subject the Holy Prophet said: "The believers' example in the matter of their mutual love, relationship and compassion with one another is of the state of the body that when a part of it is afflicted the whole of it is afflicted with fever and restlessness." (Bukhārī, Muslim).

In another *Ḥadīth* he is reported to have said: The believers are with one another like the bricks of a wall so that each is strengthened by the other." (Bukhāri: *Kitāb al-Adab;* Tirmidhī;: *Abwāb al-Birr waṣ-Ṣilah).*

19. In the preceding two verses after giving necessary instructions about the Muslim people's mutual fighting, the believers were made to realize that by virtue of the most sacred relationship of the faith they were brothers one to another, and they should fear God and try to keep their mutual relations right. Now, in the following two verses, they are being enjoined to avoid and shun those major evils which generally spoil the mutual relationships of the people in a society. Slandering and taunting the people and harbouring suspicions and spying on others are, in fact, the evils that cause mutual enmities and then lead to grave mischief. In this connection, from the commandments that are being given in the following verses and the explanations of these found in the *Ḥadīth* a detailed law of libel can be compiled. The western law pertaining to libel in this regard is so defective that a person who sues another under this law may well cause some loss to his own honour. The Islamic law, on the contrary, recognizes a basic honour for every person and gives nobody the right to attack it, no matter whether the attack is based on reality or not, and whether the person who has been attacked has a "reputation" of his own or not. Only the fact that a person has debased and humiliated the other person is enough to declare him a criminal unless, of course, it is proved that the humiliation caused had a legal ground for it.

20. Mocking does not only imply mocking with the tongue but it also includes mimicking somebody, making pointed references to him, laughing at his words, or his works, or his appearance, or his dress, or calling the people's

attention to some defect or blemish in him so that others also may laugh at him. All this is included in mocking. What is actually forbidden is that one should make fun of and ridicule another, for under such ridiculing there always lie feelings of one's own superiority and the other's abasement and contempt, which are morally unworthy of a gentleman. Moreover, it hurts the other person, which causes mischief to spread in society. That is why it has been forbidden.

To make mention of the men and the women separately does not mean that it is lawful for the men to mock the women or the women to mock the men. The actual reason for making a separate mention of the two sexes is that Islam does not at all believe in mixed society. Ridiculing each other generally takes place in mixed gatherings and Islam does not permit that non-*maḥram* males and females should meet in such gatherings and make fun of each other. Therefore, in a Muslim society it is inconceivable that the men would mock a woman, or the women would mock a man in an assembly.

21. The word *lamz* as used in the original is very comprehensive and applies to ridiculing, reviling, deriding, jeering, charging somebody or finding fault with him, and making him the target of reproach and blame by open or tacit references. As all such things also spoil mutual relationships and create bad blood in society, they have been forbidden. Instead of saying, "Do not taunt one another", it has been said "Do not taunt yourselves", which by itself shows that the one who uses taunting words for others, in fact, taunts his own self. Obviously, a person does not use invectives against others unless he himself is filled with evil feelings and is almost in a state of bursting like a volcano. Thus, the one who nourishes such feelings has made his own self a nest of evils before he makes others a target. Then, when he taunts others, it means that he is inviting others to taunt him. It is a different matter that the other person may evade his attacks because of a gentle nature, but he himself has opened the door to mischief so that the other may treat him likewise.

22. This Command requires that a person should not be called by a name or a title which may cause him humiliation, e.g. calling somebody a sinner or a hypocrite, or calling someone a lame or blind one, or one-eyed, or giving him a nickname containing a reference to some defect or blemish in him, or in his parents, or in his family, or calling a person a Jew or a Christian even after his conversion to Islam, or giving such a nickname to a person, or a family, or a community, or a group, which may bring condemnation or disgrace on it. Only those nicknames have been made an exception from this Command, which though apparently offensive, are not intended to condemn the persons concerned, but they rather serve as a mark of recognition for them. That is why the traditionists have allowed as permissible names like Sulemān al-A'mash (the weak-eyed Sulemān) and Wāsil al-Aḥdab (the hunch-backed Wāsil) among the reporters of the *Ḥadīth*.

If there are several men of the same name and a particular man among them may be recognized only by a particular title or nickname of his, the title or nickname can be used, even though the title by itself may be offensive. For instance, if there are several men called 'Abdullah, and one of them is blind, he may be called Abdullah the blind, for his recognition. Likewise, those titles also are excluded from this Command, which though apparently offensive, are in fact, given out of love and the people who are called by those titles themselves approve them, like Abū Hurairah (father of the kitten) and Abū Turāb (father of the dust).

23. That is, "It is very shameful for a believer that in spite of being a believer he should earn a name for using abusive language and for immodest behaviour. If a disbeliever earns reputation for himself for mocking the people, or taunting them, or for proposing evil and offensive titles for others, it may not be a good reputation from the point of view of humanity, but it at least goes well with his disbelief. But if a person after affirming the Faith in Allah and His Messenger and the Hereafter earns reputation on account of these base qualities, it is simply regrettable.

24. What is forbidden is not conjecture as such but excessive conjecture and following every kind of conjecture, and the reason given is that some conjectures are sins. In order to understand this Command we should analyse and see what are the kinds of conjecture and what is the moral position of each.

One kind of conjecture is that which is morally approved and laudable, and desirable and praiseworthy from religious point of view, e.g. a good conjecture in respect of Allah and His Messenger and the believers and those people with whom one comes in common contact daily and concerning whom there may be no rational ground for having an evil conjecture.

The second kind of conjecture is that which one cannot do without in practical life, e.g. in a law court a judge has to consider the evidence placed before him and give his decision on the basis of the most probable conjecture, for he cannot have direct knowledge of the facts of the matter, and the opinion that is based on evidence is mostly based on the most probable conjecture and not on certainty. Likewise, in most cases when one or the other decision has to be taken, and the knowledge of the reality cannot possibly be attained, there is no way out for men but to form an opinion on the basis of a conjecture.

The third kind of conjecture, which is although a suspicion, is permissible in nature, and it cannot be regarded as a sin. For instance, if there are clear signs and pointers in the character of a person (or persons), or in his dealings and conduct, on the basis of which he may not deserve to enjoy one's good conjecture, and there are rational grounds for having suspicions against him, the *Sharī'ah* does not demand that one should behave like a simpleton and continue to have a good

conjecture about him. The last limit of this lawful conjecture, however, is that one should conduct oneself cautiously in order to ward off any possible mischief from him; it is not right to take an action against him only on the basis of a conjecture.

The fourth kind of conjecture which is, in fact, a sin is that one should entertain a suspicion in respect of a person without any ground, or should start with suspicion in forming an opinion about others, or should entertain a suspicion about the people whose apparent conditions show that they are good and noble. Likewise, this also is a sin that when there is an equal chance of the evil and goodness in the word or deed of a person, one should regard it as only evil out of suspicion. For instance, if a gentleman while leaving a place of assembly picks up another one's shoes, instead of his own, and we form the opinion that he has done so with the intention of stealing the shoes, whereas this could be possible because of oversight as well, there is no reason for adopting the evil opinion instead of the good opinion except the suspicion.

This analysis makes it plain that conjecture by itself is not anything forbidden; rather in some cases and situations it is commendable, in some situations inevitable, in some permissible up to a certain extent and un-permissible beyond it, and in some cases absolutely unlawful. That is why it has not been enjoined that one should refrain from conjecture or suspicion altogether but what is enjoined is that one should refrain from much suspicion. Then, to make the intention of the Command explicit, it has been said that some conjectures are sinful. From this warning it follows automatically that whenever a person is forming an opinion on the basis of conjecture, or is about to take an action, he should examine the case and see whether the conjecture he is entertaining is not a sin, whether the conjecture is really necessary, whether there are sound reasons for the conjeceture, and whether the conduct one is adopting on the basis of the conjecture is permissible. Everyone who fears God will certainly take these precautions. To make one's conjecture free and independent of every such care and consideration is the pastime of only those people who are fearless of God and thoughtless of the accountability of the Hereafter.

25. "Do not spy": Do not grope after the secrets of the people: do not search for their defects and weaknesses: do not pry into their conditions and affairs. Whether this is done because of suspicion, or for causing harm to somebody with an evil intention, or for satisfying one's own curiosity, it is forbidden by the *Shari'ah* in every case. It does not behove a believer that he should spy on the hidden affairs of other people, and should try to peep at them from behind curtains to find out their defects and their weaknesses. This also includes reading other people's private letters, listening secretly to private conversation, peeping into the neighbour's house, and trying to get information in different ways about the domestic life or private affairs of others. This is grave

immorality which causes serious mischief in society. That is why the Holy Prophet once said in an address about those who pry into other people's affairs:

"O people, who have professed belief verbally, but faith has not yet entered your hearts: Do not pry into the affairs of the Muslims, for he who will pry into the affairs of the Muslims, Allah will pry into his affairs, and he whom Allah follows inquisitively, is disgraced by Him in his own house." (Abū Da'ūd).

Ḥaḍrat Mu'âwiyah says that he himself heard the Holy Prophet say; "If you start prying into the secret affairs of the people, you will corrupt them, or at least drive them very near corruption." (Abū Da'ūd).

In another *Ḥadīth* he said: "When you happen to form an evil opinion about somebody, do not pry about it." (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).*

According to still another *Ḥadīth,* the Holy Prophet said: "The one who saw a secret affair of somebody and then concealed it is as though he saved a girl who had been buried alive." (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ).

This prohibition of spying is not only applicable to the individuals but also to the Islamic government. The duty of forbidding the people to do evil that the *Sharī'ah* has entrusted to the government does not require that it should establish a system of spying to enquire too curiously into the people's secret evils and then punish them, but it should use force only against those evils which are manifested openly. As for the hidden evils spying is not the way to reform them but it is education, preaching and counselling, collective training of the people and trying to create a pure social environment. In this connection, an incident concerning Ḥaḍrat 'Umar is very instructive. Once at night he heard the voice of a person who was singing in his house. He became curious and climbed the wall. There he saw wine as well as a woman present. He shouted at the man, saying: "O enemy of God, do you think you will disobey Allah, and Allah will not expose your secret?" The man replied: "Do not make haste, O Commander of the Faithful: if I have committed one sin, you have committed three sins. Allah has forbidden spying, and you have spied; Allah has commanded that one should enter the houses by the doors, and you have entered it by climbing over the wall; Allah has commanded that one should avoid entering the other people's houses without permission, and you have entered my house without my permission." Hearing this reply Hadrat 'Umar confessed his error, and did not take any action against the man, but made him to promise that he would follow the right way in future. (Abū Bakr Muḥammad bin Ja'far al-Kharā'iṭī, *Makārim al-Akhlāq).* This shows that it is not only forbidden for the individuals but also for the Islamic government itself to pry into the secrets of the people and discover their sins and errors and then seize them for punishment. The same thing has been said in a *Ḥadīth* in which the Holy Prophet has said:

"When the ruler starts searching for the causes of suspicions among the people he corrupts them" (Abū Da'ūd).

The only exception from this Command are the special cases and situations in which spying is actually needed. For instance, if in the conduct of a person (or persons) some signs of corruption are visible and there is the apprehension that he is about to commit a crime, the government can enquire into his affairs; or, for instance, if somebody sends a proposal of marriage in the house of a person, or wants to enter into business with him, the other person can enquire and investigate into his affairs for his own satisfaction.

26. *Ghībat* (back-biting) has been defined thus: "It is saying on the back of a person something which would hurt him if he came to know of it." This definition has been reported from the Holy Prophet himself. According to a tradition which Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī and others have related on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah, the Holy Prophet defined *ghībat* as follows:

"It is talking of your brother in a way irksome to him." It was asked: "What, if the defect being talked of is present in my brother ?" The Holy Prophet replied: "If it is present in him, it would be *ghībat;* if it is not there, it would be slandering him."

In another tradition which Imām Mālik has related in Mu'wattā, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Muṭṭalib bin 'Abdullah, "A person asked the Holy Prophet: What is *ghībat?* The Holy Prophet replied: It is talking of your brother in a way irksome to him. He asked: Even if it is true, O Messenger of Allah? He replied: If what you said was false, it would then be a calumny."

These traditions make it plain that uttering a false accusation against a person in his absence is calumny and describing a real defect in him *ghībat;* whether this is done in express words or by reference and allusion, in every case it is forbidden. Likewise, whether this is done in the lifetime of a person, or after his death, it is forbidden in both cases. According to Abū Da'ūd, when Mā'iz bin Mālik Aslamī had been stoned to death for committing adultery, the Holy Prophet on his way back heard a man saying to his companion: "Look at this man: Allah had concealed his secret, but he did not leave himself alone till he was killed like a dog!" A little further on the way there was the dead body of an ass lying rotting. The Holy Prophet stopped, called the two men and said: "Come down and eat this dead ass." They submitted: "Who will eat it, O Messenger of Allah?" The Holy Prophet said: "A little before this you were attacking the honour of your brother: that was much worse than eating this dead ass."

The only exceptions to this prohibition are the cases in which there may be a genuine need of speaking in of a person on his back, or after his death, and

this may not be fulfilled without resort to backbiting, and if it was not resorted to, a greater evil might result than backbiting itself. The Holy Prophet has described this exception as a principle, thus: "The worst excess is to attack the honour of a Muslim unjustly." (Abū Da'ūd).

In this saying the condition of "unjustly" points out that doing so "with justice" is permissible. Then, in the practice of the Holy Prophet himself we find some precedents which show what is implied by "justice" and in what conditions and cases backbiting may be lawful to the extent as necessary.

Once a desert Arab came and offered his Prayer under the leadership of the Holy Prophet, and as soon as the Prayer was concluded, walked away saying: "O God, have mercy on me and on Muḥammad, and make no one else a partner in this mercy beside the two of us." The Holy Prophet said to the Companions: "What do you say: who is more ignorant: this person or his camel? Didn't you hear what he said?" (Abū Da'ūd). The Holy Prophet had to say this in his absence, for he had left soon after the Prayer was over. Since he had uttered a wrong thing in the presence of the Holy Prophet, his remaining quiet at it could cause the misunderstanding that saying such a thing might in some degree be lawful; therefore, it was necessary that he should contradict it.

Two of the Companions, Ḥaḍrat Mu'āwiyah and Ḥaḍrat Abū Jahm, sent the proposal of marriage to a lady, Fāṭimah bint Qais. She came to the Holy Prophet and asked for his advice. He said: "Mu'āwiyah is a poor man and Abū Jahm beats his wives much." (Bukhārī, Muslim). In this case, as there was the question of the lady's future and she had consulted the Holy Prophet for his advice, he deemed it necessary to inform her of the two men's weaknesses.

One day when the Holy Prophet was present in the apartment of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, a man came and sought permission to see him. The Holy Prophet remarked that he was a very bad man of his tribe. Then he went out and talked to him politely. When he came back into the house, Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah asked: "You have talked to him politely, whereas when you went out you said something different about him." The Holy Prophet said, "On the day of Resurrection the worst abode in the sight of Allah will be of the person whom the people start avoiding because of his abusive language." (Bukhārī, Muslim). A study of this incident will show that the Holy Prophet in spite of having a bad opinion about the person talked to him politely because that was the demand of his morals; but he had the apprehension lest the people of his house should consider the person to be his friend when they would see him treating him kindly, and then the person might use this impression to his own advantage later. Therefore, the Holy Prophet warned Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah telling her that he was a bad man of his tribe.

Once Hind bint 'Utbah, wife of Ḥaḍrat Abū Sufyān, came to the Holy Prophet and said: "Abū Sufyān is a miserly person: he does not provide enough for me and my children's needs." (Bukhārī, Muslim). Although this complaint from the wife in the absence of the husband was backbiting, the Holy Prophet permitted it, for the oppressed one has a right that he or she may take the complaint of injustice to a person who has the power to get it removed.

From these precedents of the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet, the jurists and traditionists have deduced this principle: "*Ghibat* (backbiting) is permissible only in case it is needed for a real and genuine (genuine from the *Sharī'ah* point of view) necessity and the necessity may not be satisfied without having resort to it". Then on the basis of the same principle the scholars have declared that *ghibat* is permissible in the following cases:

(1) Complaining by an oppressed person against the oppressor before every such person who he thinks can do something to save him from the injustice.

(2) To make mention of the evils of a person (or persons) with the intention of reform before those who can do expected to help remove the evils.

(3) To state the facts of a case before a legal expert for the purpose of seeking a religious or legal ruling regarding an unlawful act committed by a person.

(4) To warn the people of the mischiefs of a person (or persons) so that they may ward off the evil, e g. it is not only permissible but obligatory to mention the weaknesses of the reporters, witnesses and writers, for without it, it is not possible to safeguard the *Sharī'ah* against the propagation of false reports, the courts against injustices and the common people or the students against errors and misunderstandings. Or, for instance, if a person wants to have the relationship of marriage with somebody, or wishes to rent a house in the neighborhood of somebody, or wants to give something into the custody of somebody, and consults another person, it is obligatory for him to apprise him of all aspects so that he is not deceived because of ignorance.

(5) To raise voice against and criticise the evils of the people who may be spreading sin and immorality and error, or corrupting the people's faith and persecuting them.

(6) To use nicknames for the people who may have become well known by those names, but this should be done for the purpose of their recognition and not with a view to condemn them. (For details, see *Fat-h al-Bārī*, vol. X, p. 362; *Sharh Muslim* by An-Nawawī; *Riyāḍ us-Ṣāliḥīn*; al-Jaṣṣās, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*; *Rūh al-Ma'ānī* commentary on verse *wa lā yaghtab ba'ḍukum ba'ḍan*).

Apart from these exceptions it is absolutely forbidden to speak ill of a person behind his back. If what is spoken is true, it is *ghibat*; if it is false, it is

calumny; and if it is meant to make two persons quarrel, it is slander. The *Shari'ah* has declared all these as forbidden. In the Islamic society it is incumbent on every Muslim to refute a false charge made against a person in his presence and not to listen to it quietly, and to tell those who are speaking ill of somebody, without a genuine religious need, to fear God and desist from the sin. The Holy Prophet has said: If a person does not support and help a Muslim when he is being disgraced and his honour being attacked, Allah also does not support and help him when he stands in need of His help; and if a person helps and supports a Muslim when his honour is being attacked and he is being disgraced, Allah Almighty also helps him when he wants that Allah should help him. (Abū Da'ūd).

As for the backbiter, as soon as he realizes that he is committing this sin, or has committed it, his first duty is to offer repentance before Allah and restrain himself from this forbidden act. His second duty is that he should compensate for it as far as possible. If he has backbitten a dead person, he should ask Allah's forgiveness for the person as often as he can. If he has backbitten a living person, and what he said was also false, he should refute it before the people before whom he had made the calumny. And if what he said was true, he should never speak ill of him in future, and should ask pardon of the person whom he had backbitten. A section of the scholars has expressed the opinion that pardon should be asked only in case the other person has come to know of it; otherwise one should only offer repentance, for if the person concerned is unaware and the backbiter in order to ask pardon goes and tells him that he had backbitten him, he would certainly feel hurt.

27. In this sentence Allah by likening backbiting to eating the dead brother's flesh has given the idea of its being an abomination. Eating the dead flesh is by itself abhorrent; and when the flesh is not of an animal, but of a man, and that too of one's own dead brother, abomination would be added to abomination. Then, by presenting the simile in the interrogative tone it has been made all the more impressive, so that every person may ask his own conscience and decide whether he would like to eat the flesh of his dead brother. If he would not, and he abhors it by nature, how he would like that he should attack the honour of his brother-in-faith in his absence, when he cannot defend himself and when he is wholly unaware that he is being disgraced. This shows that the basic reason of forbidding backbiting is not that the person being backbitten is being hurt but speaking ill of a person in his absence is by itself unlawful and forbidden whether he is aware of it, or not, and whether he feels hurt by it or not. Obviously, eating the flesh of a dead man is not forbidden because it hurts the dead man; the dead person is wholly unaware that somebody is eating of his body, but because this act by itself is an abomination. Likewise, if the person who is backbitten also does not come to know of it through any means, he will remain

unaware throughout his life that somebody had attacked his honour at a particular time before some particular people and on that account he had stood disgraced in the eyes of those people. Because of this unawareness he will not feel at all hurt by this backbiting, but his honour would in any case be sullied. Therefore, this act in its nature is not any different from eating the flesh of a dead brother.

28. In the preceding verses the Muslims were addressed and given necessary instructions to safeguard the Muslim community against social evils. In this verse the whole of mankind has been addressed to reform it of the great evil that has always been causing universal disruption in the world, that is, the prejudices due to race, colour, language, country, and nationality. On account of these prejudices man in every age has generally been discarding humanity and drawing around himself some small circles and regarding those born within those circles as his own people and those outside them as others. These circles have been drawn on the basis of accidental birth and not on rational and moral grounds. In some cases their basis is the accident of being born in a paricular family, tribe, or race, and in some particular geographical region, or in a nation having a particular colour or speaking a particular language. Then the discrimination between one's own people and others is not only confined to this that those who are looked upon as one's own people are shown greater love and cooperation than others, but this discrimination has assumed the worst forms of hatred, enmity, contempt and tyranny. New philosophies have been propounded for it, new religions invented, new codes of law made and new moral principles framed; so much so that nations and empires have made this distinction a permanent way of life with them and practised it for centuries. The Jews on this very basis regarded the children of Israel as the chosen people of God and even in the practice of their religious rites looked upon the non-Jews as inferior to the Jews in rights and rank. This very discrimination gave birth to class distinctions (varnashrama) among the Hindus according to which superiority of the Brahmins was established, all other human beings came to be regarded as inferior and unclean and the shūdras cast into the depths of disgrace and degradation. Every person can see for himself even in this 20th century what atrocities have been committed against the coloured people in Africa and America on account of the distinction between the white and the black. The treatment that the Europeans meted out to the Red Indian race in America and to the weak nations of Asia and Africa had the same concept underlying it. They thought that the life and property and honour of all those who had been born outside the frontiers of their own land and nation were lawful for them and they had the right to plunder and take them as their slaves and exterminate them if need be. The worst examples of how the nationalism of the western nations has turned one nation against the others and made it their blood-thirsty enemy have been seen in the wars of the recent past and are being seen even in the present time. In particular, if what was manifested by the racism of the

اللّٰهَ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنَّا خَلَقْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ وَّاُنْثٰى وَ
جَعَلْنٰكُمْ شُعُوْبًا وَّ قَبَاۗىِٕلَ لِتَعَارَفُوْا ۭ اِنَّ اَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ اَتْقٰىكُمْ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ
عَلِيْمٌ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿١٣﴾ قَالَتِ الْاَعْرَابُ اٰمَنَّا ۭ قُلْ لَّمْ تُؤْمِنُوْا وَلٰكِنْ قُوْلُوْٓا اَسْلَمْنَا
وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْاِيْمَانُ فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ ۭ وَاِنْ تُطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ لَا يَلِتْكُمْ
مِّنْ اَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْـــًٔا ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٤﴾ اِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا
بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوْا وَجٰهَدُوْا بِاَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاَنْفُسِهِمْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ
اللّٰهِ ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ الصّٰدِقُوْنَ ﴿١٥﴾ قُلْ اَتُعَلِّمُوْنَ اللّٰهَ بِدِيْنِكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا
فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿١٦﴾ يَمُنُّوْنَ عَلَيْكَ اَنْ
اَسْلَمُوْا ۭ قُلْ لَّا تَمُنُّوْا عَلَيَّ اِسْلَامَكُمْ ۚ بَلِ اللّٰهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْ هَدٰىكُمْ
لِلْاِيْمَانِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿١٧﴾ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ وَ
اللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٨﴾

13 O mankind, We created you from one man and one woman, and then divided you into nations and tribes so that you may recognize one another. Indeed, the most honourable among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most pious of you.[28] Surely, Allah is All-knowing, All-Wise.[29]

14-15 The desert Arabs say, "We have believed".[30] Say to them, "You have not believed: rather say, 'We have submitted'.[31] Faith has not yet entered your hearts. If you adopt obedience to Allah and His Messenger, He will not diminish anything from the reward of your works." Surely, Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful. In fact, the true believers are those who believed in Allah and His Messenger; then they entertained no doubt and exerted their utmost in the Way of Allah with

their selves and their wealth. They indeed are the truthful ones.

O Prophet, say to those (who claim to have believed), "Are you apprising Allah of your Faith? whereas Allah knows all that there is in the heavens and the earth and has knowledge of everything." They deem it as a favour to you that they have accepted Islam. Say to them, "Do not deem your Islam as a favour to me, but rather Allah has done you a favour that He has guided you to the Faith, if you are really truthful (in your claim to have believed). Allah has the knowledge of every hidden thing in the heavens and the earth, and He sees whatever you do."

Nazi Germany and the concept of the superiority of the Nordic race in the last World War is kept in view. One can easily judge how stupendous and devastating is the error for whose reform this verse of the Qur'ān was revealed.

In this brief verse, Allah has drawn the attention of all mankind to three cardinal truths:

(1) "The origin of all of you is one and the same: your whole species has sprung up from one man and one woman: all your races that are found in the world today are, in fact, the branches of one initial race that started with one mother and one father. In this process of creation there is no basis whatever for the divisions and distinctions in which you have involved yourselves because of your false notions. One God alone is your Creator. Different men have not been created by different Gods. You have been made from one and the same substance; it is not so that some men have been made from some pure and superior substance and some other men from some impure and inferior substance. You have been created in one and the same way; it is not also so that different men have been created in different ways. And you are the offspring of the same parents; it is not so that in the beginning there were many human couples which gave birth to different populations in the different regions of the world."

(2) "In spite of being one in origin it was natural that you should be divided into nations and tribes. Obviously, all the men on the earth could not belong to one and the same family. With the spread of the race it was inevitable that countless families should arise, and then tribes and nations should emerge from the families. Similarly, it was inevitable that after settling in different regions of the earth, there should be differences of colours, features, languages and ways of living among the people, and it was also natural that those living in the same region should be closer in affinity and those living in remote regions not so close; but this natural difference never demanded that distinctions of inequality, of high and low, of noble and mean, should be

established on its basis, that one race should claim superiority over the other, the people of one colour should look down upon the people of other colours, and that one nation should take preference over the other without any reason. The Creator had divided the human communities into nations and tribes for that was a natural way of cooperation and distinction between them. In this way alone could a family, a brotherhood, a tribe and a nation combine to give birth to a common way of life and to cooperate with each other in the affairs of the world. But it was all due to satanic ignorance that the differences among mankind created by Allah to be a means of recognition, were made a means of mutual boasting and hatred, which led mankind to every kind of injustice and tyranny.

(3) The only basis of superiority and excellence that there is, or can be, between man and man is that of moral excellence. As regards birth, all men are equal, for their Creator is One, their substance of creation is one, and their way of creation is one, and they are descended from the same parents. Moreover, a person's being born in a particular country, nation, or clan is just accidental. Therefore, there is no rational ground on account of which one person may be regarded as superior to the other. The real thing that makes one person superior to others is that one should be more God-conscious, a greater avoider of evils, and a follower of the way of piety and righteousness. Such a man whether he belongs to any race, any nation and any country, is valuable and worthy on account of his personal merit. And the one who is reverse of him in character is in any case an inferior person whether he is black or white, born in the east or the west.

These same truths that have been stated in this brief verse of the Qur'ān, have been explained in greater detail by the Holy Prophet in his addresses and traditions. In the speech that he made on the conquest of Makkah, after going round the Ka'bah, he said:

"Thank God Who has removed from you the blemish of ignorance and its arrogance. O people, men are divided into classes: the pious and righteous, who are honourable in the sight of Allah, and the sinful and vicious, who are contemptible in the sight of Allah, whereas all men are the children of Adam and Adam had been created by Allah from clay." (Baihaqī, Tirmidhī).

On the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, in the midst of the *Tashrīq* days, he addressed the people, and said:

"O people, be aware: your God is One. No Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab, and no non-Arab any superiority over an Arab, and no white one has any superiority over a black one, and no black one any superiority over a white one, except on the basis of *taqvā* (piety). The most honourable among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most pious and righteous of you. Say if I have

conveyed the Message to you?" And the great congregation of the people responded, saying: "Yes, you have, O Messenger of Allah." Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "Then let the one who is present convey it to those who are absent." (Baihaqī)

In a *Ḥadīth* he has said: "You are all the children of Adam, and Adam was created from the dust. Let the people give up boasting of their ancestors, otherwise they will stand more degraded than a mean insect in the sight of Allah." (Bazzār)

In another *Ḥadīth* the Holy Prophet said: "Allah will not enquire about your lineage on the Day of Resurrection. The most honourable in the sight of Allah is he who is most pious."(Ibn Jarīr)

In still another *Ḥadīth* he said: "Allah does not see your outward appearances and your possessions but He sees your hearts and your deeds." (Muslim, Ibn Mājah).

These teachings have not remained confined to words only but Islam has practically established a universal brotherhood of the believers on the basis, which does not allow any distinction on account of colour, race, language, country and nationality, which is free from every concept of high and low, clean and unclean, mean and respectable, which admits all human beings with equal rights, whether they belong to any race and nation, any land or region. Even the opponents of Islam have had to admit that no precedent is found in any religion and any system of the success with which the principle of human equality and unity has been given practical shape in the Muslim society, nor has it ever been found. Islam is the only religion which has welded and combined innumerable races and communities scattered in all corners of the earth into one universal *Ummah*.

In this connection, a misunderstanding also needs to be removed. In the case of marriage, the importance that Islamic law gives to *kufv* (likeness of status) has been taken by some people in the sense that some brotherhoods are noble and some mean, and matrimonial relations between them are objectionable. But this, in fact, is a wrong idea. According to the Islamic law, every Muslim man can marry every Muslim woman, but the success of the matrimonial life depends on maximum harmony and conformity between the spouses as regards habits, characteristics and ways of life, family traditions and economic and social status, so that they may get on well with each other. This is the real object of being equal and alike. Where there is unusual difference and disparity between the man and the woman in this regard, lifelong companionship will be difficult. That is why the Islamic law disapproves of such intermarriages, and not for the reason that one of the spouses is noble and the other mean, but for the reason that in case there is a clear and apparent difference and distention in status, there would be a greater

possibility of the failure of the matrimonial life if the marriage relationship was established.

29. That is, "This is only known to Allah as to who is really a man of high rank and who is inferior in respect of qualities and characteristics. The standards of high and low that the people have set up of their own accord, are not acceptable to and approved by Allah. Maybe that the one who has been regarded as a man of high rank in the world is declared as the lowest of the low in the final judgment of Allah, and maybe that the one who has been looked upon as a very low person here, attains to a very high rank there. The real importance is not of the honour and dishonour of the world but of the honour and dishonour that one will receive from Allah. Therefore, what man should be most concerned about is that he should create in himself those real qualities and characteristics which make him worthy of honour in the sight of Allah.

30. This does not imply all the desert Arabs but only a few particular groups of the Bedouins who had become Muslims, seeing the increasing power of Islam, thinking that they would not only remain safe from any attack by the Muslims but would also gain materially from the Islamic conquests. These people had not embraced Islam sincerely but had professed faith only verbally in order to be counted among the Muslims, and their this inner state became exposed whenever they would come before the Holy Prophet with different sorts of demands and would enumerate and mention their rights as if they had done him a great favour by accepting Islam. Traditions mention several of such tribal groups, e.g. Muzainah, Juhainah, Aslam, Ashja', Ghifār, etc. About the Bani Asad bin Khuzaimah in particular, Ibn 'Abbās and Sa'īd bin Jubair have stated that once during a drought they came to Madīnah and making a demand for financial help they said to the Holy Prophet again and again: "We became Muslims without any conflict: we did not fight against you as have such and such other tribes fought." By this they clearly meant to point out that their refraining from fighting against the Messenger of Allah and their accepting Islam was a favour for which they must be rewarded by the Messenger and the Muslims. It was this same attitude and conduct of the Bedouin group living around Madīnah, which has been commented upon in these verses. One can understand this appraisal better if one reads it together with vv. 90-110 of At-Taubah and vv. 11-17 of Al-Fat-h.

31. Another translation of the words *qūlū aslamnā* can be; "Say: we have become Muslims." From these words some people have concluded that in the language of the Qur'ān, *"Mu'min"* and *"Muslim"* are two opposite terms. A "Mu'min" is he who has believed sincerely and a "Muslim" he who might have accepted Islam only verbally without true faith. But, in fact, this is an absolutely wrong idea. No doubt the word *īmān* here has been used for sincere affirmation by the heart and the word *Islām* for only outward and external submission but to

understand them as two independent and mutually contradictory terms of the Qur'ān is not correct. A study of the Qur'ānic verses in which the words *Islam* and *Muslim* have been used, shows that in the Qur'ānic terminology *"Islām"* is the name of the true Faith, which Allah has sent down for mankind; it comprehends the faith and obedience both, and a *"Muslim"* is he who believes with a sincere heart and obeys the Commands practically. This is borne out by the following verses:

"Indeed, Islam is the only right way of life in the sight of Allah." (Āl-'Imrān: 19)

"And whoever adopts any other than this way of submission (Islam), that way shall not be accepted from him," (Āl-'Imrān: 85)

"And I have approved Islam as the way of life for you." (Al-Mā'idah: 3)

"Whomever Allah wills to guide aright, He makes his breast wide open to Islam." (Al-An'ām: 125)

Obviously, in these verses *"Islām"* does not imply obedience without the Faith. Here are some other verses:

"Say (O Prophet): I have been enjoined to be the first one to affirm (faith in) Islam."(Al-An'ām: 14)

"If they have surrendered (to Islam), they are rightly guided." (Āl-'Imrān: 20)

"All the Prophets, who were Muslims, judged the cases according to the Torah." (Al-Mā'idah: 44)

Here, and at scores of other places, acceptance of Islam cannot mean adopting obedience without the true faith. Likewise, here are a few verses in which the word "Muslim" has occurred signifying the meaning in which it has been used repeatedly in the Qur'ān:

"O you who have believed, fear Allah as He should truly be feared and see that you do not die save as true Muslim." (Āl-'Imrān: 102)

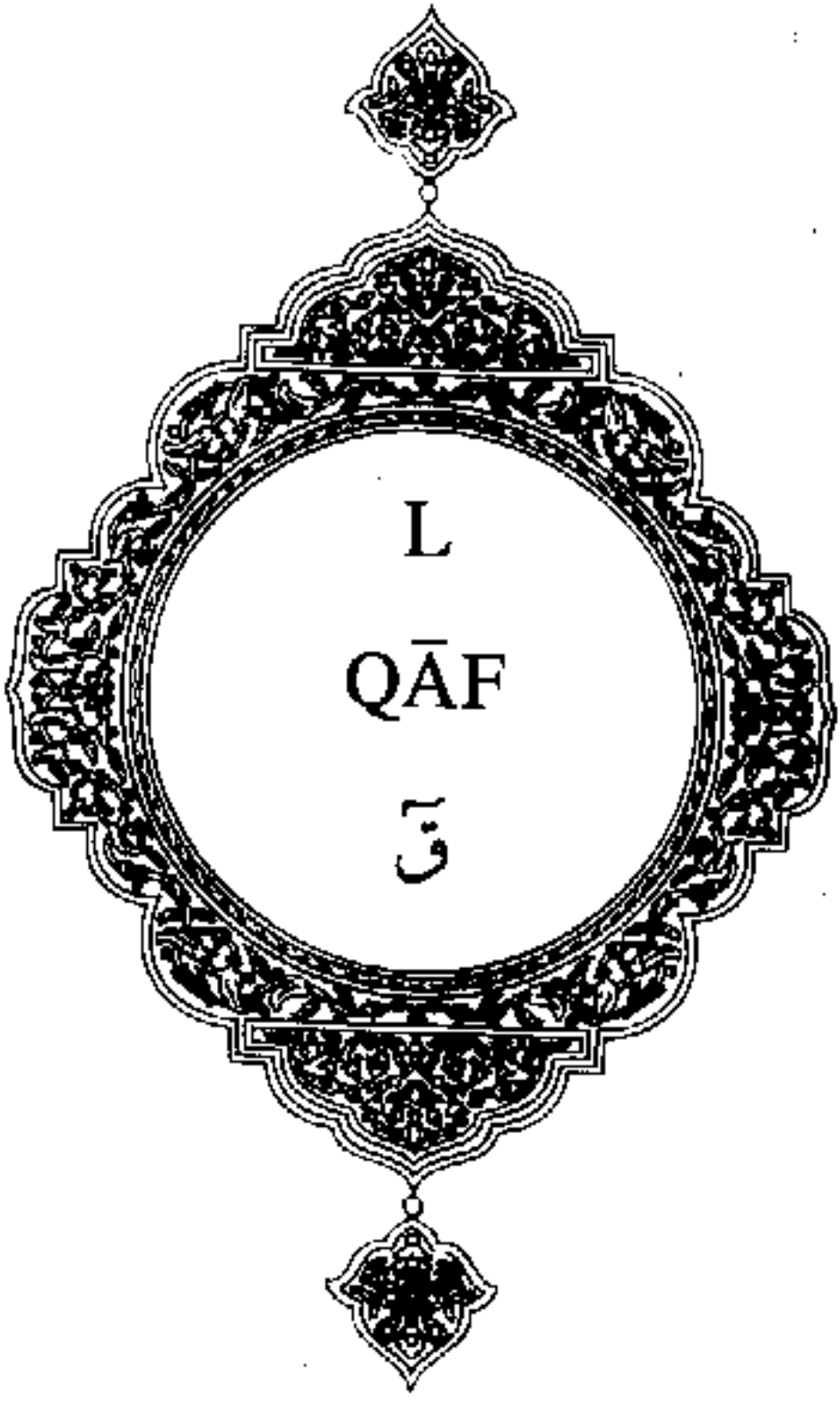
"Allah had called you "Muslims" before this and has called you (by the same name) in this Qur'ān, too." (Al-Ḥajj: 78)

"Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a Muslim, sound in the faith." (Āl-i-'Imrān: 67)

"And remember that when Abraham and Ishmael were raising the walls of this House, they prayed: ... Lord, make us Thy Muslims and also raise from our offspring a community which should be Muslim." (Al-Baqarah: 128)

(The Prophet Jacob's will for his children:) "O my children, Allah has chosen the same way of life for you. Hence remain Muslims up to your last breath." (Al-Baqarah: 132)

After a study of these verses who can say that in these the word "Muslim" implies a person who does not believe sincerely but has accepted Islam only outwardly? Therefore, to make the claim that in the Qur'ānic terminology "Islam" implies obedience without the faith and the "Muslim" in the language of the Qur'ān is he who accepts Islam only outwardly is absolutely wrong. Likewise, this claim also is wrong that the words *īmān* and *mu'min* have been used in the Qur'ān necessarily in the sense of believing sincerely. No doubt, at most places these words have occurred to express the same meaning, but there are many places where these words have also been used for outward affirmation of the faith, and all those who might have entered the Muslim Community with verbal profession have been addressed with "O you who have believed", no matter whether they are the true believers, or people with a weak faith, or mere hypocrites. For a few instances of this, see Āl-i-'Imrān: 156, An-Nisā' :136, Al-Ma'idah: 54, Al-Anfāl: 20 27, At-Taubah: 38, Al-Ḥadīd: 28, Aṣ-Ṣaff: 2.


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INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah derives its name from the initiat letter *Qaf,* thereby implying that it is the Sūrah which opens with the alphabetic letter *Qâf.*

Period of Revelation

There is no authentic tradition to show as to when exactly this Sūrah was sent down. A study of the subject-matter, however, reveals that its period of revelation is the second stage of the Holy Prophet's life at Makkah, which lasted from the third year of the Prophethood till the fifth year. We have given the characteristics of this period in the Introduction to the Sūrah Al-An'ām. In view of those characteristics it

can be said that this Sūrah might have been sent down in about the 5th year, when the antagonism of the disbelievers had become quite intense but had not yet assumed tyrannical proportions.

Theme and Topics

Authentic traditions show that the Holy Prophet used to recite this Sūrah generally in the Prayer on the 'Id days. A woman named Umm Hishām bin Ḥārithah, who was a neighbour of the Holy Prophet, says that she was able to commit Sūrah Qāf to memory only because she often heard it from the Holy Prophet in the Friday sermons. According to some other traditions he often recited it in the Fajr Prayer. This makes it abundantly clear that this was an important Sūrah in the sight of the Holy Prophet. That is why he made sure that its contents reached as many people as possible over and over again.

This reason for this importance can be easily understood by a careful study of the Sūrah. The theme of the entire Sūrah is the Hereafter. When the Holy Prophet started preaching his message in Makkah what surprised the people most was the news that people would be ressurected after death, and they would have to render an account of their deeds. They said that that was impossible; human mind could not believe that that would happen. After all, how could it be possible that when the body had disintegrated into dust the scattered particles would be reassembled after hundreds of thousands of years to make up the same body once again and raised up as a living body? Allah in response sent down this discourse. In it, on the one hand, arguments have been given for the possibility and occurrence of the Hereafter in a brief way, in short sentences, and, on the other, the people have been warned, as if to say: "Whether you express wonder and surprise, or you regard it as something remote from reason, or deny it altogether, in any case it cannot change the truth. The absolute, un-alterable truth is that Allah knows the whereabouts of each and every particle of your body that has scattered away in the earth, and knows where and in what state it is. Allah's one signal is enough to make all the scattered particles gather together again and to make you rise up once again as you had been made in the first instance. Likewise, your this idea that you have been created and left free to yourselves in the world and that you have not been made answerable to anyone, is no more than a misunderstanding. The fact is

that not only is Allah Himself directly aware of each act and word of yours, even of the ideas that pass in your mind, but His angels also are attached to each one of you, who are preserving the record of whatever you do and utter. When the time comes, you will come out of your graves at one call just as young shoots of vegetable sprout up from the earth on the first shower of the rain. Then this heedlessness which obstructs your vision will be removed and you will see with your own eyes all that you are denying today. At that time you will realize that you had not been created to be irresponsible in this world but accountable to all your deeds; the meeting out of the rewards and punishments, the Hell and Heaven, which you regard as impossible and imaginary things, will at that time become visible realities for you; in consequence of your enmity and opposition to the Truth you will be cast into the same Hell which you regard as remote from reason today; and the ones who fear the Merciful God and return to the path of righteousness, will be admitted to the same Paradise at whose mention you now express wonder and surprise.



قٓ ۚ وَالْقُرْاٰنِ الْمَجِيْدِ ۝١ بَلْ عَجِبُوْٓا اَنْ جَآءَهُمْ مُّنْذِرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَقَالَ
الْكٰفِرُوْنَ هٰذَا شَيْءٌ عَجِيْبٌ ۝٢ ءَاِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا ۚ ذٰلِكَ رَجْعٌۢ بَعِيْدٌ ۝٣
قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا تَنْقُصُ الْاَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ ۚ وَعِنْدَنَا كِتٰبٌ حَفِيْظٌ ۝٤ بَلْ كَذَّبُوْا
بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيْٓ اَمْرٍ مَّرِيْجٍ ۝٥ اَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوْٓا اِلَى السَّمَآءِ فَوْقَهُمْ
كَيْفَ بَنَيْنٰهَا وَزَيَّنّٰهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوْجٍ ۝٦ وَالْاَرْضَ مَدَدْنٰهَا وَاَلْقَيْنَا
فِيْهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَاَنْۢبَتْنَا فِيْهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍۢ بَهِيْجٍ ۝٧ تَبْصِرَةً وَّذِكْرٰى لِكُلِّ

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Verses: 45 *Revealed at Makkah*

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

14 Qāf. By the glorious Qur'ān![1]—Nay, but they wondered that a warner from among themselves had come to them.[2] So the disbelievers said, "This is indeed a strange thing: when we are dead and have become dust, (shall we be raised up again)? Such a return is far removed from reason."[3] (Whereas) We know very well whatever the earth consumes of their bodies, and We have a Book which preserves every thing.[4]

5 Nay, but these people plainly denied the Truth when it came to them. That is why they are confused now[5]

6-8 What![6] Have they never looked up to the sky above them, (and observed) how we made it and adorned it[7] and how there is no flaw in

it.[8] And We spread out the earth and set mountains in it and caused to grow in it every kind of beautiful vegetable.[9] All these things are eye-openers and objectlessons for every servant who turns (to the Truth).

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1. The word *"majid"* is used for expressing two meanings in Arabic: for expressing the high rank, status, honour and dignity of a person, and for saying that somebody is highly generous, charitable and beneficent. This word has been used for the Qur'ān in both these meanings. The Qur'ān is great and glorious in the sense that no book of the world can be brought up against it. It is a miracle both in its language and literary excellence and in its teaching and wisdom. Humans were helpless to produce the like of it at the time when it was sent down and are likewise helpless even today. Nothing of it could ever be proved wrong in any age, nor can anything of it be proved wrong in the present age. Falsehood can neither attack it from the front nor from the rear, and defeat it. And it is generous and beneficent in the sense that the more a man goes on trying to gain guidance from it, the more of guidance it goes on giving him, and the more he follows and obeys its commands and instructions the more he continues to be blessed with good things of the world and the Hereafter. There is no limit to its benefits and advantages where a man may become independent of it, and where it may cease to be beneficial and useful for him.

2. This sentence is a unique example of eloquence. In it a vast subject has been compressed into a few brief words. The object for which an oath has been sworn by the Qur'ān has not been mentioned. Instead, a subtle gap has been left and the sentence is resumed with "nay". If one thinks a little and also keeps in view the background in which this has been said, one comes to know what is the subject of the gap that has been left between the oath and "nay". In fact, what has been sworn of is this: "The people of Makkah have not refused to acknowledge the Prophethood of Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) for any sound reason but for the highly unsound reason that a member of their own kind and an individual of their own nation has come to them as a warner from God and this is something highly surprising for them; whereas what would actually be surprising was if God had remained unconcerned about the well-being and adversity of His servants and made no arrangement whatever to warn them; or had sent a non-human to warn the human beings; or a Chinese to warn the Arabs. Therefore, this basis of the denial is absolutely unsound, and a reasonable person cannot but admit that there must exist some arrangement from God to warn the servants, and in the form that the warner himself should be a person from among the people to whom he is sent." As for the question whether Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is the person whom God has sent on this mission, no other evidence is needed to settle it but this glorious and beneficent Qur'ān, which he is presenting; this is by itself enough to provide a proof of it.

This explanation shows that in this verse an oath has been sworn by the Qur'ān to impress the point that Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is really the Messenger of Allah and the disbelievers' surprise and wonder about his apostleship is misplaced, and the fact of the Qur'ān's being *"majīd"* is a proof of this claim.

3. This was the second cause of their surprise, the first being that a member of their own kind and clan had arisen with the claim that he had come as a warner to them from God. They were further surprised that the person was warning them to the effect that all men will be raised back to life after death and they will be produced all together in the Court of Allah where their deeds will be subjected to accountability and they will be rewarded and punished accordingly.

4. That is, "If it cannot be comprehended by intellect, it is their own narrow mind to blame. It does not mean that Allah's knowledge and power also should be narrow. They think that it is in no way possible to collect the scattered particles of the bodies of the countless human beings who have died since the beginning of creation and will die till Resurrection. But the fact is that Allah directly knows each of those particles in whatever form and in whichever place they are. Furthermore, a full record of this is being maintained in the Register of Allah, which has not left out any particle un-recorded. Then, as soon as Allah commands, His angels will forthwith take out every particle from wherever it is with the help of this record, and will make up the same bodies once again in which human beings had lived and worked in the world."

This verse also is one of those verses which point out that the life hereafter will not only be a physical life as it is in this world, but the body of every person also will be the same which he had in this world. If it were not so, it would be meaningless to tell the disbelievers: "We know very well whatever the earth consumes of their bodies and We have a Book which preserves everything." (For further explanation, see E.N. 25 of Sūrah Ḥā Mīm As-Sajdah)

5. In this brief sentence also a vast subject has been compressed. It means: These people did not rest content only with expressing wonder and declaring the thing to be far removed from reason, but when the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) presented his message of the Truth they denied it as falsehood without any hesitation. Its inevitable result was, and the same only could follow from it, that they are not agreed on any one position with regard to the invitation and the Messenger who has presented it. Sometimes they brand him a poet, sometimes a sorcerer, and sometimes a madman. Sometimes they say that he is a magician and sometimes that he is bewitched. Sometimes they say that he has fabricated this thing by himself in order to establish his superiority, and sometimes they bring the charge that there

Found on page 118

عَبْدٍ مُّنِيْبٍ ۝ وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً مُّبٰرَكًا فَاَنْۢبَتْنَا بِهٖ جَنّٰتٍ وَّحَبَّ
الْحَصِيْدِ ۝ وَالنَّخْلَ بٰسِقٰتٍ لَّهَا طَلْعٌ نَّضِيْدٌ ۝ رِّزْقًا لِّلْعِبَادِ ۙ وَاَحْيَيْنَا بِهٖ
بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا ۭ كَذٰلِكَ الْخُرُوْجُ ۝ كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوْحٍ وَّاَصْحٰبُ الرَّسِّ
وَثَمُوْدُ ۝ وَعَادٌ وَّفِرْعَوْنُ وَاِخْوَانُ لُوْطٍ ۝ وَّاَصْحٰبُ الْاَيْكَةِ وَقَوْمُ
تُبَّعٍ ۭ كُلٌّ كَذَّبَ الرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ وَعِيْدِ ۝ اَفَعَيِيْنَا بِالْخَلْقِ الْاَوَّلِ ۭ بَلْ هُمْ
فِيْ لَبْسٍ مِّنْ خَلْقٍ جَدِيْدٍ ۝ وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْاِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ
بِهٖ نَفْسُهٗ ۚ وَنَحْنُ اَقْرَبُ اِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيْدِ ۝ اِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيٰنِ
عَنِ الْيَمِيْنِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيْدٌ ۝ مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ اِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيْبٌ
عَتِيْدٌ ۝ وَجَآءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ۭ ذٰلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيْدُ ۝ وَ
نُفِخَ فِي الصُّوْرِ ۭ ذٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْوَعِيْدِ ۝ وَجَآءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّعَهَا سَآئِقٌ وَّ
شَهِيْدٌ ۝ لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِيْ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هٰذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَآءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ
الْيَوْمَ حَدِيْدٌ ۝ وَقَالَ قَرِيْنُهٗ هٰذَا مَا لَدَيَّ عَتِيْدٌ ۝ اَلْقِيَا فِيْ جَهَنَّمَ كُلَّ
كَفَّارٍ عَنِيْدٍ ۝ مَّنَّاعٍ لِّلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ مُّرِيْبِ ۝ الَّذِيْ جَعَلَ مَعَ اللّٰهِ اِلٰهًا اٰخَرَ
فَاَلْقِيٰهُ فِي الْعَذَابِ الشَّدِيْدِ ۝ قَالَ قَرِيْنُهٗ رَبَّنَا مَآ اَطْغَيْتُهٗ وَلٰكِنْ كَانَ
فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ بَعِيْدٍ ۝ قَالَ لَا تَخْتَصِمُوْا لَدَيَّ وَقَدْ قَدَّمْتُ اِلَيْكُمْ بِالْوَعِيْدِ ۝
مَا يُبَدَّلُ الْقَوْلُ لَدَيَّ وَمَآ اَنَا بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيْدِ ۝ يَوْمَ نَقُوْلُ لِجَهَنَّمَ هَلِ
امْتَلَاْتِ وَتَقُوْلُ هَلْ مِنْ مَّزِيْدٍ ۝ وَاُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ غَيْرَ بَعِيْدٍ ۝ هٰذَا مَا
تُوْعَدُوْنَ لِكُلِّ اَوَّابٍ حَفِيْظٍ ۝ مَّنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمٰنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَآءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُّنِيْبِ ۝
ادْخُلُوْهَا بِسَلٰمٍ ۭ ذٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُلُوْدِ ۝ لَهُمْ مَّا يَشَآءُوْنَ فِيْهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيْدٌ ۝ وَكَمْ

And from the sky We sent down blessed water where-by We produced gardens and harvest grain and tall palm-trees laden with clusters of fruit, piled one over another. This is the arrangement to provide food for the servants. With this water We revive a dead land;[10] such also will be the resurrection (of the dead from the earth).[11] 9-11

Before them the people of Noah and the people of the Rass[12] and Thamūd also denied, and so did 'Ād and Pharaoh[13] and the brethren of Lot and the dwellers of Aiykah and the people of Tubba'.[14,15] Every one denied the Messengers,[16] and consequently My scourge proved true against them.[17] 12-14

What! were We powerless in case of the first creation? Yet these people are in doubt concerning a new creation.[18] 15

We[19] have created man and know every evil suggestion that arises in his heart: We are even closer to him than his neck-vein.[20] (And besides this direct knowledge of Ours) two scribes, sitting on his right and on his left, are recording everything. He utters not a word but there is an ever ready observer to note it down.[21] Then behold, the agony of death has come with the truth.[22] This is the same thing that you were trying to escape.[23] And then the Trumpet was blown.[24] This is the Day of which you were threatened. Every person has come in a state that there is a driver with him and a witness.[25] You were heedless of this. We have removed your curtain from you, so your sight is very sharp today.[26] His companion submitted, "Here is the one who was given in my charge."[27] It was commanded, "Cast into Hell[28] every stubborn disbeliever,[29] who was hostile to the Truth, who was a forbidder of the good,[30] a transgressor,[31] a doubter[32] and who had set up another god with Allah. Cast him into severe torment."[33] His companion submitted, "Our Lord, I did not cause him to rebel, but he himself had gone far astray."[34] In reply it was said, "Do not dispute in My Presence: I had already warned you of the evil end.[35] My sentence cannot be changed[36] nor am I unjust to My servants."[37] 16-29

The Day when We shall ask Hell, "Are you full?" it will say, "Is there any more?"[38] And Paradise shall be brought close to the righteous, no longer distant.[39] It will be said, "This is that which was promised to you, to every such person who turned (to God) again and again,[40] who was watchful,[41] who feared the Merciful, unseen,[42] and 30-35

who has come with a devoted heart.[43] Enter Paradise in peace."[44] That Day will be the Day of eternal life. There they shall have all that they will desire, and We have with us yet more for them.[45]

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peace and blessings) himself was standing in Makkah and reciting the Qur'ān to the people, who had known and seen him grow up from childhood to youth and mature manhood before their eyes, the full meaning of these allusions was by itself clear and evident to every person. Therefore, leaving it aside, detailed easoning is now being presented about the authenticity of the second thing which those people regarded as strange and far removed from reason and intellect.

7. Here, by the sky is implied the whole firmament that man finds spread over him, day and night, in which the sun shines in the day and the moon and countless stars glitter at night, which amazes him even when he sees it with the bare eye, but which appears as a vast, limitless Universe when he looks at it through the telescope. It seems to be starting from nowhere and ending nowhere. Millions of times larger planets than our earth are moving in it like tiny balls; thousands of times brighter stars than our sun are shining in it; our this entire solar system is located in a corner of its only one galaxy; only in this one galaxy there exist at least three thousand million other stars like our own sun, and man's observation has so far discovered one million such galaxies. Out of the lacs of galaxies our nearest, neighbouring galaxy is so distant from us that its light reaches the earth in ten lac years travelling at the speed of 186,000 miles per second. This shows the vastness of that part of the Universe which has so far been observed and explored by man. As to how vast is the entire Universe of God we have no means to estimate and judge. Maybe that the known Universe of man does not bear with the entire Universe even that ratio which a drop of water bears with the ocean. If about the God Who has brought this huge and wonderful Universe into being, this tiny talking animal, called man, who creeps the earth, asserts that He cannot recreate him once again after death, it would be due to narrowness of his own mind. The power of the Creator of the Universe would not at all be affected by it !

8. That is, "In spite of its amazing vastness the wonderful order of the Universe is so coherent and firm and its composition so perfect that there is no crack or cleft in it, and its continuity breaks nowhere. This can be understood by an example. Radio astronomers of the present age have observed a galactic system which they have named Source 3c 295. They think that its rays which are now reaching us might have left it more than four thousand million years ago. The question is: How could it be possible for the rays to reach the earth from such a distant source had the continuity and coherence of the Universe between the earth

and the galaxy been broken somewhere and its composition been split at some point. Allah, in fact, alludes to this reality and puts this question before man "When you cannot point out even a small breach in this system of My Universe, how did the concept of any weakness in My power enter your mind, that after the respite of your test is over, if I like to bring you back to life to subject you to accountability before Me, I would not be able to do so?"

This is not only a proof of the possibility of the Hereafter but also a proof of *Tauhīd*. These rays' reaching the earth from a distance of four thousand million light years and being detected by the man-made instruments expressly points to the fact that from the galaxy to the earth the entire world has been made up of one and the same substance continuously, one and the same kind of the forces are working in it, and they are functioning according to the same laws without any difference and disparity. Were it not so the rays could neither have reached here, nor detected by the instruments which man had made after understanding the laws working on the earth and its surroundings. This proves that One God alone is the Creator of this whole Universe and its Master and Ruler and Controller.

9. For explanation, see E.N.'s 12, 13, 14 of An-Nahl, E.N.'s 73, 74 of An-Naml, and E.N. 7 of Az-Zukhruf.

10. For explanation, see E.N.'s 73, 74, 81 of An-Naml, E.N.'s 25, 33, 35 of Ar-Rum and E.N. 29 of Yā Sīn.

11. The reasoning is this: "Your conjecture about God Who made this sphere of the earth a suitable home for living creatures and Who by combining the lifeless clay of the earth with the lifeless water from the sky produced such a fine vegetable life that you witness flourishing in the form of your gardens and crops, and Who made the vegetation a means of sustenance for both man and beast, that He has no power to resurrect you after death, is a foolish and absurd conjecture. You witness almost daily the phenomenon that a land is lying barren and lifeless; then as soon as it receives a shower of rain, it gives birth to an endless train of life all of a sudden, the roots lying dead for ages sprout up and a variety of insects emerge playfully from the layers of the earth. This is a manifest proof that life after death is not impossible. When you cannot deny this express observation of yours, how can you deny that when Allah wills, you too will sprout up from the earth as the vegetation sprouts up. In this connection, one may note that in many parts of Arabia it does not sometimes rain for as long as five years at a stretch and sometimes even for longer periods the land does not receive even a drop of rain. For such long intervals in the burning deserts it is not conceivable that the roots of grass and the insects of the earth would survive. In spite of this when a little of the rain falls at some place, grass sprouts up and the insects of the earth return to life.

Therefore, the inhabitants of Arabia can understand this reasoning much better than those people who do not have to experience such long periods of drought.

12. Before this the people of Rass *(Aṣḥāb ar-Rass)* have been mentioned in Sūrah Al-Furqān: 38 above, and now here, but at both places they have been only referred to as of those nations who rejected the Prophets. No other detail about them has been given. In the traditions of Arabia two places are well known by the name of ar-Rass, one in the Najd and the other in northern Hejāz. Of these ar-Rass of the Najd is better known and has been referred to more often in the pre Islamic poetry of Arabia. Now it is difficult to determine which of these was the home of the *Aṣḥāb ar-Rass*. No reliable detail of their story is found in any tradition either. The most that one can say with certainty is that it was a nation which had thrown its Prophet into a well. But from the mere allusion that has been made to them in the Qur'ān one is led to think that in the time of the revelation of the Qur'ān the Arabs were generally aware of this nation and its history, but the traditions about them could not be preserved in historic records.

13. Only the Pharaoh has been mentioned instead of the people of Pharaoh, for he had so dominated his people that they had been left with no independent opinion and will of their own, apart from him. They followed him willy nilly wherever he led them. That is why he alone was held responsible for the deviation and degeneration of his people. Wherever there exists the freedom of will and action for a nation, it by itself bears the burden of its deeds, and wherever one man's dictatorship may have rendered a nation powerless the one man alone takes on his head the burden of the sins of entire nation. This does not mean that the nation becomes absolved from its duty and responsibility when the one man alone has burdened himself with the responsibility. This is not so. The nation in such a case becomes responsible for the moral weakness shown by it in that why it allowed a man to overpower and dominate it so completely. The same thing has been alluded to in Az-Zukhruf: 54, thus: "Pharaoh took his people to be light, and they obeyed him, for they were indeed a sinful people." (For explanation, see E.N. 50 of Sūrah Az-Zukhruf).

14. For explanation, see E.N. 37 of Sūrah Saba; E.N. 32 of Sūrah Dukhān.

15. That is, they all denied the apostleship of their Messengers as well as the news given by them that they will be raised back to life after death.

16. Although every nation denied only the Messenger who was sent to it, as it denied the news which all the Messengers have been presenting unanimously, denying one Messenger, therefore, amounted to denying all of them. Moreover, these nations did not merely deny the apostleship of the Messenger who had come to them, but they were not at all inclined to believe that a mere human could be

appointed by Allah for the guidance of other men. Therefore, they denied apostleship itself, and the crime of no one was confined to belying and rejecting any one Messenger only.

17. This is a reasoning from history for the Hereafter. In the preceding six verses, arguments were given for the possibility of the Hereafter; in these the historical end of the nations of Arabia and the adjoining lands has been presented as an argument to prove that the doctrine of the Hereafter which all the Prophets have been presenting, is the very truth, for whichever nation denied it became involved in the moral degeneration of the worst kind with the result that the torment of God descended on it and eliminated it from the world. This necessary result of the denial of the Hereafter and moral perversion which one can witness throughout history, is an express proof of the fact that man has not been created to be irresponsible in this world, but he has necessarily to render an account of his deeds as soon as the time limit for action at his disposal comes to an end. That is why whenever he works in the world irresponsibly, his whole life pattern is set on the path of ruin. If evil and wrong results go on following a course of action successively, it is a clear proof that that course of action is in conflict with the truth.

18. This is a rational argument for the Hereafter. The person who is not a denier of God and is also not so foolish as to regard this excellently ordered Universe and the creation of man in it as a mere accident, cannot help but admit that God alone has created man and this whole Universe. Now this actual fact that we exist alive in this world and this great work-house of the earth and heavens is functioning before us, by itself is an obvious proof that God was in no way powerless in creating us and this Universe. Yet if a man says that after bringing about Resurrection the same God will not be able to bring about a new world order and will not be able to create us once again, he says an irrational thing. Had God been powerless He would not have been able to create all this in the first instance. When He has created the Universe in the first instance and we ourselves came into existence by virtue of that act of creation, what can then be the rational ground for assuming that He will become powerless to re-make the dismantled thing originally made by Himself?

19. After presenting the arguments for the Hereafter, it is being stated: "Whether you believe in the Hereafter, or deny it, it has to come in any case, and it is such a factual reality, which will certainly come about in spite of your denial. If you heed the warning given by the Prophets in advance and prepare for it, you will be doing good to yourselves; if you do not believe in it, you will be inviting your own doom. Your denial will not prevent the Hereafter from taking place and God's Law of justice will not become suspended."

20. That is, "Our power and Our knowledge has so encompassed man from within and without that Our power and knowledge is closer to him than his own neck-vein. We do not have to travel from a distance to hear what he says, but We directly know every thought that arises in his heart. Likewise, when We shall want to seize him, We will not have to seize him after covering a distance, for wherever he is, he is in Our grasp; and whenever We will, We will seize him."

21. That is, "On the one hand, We Ourself directly know man's actions and movements, even his hidden thoughts; on the other, every man has two angels appointed over him, who are recording whatever he does and says; none of his actions or words is left unrecorded." This means that when man is produced in the Court of Allah, Allah at that time Himself also will be knowing what each person has done in the world; besides, there will also be two witnesses who will produce documentary evidence of the person's actions and deeds. As to what will be the nature of this documentary evidence, it is difficult for us to have a precise conception of it. But from the facts that we are witnessing today, it seems certain that the voices and pictures and marks of man's actions and movements are being preserved and imprinted on every particle of the environment in which he lives and works, and each one of these can be reproduced in exactly the same form and voice so as to leave no difference whatever between the original and its copy. Man is doing this on a very limited scale with the help of his inventions, but the angels of God neither stand in need of these machines nor are bound by any limitation. Man's own body and everything around it is their tape and their film upon which they can record every voice and every image along with its minutest and most delicate detail precisely and exactly, and can make man hear, on the Day of Resurrection, with his own ears, in his own voice, those very things which he talked in the world, and can make him see, with his own eyes, the pictures of all his misdeeds, whose genuineness he would not possibly be able to deny.

Here, one should also understand that in the Court of the Hereafter Allah will not punish anybody only on the basis of His own knowledge, but will punish him after fulfilling all the requirements of justice. That is why an exhaustive record is being got prepared of every person's words and deeds in the world so that a complete proof with undeniable evidence becomes available of everyone's life work and activity.

22. "To come with the truth" implies that the agony of death is the starting point when the reality which had remained concealed in the world, begins to be uncovered. At this point man starts seeing clearly the other world of which the Prophet had forewarned him. Here, man also comes to know that the Hereafter is the very truth, and also this whether he is entering this second stage of life as favoured or damned.

23. That is, "This is the same reality which you refused to believe. You desired that you should live and go about as an unbridled rogue in the world, and there should be no other life after death, in which you may have to suffer for the consequences of your deeds. That is why you shunned the concept of the Hereafter and were not at all inclined to believe that this next world would ever be established. Now, you may see that the same next world is unveiling itself before you."

24. This implies that blowing of the Trumpet at which all dead men will rise back to life in their own physical bodies. For explanation, see E.N. 47 of Al-An'ām, E.N. 57 of Ibrahīm, E.N. 78 of Ṭā. Hā, E.N.1 of Al-Ḥajj, E.N.'s 46,47 of Yā Sīn, and E.N. 79 of Az-Zumar.

25. Most probably this implies the same two angels who had been appointed for compiling the record of the words and deeds of the person in the world. On the Day of Resurrection, when every man will rise from his grave on the sounding of the Trumpet, the two angels will come forth immediately and take him into their custody. One of them will drive him to the Divine Court and the other will be carrying his record.

26. That is, "You can clearly see that everything of which the Prophets foretold is present here."

27. Some commentators say that "the companion" implies the angel who has been referred to as "a witness" in verse 21. He will say: "I have this person's record ready with me here". Some other commentators say that "the companion" implies the satan who was attached to the person in the world. He will say: "This person whom I was controlling and preparing for Hell, is now presented before You." But the commentary that is more relevant to the context is the one that has been reported from Qatādah and Ibn Zaid. They say that the companion implies the angel who drove and brought the person to Allah's Court He will say, "Here is the person who had been given in my charge"

28. As the context shows this command will be given to the two angels who had taken the culprit into their custody as soon as he had risen from the grave, and then brought him before the Court."

29. The word *"kaffār"* as used in the Text means an ungrateful person as well as a denier of the truth.

30. *"Khair"* in Arabic is used both for wealth and for goodness. According to the first meaning, the sentence means that he paid no one his dues from his wealth, neither the dues of Allah nor of the people. According to the second meaning, it would mean that he did not only withhold himself from the path of goodness but forbade others also to follow it. He had become a hindrance

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أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِّن قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُم بَطْشًا فَنَقَّبُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ ۖ هَلْ
مِن مَّحِيصٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِمَن كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ
وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ
وَمَا مَسَّنَا مِن لُّغُوبٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ
طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَأَدْبَارَ السُّجُودِ ﴿٤٠﴾
وَاسْتَمِعْ يَوْمَ يُنَادِ الْمُنَادِ مِن مَّكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ ﴿٤١﴾ يَوْمَ يَسْمَعُونَ الصَّيْحَةَ
بِالْحَقِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُرُوجِ ﴿٤٢﴾ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي وَنُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْنَا الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤٣﴾ يَوْمَ
تَشَقَّقُ الْأَرْضُ عَنْهُمْ سِرَاعًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ حَشْرٌ عَلَيْنَا يَسِيرٌ ﴿٤٤﴾ نَّحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا
يَقُولُونَ وَمَا أَنتَ عَلَيْهِم بِجَبَّارٍ ۖ فَذَكِّرْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَن يَخَافُ وَعِيدِ ﴿٤٥﴾

36-37 We have destroyed many nations before them, who were much stronger than they in power, and they ransacked all the lands;[46] then, could they find a place of refuge?[47] Indeed, in this there is a lesson for every such person who has a heart, or who gives ear and listens with attention.[48]

38-40 We created the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them in six days,[49] and no fatigue overcame Us. Therefore, O Prophet, bear with patience whatever they say,[50] and keep up glorifying your Lord with His praise, before sunrise and before sunset. And glorify Him again in the night and also when you are free from prostrations.[51]

41-44 And listen! The Day when the caller shall call out from near (every person),[52] the Day when all the people shall be hearing the Cry rightly,[53] shall be the Day of the coming out of the dead from the earth. It is We Who bestow life and give death and to Us shall all return on that Day, when the earth shall split asunder and the people shall be rushing out of it in all haste. This gathering together is very easy for Us.[54]

for the people in the way of goodness and exerted his utmost to see that goodness did not spread.

31. That is, "He transgressed the bounds of morality in every thing he did. He was ever ready to do anything and everything for the sake of his interests, his desires and his lusts. He amassed wealth by unlawful means and spent it in unlawful ways. He usurped the people's rights, had neither control over his tongue nor over his hands, and committed every injustice and excess. He did not rest content with creating hindrances in the way of goodness but harassed those who adopted goodness and persecuted those who worked for it."

32. The word *"murib"* as used in the original has two meanings: a doubter and the one who puts others in doubt, and both are implied here. It means that he was not only himself involved in doubt but also created doubts in the hearts of others. He held as doubtful the Being of Allah and the Hereafter and the angels and the Prophethood and Revelation and every other truth of religion. Anything that was presented by the Prophets as a truth was held as unbelievable by him, and the same disease he spread to other people. Whomever he came in contact with, he would create one or the other doubt, one or the other evil thought in his mind.

33. Allah, in these verses, has enumerated the qualities that make a man worthy of Hell: (1) Denial of the Truth, (2) ingratitude to Allah, (3) enmity for the Truth and the followers of the Truth, (4) to become a hindrance in the way of goodness, (5) failure to fulfil the rights of Allah and the people from one's wealth, (6) to transgress the bounds in one's affairs, (7) to commit injustices and excesses against others, (8) to doubt the truths of religion, (9) to create doubts in the hearts of the people, and (10) to hold another as an associate in the Godhead of Allah.

34. Here by "companion" is meant the satan who was attached to the disobedient person in the world. And this also becomes evident from the style that both the person and his satan are disputing between themselves in the Court of Allah. He says: "My Lord, this wretched one pursued me in the world and did not leave me until he succeeded in misleading me; therefore he alone should be punished. And the satan replies "Lord, I had no power over him. Had he not himself willed to become rebellious, I could not have seduced him forcibly. This wretched person himself fled from goodness and was fascinated by evil. That is why he did not like anything that the Prophets presented and went on yielding to every temptation and inducement presented by me."

35. That is, "I had warned both of you as to what punishment will be given to the one who beguiles and what punishment will be suffered by him who is beguiled. In spite of this warning when you did not desist from committing your

O Prophet, We know very well what they say;[55] and you are not 45
there to compel them into believing. Therefore, admonish with this Qur'ān every such person who fears My warning.[56]

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respective crimes, there is no use quarreling now. Both the one who beguiled and the one who was beguiled have to be punished for the crimes committed by them."

36. That is, "It is not My way to change the decisions once taken. The decision that I have taken to cast you into Hell cannot be withdrawn, nor can the law that I had announced in the world be changed that the punishment for misleading and for being misled will be awarded in the Hereafter."

37. The word *ẓallām* as used in the original means the one who is highly unjust. It does not mean: "I am unjust to My servants but not highly unjust." But it means: "If I were unjust to My own servants being their Creator and Sustainer, I would be highly unjust. Therefore, I am not at all unjust to My servants. This punishment that I am giving you is precisely the same punishment which you have made yourselves worthy of. You are not being punished an iota more than what you actually deserve, for My Court is a Court of impartial justice. Here, no one can receive a punishment which he does not actually deserve, and for which his being worthy has not been proved by certain and undeniable evidence.

38. This can have two meanings: (1) "There is no room in me for more men;" and (2) "bring all other culprits who may be there." According to the first meaning the scene depicted would be that Hell has been so stuffed up with culprits that it cannot hold any more; so much so that when it was asked: "Are you full ?" it cried out, alarmed: "Are there still more culprits to come ?" According to the second meaning, the scene depicted before the mind is that the wrath of Hell is so flared up against the culprits that it is constantly demanding more and more of them to be cast into it so that no culprit escapes un-punished."

Here, the question arises: What is the nature of Allah Almighty's addressing Hell and its reply? Is it only something metaphoric, or is Hell actually a living and intelligent being which may be spoken to and it may respond and give replies? In this regard nothing can, in fact, be said with certainty. Maybe the meaning is metaphoric and only for the purpose of depicting the actual scene of the state of Hell it may have been described in the form of the question and answer, just as one may ask a motor-car: "Why don't you move forward?" and it may say: "There is no petrol in me." But this also is quite possible that this conversation is based on reality. Therefore, it is not correct to assume about the

things which are lifeless and mute for us in the world that they would be lifeless and mute for Allah as well. The Creator can have communion with any of His creatures and each of His creatures can respond to Him, no matter how incomprehensible its language may be for us.

39. That is, "As soon as a judgement will be passed about a person from the Court of Allah that he is righteous and worthy of Paradise, he will immediately find Paradise in front of him. He will not have to travel a distance on foot or by a conveyance to reach it, and there will be no interval between the pronouncement of the judgement and his entry into Paradise. He will enter Paradise immediately on the pronouncement of the judgement as if he has not been conveyed to Paradise but Paradise itself has been brought before him. From this it can be judged how different will be the concepts of space and time in the Hereafter from our concepts in this world. The concepts of time and distance and nearness with which we are familiar in this world will become meaningless there."

40. The word *awwāb* is very extensive in meaning. It implies the person who might have adopted the way of obedience and Allah's goodwill instead of the way of disobedience and the flesh, who gives up everything that is disapproved by Allah and adopts everything that is approved by him, who gets alarmed as soon as he swerves a little from the path of worship and obedience and repents and returns to the path of worship and obedience, who remembers Allah much and turns to Him in all matters of life.

41. The word *ḥafīẓ* means the "one who guards." This implies the person who takes care of the bounds and duties enjoined by Allah, who guards the trusts imposed by Allah and avoids the things forbidden by him, who keeps watch over his time, energies and activities to see that none of these is being misemployed or misused, who offers repentance, remains steadfast and keeps it strong and intact, who examines himself over and over again to see that he is not disobeying his Lord anywhere, in word or deed.

42. That is, "Although he could not see the Merciful God and could not perceive Him by his senses in any way, yet he feared His disobedience. His heart was more dominated by the fear of the unseen Merciful God than the fear of other perceptible powers and visible and mighty beings, and in spite of knowing that He is All-Merciful, he did not become a sinner, trusting His Mercy, but feared His displeasure in whatever he said and did. Thus, this verse points to two of the believer's important and basic characteristics: first, that he fears God although he cannot see and perceive Him; second, that he does not persist in sin in spite of his full awareness of God's quality of mercy. These very two characteristics make him worthy of honour in the sight of Allah. Besides, there is another subtle point

also in it, which Imām Razi has pointed out. In Arabic, there are two words for fear, *khauf* and *khashiyyat*, which have a difference in their shade of meaning. The word *khauf is* generally used for the fear that a man feels in his heart on account of his sense of weakness as against someone's superior power and strength, and the word *khashiyyat* is used for the dread and awe with which a man is filled and inspired because of somebody's glory and grandeur and greatness. Here, the word *khashiyyat* has been used instead of *khauf*, which is meant to point out that a believer does not fear Allah only on account of the fear of His punishment, but it is the sense of Allah's glory and greatness that keeps him awe-inspired at all times.

43. The word *munīb* in the original is derived from *inābat*, which means to turn to one direction and to turn to the same again and again, just like the needle of the compass that points to the magnetic north persistently, however one may try to turn it away from that direction. Therefore, *qalb-i-munīb* would mean such a heart as has turned away from every other direction and turned towards One Allah alone and then kept on turning towards Him again and again throughout life. The same sense has been conveyed by the "devoted heart." This shows that in the sight of Allah the man of real worth is he who remains attached and devoted to Allah alone not merely verbally but also truly and sincerely.

44. If the word *salām* in *udkhulū-hā bi-salām-in* is taken in the meaning of peace and security, it would mean: "Enter this Paradise safe and secure from every kind of grief, sorrow, anxiety and affiliation"; and if it is taken in the meaning of *salam* itself, it would mean: "Enter this Paradise you are welcomed here with the greeting of peace by Allah and his angels."

In these verses Allah has mentioned the qualities because of which a person makes himself worthy of Paradise, and they are: (1) *Taqvā* (piety), (2) Turning towards Allah, (3) watching over and guarding one's relationship with Allah, (4) fearing Allah although one has not seen Him, and has full faith in His quality of mercy, and (5) coming into His Presence with a devoted and captivated heart, i.e. remaining constant on the way of devotion and dedication till death.

45. That is, "They will certainly get whatever they desire, but in addition We will also give them that which they have never conceived and, therefore, could not desire."

46. That is, "They were not only powerful and strong in their own land but had also made incursions into other lands and brought under their sway far off lands as well."

47. That is, "Could their power and might save them when the time appointed by Allah came for their seizure? And could they find shelter and refuge

anywhere? Now, on what trust do you hope that you will get refuge somewhere in the world when you have rebelled against Allah ?"

48. In other words, either one should have so much of native intelligence that one may think right of one's own accord, or if not so, one should be so free from prejudice and neglect that one may listen with attention when another person tries to make one understand the truth.

49. For explanation, see E.N.'s 11 to 15 of the commentary of Sūrah Ḥā Mīm As-Sajdah.

50. That is, "The fact of the matter is that We have made this entire Universe in six days and We did not become weary at the end so that We might be powerless to reconstruct it. Now, if these ignorant people mock you when they hear the news of the life-after-death from you and call you a madman, have patience at it, listen to whatever nonsense they utter with a cool mind, and continue to preach the truth that you have been appointed to spread."

In this verse, there is a subtle taunt on the Jews and the Christians as well, in whose Bible the story has been fabricated that God made the earth and the heavens in six days and rested on the seventh day (Gen., 2: 2). Although the Christian priests are now feeling shy of it and have changed "rested" into *"fārigh hūa"* (ceased from working) in their Urdu translation of the Holy Bible, yet in King James Authorised Version of the Bible, the words "...and he rested on the seventh day" are still there, and the same words are also found in the translation that the Jews have published from Philadelphia in 1954. In the Arabic translation also the words are: *istarāha fil-yaum as-sābi'*.

51. This is the means by which man gets the power and energy to continue his struggle to raise the Word of the Truth and to call the people towards righteousness throughout life with full determination even though he may have to pass through heart-breaking and soul-destroying conditions and his efforts may seem to be bearing no fruit. Praising and glorifying the Lord implies the Prayer here, and wherever in the Qur'ān the praise and glorification has been associated with specific times, it implies the Prayer. The Prayer "before sunrise" is the Fajr Prayer, and the Prayers "before sunset" are the 'Aṣr and the Ẓuhr Prayers. The Prayers in the night are the Maghrib and the 'Ishā' Prayers, and the third, the Tahajjud Prayer, is also included in the glorification of the night. (For explanation, see E.N. 111 of Ṭā Hā; E.N.'s 23, 24 of Ar-Rūm). As for the glorification that has been commanded after "being free from prostrations", it may imply the after-Prayer devotions as well as the offering of the voluntary prayers at the end of the prescribed obligatory Prayers. Ḥadrat 'Umar, Ḥadrat 'Ali, Ḥadrat Ḥasan bin 'Alī, Ḥadrat Abū Hurairah, Ibn 'Abbās, Sha'bi, Mujāhid, 'Ikrimah, Ḥasan Basri, Qatādah, Ibrahīm Nakha'ī and Auzā'ī say that it implies the two

rak'ats after the Maghrib Prayer. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'Āṣ, and according to a tradition, Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās also, held the opinion that it implies the after-Prayer devotions, and Ibn Zaid says that the object of this Command is that voluntary Prayers also should be offered after the prescribed obligatory Prayers.

According to a tradition reported in Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Abū Huraīrah, once the poor emigrants from Makkah came before the Holy Prophet, and said "O Messenger of Allah, the rich people have attained high ranks for themselves. The Holy Prophet asked: What has happened ? They said: They offer the Prayers as we offer, and they observe the Fasts as we observe; but they practise charity, which we cannot, and they set the slaves free which we cannot. The Holy Prophet said: Should I tell you a thing which if you practised, you would surpass all others, except those who practised the same that you practised? It is this that you should pronounce *Subḥān-Allah, al-Ḥamdu-lillāh* and *Allah-u-Akbar*, 33 times each after every Prayer." After some time, the same people came and said: "Our rich brothers also have heard this and they too have started practising, it." Thereupon the Holy Prophet said: "This is Allah's bounty and He bestows it on whomever He wills." According to a tradition these devotional words have to be repeated ten times each instead of 33 times each.

Hadrat Zaid bin Thābit has reported that the Holy Prophet instructed his Companions that they should pronounce *Subḥān-Allah*, and *al Ḥamdu-lillāh* 33 times each and *Allah-u-Akbar* 34 times after every Prayer. Afterwards an Ansār Companion submitted: "I have seen in a vision that somebody was telling me that it would be better if I pronounced these three devotional words 25 times each and then *Lā ilāha ill-Allāh* 25 times. The Holy Prophet replied: Well, you may do likewise." (Aḥmad, Nasā'ī, Dārimī).

Ḥaḍrat Abu Sa'īd Khudrī says: "I have heard the Holy Prophet pronounce the following words when he would return after the Prayers were over: *Subḥāna Rabbika Rabbil-'izzat-i 'ammā yaṣifūn' wa salām-un 'alal-mursalīn, wal-ḥamdu lillāh-i Rabb-il 'ālamīn.*" (Jaṣṣās *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).*

Besides these, several other forms of the after-Prayer devotional pronouncements also have been reported from the Holy Prophet. Those who wish to act on this instruction of the Qur'ān may select the one they find suitable from *Mishkāt: Bāb adh-dhikr ba'd aṣ-Ṣalāt,* commit it to memory and practise it. Nothing can be better than what the Holy Prophet himself has taught in this regard. But what one should bear in mind is that the real object of the devotional pronouncements is not to utter these words only as a matter of course but to refresh and fix their meaning in the mind. Therefore, the meaning of whatever

devotions one pronounces should be understood well and then practised with full consciousness of the meaning.

52. That is, "Wherever a dead person would be lying, or wherever his death had occurred in the world, the cry of the caller shall reach him there, which will urge him to rise and go before his Lord to render his account. This cry will be such that everybody who rises from death anywhere on the surface of the earth, will feel as though the caller had called him from a nearby place. Simultaneously will this cry be heard everywhere on the globe equally clearly. From this also one can judge how different will be the concepts of space and time in the next world from what they are in this world, and what forces will be working there in accordance with the new laws."

53. The words *yasmʿaūn-as-ṣaiḥata bil ḥaqq-i* can have two meanings: (1) That all the people will be hearing the cry of the right Command; and (2) that they will be hearing the cry rightly. In the first case the sentence will mean that the people will be hearing the same right Command with their ears, which they were not inclined to accept in the world, which they had persistently refused to believe, and mocked the Prophets who had brought it. In the second case it will mean that they will certainly hear this cry, and they will realize that it is no fancy but indeed the Cry of Resurrection; they will be left with no doubt that the Day of Resurrection of which they had been forewarned had arrived and the Cry that was being raised was of the same.

54. This is the answer to the saying of the disbelievers that has been reproduced in verse 3 above. They said: "How can it be that when we are dead and become dust, we shall be raised back to life once again ? This resurrection is far removed from reason." In reply it has been said: "This gathering together, *i.e.*, raising back to life and gathering all the people of the former and latter times together, is very easy for Us. It is not at all difficult for Us to know as to where the dust of one particular person lies and where of the other. We shall also face no difficulty in knowing as to which are the particles of Harry and which of Dick among the scattered particles of the dust. Gathering together all these particles separately and re-making each and every man's body once again and then creating in that body, the same very personality which had lived in it before, is not a task that may require any hard labour from Us, but all this can be accomplished immediately at one signal from Us. All those human beings who have been born in the world since the time of Adam till Resurrection can be brought together by one Command of Ours. If your petty mind thinks it is far off, it may think so, but it is not beyond the power of the Creator of the Universe."

55. In this sentence there is consolation for the Holy Prophet as well as a threat for the disbelievers. Addressing the Holy Prophet it has been said: "Do not

care at all about what these foolish people utter about you: We are hearing everything and it is for Us to deal with it." The disbelievers are being warned to the effect: "The taunting remarks that you are passing against Our Prophet, will cost you dearly. We Ourself are hearing everything that you utter and you will have to suffer for its consequences."

56. This does not mean that the Holy Prophet wanted to compel the people into believing and Allah stopped him from this, but, in fact, although the Holy Prophet has been addressed the disbelievers are being warned, as if to say, "Our Prophet has not been sent as a dictator over you. He is not there to compel you to become believers even if you did not wish to believe. His only responsibility is that he should recite the Qur'ān and make the truth plain to the one who would take the warning. Now, if you do not accept his invitation, We Ourself will deal with you, not he."


LI
ADH
DHĀRIYĀT
الذّٰرِيٰت

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LI

ADH-DHĀRIYĀT

الذّٰرِيٰت

INTRODUCTION

Name

It is derived from the very first word *wadh-dhariyāt*, which implies that it is a Sūrah which begins with the word *adh-dhāriyāt*.

Period of Revelation

The subject-matter and the style clearly show that it was sent down in the period when although the Holy Prophet's invitation was being resisted and opposed with denial and ridicule and false accusations stubbornly, persecution had not yet started. Therefore, this Sūrah also seems to have been revealed in the same period in which the Sūrah Qāf was revealed.

Subject-Matter and Topics

The Sūrah mostly deals with the Hereafter, and in the end it presents the invitation to *Tauḥīd*. In addition, the people have also been warned that refusal to accept the message of the Prophets and persistence in the concepts and creeds of ignorance have proved to be disastrous for those nations themselves which have adopted this attitude and way of life in the past.

About the Hereafter what this Sūrah presents in short but pithy sentences is this: The people's different and conflicting beliefs about the end of human life are themselves an express proof that none of these beliefs and creeds is based on knowledge; everyone by himself has formed an ideology on the basis of conjecture and made the same his creed. Someone thought that there would be no life-after-death; someone believed in the life-after-death, but in the form of the transmigration of souls; someone believed in the life hereafter and the meting out of the rewards and punishments but invented different sorts of props and supports to escape retribution. About a question of such vital and fundamental importance a wrong view of which renders man's whole life-work wrong and waste and ruins his future for ever, it would be a disastrous folly to build an ideology only on the basis of speculation and conjecture, without knowledge. It would mean that man should remain involved in a grave misunderstanding, pass his whole life in the heedlessness of error, and after death should suddenly meet with a situation for which he had made no preparation at all. There is only one way of forming the right opinion about such a question, and it is this: Man should seriously ponder over the knowledge about the Hereafter that the Prophet of Allah is conveying to him from Him, and should study carefully the system of the earth and heavens and his own existence, and should see whether the evidence of that knowledge's being sound and correct is afforded by everything around him or not. In this regard, the arrangement of the wind and rain, the structure of the earth and the creatures found on it, man's own self, the creation of the heavens and of everything in the world in the form of pairs have been presented as evidence of the Hereafter, and instances have been cited from human history to show that the temper of the empire of the Universe requires that the law of retribution must operate here.

After this, giving the invitation to *Tauhîd* briefly, it has been said: "Your Creator has not created you for the service of others but for His own service. He is not like your false gods, which receive sustenance from you and godhead of which cannot function without your help, but He is a God Who is the Sustainer of all, Who does not stand in need of sustenance from anyone and Whose Godhead is functioning by His own power and might.

In this very connection, it has also been stated that whenever the Prophets of Allah have been opposed and resisted, they have not been opposed and resisted on the basis of any rational ground but on the basis of the same obduracy and stubbornness and false pride that is being shown against the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and there is no other motive for it than rebellion and arrogance. Then the Holy Prophet has been instructed not to bother about the rebels but to go on performing his mission of invitation and admonition, for it is useful and beneficial for the believers although it may not be so for the other people. As for the wicked people who still persist in their rebellion, they should know that their predecessors who followed the same way of life, have already received their shares of the punishment, and these people's share of the punishment has been made ready for them.



وَالذّٰرِيٰتِ ذَرْوًا ﴿١﴾ فَالْحٰمِلٰتِ وِقْرًا ﴿٢﴾ فَالْجٰرِيٰتِ يُسْرًا ﴿٣﴾ فَالْمُقَسِّمٰتِ اَمْرًا ﴿٤﴾
اِنَّمَا تُوْعَدُوْنَ لَصَادِقٌ ﴿٥﴾ وَّاِنَّ الدِّيْنَ لَوَاقِعٌ ﴿٦﴾ وَالسَّمَآءِ ذَاتِ الْحُبُكِ ﴿٧﴾
اِنَّكُمْ لَفِيْ قَوْلٍ مُّخْتَلِفٍ ﴿٨﴾ يُّؤْفَكُ عَنْهُ مَنْ اُفِكَ ﴿٩﴾ قُتِلَ الْخَرّٰصُوْنَ ﴿١٠﴾
الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِيْ غَمْرَةٍ سَاهُوْنَ ﴿١١﴾ يَسْـَٔلُوْنَ اَيَّانَ يَوْمُ الدِّيْنِ ﴿١٢﴾ يَوْمَ هُمْ عَلَى
النَّارِ يُفْتَنُوْنَ ﴿١٣﴾ ذُوْقُوْا فِتْنَتَكُمْ ؕ هٰذَا الَّذِيْ كُنْتُمْ بِهٖ تَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَ ﴿١٤﴾ اِنَّ
الْمُتَّقِيْنَ فِيْ جَنّٰتٍ وَّعُيُوْنٍ ﴿١٥﴾ اٰخِذِيْنَ مَآ اٰتٰىهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ ؕ اِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا قَبْلَ
ذٰلِكَ مُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿١٦﴾ كَانُوْا قَلِيْلًا مِّنَ الَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُوْنَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَبِالْاَسْحَارِ هُمْ
يَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَفِيْٓ اَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّآئِلِ وَالْمَحْرُوْمِ ﴿١٩﴾ وَفِي الْاَرْضِ اٰيٰتٌ

LI

ADH-DHĀRIYĀT

الذّٰرِيٰت

Verses: 60 *Revealed at Makkah*

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

1-6 By the winds that raise up dust, then lift up clouds laden with water,[1] then glide with ease, then distribute a big affair (rain),[2] the truth is that that with which you are being threatened[3] is true, and the meting out of the rewards and punishments is inevitable.[4]

7-9 By the sky of various appearances,[5] you are at variance with one another (concerning the Hereafter)[6]; only such a one is perverted from it who has turned away from the Truth.[7]

Doomed are they who judge by conjecture,[8] who are deeply engrossed in ignorance and heedlessness.[9] They ask, "When will be the Day of Retribution?" It will be when they are punished at the Fire.[10] (It will be said to them:) "Now taste your mischief :[11] this is the same which you were seeking to be hastened."[12] The righteous,[13] however, shall be among gardens and watersprings that Day, and shall be joyfully receiving what their Lord shall give them.[14] They were doers of good even before the coming of this Day: they slept but little in the night,[15] prayed for forgiveness in the early hours of dawn,[16] and in their possessions was a due share of him who asked and of him who was needy.[17] 10-19

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1. All the commentators are agreed that *adh-dhariyāt* implies the winds that disperse and raise up the dust, and *al-ḥamilāt i wiqran* implies the winds that lift up millions of tons of water vapours from the oceans in the form of clouds. This same commentary has been reported from Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, Ḥaḍrat 'Ali, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, and also from Mujāhid, Sa'īd bin Jubair, Ḥasan Baṣrī, Qatādah, Suddī and other scholars.

2. The commentators have disputed the commentary of *al-jāriyat-i yusran* and *al-muqassimāt-i amran*. One group has preferred the view, or held this meaning as admissible, that by these two also are meant the winds; that is, the same very winds then transport the clouds, and spreading over different parts of the earth, distribute the water as and where required according to Allah's command. The other group holds that *al-āriyāt-i yusran* implies fast moving boats, and *al-muqassimat-i amran* implies the angels who distribute among the creatures their shares of the provisions according to Allah's command. According to a tradition, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar explained this very meaning of these two sentences and said: "Had I not heard this from the Holy Prophet, I would not have mentioned it." On this very basis, 'Allama Ālūsī has expressed the opinion that it is not permissible to take any other meaning of these sentences than this, and those who have taken any other meaning, have taken undue liberties. But Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr says that this tradition has weak links of the transmitters and on its basis it cannot be said with absolute certainty that the Holy Prophet might himself have given this commentary of these sentences. There is no doubt that from a good number of the Companions and their immediate followers only this second commentary has been reported, but a good number of the commentators have given the first commentary also, and it fits in better with the context. Shāh Rafī'uddīn, Shāh 'Abdul Qādir and Maulānā Maḥmūd-ul-Ḥasan also have preferred the first meaning in their translations of the Qur'ān.

3. The word used in the original is *tū'adūn*. If it is derived from *wa'd*, the meaning would be: "That which you are being promised;" and if it is from *wa'id*, it would mean: "That which you are being threatened with." As regards the context, the second meaning is preferable, for the addressees are the people who were lost in disbelief, polytheism and sin, and were not prepared to believe that they would be held accountable some time in the future and would be rewarded or punished accordingly. That is why, we have taken *tū'adūn* in the meaning of *wā'id* and not of *wa'd* (promise).

4. This is the thing for which the oath has been sworn. The oath implies this: The unique order and regularity with which the wonderful system of the rain is functioning before your eyes, and the wisdom and good reasons which clearly underlie it, testify to the reality that this world is not a meaningless and useless toy-house where the great drama of life is being presented at random since millions and millions of years. But, it is, in fact, a wise system of the highest order in which everything that happens has a purpose and reason behind it. In this system it is not possible that a creature like man should have been given intellect, sense and the powers to exploit things to advantage, should have been granted moral sense to distinguish the good and evil, right and wrong deeds and then might have been left alone foolishly and meaninglessly in the world to behave as he pleased, and that he should never be questioned as to how he had used and employed the powers of the heart and mind and body, the vast means placed at his disposal to work in the world, and the power and authority granted to him to employ the countless creatures of God to advantage. In this system of the Universe where everything is purposeful, how can the creation of a unique being like man only be purposeless? In a system where everything is based on wisdom, how can the creation of man only be useless and futile? The purpose of the creation of those things which do not possess consciousness and intellect is fulfilled in this very physical world. Therefore, it would be right and reasonable if they were destroyed after they had reached the end of their life term, for they have not been granted any powers and authority for which they might have to be called to account. But a creature which possesses intellect and consciousness and authority, whose activities are not confined only to the physical world, but are also moral in nature, and whose actions entailing moral consequences do not take place only till the end of life, but continue to register their moral effects on it even after death, cannot be destroyed like plants and animals just after it has fulfilled the function of its physical existence. Whatever good or evil act he has committed by his own will and choice, he must get the reward or suffer the punishment for it justly and equitably, for this is the basic requirement of the factor under which, contrary to other creatures, he has been endowed with the freedom of choice and will. If he is not held accountable, if he is not rewarded or punished according to his moral

acts, and if he also is destroyed at the conclusion of his physical life like the creatures which have been given no freedom of will and choice, his creation would inevitably be altogether futile, and a Wise Being cannot be expected to indulge in a futile exercise.

Besides, there is also another reason for swearing an oath by these four phenomena of the Universe regarding the occurrence of the Hereafter and the meting out of rewards and punishments. The ground on which the deniers of the Hereafter regard the life after death as impossible is this: When we are mixed up with dust after death and our particles have scattered away in the earth, how can it be possible that all these scattered particles of the body are reassembled and we are made to rise up again? The error of this apprehension is by itself removed when we consider deeply the four phenomena of the Universe, which have been presented as an argument for the Hereafter. The rays of the sun have their effect on all the collections of water on the surface of the earth, where their heat reaches. In this process countless drops of water evaporate from the collection, but they do not become extinct, and every drop remains preserved in the air as vapour. When Allah commands the same wind gathers the same vapours of the drops together, combines them into thick clouds, spreads those clouds on different parts of the earth and precisely at the time appointed by Allah causes each single drop to fall back to the earth in the form as it was in the beginning. This phenomenon that is occurring before the eyes of man daily testifies that the particles of the bodies of the dead men can also gather together at one command by Allah and the men can be raised up in the shape in which they lived before. Whether these particles are in the dust, or in the water, or in the air, in any case they remain preserved in this very earth and its atmosphere. Why should it be difficult for the God Who gathers together the vapours of water after they had dispersed in the air, by means of the same air, and then causes them to rain as water, to gather together the scattered particles of the human bodies from the air, water and earth and then combine them in their original form and shape?

5. The word *hubuk* in the original is also used for the paths and for the waves which are produced on the sand of the desert and the surface of stagnant water by the wind; it is also spoken for the curls in wavy hair. Here, the sky has been characterised by *"hubuk"* either because the sky is often overcast with clouds of different shapes, which go on changing because of the wind, and no shape lasts nor resembles any other, or because at night one sees the stars scattered in the sky in many different combinations and no combination resembles any other combination.

6. The oath has been sworn by the sky of various appearances on this difference of views because of the similarity. That is, just as the clouds and the clusters of stars in the sky have different appearances and there is uniformity

among them, so are also your views about the Hereafter, each different from the other. Some one says that this world is eternal and no Resurrection can take place. Another says that this system is not eternal and can come to an end in the course of time, but whatever becomes extinct, including man, cannot possibly be resurrected. Another one regards resurrection as possible but, holds the belief that man in order to be requited for his good and evil deeds is born and reborn again and again in this very world. Some one believes in Hell and Heaven but combines the transmigration of the souls also with it. He thinks that the sinner goes to Hell to suffer the punishment as well as is born and reborn in this world for the sake of the punishment. Some one says that the life in the world is in itself an agony; as long as man's self remains attached to physical life, he goes on dying and taking birth again and again in this very world, and his real salvation is that he should attain annihilation. Some one believes in the Hereafter and Hell and Heaven, but says that God by giving death to His only son on the cross had atoned for the original sin of man, and man will escape the evil consequences of his evil acts by believing in the son. Some other people generally believe in the Hereafter and the meting out of the rewards and punishments but at the same time regard certain holy men as the intercessors, who are such favourites of Allah, or wield such influence with Him, that any one who attaches himself to them as a disciple, can escape the punishment whatever he may do in the world. About these holy men also there is no agreement among their devotees; every group of them has its own separate intercessor. This difference of the views itself is a proof that whenever man has formed an opinion about his own and the world's end, independent of Revelation and Prophethood, he has formed it without knowledge; otherwise if man in this regard really had some direct means of knowledge there would not have arisen so many different and contradictory beliefs.

7. The pronoun of *'anhu* in this sentence either turns to the meting out of the rewards and punishments, or to various views. In the first case, it means: "The meting out of the rewards has to take place, in spite of your holding different beliefs about it; but only such a person is perverted from it, who has turned away from the Truth." In the second case, the meaning is: "Only such a one is misled by these different views, who has turned away from the Truth."

8. Here the Qur'ān is warning man of an important truth. To judge or make an estimate on the basis of conjecture and speculation in the ordinary matters of worldly life may be useful to some extent, although it would be no substitute for knowledge, but it would be disastrous to make estimates and give judgements merely according to one's own conjectures and speculations in a question of such fundamental nature and importance as whether we are, or are not, responsible and accountable to anyone for the deeds and actions of our lifetime, and if we are, to whom we are accountable, when and what shall be the accountability, and what

will be the consequences of our success and failure in that accountability. This is not a question on which man may form an estimate merely according to his conjecture and speculation and then stake his entire life capital on the gamble. For if the conjecture proves to be wrong, it would mean that the man has doomed himself to utter ruin. Furthermore, this question is not at all included among those questions about which one may form a right opinion by the exercise of analogy and conjecture. For conjecture and analogy can work only in those matters which are perceptible for man, whereas this is a question which does not come under perception in any way. Therefore, it is not at all possible that a conjectural and analogical judgement about it may be right and correct. As for the question: What is the right way for man to form an opinion about the matters which are non-perceptible and incomprehensible in nature? this has been answered at many places in the Qur'ān, and from this Sūrah also the same answer becomes obvious, and it is this: (1) Man himself cannot reach the reality directly; (2) Allah gives the knowledge of the reality through His Prophets; and (3) man can ascertain the truth of that knowledge in this way: he should study deeply the countless signs that are found in the earth and heavens and in his own self, then consider seriously and impartially whether those signs testify to the reality that the Prophet has presented, or to the different ideologies that the other people have presented in this regard. This is the only method of scientific investigation about God and the Hereafter that has been taught in the Qur'ān. Doomed would be the one who discarded this method and followed his own analogies and conjectures.

9. That is, "They do not know what fate they are heading for on account of their wrong conjectures, whereas every way that is adopted with a wrong view of the Hereafter only leads to ruin. He who is a denier of the Hereafter is not at all preparing himself for any accountability and is engrossed in the thought that there would be no life after death, whereas the time would suddenly come when against all this expectations he would open his eyes in the new life and he would realize that there he has to render an account of each of his acts and deeds. The person who is expending his life under the idea that he would come back to this very world after death, will come to know as soon as he dies that all doors of return are closed, that there is no chance of compensating for the misdeeds of the previous life by any new actions, and that there is another life ahead in which he has to meet with and suffer the consequences of his worldly life for ever after. The person who commits suicide in the hope that after he has destroyed his self and its desires he would escape the agony of life in the form of total annihilation, will find as soon as he passes through the gate of death that there is an everlasting life ahead and not mortality, where he has to explain as to why he had been straining every nerve to destroy the self that he had been blessed with instead of developing and adorning it in every possible way. Likewise, the one who

continued committing disobedience of Allah throughout life, placing reliance upon some son of Allah's becoming an atonement or some holy one's becoming an intercessor, will come to know as soon as he appears before Allah that there is neither any atoner there nor anyone wielding such influence and power that he may save him from Allah's grasp and punishment by means of his own power and influence. Thus, all these conjectural creeds are, in fact, an opiate under the intoxication of which these people are lying senseless, and do not know where they are being misled by the ignorance which they have adopted by rejecting the true knowledge given by God and His Prophets.

10. The disbelievers did not ask the question: When will Resurrection be? for the sake of seeking knowledge but for the purpose of taunt and ridicule. That is why they have been given such an answer. It is just like the taunting reaction of the wicked person who is admonished to desist from his immoral deeds, otherwise he would meet with the evil consequences of those deeds one day, and he asks in jest: When will that day be? Obviously, such a question is not asked to know the date of the occurrence of the evil end but to make fun of the admonition. Therefore, its right answer is that it will occur when the evildoers will meet with their doom. Besides, one should also understand well that if a denier of the Hereafter is discussing the question of the Hereafter sensibly, he can dispute the arguments in favour and against it, but he can never ask the question: On what date will the Hereafter occur? unless he has lost all reason. Whenever he puts such a question, it will only be as a taunt and ridicule. For it does not at all affect the real discussion whether the date of the occurrence of the Hereafter is stated or not. No one can deny the Hereafter only because the year and the month and the day of its occurrence have not been given, nor can one believe in it on hearing that it will occur on such and such a day of such and such a month and year. The date is no argument that may cause a denier to be convinced of its coming, for after that the question will arise: How can one believe whether on that particular day the Hereafter will actually occur?

11. The word *fitnah* gives two meanings here: (1) "Taste this torment of yours;" and (2) "taste the mischief that you had created and spread in the world."

12. The disbelieves' asking: "When will the Day of Retribution be?" implied: "Why is it being delayed?" That is, "When we have denied it and have deserved the punishment for belying it, why doesn't it overtake us immediately?" That is why when they will be burning in the Hell-fire, at that time it will be said to them: "This is that which you sought to be hastened." This sentence by itself gives the meaning: It was Allah's kindness that He did not seize you immediately on the occurrence of disobedience from you and went on giving you respite after

respite to think and understand and mend your ways. But the foolish people that you were, you did not take advantage of the respite but demanded that your doom should be hastened for you instead. Now you may see for yourself what it was that you were seeking to be hastened?"

13. In this context the word *muttaqī* (the righteous) clearly implies those people who believed in the Hereafter when they were given the news of it by the Book of Allah and His Messenger, and adopted the attitude and way of life that they were taught for success in the life hereafter, and refrained from the way about which they had been told that it would involve man in the torment of God.

14. Literally: "... shall be receiving what their Lord will have granted them", but in this context "receiving" does not merely mean "to receive" but to receive joyfully. Obviously, when a person is given something of his own choice and liking, his receiving it will naturally have the meaning of accepting and receiving it joyfully.

15. Some commentators have given this meaning of this verse: "Seldom did it so happen that they spent the whole night sleeping and did not spend a part of it, in the beginning of the night or in the middle or in the end of it, awake in the worship of Allah." This commentary with a little variation in wording has been related from Ḥaḍrat Ibn 'Abbās, Anas bin Mālik, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, Mutrif bin 'Abdullah, Abul 'Āliyah, Mujāhid, Qatādah, Rabī' bin Anas and others. According to some other commentators, it means this: "They spent the major part of their nights in the worship of Allah Almighty and slept little." This meaning has been reported from Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣrī, Aḥnaf bin Qais, and Ibn Shihāb Zuhrī, and the later commentators and translators have preferred this, for this appears to be in better agreement with the words of the verse and the context. That is why we have adopted this meaning in the translation.

16. That is "They did not belong to those who spent their nights in immoral and indecent acts and even then never thought of seeking Allah's forgiveness. On the contrary, they spent a major part of the nights in the worship of Allah and then in the early hours of dawn sought His forgiveness, saying that they did not do full justice to the worship that was due from them. The words *hum yastaghfirūn* also contain an allusion to this that it befitted and suited them alone that they should exert their utmost in the service of their Lord and then, at the same time, should implore Him humbly for the forgiveness of their errors and shortcomings instead of exulting at and waxing proud of their good acts. This could not be the way of those shameless, wicked people who committed sin and behaved arrogantly as well.

[Contd. on p. 148]

لِّلْمُوْقِنِيْنَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَفِيْٓ اَنْفُسِكُمْ ؕ اَفَلَا تُبْصِرُوْنَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَفِي السَّمَآءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا
تُوْعَدُوْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَآءِ وَالْاَرْضِ اِنَّهٗ لَحَقٌّ مِّثْلَ مَآ اَنَّكُمْ تَنْطِقُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾
هَلْ اَتٰىكَ حَدِيْثُ ضَيْفِ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ الْمُكْرَمِيْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾ اِذْ دَخَلُوْا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوْا سَلٰمًا
قَالَ سَلٰمٌ ۚ قَوْمٌ مُّنْكَرُوْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾ فَرَاغَ اِلٰٓى اَهْلِهٖ فَجَآءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِيْنٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَقَرَّبَهٗٓ
اِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ اَلَا تَاْكُلُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾ فَاَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيْفَةً ؕ قَالُوْا لَا تَخَفْ ؕ وَبَشَّرُوْهُ
بِغُلٰمٍ عَلِيْمٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ فَاَقْبَلَتِ امْرَاَتُهٗ فِيْ صَرَّةٍ فَصَكَّتْ وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوْزٌ
عَقِيْمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ قَالُوْا كَذٰلِكِ ۙ قَالَ رَبُّكِ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْحَكِيْمُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٣٠﴾

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ اَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُوْنَ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّآ اُرْسِلْنَآ اِلٰى قَوْمٍ
مُّجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾ لِنُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِّنْ طِيْنٍ ﴿٣٣﴾ مُّسَوَّمَةً عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ
لِلْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾ فَاَخْرَجْنَا مَنْ كَانَ فِيْهَا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَمَا وَجَدْنَا فِيْهَا
غَيْرَ بَيْتٍ مِّنَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَتَرَكْنَا فِيْهَآ اٰيَةً لِّلَّذِيْنَ يَخَافُوْنَ الْعَذَابَ
الْاَلِيْمَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَفِيْ مُوْسٰٓى اِذْ اَرْسَلْنٰهُ اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ بِسُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَتَوَلّٰى بِرُكْنِهٖ
وَقَالَ سٰحِرٌ اَوْ مَجْنُوْنٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ فَاَخَذْنٰهُ وَجُنُوْدَهٗ فَنَبَذْنٰهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ وَهُوَ
مُلِيْمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَفِيْ عَادٍ اِذْ اَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّيْحَ الْعَقِيْمَ ﴿٤١﴾ مَا تَذَرُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ اَتَتْ
عَلَيْهِ اِلَّا جَعَلَتْهُ كَالرَّمِيْمِ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَفِيْ ثَمُوْدَ اِذْ قِيْلَ لَهُمْ تَمَتَّعُوْا حَتّٰى حِيْنٍ ﴿٤٣﴾
فَعَتَوْا عَنْ اَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ فَاَخَذَتْهُمُ الصّٰعِقَةُ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوْا
مِنْ قِيَامٍ وَّمَا كَانُوْا مُنْتَصِرِيْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَقَوْمَ نُوْحٍ مِّنْ قَبْلُ ؕ اِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا قَوْمًا
فٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَالسَّمَآءَ بَنَيْنٰهَا بِاَيْدٍ وَّاِنَّا لَمُوْسِعُوْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَالْاَرْضَ فَرَشْنٰهَا فَنِعْمَ
الْمٰهِدُوْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَفِرُّوْٓا اِلَى

There are many signs in the earth for those who affirm faith[18] and also in your own selves.[19] Do you not perceive ? In the heaven is your provision and also that which is being promised to you.[20] So, by the Lord of the heaven and the earth ! This is true, as true as you are speaking now. 20-23

O Prophet,[21] has the story of Abraham's honoured guests reached you ?[22] When they came to him, they said, "Peace to you." He said, "Peace to you too— unfamiliar folks they are!"[23] Then he went quietly to his family[24] and brought out a fatted (roasted) calf[25] and laid it before the guests. He said, "Will you not eat ?" Then he became afraid of them.[26] They said, "Be not afraid!" And they gave him the good news of the birth of a son, possessing knowledge.[27] Hearing this his wife came forward, crying, and she smote her face, and said, "An old woman, barren!"[28] "Thus has said your Lord," they replied, "He is the All-Wise, the All-Knowing."[29] Abraham said, "O Divine Messengers, what is your special errand?"[30] They said, "We have been sent to a guilty people,[31] to rain upon them stones of baked clay, which are marked with your Lord for the transgressors."[32]—Then[33] We evacuated all those who were believers in that settlement, and We did not find in it any house of the Muslims except one.[34] Then We left there only one sign for those who fear the painful torment.[35] 24-37

(And there is a sign for you) in the story of Moses. When We sent him to Pharaoh with a clear authority,[36] he showed arrogance on account of his might, and said, "He is a sorcerer or a madman."[37] Consequently, We seized him and his hosts and cast them into the sea, and he became blameworthy.[38] 38-40

And (for you is a sign) in 'Ād when We sent upon them a blighting wind which made rotten everything that it blew on.[39] 41-42

And (for you is a sign) in Thamūd when it was said to them, "Enjoy yourselves for a while."[40] But in spite of this warning they defied the Command of their Lord. Consequently, they were overtaken by a thunderbolt[41] even while they looked on. Then they could neither stand up nor were able to save themselves.[42] 43-45

And before them We destroyed the people of Noah because they were a sinful people. 46

47-51 We[43] have built the heaven with Our own might and We possess the power for it.[44] We have spread out the earth and (behold) how excellent Spreaders We are![45] And We have created everything in pairs;[46] maybe that you learn a lesson from it.[47] So flee unto Allah: I am an open warner from Him to you. And do not set up another god with God; I am on open warner from Him to you[48].

Contd. from p.145]

17. In other words, on the one hand, they recognized the right of their Lord and duly discharged it; on the other, they did not think that whatever Allah had given them, whether little or much, was wholly their own and their children's right, but they had the sense that in their possessions there was the right and share of every such person who was indigent and needy. They did not render help to the people as a charity so as to earn their gratitude for the favour done, but they regarded it as the people's right and discharged it as their own duty. Then their this service to mankind was not only confined to those who came to them for seeking help as beggars but anyone about whom they came to know that he had been left destitute, they would become anxious to render him necessary help of their own accord. There was no orphan who might have been left helpless, no widow who might have had no bread-winner, no disabled person who might be unable to earn a living, no one who might have lost his job, or whose earning might not be sufficing his needs, nobody who might have been hit by a calamity and might be unable to compensate for the loss by himself, in short, there was no needy one whose condition they might have known and yet might have withheld their help when they could have rendered him necessary help and support.

The following are the three qualities on the basis of which Allah regards them as the righteous doers of good, and says that these very qualities have made them worthy of Paradise; (1) That they believed in the Hereafter and refrained from every act and conduct which Allah and His Messenger had stated to be disastrous for the life-after-death; (2) that they exerted their utmost to do full justice to the service of Allah and still sought Allah's forgiveness instead of exulting at their acts of piety; and (3) that they served Allah's servants not as a favour to them but as their own duty and their right due from them.

Here, one should also know and understand another thing; The right of the needy ones that has been mentioned here in the wealth of the believers does not imply the *zakāt*, which has been imposed as religious duty on them. But this is the right that a well-to-do believer himself feels there is in his possessions of the needy even after he has paid off the *zakāt*, and he discharges it willingly even if it has not been made obligatory by the *Sharī'ah*. Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid, Zaid bin

Aslam and other scholars have understood this very meaning of this verse. In fact, the real spirit of this Divine Command is that a pious and virtuous person is never involved in the misunderstanding that he has become relieved of his duty of discharging the right of Allah and His servants that there was in his possessions after he has paid the *zakāt*, and now he is not bound to help every needy and destitute person whom he comes across. Contrary to this, every servant of Allah, who is really pious and righteous, remains ever ready to do whatever good he can willingly, does not let slip any opportunity when he could do some good to the people in the world. He is not of the way of thinking that he has done whatever good he had been enjoined to do and now no more good is required to be done by him. The one who has recognized the true value of goodness, does not perform it as a burden but tries to earn more and more of it, greedily as a bargain to his own advantage, in his own interest.

18. The signs imply those proofs which testify to the possibility and necessity of the Hereafter. The earth's own body and its structure, its having been placed at a suitable distance from the sun at a particular angle, the arrangement of heat and light and of different seasons on it, the provision of air and water on it, and of countless different kinds of treasures in its belly, covering its surface with a fertile crest and causing to grow in it an endless variety of vegetables, generating countless races of the animals of the land and water and air, providing suitable food and proper conditions for the life of every species, creating and making available all those means and resources on it even before the creation of man, so as to meet and suit his ever increasing needs in every stage of history as well as accord with the development of his civilization and way of living, these and countless other signs can be seen in the earth and its surroundings by every discerning eye. The case of the one who has closed the doors of his heart to belief and faith is different. He will see in these every thing else but not any sign that may point to the reality. But an un-prejudiced person who has an open mind, will never form the idea after observing these signs that all this has come about as the result of an accidental explosion, that had occurred suddenly in the universe millions of years ago; he will rather be convinced that this wise and perfect work of art is the creation of an Omnipotent and Omniscient God. And that God Who has made this earth cannot be helpless to resurrect man after death, nor can He be so foolish as to leave a sensible and intelligent being like man after granting him powers and authority to roam at will in His earth. The fact that man has been granted powers and authority by itself demands that he should be accountable; otherwise it would be against wisdom and justice; and the Creator's being all-powerful (Omnipotent) is by itself a proof that after the human species has fulfilled its function in the world, He can raise all its members back to life and gather them

together from wherever they are lying dead in the earth for the purpose of accountability.

19. That is, "You may not look outside yourself; look within your own self, and you will find countless signs testifying to the same truth. You will see how your creation was begun by combining a microscopic sperm with a microscopic egg in a corner of the mother's body; how you were blessed with a body of unique structure and a self endowed with wonderful powers and abilities; how you were brought out from the dark world of your mother's womb, as soon as your structure became complete, into this vast world, equipped with an automatic machine within yourself, which goes on functioning by itself from the day you take birth till your maturity and old age, to assimilate food, produce blood and circulate it in the veins, discharge waste matter, prepare new parts in place of the wasted and worn out parts of the body, resisting the internal and the external hazards to the body and compensating for the losses, even for sending you to peaceful sleep after exhaustion, without any effort required to be made by you towards these basic needs of life. A wonderful brain has been placed under your skull in whose complicated layers lies filled an invaluable wealth of intellect, thought, imagination, consciousness, discrimination, will, memory, desire, feeling and emotions, inclinations and trends, and other mental abilities. You have been provided with numerous means of knowledge which supply you with every kind of informational through the eye, nose, ears and skin. You have been given the tongue and the power of speech by which you can express your thoughts and feelings. And then your ego has been placed as a ruler over the entire kingdom of your body so that it may employ all the powers and abilities and form opinions and decide as in what ways you have to expend and employ your time and labour and efforts, what you have to reject and what you have to accept, what should be your objective in life and what you should shun and avoid.

Thus equipped when you were brought into the world, you saw what provisions had been made ready here for your nourishment, development and the progress and perfection of your self by virtue of which you reached a particular stage of life when you became able to use the powers and authority you had been endowed with.

For using these powers you were given means in the earth, provided with opportunities, and given ability to control and employ many of the things as you pleased. You had all the ways of disbelief and faith, sin and obedience, justice and injustice, good and evil, truth and falsehood, open before you; there were those who invited to each of these ways and there were the means to lead to each one of them. Whoever among you selected one particular way did so on his own responsibility, for he had the power to decide and choose endowed in himself. Depending on the choice made by each one and taking advantage of the

opportunities thus afforded of employing his powers of will and intention some one became a good man and another a bad man; some one adopted the way of belief and faith and another the way of disbelief, polytheism or atheism; some one withheld himself from unlawful desires, and another did whatever he wanted in obedience to his self; some one became an oppressor and another the oppressed; some one carried out his duties and another usurped the rights of others; some one continued to do good till his last breath, another went on committing evil till his last moment of life; some one exerted himself to raise the word of the truth, another went on oppressing the followers of the truth in order to cause falsehood to flourish.

Now, can a person, unless he is absolutely blind and senseless, say that a being such as this has appeared on the earth just by an accident? that there is no wisdom and no plan working behind his creation? that the storms that he is raising on the earth are without a purpose and will end up without entailing any consequence ? that there will be no reward for a good act and no punishment for an evil act? and that injustice will not be redressed and the unjust will not be brought to book? Such things may be said by a person who has lost his reason, or by the one who is resolved not to acknowledge at all the wisdom of a Wise Being working behind the creation of man. But an un-prejudiced, sensible person cannot help but admit that the creation of man, the powers and abilities he has been given, and the position he has been granted here, is certainly a grand, wise plan, and the wisdom of the God Whose plan it is, inevitably demands that man should be questioned about his actions and deeds; and it cannot be right to entertain the doubt about the powers of God that He will not be able to recreate man whom He has brought up to this noble position of honour from a mere microscopic cell.

20. By the heaven here is meant the "heavens", by "provisions" all that man is given for his survival and functioning in the world, and by "that which is promised." Resurrection, gathering together, accountability, meting out of rewards and punishments, and Hell and Heaven, which have been foretold and promised in all Divine Books and now in the Qur'ān. The verse means to say; "The decisions as to who should be given what and how much in the world are taken in heavens, and also the decision as to when should any of you be recalled for the purpose of accountability and dispensation of the rewards and punishments."

21. Now, from here to the end of verse 46, brief allusions have been made, one after the other, to the end of Allah's Prophets and some of the nations of the past, which are meant to impress two things:

First, that in human history God's law of retribution has been working constantly, in which precedents are found of the rewards for the righteous and of

punishments for the wicked people continuously. This is a clear evidence of the fact that even in the life of this world the Creator's relationship with man is not merely based on the physical law but the moral law also is working side by aide with it. And when the temper of the kingdom of the universe is such that the creation which has been given an opportunity to act morally while living in a physical body, should not only be dealt with on the basis of physical laws, like animals and plants, but the moral law also should be applied to its moral acts this by itself points to the truth that a time must come in this kingdom when on the completion of man's role in the physical world full results of his moral acts should also appear strictly in accordance with the moral law because in the physical world they do not appear fully.

The second thing that has been impressed by these historical allusions is that the nations which did not believe in the Prophets of Allah and based their conduct and attitude in life on the denial of the Oneness of Allah, the Prophethood and the Hereafter, were ultimately doomed to destruction. This continuous experience of history testifies that God's law of morality that was conveyed through the Prophets, and on the basis of which man will be subjected to accountability in the Hereafter, is entirely based on the truth. For whichever nation determined its conduct and attitude in the world independent of this law, considering itself irresponsible and un-accountable, has gone straight to its doom.

22. This story has been narrated at three places in the Qur'ān above, in Hūd: 69-73, Al-Ḥijr: 51-56 and Al-'Ankabūt: 31.

23. In view of the context in which this sentence has occurred, it can have two meanings: (1) That the Prophet Abraham himself said to the guests, "I have never had the chance to see you before; you are perhaps new-comers in this land." (2) That after responding to their salutation, the Prophet Abraham said these words to himself, or to his servants, while going inside the house for arranging the feast, "They appear to be strangers: people of their noble nature and appearance have not been seen before in this land."

24. That is, "He did not tell his guests that he was going to arrange food for them, but after they were seated he went quietly into the house to arrange a feast for them, so that the guests should not refuse it out of formality."

25. In Sūrah Hūd, the words are *'ijlin ḥanīdh*, a roasted calf; here *bi-'ijlin samīn*: a fatted calf that he got roasted.

26. That is, "When they did not stretch out their hands for food, the Prophet Abraham became afraid in his heart. The reason for this fear could be that in tribal life the strangers' going to a house and avoiding food used to be an indication that they had come with an evil design. But most probably when they

refrained from food the Prophet Abraham realized that they were angels, who had come in human guise; and since the angels came in human guise only on extraordinary occasions, he became afraid that they must have come in that guise on some dreadful mission.

27. According to Sūrah Hūd: 71, this was the good news of the birth of the Prophet Isaac (peace be upon him) and this also contained the good news that through the Prophet Isaac he would have a grandson like the Prophet Jacob (peace be upon him).

28. That is, "I am not only old but barren too. How shall a child be born to me?" According to the Bible, the Prophet Abraham at that time was a hundred years old and Sarah was ninety. (Gen., 17: 17).

29. The object of this story is to tell that Allah will certainly reward His servant, who did full justice to the rights of His worship in the world, in the Hereafter handsomely, but even in this world he rewarded him well by giving him children at an age when according to the common physical laws he could not beget children and his aged wife having remained childless throughout life had completely despaired of ever bearing children; and then He granted him such extraordinary children as have not been granted to any one else in the world. There has been no other man in history in whose line four Prophets might have been born in succession. It was the Prophet Abraham alone whose line continued to be blessed with Prophethood for three generations, and the illustrious Prophets like Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph (peace be upon them) emerged from his house.

30. As the angels come in human guise only on highly important occasaions the Prophet Abraham used the word *khaṭb* to find out the purpose of their visit; the word *khaṭb* in Arabic is used for an errand of some extraordinary nature.

31. That is, to the people of the Prophet Lot. The epithet of "a guilty people" was enough to tell which people were meant in view of the gravity of their crimes. They have already been mentioned in the Qur'ān in Al-A'rāf: 80-84, Hūd: 74-83, Al-Ḥijr: 58-79, Al-Anbiyā': 74-75, Ash-Shu'arā: 160-175, An-Naml: 54-58, Aṣ-Ṣāffāt : 133-137.

32. That is, "Each stone has been marked by your Lord's command to show for which culprit it is meant." According to the details given in the Qur'ān, in Sūrahs Hūd and Al-Ḥijr, their towns were turned upside down, and then showered with stones of baked clay. From this one can understand that the entire land was overturned by a severe earthquake and the people who tried to escape were showered with brimstone and destroyed.

33. As to what happened between them and the people of the Prophet Lot when the angels reached his house after their meeting with the Prophet Abraham, has been left out. The details have been given in the Sūrahs Hūd, Al-Hijr and Al-'Ankabūt above. Here mention is being made only of the time when they were going to be visited by the scourge.

34. That is, "Among the whole nation and in the entire land there was only one house that shone with the light of the Faith and Islam, and it was no other but the house of the Prophet Lot himself. The rest of the entire nation was sunk deep in sin and wickedness and its whole country was brimming over with filth and immorality. Therefore Allah rescued the people of that one house and then sent down the torment on the land, which did not spare any one of the wicked people.

In this verse three important themes have been discussed:

(1) That Allah's law of retribution does not decree the total destruction of a nation as long as there remains a considerable element of good in it. As against the majority of the bad people if it still contains a small element of those who continue trying to invite others to the right way, Allah gives it an opportunity to work, and goes on increasing the respite of the nation which is not yet wholly devoid of goodness. But in case there remains no element of goodness at all in the nation, Allah's law is that He somehow rescues by His power and grace some of the good people, who might have become weary and helpless fighting evil in its settlements, and deals with the rest as every sensible master would deal with his rotten fruit.

(2) That "Muslim" is not the name only of the people who are the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) but of all the Prophets before him and their followers who were also Muslims. Their religions were not mutually exclusive that one might be the religion of the Prophet Abraham, another of the Prophet Moses and still another of the Prophet Jesus, but they all were Muslims and their religion was this same Islam. This truth has been explained at several places in the Qur'ān and there is no room for ambiguity in this regard. For instance, see Al-Baqarah: 128, 131-132; Āl-'Imrān: 67; Al-Mā'idah: 44, 111; Yūnus: 72,84; Yūsuf: 101; Al-A'râf: 126; An-Naml: 31, 42, 44.

(3) That the words *"Mu'min"* and *"Muslim"* have been used as synonyms in this verse. If this verse is read with verse 14 of Al-Ḥujurāt, the error of the thinking of those people becomes obvious, who regard *Mu'min* and *Muslim* as two independent terms of the Qur'ān, which have been used in one and the same meaning every where, and *Muslim* is necessarily used for the person who might have entered the fold of Islam by professing the

Faith only verbally, without true faith. (For further explanation, see E.N. 31 of Sūrah Al-Ḥujurāt).

35. "One sign": the Dead Sea, southern part of which still presents the signs of a great disaster. The archaeologists have expressed the opinion that the principal cities of the people of Lot were probably sunk underground and the waters of the Dead Sea spread over them. For that part of this sea which is situated to the south of the small peninsula called "Al-Lisān" clearly seems to be a later development, and the signs of the ruins of the Dead Sea found to the north of this peninsula are very different from those found in the south. From this it is concluded that the southern part was once higher than the sea level. At some later time it sank and went under water. The period of its sinking also seems to be about 2000 B.C. and the same precisely is the time of the Prophets Abraham and Lot historically. In 1965 an American archaeological research party discovered a large grave-yard at Al-Lisān which contains more than twenty thousand graves. From this one is led to think that nearby it there must have existed a large city. But no ruins of any such city are found in the adjoining area, which might have given rise to such a big grave-yard. This fact also strengthens the doubt that the city whose grave-yard it was has sunk under the sea. The area to the south of the sea still abounds in the ruins and the underground stocks of sulphur, resin, tar and natural gas found in this area lead one to believe that hell must have been let loose at this place at some time by the eruption of lava and the play of lightning. (For further explanation, see E.N. 114 of Ash-Shu'arā').

36. "A clear authority": such miracles and clear evidences which made it absolutely manifest that he had been appointed as a Messenger by the Creator of the earth and heavens.

37. That is, they called him sometimes a sorcerer and sometimes a madman.

38. A whole history has been compressed into this brief sentence. To understand it well one should know that Pharaoh was the absolute ruler of the greatest centre of civilization and culture of the world in those days and the people of the adjoining lands were overawed by his power and might. Obviously, when he might have sunk suddenly one day in the sea along with his armies, the event must have become well known not only in Egypt but among all the neighbouring nations as well. At this, except for those whose kith and kin had sunk, there was no one else among their own people, or in the other nations of the world who would mourn them or write an elegy on them, or would at least express sorrow and say that good and noble people had become a victim of the disaster. Instead of this, as the world had become fed up with their wickedness and injustices, every person heaved a sigh of relief at their exemplary fate, everyone cursed them, and

anyone who heard this news exclaimed that the wicked people had deserved the fate justly. In Sūrah Ad-Dukhān the same thing has been expressed, thus: "Then neither did the heavens weep on them nor the earth." (For explanation, see E.N. 26 of Sūrah Ad-Dukhan).

39. The word used for this wind is *'aqīm*, which is used for a barren woman, though literally it means dry. If the literal meaning is taken it would mean that it was such an intensely hot and dry wind that on whatever it blew it caused it to become absolutely dry; and if it is taken in the idiomatic sense it would mean that like a barren woman it was a wind without any benefit: neither it was pleasant, nor it brought rain, nor fertilized the trees, nor contained any other benefit for which the wind blows. At other places it has been stated that this wind was not only useless and dry but it blew so violently that it swept the people off the ground and it continued to rage for eight days and seven nights continuously, till it laid the entire land of the 'Ād waste. (For explanation, see E.N.'s 20, 21 of Sūrah Ḥā Mīm As-Sajdah, and E.N.'s 25 to 28 of Al-Ahqāf).

40. The commentators have disputed as to which respite it implies. Ḥaḍrat Qatādah says that it alludes to that verse of Sūrah Hūd in which it has been stated that when the Thamūd killed the she camel of the Prophet Ṣāliḥ, they were warned by Allah that they had three more days to enjoy life after which they would be overtaken by the torment. Contrary to this, Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣrī has expressed the opinion that this thing had been said by the Prophet Ṣālih to his people in the beginning of his mission and by this he meant that if they would not adopt the way of repentance and faith, they would be granted a respite to enjoy life in the world only till an appointed time, and then they would be overtaken by the torment. The second of these two commentaries seems to be more correct, for the following verse ("But in spite of this they defied the command of their Lord") indicates that the respite being mentioned here had been given before the defiance and they committed it after the warning. On the contrary, the three days' respite mentioned in Sūrah Hūd had been given after the wicked people had committed the final defiance which became decisive in their case and sealed their doom for ever afterwards.

41. Different words have been used for this torment at different places in the Qur'ān. Somewhere it has been called *rajfah* (a frightful and shocking calamity), somewhere *ṣaiḥah* (a crashing and thundering disaster), somewhere *taghiyah* (a most severe affliction) and here it has been described as *ṣā'iqah* (a calamity that strikes like a thunderbolt). Probably this torment had occurred as an earthquake which was also accompanied by a terrible noise.

42. *Intiṣar* from which the word *muntaṣirūn* in the original is derived means to save oneself from an attack by somebody as well as to avenge oneself on the attacker.

43. After presenting historical arguments for the Hereafter, now arguments from the universe are being presented in proof of the same.

44. The word musi' (pl. mūsi'ūn) may mean the one who possesses power and means, and also the one who can extend and expand something. According to the first meaning, the verse would mean: "We have built this heaven by Our own might and not with somebody else's help, and its erection was in no way beyond Us. Then how can you ever conceive that We shall not be able to recreate it ?" According to the second meaning, it would mean: "This huge universe that We have created, is not a finished work, but We are expanding it continuously, and new and ever new manifestations of Our creation are appearing in it every moment. How do you then think that such a marvellous Creator would not be able to repeat His creation.

45. For explanation, see E.N. 18 above. For further explanation, see E.N. 74 of Sūrah An-Naml, E.N. 29 of Sūrah Yā Sīn and E.N.'s 7 to 10 of Az-Zukhruf

46. That is, "Everything in the world has been created on the principle of the pairs. The whole system of the Universe is functioning on the principle that certain things are complementary and matching to certain others, and their combination brings into being countless new forms and combinations. Nothing here is so unique as may have no match, for the fact is that a thing becomes productive only after it has combined with its matching partner." (For further explanation, see E.N. 31 of Sūrah Yā Sīn, and E.N. 12 of Az-Zukhruf).

47. That is, "The erection of the whole Universe on the principle of the pairs and the existence of all things in the world in couples is a reality that testifies expressly to the necessity of the Hereafter. If you consider it deeply you will yourself come to the conclusion that when everything in the world has a partner and nothing becomes productive without combining with its partner, how can the life of the world be without a match and partner? Its match and partner necessarily is the Hereafter. Without that partner it would be absolutely fruitless."

To understand what follows one should also understand that the discussion heretofore centres around the Hereafter, but this very discussion and argument afford a proof of the Oneness of God. Just as the argument of the rain, the structure of the earth, the creation of the heavens, man's own existence, the wonderful working of the law of pairs in the Universe, testify to the possibility and necessity of the Hereafter, so they are also testifying that neither is this

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اللّٰهِ ۚ اِنِّیْ لَكُمْ مِّنْهُ نَذِیْرٌ مُّبِیْنٌ ۝ وَلَا تَجْعَلُوْا مَعَ اللّٰهِ اِلٰهًا اٰخَرَ ۚ اِنِّیْ لَكُمْ
مِّنْهُ نَذِیْرٌ مُّبِیْنٌ ۝ كَذٰلِكَ مَاۤ اَتَى الَّذِیْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِّنْ رَّسُوْلٍ اِلَّا قَالُوْا
سَاحِرٌ اَوْ مَجْنُوْنٌ ۝ اَتَوَاصَوْا بِهٖ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُوْنَ ۝ فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَمَاۤ
اَنْتَ بِمَلُوْمٍ ۝ وَّذَكِّرْ فَاِنَّ الذِّكْرٰى تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ ۝ وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَ
الْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِیَعْبُدُوْنِ ۝ مَاۤ اُرِیْدُ مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ رِّزْقٍ وَّمَاۤ اُرِیْدُ اَنْ یُّطْعِمُوْنِ ۝
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِیْنُ ۝ فَاِنَّ لِلَّذِیْنَ ظَلَمُوْا ذَنُوْبًا مِّثْلَ
ذَنُوْبِ اَصْحٰبِهِمْ فَلَا یَسْتَعْجِلُوْنِ ۝ فَوَیْلٌ لِّلَّذِیْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ
یَّوْمِهِمُ الَّذِیْ یُوْعَدُوْنَ ۝

52-55 This has always been so. Whenever a Messenger came to the peoples before them, they said, "He is a sorcerer or a madman."[49] Have they reached a mutual understanding concerning this? Nay, but they are all a rebellious people.[50] So, O Prophet, turn away from them: you are not at all to blame.[51] But go on admonishing them, for the admonition is beneficial for the believers.[52]

56-60 I have not created the jinn and the men except for this that they should worship Me.[53] I do not ask any sustenance of them, nor do I ask them to feed Me.[54] Allah Himself is the Sustainer, Possessor of power and might.[55] Therefore, those who have done wrong,[56] have also their portion of a similar torment ready as the people like them have been meted out their portions before. So let them not ask Me to hasten.[57] Ultimately, there will be destruction for those who have disbelieved, on the Day with which they are being threatened.

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Godless nor it has many gods, but One All-Wise and All-Powerful God alone is its Creator and Master and Controller. That is why in the following verses the

invitation to the Oneness of God is being presented on the basis of these very arguments. Furthermore, the inevitable result of believing in the Hereafter is that man should give up his attitude of rebellion against God and should adopt the way of obedience and servitude. He remains turned away from God as long as he remains involved in the false belief that he is not accountable before anyone and that he will not have to render an account of his deeds of the worldly life to anyone. Whenever this misunderstanding is removed, man immediately comes to the realization that he was committing a grave error by regarding himself as irresponsible, and this realization compels him to return to God. That is why immediately after concluding the arguments for the Hereafter, it has been said: "So flee unto Allah."

48. Though these sentences are the Word of Allah, the speaker here is not Allah but the Holy Messenger of Allah. In fact, Allah has made his Messenger say: "Flee unto Allah: I am warning you from Him." An instance of this style is found in the very first Sūrah of the Qur'ān, Sūrah Al-Fātihah, where the Word is of Allah, but the speakers are the servants, who say: *Iyyāka na'budu wa Iyyāka nasta'īn; ihdi-nas ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm:* "Thee alone we worship and to Thee alone we pray for help. Show us the Straight Way." Just as there it has not been said: "O believers, pray to your Lord thus," but the context itself shows that it is a supplication which Allah is teaching His servants, so here also it has not been said: "O Prophet, say to these people," but the context itself indicates that it is an invitation to the Oneness of God, which the Holy Prophet is presenting according to Allah's command. Besides Sūrah Al-Fātihah, there are several other instances also of this style in the Qur'ān, where though the Word is of Allah, the speakers somewhere are the angels and somewhere the Holy Prophet, and the context shows as through whom Allah is speaking at that particular place. For instance, see Sūrah Maryam: 64-65, Aṣ-Ṣāffāt: 159-167, Ash-Shu'arā': 10.

49. That is, "This has not happened for the first time that the people are calling the Messenger sent by Allah a sorcerer and a madman when they heard the news of the Hereafter and the invitation to the Oneness of Allah from him. The whole history of Apostleship bears evidence that ever since the Messengers started coming for the guidance of mankind, ignorant people have been repeating the same folly in the same manner. Whichever Messenger came and gave them the warning that they were not the servants of many gods but One God alone is their Creator and Deity and Master of their destinies, ignorant people said that he was a sorcerer, who wanted to beguile and misguide them by his sorcery. Whichever Messenger came and warned them that they had not been created and left irresponsible in the world, but that at the conclusion of their life-work they would have to present themselves before their Creator and Master and render an account of their deeds and in consequence thereof they will be rewarded or punished

accordingly, the foolish people cried out that he was a madman and had lost his reason because no one could be resurrected after death."

50. That is, "The fact that the people of different countries and nations adopted the same attitude as against the invitation of the Prophets and opposed them in the same manner in different ages for thousands of years could not be due to the reason that all the former and the latter generations had settled in a conference that whenever a prophet came with his message, he should be given such and such an answer. Then, what could be the reason for the uniformity of their attitude and behaviour? There could be no other reason for this than that rebellion and transgression was their common characteristic. As all the ignorant people of every age have been desirous of living a life free of Allah's service and fearless of His accountability, whoever called them to the service of Allah and to lead a God-conscious life, they gave him one and the same fixed answer."

This also throws light on an important truth and it is this: The motives that man has been naturally endowed with for adopting error and guidance, goodness and evil, justice and injustice, and similar other conducts, have been appearing in every age and in every corner of the world in the like manner no matter how different might have been their forms due to advancement of means and resources. Whether the man of today fights by means of the tanks and aircraft and hydrogen bombs and the man of the ancient time fought with stones and sticks, the basic motives for fighting between men have always been the same. Likewise, the atheist of today might heap up his arguments for atheism as he likes, his motives for following that creed are precisely the same as had been of an atheist six thousand years ago and in his reasoning also he is not basically any different from his predecessor

51. In this verse a method of the preaching of religion has been taught, which should be well understood. When a preacher of the truth has presented his message clearly before a person with rational arguments, and has also removed his doubts and objections and answered his arguments, he becomes relieved of his duty of making the truth plain. Even after this if the other person persists in his belief and creed, the responsibility for it does not lie on the preacher of the truth. It is no more necessary that he should pursue the same person, should go on spending his time in discussing things with him, and should make it a point that he has somehow to convince the same one man of the truth. The preacher, in fact, has done his duty; if the other man is not convinced, let him alone. If the preacher does not any more attend to him, he cannot be blamed for letting a person remain involved in error, because now the other person himself is responsible for his deviation and error.

The Holy Prophet has not been addressed here to be taught this method because, God forbid, in his preaching he unnecessarily pursued the people and Allah wanted to stop him from this fact, the actual reason for stating this method is that when a preacher of the truth has done his best to make the people understand his message in a rational way and then seeing the signs of stubbornness in them withdraws from them, the people inveigh against him and start accusing him of indifference and inattention whereas, they, as they say, want to discuss things in order to understand his message. The fact, however, is that they do not intend to understand anything but only to involve the preacher in disputation and waste his time. Therefore, Allah Himself said in clear words: "Turn away from them: you are not at all to blame for showing any indifference towards them." After this nobody could blame the Holy Prophet that according to the Book that he had brought he had been appointed to make them understand his religion: then why he did not answer their objections.

52. In this verse the second method of preaching has been stated. The real object of the invitation to the truth is to convey the blessing of the faith to those righteous souls who are appreciative of the blessing and are themselves keen to attain it. But the preacher does not know where those righteous souls are among the hundreds of thousands of the members of human society. Therefore, his duty is to continue giving his call so that his voice reaches wherever there are the people who would accept his message. These very people are his real wealth. To search them out is his real task; and to gather them together and bring them on to the path of God should be his objective. The preacher should attend to the useless element of the children of Adam that he comes across in the process only until he finds out by experience that it is a worthless commodity. After he has experienced their worthlessness and base quality, he should not waste his precious time on them, for they are not the people who would benefit from his admonition, and expending his energy on them is indeed a loss of those who are keen to benefit from it.

53. That is, "I have not created them for the service of others but for My own service. They should serve Me, for I am their Creator. When no one else has created them, no one else has the right that they should serve him; and how can it be admissible for them that they should serve others instead of Me, their Creator?" Here, the question arises that Allah Almighty is not the Creator only of the jinn and men but of the entire Universe and of every thing in it. Then, why has it been said only about the jinn and men that He has not created them for the service of others but of Himself ? whereas every single creature is there to serve Allah. The answer is: On the earth only the jinn and men have been granted the freedom that they may serve Allah within their sphere of choice if they so like; otherwise they can turn away from Allah's service as well as serve others beside

Him. The rest of the creatures in the world do not have this kind of freedom. They do not have any choice whatever that they may not worship and serve Allah, or may serve any other. Therefore, only about the jinn and men it has been said here that by turning away from the obedience and servitude of their Creator within the bounds of their option and choice and by serving others than the Creator, they are fighting their own nature. They should know that they have not been created for the service of any other but the Creator, and for them the right way is that they should not abuse the freedom granted them, but within the bounds of this freedom also they should serve God voluntarily just as every particle of their body is serving Him involuntarily in the sphere where they have not been granted any freedom.

The word *'ibādat* (service, worship) in this verse has not been used in the sense of only prayer, fasting and other kinds of such worship so that one may understand that the jinn and men have been created only for performing the Prayer, observing the Fast and for praising and glorifying Allah. Although this sense also is included in it, this is not its complete sense. Its complete sense is that the jinn and men have not been created for the worship, obedience and carrying out of the orders of any other but Allah. They are not there to bow to any other, to carry out the orders of any other, to live in fear of any other, to follow the religion enjoined by any other, to look upon any other as the maker and destroyer of one's destiny, and to supplicate any other than Allah for help. (For further explanation, see E.N. 63 of Sūrah Sabā, E.N. 2 of Az-Zumar, E.N. 30 of Al Jāthiyah).

Another thing that incidentally becomes quite obvious from this verse is that the jinn are a separate and independent creation from men. This brings out the error of the thinking of those people, who assert that some people from among mankind have been called the jinn in the Qur'ān. This same thing is also confirmed and testified by the following verses of the Qur'ān: Al-An'ām :100, 128, Al-A'rāf, 38, 179, Hūd: 119, Al-Ḥijr: 27 to 33, Banī Isrā'īl: 88, Al-Kahf: 50, As-Sajdah: 13, Sabā: 41, Ṣuād: 75, 76, Ḥā Mīm As-Sajdah: 25, Al-Aḥqāf: 18, Ar-Raḥmān: 15, 39, 56. (For a complete discussion of this question, see E.N. 21 of Al-Anbiyā', E.N.'s 23, 45 of An-Naml, E.N. 24 of Sabā).

54. That is, "I do not stand in need of any kind of help from the jinn and men: that My Godhead would not function if they did not worship Me: that I would be no more God if they turned away from My service. I indeed do not stand in need of their service, but it is the demand of their own nature that they should serve Me. They have been created for this very object, and fighting nature would be to their own detriment."

And in saying: "I do not ask any sustenance of them nor do I ask them to feed Me," there is a subtle hint to this Those whom the people who have turned

away from Godworship in the world, worship, indeed, stand in need of these their worshippers. If they do not help sustain their godhead, it would not function even for a day. The gods do not provide for the worshippers but the worshippers provide for the gods instead. The gods do not feed them but they feed the gods instead. The gods do not protect them but the worshippers protect the gods instead. The worshippers, in fact, are their army through whom their godhead functions. Wherever the worshippers of the false gods have ceased to exist, or the worshippers have given up their worship, the gods have lost all their pomp and glory and the world has seen how helpless they have become. Of all the deities Allah Almighty is the only real Deity Whose Godhead is functioning by His own power and might, Who does not take anything from His servants, but He alone gives His servants everything.

55. The word *matīn* as used in the original means strong and stable whom nobody can shake and move.

56. "Those,.....wrong": Those who have violated the reality and the truth and their own nature. The context itself shows that "those who have done wrong", here implies the people who are serving others than the Lord of the Universe, who disbelieve in the Hereafter, who regard themselves as irresponsible in the world, and have denied those Prophets who have tried to make them understand the reality.

57. This is the answer to the disbelievers' demand: "Why doesn't the Day of Retribution overtake us? Why is it being delayed?"



LII

AṬ-ṬŪR

الطُّور

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LII

AṬ-ṬŪR

الطّور

INTRODUCTION

Name

It is derived from the very first word *"Wat-Ṭūr-i."*

Period of Revelation

From the internal evidence of the subject-matter it appears that this Sūrah too was revealed in the same stage of the Holy Prophet's life at Makkah in which the Sūrah Adh-Dhāriyāt was revealed. While going through it one can clearly feel that during the period of its revelation the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was being showered with objections and accusations but there is no evidence yet to show that severe persecution of the Muslims had started.

Subject-Matter and Topics

The subject-matter of its first section (vv. 1-28) is the Hereafter. As arguments for its possibility, necessity and occurrence had already been given in Sūrah Adh-Dhāriyāt, these have not been repeated here. However, swearing an oath by some realities and signs which testify to the Hereafter, it has been stated most emphatically that it will surely come to pass, and none has the power to prevent its occurrence. Then, it has been stated as to what will be the fate of those who deny it when it actually occurs, and how will those who believe in it and adopt the way of piety and righteousness accordingly, be blessed by Allah.

Then, in the second section (vv. 29-49) the Quraish chiefs' attitude towards the message of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has been criticised. They called him a sorcerer, a madman, or a poet, and would thus mislead the common people against him so that they should not pay any serious attention to the message he preached. They looked upon him as a calamity that had suddenly descended on them and would openly wish that he met with a disaster so that they were rid of him. They accused him of fabricating the Qur'ān by himself and of presenting it in the name of Allah, and this was, God forbid, a fraud that he was practising. They would often taunt him, saying that God could not have appointed an ordinary man like him to the office of Prophethood. They expressed great disgust at his invitation and message and would avoid him as if he was asking them for a reward for it. They would sit and take counsels together to devise schemes in order to put an end to his mission. And while they did all this they never realized what creeds of ignorance they were involved in and how selflessly and sincerely was Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) exerting himself to deliver them from their error. While criticizing them for this attitude and conduct, Allah has put them certain questions, one after the other, each of which is either an answer to some objection of theirs, or a criticism of some error. Then, it has been said that it would absolutely be of no avail to show them a miracle in order to convince them of his Prophethood, for they were such stubborn people as would misinterpret anything they were shown only to avoid affirming the faith.

In the beginning of this section as well as in its end, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has been given the instruction that he should persistently continue giving his invitation and preaching his message in spite of the accusations and objections of his opponents and enemies, and should endure their resistance patiently till Allah's judgement comes to pass. Besides, he has been consoled, as if to say: "Your Lord has not left you alone to face your enemies, after raising you as a Prophet, but He is constantly watching over you. Therefore, endure every hardship patiently till the Hour of His judgement comes, and seek through praising and glorifying your Lord the power that is required for exerting in the cause of Allah under such conditions.



وَ الطُّوْرِ ۙ﴿۱﴾ وَ كِتٰبٍ مَّسْطُوْرٍ ۙ﴿۲﴾ فِیْ رَقٍّ مَّنْشُوْرٍ ۙ﴿۳﴾ وَّ الْبَیْتِ الْمَعْمُوْرِ ۙ﴿۴﴾ وَ
السَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوْعِ ۙ﴿۵﴾ وَ الْبَحْرِ الْمَسْجُوْرِ ۙ﴿۶﴾ اِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ ۙ﴿۷﴾ مَّا لَهٗ
مِنْ دَافِعٍ ۙ﴿۸﴾ یَّوْمَ تَمُوْرُ السَّمَآءُ مَوْرًا ۙ﴿۹﴾ وَّ تَسِیْرُ الْجِبَالُ سَیْرًا ؕ﴿۱۰﴾ فَوَیْلٌ
یَّوْمَىٕذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِیْنَ ۙ﴿۱۱﴾ الَّذِیْنَ هُمْ فِیْ خَوْضٍ یَّلْعَبُوْنَ ؕ﴿۱۲﴾ یَوْمَ یُدَعُّوْنَ اِلٰى
نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ دَعًّا ؕ﴿۱۳﴾ هٰذِهِ النَّارُ الَّتِیْ كُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُوْنَ ؕ﴿۱۴﴾ اَفَسِحْرٌ هٰذَاۤ اَمْ
اَنْتُمْ لَا تُبْصِرُوْنَ ۙ﴿۱۵﴾ اِصْلَوْهَا فَاصْبِرُوْۤا اَوْ لَا تَصْبِرُوْا ؕ سَوَآءٌ عَلَیْكُمْ ؕ اِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ
مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ؕ﴿۱۶﴾ اِنَّ الْمُتَّقِیْنَ فِیْ جَنّٰتٍ وَّ نَعِیْمٍ ۙ﴿۱۷﴾ فٰكِهِیْنَ بِمَاۤ اٰتٰىهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ ۚ وَ
وَقٰىهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِیْمِ ۚ﴿۱۸﴾ كُلُوْا وَ اشْرَبُوْا هَنِیْٓـًٔا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۙ﴿۱۹﴾
مُتَّكِـِٕیْنَ عَلٰى سُرُرٍ مَّصْفُوْفَةٍ ۚ وَ زَوَّجْنٰهُمْ بِحُوْرٍ عِیْنٍ ۚ﴿۲۰﴾ وَ الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LII

AṬ-ṬŪR

الطور

Verses: 49 *Revealed at Makkah*

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

By the (mount) Ṭūr,[1] and an open Book written on a fine scroll,[2] and the inhabited House,[3] and the elevated roof,[4] and the surging ocean,[5] the torment of your Lord shall surely come to pass, which none can avert.[6] It will be on a Day when the heaven shall reel and shake violently,[7] and the mountains shall fly about.[8] Woe on that Day to the deniers who are today engaged in their (useless) arguments for sport.[9] The Day when they are driven and pushed to Hell-Fire, it will be said to them, "This is the same Fire that you were wont to deny. Now tell: Is this magic? Or, do you not perceive it?[10] Now burn! Whether you bear it patiently or not, it is all the same for you. You are being recompensed only according to your deeds." 1-16

The righteous[11] shall be in Gardens and Bliss, rejoicing in what their Lord shall give them; and their Lord shall save them from the torment of Hell.[12] (It will be said to them:) "Eat and drink with relish[13] as a reward for what you have been doing." They will be reclining on couches, facing each other, and We shall wed them to houris with beautiful eyes.[14] 17-20

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1. Ṭūr means a mountain, and *aṭ-Ṭūr* the particular mountain on which Allah had blessed the Prophet Moses with the Prophethood.

2. In ancient times the books and writings which were meant to be preserved for long were written on the skin of deer instead of the paper. This skin was especially prepared for writing as a thin and fine parchment and was called *raqq* terminologically. The Jews and Christians in general wrote the Torah, Psalms, the Gospels and the Prophets' Books on this same *raqq* so that they would endure. Here, by "an open Book" is implied the same collection of the holy scriptures which the followers of the Book possessed. It has been described as "an open Book" because it was not extinct; it was read and one could easily find out what was written in it.

3. According to Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣri, "the inhabited House" implies the House of Allah, the Ka'bah, which is never without its visitors and pilgrims at any time of the day and night. However, Ḥaḍrat 'Ali, Ibn 'Abbās, 'Ikrimah, Mujāhid, Qatādah, Ḍaḥḥāk, Ibn Zaid and other commentators have stated that it implies the *Bait-al-ma'mūr* (the inhabited House) which the Holy Prophet referred to in connection with his *Mi'rāj* (Ascension), against the wall of which he had seen the Prophet Abraham reclining. Mujāhid, Qatādah and Ibn Zaid say that just as the Ka'bah is the centre and place of refuge for all God-worshippers, so is there in every heaven a similar Ka'bah for its dwellers which occupies a similar central position for the worshippers of Allah there. One of these Ka'bahs was the one against the wall of which the Holy Prophet had seen the Prophet Abraham reclining on the occasion of the *Mi'rāj;* and with it the Prophet Abraham had a natural affinity, for he himself was the founder of the Ka'bah of the earth. In view of this explanation, this second commentary does not go against the commentary given by Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣri, but if both are read together, we can understand that here the oath has not been sworn only by the Ka'bah of the earth, but it also includes an oath by all the Ka'bahs that are there in the entire Universe.

4. "The elevated roof": the sky which seems to be spread over the earth like a vault; here this word has been used for the entire Universe. (For explanation, see E.N. 7 of Sūrah Qāf).

5. Several meanings have been given of the word *al-baḥr-il-masjūr* as used in the original. Some commentators have taken it in the meaning of "full of fire"; some take it in the sense of "empty and un-occupied", the water of which might have sunk into the earth; some take it in the meaning of "restricted and confined", by which they imply that the ocean has been restrained so that its water neither sinks into the earth nor spreads over the land to drown all its dwellers. Some have taken it in the meaning of mixed and blended because in it sweet and saline, warm and cold, water is mixed together; and some take it in the meaning of brimful and surging. The first two of these meanings bear no relevance to the context. These two states of the ocean-splitting of the bottom of the ocean and sinking of its water into the earth and then its being filled with fire—will appear on

the Day Of Resurrection, as mentioned in Sūrah Takvīr: 6 and Infitār: 3. These states of the future do not exist at present and therefore cannot be sworn by to convince the people of today of the occurrence of the Hereafter. Therefore, here *al-bahr il masjūr* can be taken only in the meaning of confined, mixed, brimful and surging.

6. This is that truth for which an oath has been sworn by the five things. "The torment of your Lord" implies the Hereafter, for it will be a torment for those who deny that it will come. That is why it has been called "the torment of your Lord" instead of the Resurrection, or the Hereafter, or the Day of Retribution. Now let us consider how the five things by which an oath has been sworn point to its occurrence.

Mount Tūr is the place where a decision was taken to exalt an oppressed nation and to abase an oppressive nation, and this decision was taken not on the basis of a physical law but on the basis of a Moral Law and the Law of Retribution. Therefore, Mount Tūr has been presented as a symbol for the Hereafter. It implies that the decision of exalting a helpless nation like the children of Israel and the drowning of a powerful and mighty ruler like the Pharaoh along with his hosts, which was taken in a quiet and listless night on the Mount Tūr, is proof of the fact how the nature of the Kingdom of the Universe demands that man who has been endowed with powers and authority, should be subjected to moral accountability and rewarded and punished accordingly, and for meeting this demand adequately a Day of Reckoning is necessary when the whole of mankind should be gathered together and called to account for its deeds. (For further explanation, see E.N. 21 of Sūrah Adh-Dhariyāt).

The holy scriptures have been sworn by because all the Prophets who came to the world from the Lord of the Universe and the Books they brought gave the same one news in every age which the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) is giving, i.e. that all humans of the former and latter generations will one day be resurrected and presented before their God and rewarded and punished according to their deeds. There has been no heavenly Book that fails to proclaim that this life is not the only life, that man will not end in the dust after death and that there will be both accountability and reckoning.

"The inhabited House" has been sworn by for the reason that in those days the building of the Holy Ka'bah was a great sign, particularly for the Arabs, which pointed to the truthfulness of Allah's Prophets and to the fact that they were supported by Allah Almighty's far-reaching wisdom and great power. 2,500 years before the revelation of these verses a person happens to visit these barren and uninhabited mountains, without any army or worldly provision, leaving behind a wife and a suckling child devoid of material support. Then, some time later the

same man returns and builds at this desolate place a house for the worship of Allah and gives a call to the people to come and visit that house as pilgrims. This same structure and the call are so fervently received that the House becomes the centre of the entire population of Arabia. People respond to the call enthusiastically and are drawn from every corner of the country to the House in a spirit of devotion and dedication. For 2,500 years this House continues to remain such a sanctuary of peace that while blood is shed in the country around it, none can dare raise his hand against another as soon as people enter its sacred boundaries; and then because of this very House Arabia is blessed with four months of such total peace every year when caravans travel in full safety, trade flourishes and markets are held. Then the House inspired such awe that during this whole period no tyrant could ever look towards it with an evil intention, and whoever dared do so was so seized by Allah's wrath that he became an object of warning for others. Such a miracle had been witnessed by the people themselves only 45 years before the revelation of these verses, and many of those who had witnessed it were still present and living in the city at the time when these verses were being recited to the people of Makkah. What greater proof could be there of the fact that the Prophets of God never uttered empty words? They see with their eyes that which others do not see; they talk freely of such realities as cannot be comprehended by others by intellect; they engage at times in works which might be viewed as madness by the contemporary world but which might strike with amazement the people coming centuries afterwards. When men of such calibre have unanimously been giving in every age the news that Resurrection shall occur and accountability shall take place, it would be sheer madness to dub it as the bragging of the insane.

The elevated roof (the sky) and the surging ocean have been sworn by, for both these are a pointer to Allah's wisdom and His power, and the same wisdom and power prove both the possibility of the Hereafter and its occurrence and necessity. As for the sky's being a pointer we have already explained it in E.N. 7 of Sūrah Qāf above. As for the ocean, anyone who considers it deeply with an unbiased mind will testify that the provision of water in such abundance on the earth is by itself such an amazing work which cannot be the result of an accident or chance. This also proves that it is not possible that such a perfect system could come into being by chance and the bodies of each species could be made precisely according to the depth in which it has to live. Its water has been made saline so that the bodies of the millions of the animals which die in it daily do not rot. Its water has been restrained at a particular level in such a way that it neither sinks into the earth's belly passing through its cracks and holes, nor it spreads over the land to submerge it, but has been checked at the same level for millions of years. Because of the existence of this great store of water the rainfall is arranged on the dry parts of the earth, in which the heat of the sun and the

circulation of the winds cooperate with full regularity. Then the ocean's being inhabited with life and the creation in it of the various kinds of creatures has given man the advantage that he obtains from it his food and other necessities in large quantities. Then its being checked and restrained to a limit has given birth to the continents and islands which are the home of man, and because of its adhering to and following some fixed laws has it become possible that man may navigate his ships in it. Such an arrangement could not have possibly existed without the wisdom of an All-Wise Being and the power of an Absolute Ruler, nor could this deep relationship that binds the interests of man and other creatures of the earth to the arrangement of the ocean be established at random. Now, if this is undeniable evidence that an All-Wise and All-Powerful God has created a vast and surging, brackish ocean also besides making countless other arrangements for the purpose of settling man on the earth, that person would be foolhardy, who expects that the All-Wise God would make arrangements for man that he should water his crops from the ocean and provide him sustenance thereby but would never question him as to how he returned thanks after eating His provisions, and that He would grant man the power that he should run his ships on the surface of the ocean but would never question him as to whether he had run the ships for the sake of the truth, righteousness and justice, or had committed robberies. Likewise, it would also be sheer folly to imagine that the Absolute Sovereign of Whose power the creation of the wonderful ocean is a petty, insignificant sign, Who has checked and restrained this vast store of water on this suspended globe which is moving in space, Who has dissolved a huge quantity of salt in it, Who has created countless varieties of creatures in it, and has arranged their sustenance therein, Who carries billions of tons of water from it every year by means of the wind and causes it to fall regularly as rain on millions of square miles of dry land, becomes so helpless and powerless after creating man that He could not resurrect him again.

7. The word *maur* in the original is used for turning round, boiling, fluttering, rotating, swinging and moving forward and backward. The object of depicting the condition of the heavens on the Day of Resurrection in these words is to give the idea that the system of the heavens on that Day will be wholly upset, and when an observer will look up to the sky, he will feel that the constant pattern and order that it always used to present, has been broken and there is disorder, confusion and chaos on every side.

8. In other words, the pull of the earth which is keeping the mountains in place, will become loose, they will be uprooted and start floating about in space like clouds.

9. It means that they are mocking and ridiculing the news of Resurrection, Hereafter, Heaven and Hell when they hear it from the Prophet, and instead of

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اتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمَانٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَا أَلَتْنَاهُمْ مِنْ عَمَلِهِمْ
مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۚ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ ﴿٢١﴾ وَأَمْدَدْنَاهُمْ بِفَاكِهَةٍ وَلَحْمٍ مِمَّا
يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ يَتَنَازَعُونَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا لَا لَغْوٌ فِيهَا وَلَا تَأْثِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ
غِلْمَانٌ لَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لُؤْلُؤٌ مَكْنُونٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾
قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِي أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَانَا عَذَابَ
السَّمُومِ ﴿٢٧﴾ إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ ۖ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٨﴾ فَذَكِّرْ فَمَا أَنْتَ
بِنِعْمَتِ رَبِّكَ بِكَاهِنٍ وَلَا مَجْنُونٍ ﴿٢٩﴾ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَتَرَبَّصُ بِهِ رَيْبَ
الْمَنُونِ ﴿٣٠﴾ قُلْ تَرَبَّصُوا فَإِنِّي مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الْمُتَرَبِّصِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ أَمْ تَأْمُرُهُمْ أَحْلَامُهُمْ
بِهَٰذَا أَمْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ تَقَوَّلَهُ ۚ بَل لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ فَلْيَأْتُوا
بِحَدِيثٍ مِّثْلِهِ إِن كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾ أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾
أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۚ بَل لَّا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ أَمْ عِندَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَبِّكَ أَمْ
هُمُ الْمُصَيْطِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ أَمْ لَهُمْ سُلَّمٌ يَسْتَمِعُونَ فِيهِ ۚ فَلْيَأْتِ مُسْتَمِعُهُم بِسُلْطَانٍ
مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ أَمْ لَهُ الْبَنَاتُ وَلَكُمُ الْبَنُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُم مِّن مَّغْرَمٍ
مُّثْقَلُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ أَمْ عِندَهُمُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ أَمْ يُرِيدُونَ كَيْدًا ۖ فَالَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا هُمُ الْمَكِيدُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ أَمْ لَهُمْ إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَإِن
يَرَوْا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ سَاقِطًا يَقُولُوا سَحَابٌ مَّرْكُومٌ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَذَرْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُلَاقُوا
يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِي فِيهِ يُصْعَقُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ يَوْمَ لَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا هُمْ
يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَإِنَّ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا عَذَابًا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ

Those who have believed and their offspring also have followed in their footsteps in degrees of faith, We shall join to them those of their offspring also (in Paradise) and shall not deprive them of anything of their deeds.[15] Every person is a pledge for what he has earned.[16] We shall go on providing them well with fruits and meat,[17] such as they may desire. They shall zealously be passing from hand to hand a cup of wine which shall neither contain idle talk nor immorality.[18] And there will go round to them young boys, exclusively appointed for their service,[19] who will be as lovely as well-guarded pearls. They will turn to one another and ask (about their worldly lives). They will say, "Before this we lived among our kinsfolk, in fear and dread.[20] Consequently, Allah has been bounteous to us and has saved us from the torment of the scorching wind.[21] Indeed, we prayed only to Him in our previous life. Most surely He is the Beneficent, the Merciful." 21-28

So, O Prophet, go on admonishing (them). By the grace of your Lord, you are neither a soothsayer nor mad.[22] 29

Do they say, "He is a poet for whom we are awaiting the adverse turn of fortune?"[23] Say to them, "Yes, wait; I too shall wait with you."[24] Do their minds command them to do so, or, are they a people who have transgressed all limits?[25] 30-32

Do they say, "This man himself has forged this Qur'ān" The fact is that they do not want to believe.[26] Let them then produce a discourse like it, if they are true in what they say.[27] 33-34

Have they been created without a Creator? Or, are they their own creators? Or, have they created the heavens and the earth? The fact is that they lack faith.[28] 35-36

Do they possess the treasures of your Lord? Or, is it they who control them?[29] 37

Do they have a ladder by climbing which they overhear what goes on in heavens? Then let any of them who has overheard bring a clear proof. Is Allah to have daughters and you sons?[30] 38-39

Do you ask them for any rewards that they are weighed down under a load of debt?[31] 40

41 Do they have the knowledge of the unseen realities whereby they may be writing down?[32]

42 Do they intend to devise a plot?[33] (If so,) the plot shall recoil upon the disbelieves themselves.[34]

43 Do they have a god other than Allah? Exalted is Allah above what they associate with Him.[35]

44-47 Even if they saw fragments of the sky falling down, they would say, "this is a mass of clouds advancing."[36] Therefore, O Prophet, leave them to themselves till they meet that Day of theirs wherein they shall be struck down, the Day when neither shall their own plotting avail them anything nor shall anyone else come to their rescue. And even before that there awaits the wrongdoers another torment, but most of them do not know.[37]

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considering it seriously they are disputing it only for fun and amusement. Their discussions of the Hereafter are not meant to understand the reality, but only to amuse themselves, and they do not at all realize the fate for which they are destined.

10. That is, "When the Messengers in the world warned you of this Hell, you said that it was only by magic that they were fooling you. Now say: Is this Hell which you are facing mere magic, or you still do not see that you have actually met with the same Hell which was being foretold to you?"

11. "The righteous": the people who believed in the news given by the Prophets and who safeguarded themselves in the world itself and refrained from thoughts and deeds that doom man to Hell.

12. There seems to be no need to mention a person's being saved from Hell after it has been said that he will be admitted to Heaven, but at several places in the Qur'ān these two things have been mentioned separately because a person's being saved from Hell is by itself a great blessing. And the words, "their Lord shall save them from the torment of Hell", is an allusion to the truth that man's being saved from Hell is possible only through Allah's grace and bounty; otherwise human weaknesses cause such flaws to occur in everyone's work that if Allah does not overlook them by His grace and instead decides to subject him to accountability, none can save himself from His punishment. That is why although entry into Paradise is a great bounty from Allah, his being saved from Hell is no less a mercy.

13. Here, the word "with relish" contains vast meaning in itself. In Paradise whatever a man receives, he will have it without any labour and toil. There will be no question of its sustenance in short supply. Man will not have to spend anything for it. It will be precisely according to his desire and choice and taste. In whatever quantity and whenever he will desire it, it will be made available. He will not be staying there as a guest that he may feel shy of asking for something, but everything will be the reward of his lifelong deeds and the fruit of his own labours. His eating and drinking anything will not cause any illness nor will he eat for satisfying hunger or for survival but only for the sake of enjoyment. Man will be able to obtain as much pleasure from it as he pleases without the fear of indigestion, and the food eaten will not produce any filth. Therefore, the meaning of eating and drinking "with relish" in Paradise is much more vast and sublime than what is understood by it in the world.

14. For explanation, see E.N.'s 20, 29 of Sūrah As-Sāāffāt, and E.N. 42 of Ad-Dukhān.

15. This theme has already been mentioned in Sūrah Ar-Ra'd: 23 and Al Mu'min: 8 above, but here a greater good news has been given. In the verse of Sūrah Ar-Ra'd only this much was said: "They will enter into them (Gardens) along with the righteous from among their forefathers, wives and descendants," and in Sūrah Al-Mu'min: "The angels ask forgiveness for the believers; they say Our Lord...(admit therein also) of their parents and wives and children who are righteous." Here, what has been said in addition is: If the children had been following in the footsteps of their forefathers in faith, they will be joined with them in Paradise even though they might not deserve, on the basis of their deeds, the same high rank which the elders would attain on the basis of their superior faith and deeds, and this joining will not be of the nature of occasional visits and meetings but they will be lodged permanently with them in Paradise as is borne out by the words: *alḥaqnā bi-him*. For the sake of further satisfaction it has been stated: "In order to be joined with their offspring the parents will not be lowered and reduced in rank, but in order to be joined with their elders the rank of the children will be enhanced and exalted".

Here, it should be borne in mind that this news has been given in respect of the children who on reaching maturity voluntarily decided to affirm faith and of their own free will followed in the footsteps of their righteous forefathers. As for those of the children of a believer, who might have died even before reaching maturity, there cannot be any question of belief or disbelief, obedience or disobedience, for they will be admitted to Paradise automatically and will be lodged along with their parents to be a comfort of the eyes for them.

16. Here, the metaphor of *rahn* (pledge) is very meaningful. If a person takes a loan from somebody, and the creditor keeps some article belonging to the debtor as a pledge with himself as a guarantee for the payment of his right, the debtor cannot redeem his pledge unless he pays off the debts; and if he does not redeem his pledge within the fixed time limit, the pledged article stands forfeited. The nature of the affair between man and God has been compared here to this very situation. The provisions, powers, capabilities and authority that God has granted man in the world are a debt that the Master has given to His servant, and as a guarantee for this debt the self of man is a pledge with Allah. If man by employing the provisions and the powers and authority in the right way earns the good by which the debt can be paid off, he will redeem the pledged thing, i.e. his own self, otherwise it will be forefeited. This thing has been said immediately after the preceding verse because even though the righteous believers may themselves be the people of a very high rank, their children cannot redeem their pledge unless they redeem their self by their-own labour and effort. The earning of the forefathers cannot redeem the children. However, if the children are able to redeem themselves by virtue of their faith in some degree by following their righteous forefathers in their footsteps, it would then be Allah's grace and bounty that in Paradise He may exalt them from lower ranks to be joined with their parents in the higher ranks. The good done by the forefathers can benefit the children only so far, but if by their own deeds they deserve Hell, it is not possible that they may be admitted to Paradise for the sake of the forefathers. Another thing that can be deduced from this verse is that the less righteous children's being joined with their more righteous forefathers is not in reality the result of the life-work of the children but of their forefathers'. They by virtue of their deeds will deserve the grace that their children be joined with them in order to be a comfort of the eyes for them. That is why Allah will not lower their ranks to join them with their children but will exalt the children's ranks to be joined with them, so that the perfection of Allah's blessings on them is not marred by the distress that they may suffer on account of the remoteness of their children far away.

17. In this verse, there is the mention of providing the dwellers of Paradise with every kind of meat generally, and in Sūrah Al-Wāqi'ah it has been said: "They will be served with the flesh of fowls." We do not know what exactly will be the nature of this flesh. But just as in some expressions of the Qur'ān and in some *Aḥādith* it has been said about the milk of Paradise that it will not have been drawn from the udders of animals, and about the honey of Paradise it has been said that it will not have been produced by the bees, and about the wine of Paradise it has been said that it will not have been distilled from rotten fruit, but these things will flow out of the springs into the canals by the power of Allah, so it can be argued by analogy that this flesh too will not be obtained from slaughtered

animals but this too will be a natural product. The God Who can produce milk and honey and wine directly from earthly substances can also produce tasty flesh of every kind from the same substances, which should even surpass the flesh of animals in taste and delight. (For further explanation, see E.N. 25 of Sūrah Aṣ-Ṣaāffāt, E.N.'s 21 to 23 of Sūrah Muḥammad).

18. That is, the wine of Paradise will not intoxicate that they should get drunk and talk nonsense, or use abusive language, or conduct and behave indecently as drunkards. (For further explanation, see E.N. 27 of As-Sāaffāt).

19. Here, the word used is *ghilmān-ul lahum* and not *ghilmān-u-hum*. If *ghilmān u-hum* had been used, it would have meant that their servants in the world would be made their servants in Paradise too; whereas whoever from the world goes to Paradise, will go there on the basis of his own work and entitlement, and there is no reason that after his entry in Paradise he may be made a servant of the same master whom he had been serving in the world. But it can also be that a servant on account of his deeds may attain a higher rank than his master in Paradise. Therefor, by using *ghilmān ul-lahum* no room has been left for this suspicion. This word provides the explanation that these will be the boys who will be exclusively appointed for their service in Paradise. (For further explanation, see E.N. 26 of Sūrah Aṣ-Ṣāāffāt).

20. That is, "We were not heedless and living a care-free life of ease and comfort, but we were always on our guard lest we should commit an evil for which we may be held accountable before God." Here, the mention of "...living among our kinsfolk, in fear and dread," in particular, has been made for the reason that man commits evil mostly when he is deeply engrossed in arranging ease and comfort for his children and trying to make their future secure and happy. For the same purpose he earns forbidden things by forbidden means, usurps the rights of others and makes evil plans. That is why the dwellers of Paradise will say to one another: "That which particularly saved us from the evil of the Hereafter was that while living among our families we did not think so much of arranging the pleasures of life and a splendid future for them as for avoiding for their sake those methods and means that might ruin our life in the Hereafter and that we should not lead our children also on to the way that might make them worthy of the torment of Allah.

21. The word *samūm* in the original means hot, scorching wind; here it implies the waves of hot wind that will be arising from Hell.

22. After depicting a scene of the Hereafter the address now turns to the obduracies of the disbelieves of Makkah with which they were resisting the message of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). This verse though apparently addressed to the Holy Prophet is actually meant for the disbelievers through him.

Whenever he spoke of Resurrection and the gathering together of mankind, and accountability, and meting out of rewards and punishments, and Heaven and Hell and recited the verses of the Qur'ān in support thereof, with the claim that he received that information from Allah and that it was Allah's Word that had been revealed to him, their leaders and religious guides and depraved people neither listened to him seriously themselves nor wanted that the other people should pay any attention to him. Therefore, they would sometimes taunt him saying that he was a sorcerer, or that he was a poet, or that he was a madman, or that he fabricated those strange things himself and presented them as Revelations from Allah only in order to impress the people. They thought that by passing such remarks against him they would be able to create suspicions among the people about him and would thus render his preaching ineffective and vain. About this it is being said: "O Prophet, the truth in fact is the same that has been presented from the beginning of the Sūrah to this point. If these people call you a sorcerer and a madman on account of these things, you should not take it to heart but should go on arousing the people from their heedlessness and warning them of the reality, for by the grace of God you are neither."

The word *kāhin* (sorcerer) in Arabic is used for an astrologer, fortune teller and a wise man. In the pre-Islamic days of ignorance it was a full-fledged profession. The sorcerers claimed, and the credulous people thought and believed, that they knew the destinies of the people, or they had a special link with the spirits, devils and jinn through whom they came to know of the unseen realities. If a thing was lost, they could tell where it lay; if a theft occurred somewhere, they could tell who the thief was; and they could foretell destinies. People came to them, and they would tell them unseen things in exchange for gifts and offerings. They would sometimes visit the towns and villages and would cry about their profession so that the people might approach them. They had a way and manner and appearance of their own by which they became easily recognisable. The language they used also differed from the common speech of the people. They would utter rhymed and rhythmical sentences with a peculiar accent and modulation and generally used vague and ambiguous sentences from which every person could draw his own meaning. The Quraish chiefs in order to deceive the common people accused the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) of sorcery only for the reason that he was giving the news of the realities that are hidden and his claim was that an angel from God came to reveal that news to him, and the Word of God that he was presenting was also rhymed. But no one in Arabia could be deceived by this accusation because no one was unaware of the sorcerers' profession and their general way and appearance and their language and business. Everyone knew what they did, why the people visited them, what they told them, what sort of modulated sentences they uttered and what subject-matter they

contained. Then, above all, it could not be that a sorcerer would rise with a creed that went against the prevalent beliefs of the nation and would exert himself preaching it continuously at his own risk. Therefore, this accusation of sorcery did not apply to the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) at all and no one in Arabia who had any common sense could be deceived by it.

Likewise, the disbelievers of Makkah also accused him of madness only for their own satisfaction, just as some shameless Western scholars of the present day in order to satisfy their malice and enmity against Islam, claim that, God forbid, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had epileptic fits and whatever he uttered during those fits was taken as Divine Revelation by the people. No sensible person in those days regarded such absurd accusations as worthy of any attention, nor can anyone today who reads the Qur'ān and studies the wonderful feats of the Holy Prophet's leadership and guidance believe that these were the product of epileptic fits.

23. That is, "We are waiting for him to be afflicted with calamity so that we be rid of him." Probably they thought that since Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) was opposing their deities and denying their supernatural powers, he would fall under the curse of some deity, or some bold devotee of a god would put an end to him.

24. This can have two meanings: (1) "I would also see whether this desire of yours is fulfilled or not ;" and (2) "I am also waiting to see who goes to his doom, you or I."

25. In these two sentences, the opponents' entire propaganda has been nailed, and they have been completely exposed. The reasoning briefly is this: These Qaraish chiefs and elders pose as very wise people, but does their intellect tell them that they should call a person a poet when he is not a poet, and call him a madman when he is well-known for his wisdom among the people, and dub him a sorcerer when he has not the remotest association with sorcery ? Then, if you are passing these judgments only on the basis of intellect and reason, you should have passed one judgement, and not so many contradictory judgements simultaneously. After all, how can one and the same man be a poet and a madman and a sorcerer at one and the same time ? If he is mad, he can then neither be a sorcerer nor a poet. If he is a sorcerer, he cannot be a poet, and if he is a poet, he cannot be a sorcerer, for the language and diction and themes of poetry are quite different from the language and themes of sorcery. The one who knows the distinctions between poetry and sorcery cannot possibly call and regard the same discourse both as poetry and as sorcery at one and the same time. Therefore, it is evident that these contradictory things are being said against the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) not on the basis of intellect and reason but only due

to obduracy and stubbornness, and the big chiefs of the nation blinded by their prejudice and enmity are levelling absurd charges which no serious person can regard as worthy of any attention. (For further explanation, see E.N. 104 of Al-A'rāf, E.N. 3 of Sūrah Yūnus, E.N.'s 53, 54, of Banī Isrā'īl, E.N.'s 130, 131, 140, 142-144 of Ash-Shu'arā'.

26. In other words, it means this: The Quraish who think that Muḥammad (upon whom be peace) himself is the author of the Qur'ān know it in their innermost hearts that it cannot be his word, and those others also whose mother tongue is Arabic not only clearly feel that it is far more sublime and superior to human speech but any one of them who knows Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) personally cannot ever suspect that this is actually his own word and speech. Therefore, the thing plainly is that those who ascribe the authorship of the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet do not, in fact, wish to affirm faith. That is why they are inventing false excuses one of which is this excuse. (For further explanation, see E.N. 21 of Yūnus, E N. 12 of Al-Furqān, E N. 64 of Al-Qaṣaṣ, E.N.'s 88,89 of Al-Ankabūt, E.N.'s 1 to 4 of As-Sajdah, E.N. 54 of Ḥā Mīm As- Sajdah, E.N.'s 8 to 10 of Al-Aḥqāf).

27. That is, "Not only is the Qur'ān not the word of Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and bessings) but the truth is that it is not human at all; it is beyond the power of man to compose and produce it. If you think it is human, you are challenged to produce the like of it, which should also be human." This challenge had been given not only to the Quraish but to all the disbelievers of the world first of all in this verse. Then it was repeated thrice in Makkah and then finally in Madīnah. (Please see Yūnus: 38, Hūd: 13, Banī Isra'īl: 88, Al-Baqarah: 23). But no one could dare meet this challenge of the Qur'ān at that time, nor has any one else had so far the ability to compose and produce a man-made work like the Qur'ān.

Some people because of lack of understanding the real nature of this challenge, say that not to speak of the Qur'ān, no one has the power to write prose or compose poetry in the style of another person. Homer, Rūmī, Shakespeare, Goethe, Ghālib, Tagore, Iqbāl, all are unique in their styles: it lies in no one's power to produce poetry like theirs by imitation. Those who give this answer to the challenge of the Qur'ān are, in fact, involved in the misunderstanding that the meaning of "let them then produce a discourse like it", is a challenge to man to compose and write a book like the Qur'ān, in the style of the Qur'ān; whereas it does not imply any resemblance in literary style but it implies this: Bring a book of the same sublimity and quality and rank, not only in Arabic but in any language of the world, that may be regarded as a match for the Qur'ān in respect of the characteristics for which the Qur'ān is a miracle. The following are in brief some

of the main characteristics because of which the Qur'ān has been a miracle before as it is a miracle today:

(1) The Qur'ān is the highest and most perfect model of the literature of the language in which it was revealed. No word and no sentence in the entire Book is sub-standard. Whatever theme has been presented in it, has been presented in the most appropriate words and in the most suitable style. One and the same theme has been presented over and over again but every time in a new style avoiding the defect of repetition everywhere. The entire Book, from the beginning to the end, is set in the choicest words, like chiselled and polished gems, that cannot be replaced. The discourses are so impressive that no one who knows the language, even if he is a disbeliever, can help being moved to ecstasies on hearing them. Even after 1,400 years this Book is still the model of Arabic literature and no other Arabic book can approach it in literary excellence not to speak of equalling it. Not only this: this Book has so controlled the Arabic language that even after the passage of 14 centuries the standard of this language's beauty and eloquence is the same that had been set by it; whereas in such long periods languages change out of recognition. No other language of the world has remained in the same state in so far as its spelling and diction, idiom, rules of language and usages are concerned. But it is only the power of the Qur'ān that has held the Arabic language in place; each idiom of it is still in use in Arabic literature; its literature is still the standard literature of Arabic; and in writing and speech still the same language is regarded as good Arabic that had been used in the Qur'ān 1,400 years ago. Is there any man-made book in any language of the world that bears the same characteristics?

(2) This is the one single Book in the world, which has so extensively and so universally influenced mankind's thoughts, morals, civilization and way of life as has no precedent in history. In the first instance, its impact changed one nation; then that nation rose and changed a major part of the world. No other Book has proved to be so revolutionary. This Book has not remained confined to writing on paper but in the practical world its each word has formed and moulded ideas and thoughts and built up a lasting civilization. Its influence has continued being operative for 1,400 years and its circle of influence and impact is still expanding every day.

(3) The theme that this Book discusses is the most extensive theme which comprehends the whole Universe, from eternity to eternity. It deals with the reality of the Universe, its beginning and end, its system and law. It tells us to who is the Creator and Controller and Disposer of this Universe, what are His attributes, what are His powers, and what is that essence and basis on which He has established this entire system of the

world. It specifies man's position and his place which he cannot change. It tells what is the right and correct way of thought and action for man in view of this place and position, which corresponds to the reality, and what are the wrong ways which clash with the reality. Then to prove why the right way is right and the wrong ways wrong, it presents countless arguments from various phenomena of the earth and heavens, from different aspects of the system of the Universe, from man's own self and existence and from man's own history. Besides, it also tells how and for what reasons man adopts the wrong ways, by what means he can find out the right Way, which has always been one and shall remain one, and how he has been guided to it in every age. It does not merely point to the Right Way but presents a plan of the complete system of life for following that way, which contains a detailed and systematic code concerning beliefs, morals, purification of self, worship, social life, civilization, economy, politics, justice, law and every other aspect of human life. Furthermore, it also tells in full detail what are the results of following this Right Way and of adopting the wrong ways in this world and what consequences of this will appear in the Next World after the present system of the world has come to an end. It depicts fully the coming to an end of the present world and of the establishment of the New World; it gives every detail of the process of change; it portrays the Next World and describes fully how man will find a totally new life there, how his deeds from worldly life will be subjected to accountability, what things he will be questioned about, how his complete record, which he will not be able to deny or dispute, will be placed before him, what strong evidence will be produced in proof thereof, why the culprits will be punished and the righteous rewarded, what rewards will be bestowed on the righteous and in what forms will the culprits suffer the evil consequences of their misdeeds. The way this vast theme has been dealt with in this Book is not of the nature of some conclusions that its Author might have reached from some syllogistic premises but its nature is that its Author has the direct knowledge of the Reality.

He sees everything happening from eternity to eternity. All the realities are manifest for Him and the entire Universe is like an open book before Him. He sees the entire life of mankind, from its origin to its end, even beyond the present life into the second life simultaneously, and He is guiding man not on the basis of conjecture and speculation but on the basis of knowledge. Not a single truth that He presents as knowledge has been proved to be wrong so far. The concept of the Universe and Man that He presents fully explains all the phenomena and events and can become the basis of research in every branch of knowledge. His Word contains the answers to all the ultimate problems of philosophy and natural and social sciences, and they are so coherent and consistent logically that a perfect,

consistent and comprehensive system of thought can be built on their basis. Then from the practical aspect the guidance that He has given to man about various spheres of life is not only highly rational and pure but countless men have been living according to it in actual fact in different parts of the earth for 1,400 years and have found it by experience to be the only valid way. Is there any manmade book of this unique quality present in the world, or has ever been, which may be produced to match this Book ?

(4) This Book was not composed and written all at once and presented before the world, but a reformatory movement was started with some basic and initial instructions, and then for 23 years as the movement passed through different stages of its development its parts were presented by the tongue of the leader, sometimes as lengthy discourses and sometimes as brief sentences, as the conditions and requirements of the occasion demanded. Then, when the Mission was brought to completion, these parts that had been issued at different times were compiled in the form of a complete Book which has been known by the name of the "Qur'ān". The leader of the movement states that these discourses and sentences are not his original work but were sent down to him by the Lord of all Creation. If a person asserts that they are the original work of the leader himself, he should produce a precedent from history to prove his contention. He should show whether it is possible that the speeches made and the instructions given by a man at different times while leading a powerful collective movement for years continuously by himself in different capacities, sometimes as a preacher and teacher of morals, sometimes as a leader of an oppressed class, sometimes as the ruler of a state, sometimes as the commander of a fighting army, sometimes as a victor, sometime as a law-giver and legislator, could form a complete and consistent and comprehensive system of thought and action, which should be free from every contradiction and inconsistency, which should appear to be dominated by the same central idea and pattern of thought, which should show that the leader has been building up a universal system of belief and action on the basis of the same foundation of his message with which he had started his work, and which should be a system each element and part of which is in perfect harmony and consistency with the other parts. Then the one who reads this collection of the discourses with a discerning eye cannot help realizing that the founder of the movement at the outset had a full plan of the movement in view till the last stage, and it never happened that a new idea might have struck him at some later stage, which was unknown to him before, or which he had to change later. If ever there has been a man of this calibre, his name should be made known to the world.

(5) The leader who had been made to give these discourses and speak these sentences did not suddenly emerge from a hidden place to present these before the people nor would disappear after he had done so. He had lived his life in full view of society before he started his movement as well as continued to live in the same society after that till his last breath. The people were well aware of the language and style of his conversation and speech. *Hadīth* still presents a major part of it and by going through it the people who know Arabic can easily find out even today what was the leader's own style of speech and conversation. His contemporaries who spoke his language felt then and those who know Arabic feel today that the language and the style of this Book is very different from the language and style of that leader. So much so that whenever in the midst of a sermon delivered by the leader there occurs a sentence or two of this Book, the distinction between the two becomes all too obvious. The question is: Has a man in the world ever had the power, or can he have the capability, that he should go on conversing in two absolutely different styles consistently for years at a stretch and it should never become known that the two separate styles are, in fact, of one and the same person? It is possible that one may succeed in such affectation temporarily but it is not at all possible that for twenty-three years continuously a person should have a different diction and style when he recites the Revelations from Allah and a wholly different diction and style when he speaks in his personal capacity.

(6) The leader while leading and guiding the movement met with different sorts of conditions. Sometimes he became the target of ridicule, humiliation and severe persecution of his fellow-countrymen and the people of his own tribe and clan; sometimes his companions were so harshly treated that they were compelled to emigrate from the country; sometimes the enemies plotted against his life; sometimes he himself had to leave his home and city; sometimes he had to pass through extreme poverty and starvation; sometimes he had to fight wars successively in which he suffered defeats as well as won victories; sometimes he overcame the enemies and the same enemies who had persecuted him, came before him humbled: sometimes he achieved such power which few people in the world have been able to achieve. Under all such conditions a person's feelings obviously cannot remain the same. When on these different occasions the leader spoke in his personal capacity, his words and speeches carried the clear impression of his personal feelings, which naturally arise in the heart of a man on such occasions. But the discourses that were heard from him as Allah's Revelations in these different conditions, are wholly devoid of human feelings. At no place can even an acute observer and critic point out the play of human feelings in them.

(7) The vast and comprehensive knowledge that is contained in this Book, is not possessed even by any of the distinguished learned people of this 20th century, not to speak of the people of Arabia and Rome and Greece and Iran of those days. The condition today is that after a man has spent his whole life-time studying a branch of philosophy or a natural or social science, he comes to know what ultimate problems of his field of study are, but when he studies the Qur'ān seriously he comes to know that this Book contains a clear answer to those problems. This thing is not confined to any one branch of knowledge but holds good in respect of all those sciences which have anything to do with the Universe and Man. How can one believe that 1,400 years ago an un-lettered man in the Arabian desert possessed such deep insight into every branch of knowledge, and he had thought over every basic problem and thought out an absolute and final answer to it?

Although there are several other aspects also of the Qur'ān's being a miracle, if a man ponders over these few aspects only he will realize that the Qur'ān's being a miracle is far more evident today than it was at the time when it was revealed and if Allah so wills, it will go on becoming more and more evident and manifest as time passes till the Day of Resurrection.

28. The questions asked before this were meant to make the disbelievers of Makkah realize that whatever they were saying to belie the Prophet Muḥammad's claim to prophethood was highly irrational. Now in this verse the question put before them is: "What is that in the message of the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) which you find so embarrassing for yourselves? He just says that Allah is your Creator and you should only serve Him. Why are you annoyed at it? Are you your own creators? Or, has this vast Universe been created by you? If neither of these is true, and you admit that your Creator as well as the Creator of the Universe is Allah alone, why do you then feel angry with the person who tells you that Allah alone is worthy of your service and worship? What you should actually feel angry about is that you worship him who is not your Creator instead of Him Who is your real Creator. You admit with the tongue that Allah alone is your Creator as well as of the whole Universe, but if you really had faith in this, you would not have so maligned the person who was calling you to Allah's service.

This was such a pungent and stinging question that it shook the polytheistic faith to the root. Bukhārī and Muslim have related that after the Battle of Badr, Jubair bin Muṭ'im came to Madīnah to negotiate release of the Quraish prisoners of war on behalf of the people of Makkah. The Holy Prophet at that time was leading the Maghrib Prayer, and he recited this Sūrah aṭ-Ṭūr in it. Muṭ'im himself has stated that when the Holy Prophet reached this place, his heart seemed

to be leaving his breast. One main reason of his embracing Islam afterwards was that Islam had taken root in his heart on hearing these very verses on that day.

29. This is an answer to the objection of the disbelievers of Makkah who said: Why had Muhammad, son of 'Abdullah (upon whom be peace), only been appointed a Messenger? The answer implies this: "Somebody in any case had to be appointed a Messenger in order to deliver the people from their error of serving others than Allah. Now the question is: Who should decide whom Allah should appoint His Messenger and whom He should not ? If these people refuse to accept the Messenger appointed by Allah, it means that either they regard themselves as the masters of the world or they presume that the world may belong to Allah, but it should be ruled by them."

30. A detailed reasoning has been compressed into these brief sentences. It means to say: "If you deny what the Prophet says, then what means have you got to know the reality? Has any of you had access to the heavens where he found out directly from Allah or His angels that the beliefs on which you have based your religion are absolutely in accord with the reality ? If someone makes this claim he should come forward and tell as to when and how he had access to the heavens and what knowledge he has brought from there. If you do not make any such claim, then consider how ridiculous is your creed that you assign children to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and that too daughters, whom you regard as disgraceful for yourselves. Without knowledge you are wandering in the darkness of such errors and turning hostile to the person who bring you the light of knowledge from God."

31. The question is actually directed to the disbelievers. It means: "If the Messenger had a selfish motive and had been exerting only for a personal gain from you, there would be a rational ground for you to avoid him. But you yourselves know that he is absolutely selfless in his invitation and is exerting himself only for your own benefit and well-being. Then, how is it that you are not even inclined to listen to him with a cool mind ?" There is also a subtle hint in this question. Like the self-styled guides and guardians of religious shrines of the world, the religious guides, priests and scholars of the polytheists of Arabia also were engaged in a religious business. In view of the same, this question was put before them: "On the one hand, these dealers in religion are openly receiving gifts and offerings and fees for every religious service from you; on the other, a person who has ruined his trading business, is trying to show you the right way with highly rational arguments, absolutely selflessly. Is it not sheer senselessness that you shun him but run after them?"

32. That is, "What particular knowledge do you have to refute the truths that the Messenger is presenting before you, which you may present with the

claim that you directly know the realities hidden behind the phenomenal world? Do you really have the knowledge that God is not One, but all those whom you have set up as deities also possess godly attributes and powers ? Have you really seen the angels and found that they are girls, and, God forbid, are begotten of God? Do you really know that the Revelation has neither come to Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), nor it can come to any man, from God ? Do you really have the knowledge that no Resurrection will take place, that there is going to be no life after death, that there will be no Hereafter when man will be subjected to accountability and rewarded or punished according to his deeds? If you claim to possess any such knowledge, can you give in writing that you are belying what the Prophet says about the unseen realities on the ground that you have peeped into the hidden realities and seen that the truth is not that which the Prophet presents." Here, one may express the misgiving that if in response to this, those people had given this in writing, in their stubbornness, will not this reasoning have become meaningless? But this misgiving is misplaced because even if they had given this in writing on account of their stubbornness, the common people of society in which this challenge had been given openly were not blind: everyone of them would have understood that the writing had been given out of sheer stubbornness, and no one, in fact, was refuting what the Prophet said on the basis that he had the knowledge that it was false.

33. The allusion is to the secret plots that the disbelievers of Makkah used to devise in their meetings in order to defeat the mission of the Holy Prophet (on whom be Allah's peace) and to kill him.

34. This is one of the clear prophecies of the Qur'ān. In the initial stage at Makkah when the Holy Prophet (on whom be Allah's peace) had no apparent power and support with him except a handful of the ill-equipped Muslims and the whole nation was opposing and resisting him relentlessly, the confrontation between Islam and disbelief appeared to be utterly unequal. No one at that time could imagine that after a few years the tables would be turned on disbelief. Rather, the superficial observer could safely predict that the strong opposition of the Quraish and entire Arabia would at last put an end to the message of Islam. But even under those conditions, a challenge was thrown to the disbelievers and they were told in clear terms: "You may devise whatever plots you wish in order to frustrate this message, they will all recoil upon you, and you will never succeed in defeating and putting an end to it."

35. That is, "The fact of the matter is that those whom they have set up as deities, are not in fact the deities, and *shirk* is wholly an unreal thing. Therefore, the person who has risen with the message of *Tauḥīd* has the power of the truth with him; and those who are supporting *shirk* are indeed fighting for the imaginary. How will then *shirk* win in this conflict?"

[Contd. on p. 192

حِيْنَ تَقُوْمُ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَمِنَ الَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَاِدْبَارَ النُّجُوْمِ ﴿٤٩﴾

48-49 Endure patiently, O Prophet, until your Lord's judgement comes to pass[38]: you are in Our sight.[39] Glorify your Lord with His praise when you rise up,[40] and glorify Him in the night too,[41] and also at the retreat of the stars.[42]

Contd. from p.[191]

36. This is meant to expose the stubbornness of the Quraish chiefs, on the one hand, and to console the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and his Companions, on the other. The Holy Prophet and his Companions wished that those people should be shown such a miracle by Allah as should convince them of the truth of his Prophethood. At this, it has been said: Whatever miracle they might see with their eyes, they will in any case misinterpret it and invent an excuse for persisting in disbelief, for their hearts are not at all inclined to believe. At several other places also in the Qur'ān their this stubbornness has been mentioned, e.g. in Sūrah Al-An'ām: 111, it has been said: "Even if we had sent down the angels to them and made the dead speak with them and ranged all the things of the world before them (as a proof thereof), they would still have disbelieved," and in Sūrah Al-Ḥijr: 15: "Even if We had opened a gate for them in heaven, and they had begun to ascend through it during day time, they would have said: "Our eyes have been dazzled; nay, we have been bewitched."

37. This is a repetition of the same theme that has already occurred in As-Sajdah: 21 above: "Even in this world We shall make them taste (one or the other) lesser torment before that greater torment; maybe they desist (from their rebellious attitude)." That is, "We shall send down personal and national disasters from time to time in the world to remind that there is above them a superior power which is deciding their destinies and none has the power to change its decisions. But the people who are involved in ignorance have neither learnt any lesson from these events before nor will learn any lesson in the future. They do not understand the meaning of the disasters and calamities occurring in the world. Therefore, they explain them away in every such way as takes them further and further away from the reality, and their mind never turns to any explanation, which might make the error of their atheism or polytheism manifest to them. This same thing has been explained by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in a *Ḥadīth*, thus: "The example of a hypocrite who falls ill and then gets well, is of the camel whom the masters tied, but it did not understand why they had tied it, and when they untied

it, it did not understand why they had untied it." (Abū Da'ūd: *Kitāb al-Janā'iz*). For further explanation, see E.N. 45 of Al-Anbiyā', E.N. 66 of An-Naml, E.N.'s 72, 73 of Al-'Ankabūt).

38. Another meaning can be: Remain firm and steadfast in carrying out the Command of your Lord."

39. That is, "We are watching over you and have not left you alone."

40. There can be several meanings of this and possibly all may be implied:

First, "Whenever you rise from a meeting, you should rise glorifying and praising Allah." The Holy Prophet himself acted upon this as well as instructed the Muslims that they should glorify and praise Allah when they rose from a meeting. Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī and Hākim have related, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah, that the Holy Prophet said: "If a person sat in a meeting in which much controversy took place, and he pronounced the following words before rising, Allah would forgive whatever passed in the meeting: *subḥānaka Allāhumma wa bi-ḥamdika, ashhadu-al lā-ilāha illā Anta, astaghfiruka wa utūbu ilaika:* "O Allah, I glorify You with Your praises: I bear witness that there is no deity but You: I seek Your forgiveness and offer repentance before You."

The second meaning is: "When you get up from bed, glorify your Lord with His praise." The Holy Prophet acted upon this himself and had also taught his Companions that they should pronounce the following words when they got up after sleep: *"La ilāha ill-Allah waḥda-hū lā sharīka lahū, lahul mulku wa lahul-ḥamdu wa huwa 'alā kulli shai'in Qadīr. Subḥān-Allāh-i wal-ḥamdu-lillāhi wa lā ilāha ill-Allāh, wallāhu Akbar, wa lā ḥaula wa lā quwwata-illā-billāh."* (Musnad Aḥmad, Bukhārī, on the authority of 'Ubādah bin aṣ-Ṣamit).

Its third meaning is: "When you stand up for the Prayer, begin it with the praise and glorification of Allah." Accordingly, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) taught that the Prayer should be begun, after the first *takbīr*, with the following words: *Subḥānak-Allāhumma wa bi-ḥamdi-ka wa tabārak asmuka wa ta'āla jadduka wa lā ilāha ghairuka:* "Glory be to You, O Allah, and I praise You. Blessed is Your name, and You are exalted. There is no god other than You."

Its fourth meaning is: "When you rise to invite others to Allah, begin your invitation with the praise and glorification of Allah." That also was the Holy Prophet's constant practice, and he always began his addresses with the praise and glorification of Allah Almighty.

Commentator Ibn Jarīr has given still another meaning of it, and it is this: "When you get up after the midday nap, offer the Prayer and this implies the Ẓuhr

Prayer."

41. This implies the Maghrib, the 'Ishā' and the Tahajjud Prayers as well as the recital of the Qur'ān and the remembrance of Allah.

42. "Retreat of the stars" implies the early hours of the morning when the stars set and they lose their lustre on the appearance of dawn. This is the time of the Fajr Prayer.


LIII
AN-NAJM
اَلنَّجم

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

LIII

AN-NAJM

اَلنَّجْم

INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah derives its name from the very first word *wan-Najm*. This title also does not relate to the subject-matter, but is a name given to the Sūrah as a symbol.

Period of Revelation

According to a Tradition related by Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Da'ūd and Nasā'ī, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, the first Sūrah in which a verse requiring the performance of a *sajdah* (prostration) was sent down, is Sūrah An-Najm. The parts of this *Ḥadīth* which have been reported by Aswad bin Yazīd, Abū Isḥāq and Zuhair bin Mu'āwiyah from Ḥaḍrat Ibn Mas'ūd indicate that this is the first Sūrah of the Qur'ān, which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had publicly recited before an assembly of the Quraish (and according to Ibn Mardūyah, in the Ka'bah) in which both the believers and the disbelievers were present. At the end, when he recited the verse requiring the performance of a *sajdah* and fell down in prostration, the whole assembly also fell down in prostration with him,

and even those chiefs of the polytheists who were in the forefront of the opposition to the Holy Prophet (peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) could not resist falling down in prostration. Ibn Mas'ūd (may Allah be pleased with him) says that he saw only one man, Umayyah bin Khalaf, from among the disbelievers, who did not fall down in prostration but took a little dust and rubbing it on his forehead said that that was enough for him. Later, as Ibn Mas'ūd relates, he saw this man being killed in the state of disbelief.

Another eye-witness of this incident is Ḥaḍrat Muṭṭalib bin Abī Wadā'ah, who had not yet become a Muslim. Nasā'ī and Musnad Aḥmad contain his own words to the effect: "When the Holy Prophet recited the Sūrah An-Najm and performed the *sajdah* and the whole assembly fell down in prostration along with him, I did not perform the *sajdah*. Now to compensate for the same whenever I recite this Sūrah I make sure never to abandon its performance."

Ibn Sa'd says that before this, in the Rajab of the 5th year of Prophethood, a small group of the Companions had emigrated to Abyssinia. Then, when in the Ramaḍān of the same year this incident took place the news spread that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had recited Sūrah An-Najm publicly in the assembly of the Quraish and the whole assembly, including the believers as well as the disbelievers, had fallen down in prostration with him. When the emigrants to Abyssinia heard this news they formed the impression that the disbelievers of Makkah had become Muslims. Thereupon, some of them returned to Makkah in the Shawwāl of the 5th year of Prophethood, only to learn that the news was wrong and the conflict between Islam and bisbelief was raging as furiously as before. Consequently, the second emigration to Abyssinia took place, in which many more people left Makkah.

Thus, it becomes almost certain that this Sūrah was revealed in the Ramaḍān of 5th year of Prophethood.

Historical Background

The details of the period of revelation as given above point to the conditions in which this Sūrah was revealed. During the first five years of his appointment as a Prophet, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had been extending invitation to Allah's Religion

by presenting the Divine Revelations before the people only in private and restricted meetings and assemblies. During this whole period he could never have a chance to recite the Qur'ān before a common gathering openly, mainly because of the strong opposition and resistance from the disbelievers. They were well aware of how magnetic and captivating was the Holy Prophet's personality and his way of preaching and how impressive were the Revelations of the Qur'ān. Therefore, they tried their best to avoid hearing it themselves and to stop others also from hearing it and to suppress his invitation by false propaganda by spreading every kind of suspicion against him. For this object, on the one hand, they were telling the people that Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had gone astray and was now bent upon misleading others as well; on the other, they would raise an uproar whenever he tried to present the Qur'ān before the people so that no one could know what it was for which he was being branded as a misled and misguided person.

Such were the conditions when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) suddenly stood up one day to make a speech in the sacred precincts of the Ka'bah, where a large number of the Quraish had gathered together. Allah at that time made him deliver this discourse, which we have now in the form of the Sūrah An-Najm with us. Such was the intensity of the impression that when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) started reciting it the opponents were so completely overwhelmed that they could not think of raising any disorder, and when at the conclusion he fell down in prostration, they too fell down in prostration along with him. Later they felt great remorse at the weakness they had involuntarily shown. The people also started taunting them to the effect that whereas they had been forbidding others to listen to the Qur'ān, that day not only had they themselves listened to it, with complete absorption, but had even fallen down in prostration along with Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). At last, they had to invent a story in order to get rid of the people's taunt and ridicule. They said: "After he had recited *afara'ait-ul-Lāta wal-'Uzzā wa Manāt ath-thālitha-al-ukhrā,* we heard from Muḥammad the words: *tilk-al-gharāniqatal-'ulā, wa anna shafā'atu-hunna latarjā:* 'They are exalted goddesses: indeed, their intercession may be expected.' From this we understood that Muḥammad had

returned to our faith." As a matter of fact, only a mad person could think that in the context of this Sūrah the sentences they claimed to have heard could have any place and relevance. (For details, please see E.N.'s 96 to 101 of Sūrah Al-Ḥajj).

Subject-Matter and Topics

The theme of the discourse is to warn the disbelievers of Makkah about the error of the attitude that they had adopted towards the Qur'ān and the Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The discourse starts in a way as if to say: "Muḥammad is neither deluded nor gone astray, as you are telling others in your propaganda against him, nor has he fabricated this teaching of Islam and its message, as you seem to think he has. In fact, whatever he is presenting is nothing but Revelation which is sent down to him. The verities that he presents before you, are not the product of his own surmise and speculation but realities of which he himself is an eye-witness. He has himself seen the Angel through whom this knowledge is conveyed to him. He has been directly made to observe the great Signs of his Lord: whatever he says is not what he has himself thought out but what he has seen with his own eyes. Therefore, your disputing and wrangling with him is just like the disputing and wrangling of a blind man with a man of sight over a thing which the blind man cannot see but he can see."

After this, three things have been presented in their successive order:

First, the listeners have been made to understand that: "The religion that you are following is based on mere conjecture and invented ideas. You have set up a few goddesses like Lāt and Manāt and 'Uzzā as your deities, whereas they have no share whatever in divinity. You regard the angels as the daughters of Allah, whereas you regard a daughter as disgraceful for your own selves. You think that these deities of yours can influence Allah in your favour, whereas the fact is that all the angels together, who are stationed closest to Allah, cannot influence Him even in their own favour. None of such beliefs that you have adopted, is based on knowledge and reason, but are wishes and desires for the sake of which you have taken some whims as realities. This is a grave error. The right and true religion is that which is in conformity to the reality, and the reality is never subject to the people's wishes and

desires so that whatever they may regard as a reality and truth should become the reality and truth. Speculation and conjecture cannot help to determine as to what is according to the truth and what is not; it is knowledge. When that knowledge is presented before you, you turn away from it, and brand the one who tells you the truth as misguided. The actual cause of your being involved in this error is that you are heedless of the Hereafter. Only this world is your goal. Therefore, you have neither any desire for the knowledge of reality, nor you bother to see whether the beliefs you hold are according to the truth or not.

Secondly, the people have been told that: Allah is the Master and Sovereign of the entire Universe. The righteous is he who follows His way, and the misguided he who has turned away from His way. The error of the misguided and the righteousness of the righteous are not hidden from Him. He knows whatever everyone is doing: He will requite the evil with evil and the good with good. The final judgement will not depend on what you consider yourself to be, and on tall claims you make of your purity and chastity but on whether you are pious or impious, righteous or un-righteous, in the sight of God. If you refrain from major sins, He in His mercy will overlook your minor errors.

Thirdly, a few basic principles of the true Religion which had been presented hundreds of years before the revelation of the Qur'ân in the Books of the Prophets Abraham and Moses have been re-iterated so that the people did not remain involved in the misunderstanding that the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had brought some new and novel religion, but they should know that these are the fundamental truths which the former Prophets of Allah have always been presenting in their respective ages. Besides, the same Books have been quoted to confirm the historical facts that the destruction of the 'Ād and the Thamūd and of the people of the Prophets Noah and Lot was not the result of accidental calamities, but Allah has destroyed them in consequence of the same wickedness and rebellion from which the disbelievers of Makkah were not inclined to refrain and desist in any case.

After presenting these themes and discourses the Sūrah has been concluded, thus: "The Hour of Judgement has approached near at hand, which no one can avert. Before the occurrence of that Hour you are

being warned through Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Qur'ān in the like manner as the former people had been warned before. Now, is it this warning that you find novel and strange? -which you mock and ridicule? which you turn away from and cause disorder so that no one else also is able to hear what it is ? Don't you feel like weeping at your folly and ignorance? Abandon this attitude and behaviour, bow down to Allah and serve Him alone!"

This was that impressive conclusion hearing which even the most hardened deniers of the Truth were completely overwhelmed, and when after reciting these verses of Divine Word the Holy Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) fell down in prostration, they too could not help falling down in prostration along with him.

سُوْرَةُ النَّجْمِ مَكِّيَّةٌ
اٰيَاتُهَا ٦٢ رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٣

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

وَالنَّجْمِ اِذَا هَوٰى ۝١ مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوٰى ۝٢ وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوٰى ۝٣
اِنْ هُوَ اِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُّوْحٰى ۝٤ عَلَّمَهٗ شَدِيْدُ الْقُوٰى ۝٥ ذُوْ مِرَّةٍ ؕ فَاسْتَوٰى ۝٦ وَهُوَ
بِالْاُفُقِ الْاَعْلٰى ۝٧ ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلّٰى ۝٨ فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ اَوْ اَدْنٰى ۝٩ فَاَوْحٰٓى
اِلٰى عَبْدِهٖ مَآ اَوْحٰى ۝١٠ مَا كَذَبَ الْفُؤَادُ مَا رَاٰى ۝١١ اَفَتُمٰرُوْنَهٗ عَلٰى مَا يَرٰى ۝١٢
وَلَقَدْ رَاٰهُ نَزْلَةً اُخْرٰى ۝١٣ عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهٰى ۝١٤ عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَاْوٰى ۝١٥
اِذْ يَغْشَى السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشٰى ۝١٦ مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغٰى ۝١٧ لَقَدْ رَاٰى مِنْ اٰيٰتِ
رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرٰى ۝١٨ اَفَرَءَيْتُمُ اللّٰتَ وَالْعُزّٰى ۝١٩ وَمَنٰوةَ الثَّالِثَةَ الْاُخْرٰى ۝٢٠ اَلَكُمُ
الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْاُنْثٰى ۝٢١ تِلْكَ اِذًا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيْزٰى ۝٢٢ اِنْ هِيَ اِلَّآ اَسْمَآءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوْهَآ
اَنْتُمْ وَاٰبَآؤُكُمْ مَّآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطٰنٍ ؕ اِنْ يَّتَّبِعُوْنَ اِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا
تَهْوَى الْاَنْفُسُ ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُمْ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمُ الْهُدٰى ۝٢٣ اَمْ لِلْاِنْسَانِ مَا تَمَنّٰى ۝٢٤
فَلِلّٰهِ الْاٰخِرَةُ وَالْاُوْلٰى ۝٢٥ وَكَمْ مِّنْ مَّلَكٍ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ لَا تُغْنِيْ شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا
اِلَّا مِنْۢ بَعْدِ اَنْ يَّاْذَنَ اللّٰهُ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيَرْضٰى ۝٢٦ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ
بِالْاٰخِرَةِ لَيُسَمُّوْنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ تَسْمِيَةَ الْاُنْثٰى ۝٢٧ وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهٖ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ؕ اِنْ
يَّتَّبِعُوْنَ اِلَّا الظَّنَّ ۚ وَاِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِيْ مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا ۝٢٨ فَاَعْرِضْ عَنْ
مَّنْ تَوَلّٰى ۙ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ اِلَّا الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا ۝٢٩ ذٰلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُمْ مِّنَ
الْعِلْمِ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِهٖ ۙ وَهُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اهْتَدٰى ۝٣٠

LIII

AN-NAJM

سُورَةُ النَّجْمِ

Verses: 62 *Revealed at Makkah*

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

By the Star[1] when it set, your companion[2] is neither gone astray nor deluded.[3] He does not speak of his own desire; it is but a Revelation which is sent down to him.[4] One mighty in power has taught him,[5] who is endowed with great wisdom.[6] He stood poised in front when he was on the uppermost horizon.[7] Then he drew near and hung suspended above, two bow-lengths away or even closer.[8] Then he revealed to the servant of Allah whatever he had to reveal.[9] The heart belied not what he saw.[10] Do you then dispute with him concerning what he sees (with the eyes)? 1-12

And he saw him once again by the farthest lote-tree, nearby which is the Garden of Repose.[11] At that time the lote-tree was covered with that which covered it.[12] The sight was neither dazzled nor it exceeded the limit,[13] and he saw of the greatest Signs of his Lord.[14] 13-18

Now tell: Have you ever pondered over the reality of this Lāt, and this 'Uzzā, and another, the third goddess, Manāt?[15] Are the sons for you and the daughters for Allah?[16] This would indeed be an unfair division! These are nothing but mere names which you and your forefathers have invented. Allah has sent down no authority for them.[17] The fact is that the people are following mere conjecture and the lusts of their souls,[18] even though right guidance has come to them from their Lord.[19] Is it that whatever man desires should become the truth for him?[20] To Allah belongs the present and the Hereafter. 19-25

How many an angel is there in the heavens! Their intercession can avail nothing until Allah permits it in favour of whomever He wills and is pleased with.[21] But those who do not believe in the Hereafter, 26-28

name the angels with the names of goddesses,[22] although they have no knowledge of this. They follow mere conjecture,[23] and conjecture can avail nothing against the Truth.

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1. In the original the word *"an-najm"* has been used. Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid and Sufyān Thaurī opine that it implies the Pleides. Ibn Jarīr and Zamakhsharī have held this same interpretation as preferable, for in Arabic when the word *an-najm is* used absolutely it usually implies the Pleides. Suddī says that it implies Venus; and Abū 'Ubaidah, the grammarian, holds that here the word *an-najm* has been used generically so as to express this idea: "When the day dawned, and the stars set." In view of the context we are of the opinion that this last interpretation is more preferable.

2. "Your Companion" implies the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be peace) and the addressees are the Quraish. The word *Ṣāḥib* as used in the original means a friend, a companion, a close associate. Here, making mention of the Holy Prophet by the word *Ṣāḥib-u-kum* (your Companion) instead of "Our Messenger" is very meaningful. This is meant to make the people of the Quraish realize: "The person being mentioned is no stranger to you: he is not an outsider whom you may not be knowing or recognizing already. He is a man of your own clan and tribe; he lives and moves among you; even your children know who and what he is, what is his character, what are his dealings, what are his ways and habits and characteristics, and how he has passed his life among you so far. If some one of you were to say an improbable thing about him, there would be a thousand men among you who knew him, who could see for themselves whether what was said actually applied to him or not."

3. This is the thing for which an oath has been sworn by the setting star or stars. "Going astray" means a person's adopting a wrong way being unaware of the right way, and "being deluded" means his adopting the wrong way knowingly and consciously. The verse means: "Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is a well-known man among you. Your accusation that he has gone astray, or is misguided, is utterly wrong. In fact, he is neither gone astray nor misguided." Here, the propriety of swearing by the setting stars is that in the darkness of the starry night a person cannot see the things of his surroundings clearly, and from their vague appearances can form wrong judgements about them, e.g. he may take a tree for a ghost in the dark, a string for a snake, a rock in the sand for a beast of prey. But when the stars have set and the day has dawned, everything appears before man in its real form and shape, and there remains no doubt whatever about the reality of anything. The same is the case also of Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) among you. His life and personality is not hidden in darkness, but is manifest like the bright dawn.

You are aware that this "companion of yours" is a right-minded, wise and sagacious man. How can somebody from among the Quraish have the misunderstanding that he has gone astray? You also know how well-intentioned and honest and righteous person he is. How can one of you form the view that he has knowingly adopted a crooked way not only for himself but has started inviting others also to the same falsehood?

4. It means this: "The things for which you accuse him of having gone astray or been misled and deceived, have neither been fabricated by himself nor motivated by any selfish desire on his part, but they have been sent down, and are being sent down, to him by God. He did not intend to become a Prophet of his own desire so that he might have laid a claim to Prophethood in order to satisfy his desire, but when Allah appointed him to that office through Revelation, then only did he rise to preach his mission and to tell you that he had been appointed God's Messenger to you. Likewise, this invitation to Islam, this teaching of the doctrine of *Tauḥīd*, this news about the gathering together of all mankind on the Day of Resurrection and their accountability, the truths that he is presenting about the Universe and Man and the principles of leading a pure life, are not a philosophy propounded by himself, but the knowledge of all this has been bestowed on him by Revelation. Likewise, this Qur'ān that he recites before you, is also not of his own composition but it is Divine Word which is sent down to him by Revelation."

Here, the question arises: To which of the words spoken by the Holy Prophet do Allah's Words: "He does not speak of his own desire; it is only a Revelation which is sent down to him," apply? Do they apply to everything that he spoke, or to some of his words and not to others? The answer is: As far as the Qur'ān is concerned, the Divine Words apply to it most completely. As for the other words, apart from the Qur'ān, which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) spoke, they could inevitably be of three kinds:

First, those words which he employed for preaching religion and inviting others to Allah, and for explaining the themes, teachings and commands of the Qur'ān, or for giving admonition and instruction to the people to fulfil the object for which the Qur'ān was revealed. In this regard, obviously nobody can have the doubt that, God forbid, he fabricated these things from his own mind. In these matters, his position, in fact, was of the official interpreter of the Qur'ān and of Allah's authorised representative. Although these things were not revealed to him literally as the Qur'ān was revealed; yet these were necessarily based on the same knowledge that he had been given by Revelation. The only difference between the Qur'ān and these was that the Qur'ān, both in word and in meaning, was entirely from Allah, and in these other things the meanings were those taught by Allah and the words those which he himself employed to express those meanings. On the basis of this very distinction, the Qur'ān has been described as *waḥī-jalī* (manifest

Revelation) and the Holy Prophet's other sayings as *waḥī-khafī* (concealed Revelation).

The second kind of the words were those which the Holy Prophet spoke in connection with the struggle of raising Allah's Word and his services for establishing Islam. In this regard, he had to perform countless duties of different kinds as the leader and guide of the Muslim community. In this many a time he took counsel with his Companions as well, and followed their advice instead of his own view. On being asked he sometimes told them that he was expressing a particular view not under Allah's command but as his personal opinion, and on several occasions it so happened that he said something on the basis of his own opinion and later an instruction came down against it from Allah. None of the things of this nature that he said or did could be based on a selfish motive. As for the question whether these sayings were based on Divine inspiration, the answer is that except for the things in regard to which he made it explicit that they were not based on Divine command, or about which he took counsel with his Companions and accepted their advice, or with regard to a thing against which Allah sent down an instruction after he had said or done something on the basis of his personal judgement, all other things were based on concealed Revelation *(waḥī khafī)* just like the things of the first kind. For the office of the leader and guide of the Islamic Movement and the chief of the believing community and the ruler of the Islamic State, which he held, was not self-invented or bestowed by the people, but he had been appointed to it by Allah, and whatever he said and did in carrying out the duties of this office, his position in it was of the representative of Divine Will. In this matter, whatever he said on the basis of his personal judgement, his judgement in those matters was approved by Allah, and was, derived from the light of the knowledge which Allah had blessed him with. That is why whenever his personal judgement was even slightly turned away from Allah's pleasure, it was immediately rectified by manifest Revelation *(waḥī jalī)*. This rectification of some of his personal judgements is itself a proof that all the rest of his religious judgements and interpretations were precisely in accordance with Divine Will.

The third kind of the things were those he said concerning common matters of life as a man, which had nothing to do with the duties of Prophethood, which he said before being appointed a Prophet as well as continued saying even after having been appointed a Prophet. About this kind of the things it should be understood at the outset that there was no dispute with the disbelievers concerning them. They had not accused him of being a misled and misguided person because of these but because of the first two kinds of the things. These things were not disputed and therefore could not become the cause of a verse from Allah. But although they were not the subject of any dispute, yet the fact is that in this private aspect of his life also never did the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) utter a

word that was opposed to the truth, but at all times, under all conditions, his words and deeds remained within the bounds that Allah had prescribed for living his life as a Prophet and righteous man. Therefore, the light of Revelation shone in that sphere as well. This same thing has been reported from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in some authentic *Aḥādīth*. In Musnad Ahmad a Tradition has been related on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah, saying that the Holy Prophet once said: "I never say anything but what is true and right." A Companion said, "O Messenger of Allah, you say things sometimes in jest also." The Holy Prophet replied: "Indeed, I never say anything but the truth." According to Musnad Aḥmad and Abū Da'ūd, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'Āṣ is reported to have said: "I used to write down whatever I heard from the sacred tongue of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) so as to preserve it. The people of the Quraish forbade me to do this, saying: 'You are writing down everything whereas the Holy Prophet is a man; he sometimes says things in the state of anger too'. At this I gave up writing. Afterwards when I mentioned this before the Holy Prophet, he said: 'You should continue writing; By Him in Whose hand is my life, never have I said anything but the truth'." (For a complete discussion of this question, see my book *Tafhīmāt* vol. I, Article: Prophethood and Its Injunctions).

5. That is, "There is no human being who teaches him this, as you seem to think, but he obtains this knowledge through a supernatural source." According to some people, "mighty in power" implies Allah Himself, but a great majority of the commentators are agreed that it implies the Angel Gabriel (upon whom be peace). This same view has been reported from Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah, Qatādah, Mujāhid and Rabī' bin Anas. Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Kathīr, Razī, Ālūsī and others also have adopted this very view. Shah Walīyullah and Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī also have followed this same view in their translations. And the fact is that from the other explanations of the Qur'ān itself also this very thing is confirmed. In Sūrah Takvīr it has been said: "This indeed is the Word of a noble Messenger, who has great power and high rank with the Owner of the Throne: there he is obeyed and held as trustworthy. And (O people of Makkah), your Companion is not mad. He has seen that Messenger on the bright horizon." (vv. 19-23). Then, in Sūrah Al-Baqarah: 97, the Angel has been mentioned by name through whom this teaching had been revealed on the heart of the Prophet: "Say to them: Whoever is enemy to Gabriel should understand that he has, by Allah's Command, revealed to your heart the Qur'ān." If these verses are read with this verse of Sūrah An-Najm, there remains no doubt that here "mighty in power" implies the Angel Gabriel and not Allah. More about it to follow.

Here, some people express the doubt as to how the Angel Gabriel can be regarded as the Holy Prophet Muḥammad's teacher. For this would mean that he

was the teacher and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) his pupil, and this would place him above the Holy Prophet in rank. But this suspicion is misplaced, because Gabriel did not impart instruction to the Holy Prophet from any personal knowledge of his own, which might give him superiority over the Holy Prophet. Allah, in fact, had made him a means of conveying knowledge to the Holy Prophet, and he was the Holy Prophet's teacher in the metaphoric sense for being only a medium of instruction. That does not give him any superiority whatever. To quote an example: After the Prayer was prescribed five times a day, Allah sent Gabriel (peace be upon him) to teach the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) the correct times of the Prayers, and he led him in the Prayers five times daily for two days. This has been related in Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī and Mu'waṭṭā and other collections of the *Aḥādīth*, with authentic chains of reporters, and in this the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself has explained that he was the follower and Gabriel his leader in the Prayers. But his being made the leader only for the purpose of instruction does not mean that he was superior to the Holy Prophet in rank.

6. Ibn 'Abbās and Qatādah take *dhū-mirra-tin* of the Text in the meaning of beautiful and grand. Mujāhid, Ḥasan Baṣrī, Ibn Zaid and Sufyān Thaurī say that it means strong and powerful. Sa'īd bin Musayyab has expressed the opinion that it means wise. In a *Ḥadīth* the Holy Prophet has used this word in the sense of healthy and sound. In Arabic usage this word is used in the meaning of sound in judgement, wise and learned also. Allah has chosen this word for Gabriel (peace be upon him) here because he possesses both intellectual and physical powers to the highest degree. We have adopted only one of these meanings in the translation, for his physical powers have been mentioned in the preceding sentence.

7. The horizon means the eastern edge of the sky where the sun rises and the day dawns. The same has been referred to as *ufuq mubīn* (bright horizon) in Sūrah Takvīr: 23. Both the verses make it explicit that when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) saw Gabriel (peace be upon him) for the first time, he had appeared on the eastern horizon of the sky; and there are several authentic Traditions which show that at that time he was in his real shape in which Allah has created him. We shall quote all such Traditions below.

8. That is, "After appearing on the uppermost edge of the sky, Gabriel started advancing towards the Prophet till he reached and hung suspended above him in mid air. Then he bent down to him and came within just two bow-lengths or even closer." The commentators generally have taken *qāba qausain* in the meaning of "two bow-lengths", but Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās and Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd have taken *qaus* in the meaning of a *dhirā'* (an arm-length, cubit), and have interpreted the words *kāna qāba qausain*, saying that the distance between them was reduced to only two arm-lengths. And since all bows are not

equal in length, the approximate distance has been expressed by "two bow-lengths away or even closer."

9. The sentence *fa auḥa illā 'abd-i-hī mā auḥā* of the Text can have two translations: (1) "He revealed to His (Allah's) servant whatever he revealed"; and (2) "He (Allah) revealed to His own servant whatever He revealed." According to the first translation, the meaning would be: Gabriel revealed to the servant of Allah whatever he had to reveal"; according to the second: "Allah revealed through Gabriel to His servant whatever He had to reveal." The commentators have given both these meanings; the first meaning, however, fits in better with the context, and the same has been reported from Ḥadrat Ḥasan Basri and Ibn Zaid. Here, the question may be asked: "How can the pronoun of *'abd-i-hī* turn to Allah instead of to the subject of *auḥā*, whereas Allah has nowhere been mentioned from the beginning of the Sūrah to this place ?" The answer is that wherever it becomes apparent from the context that the antecedent of a pronoun refers to a particular person, the pronoun turns to him automatically whether it has been mentioned before or not. There are several instances of this available in the Qur'ān itself. In Sūrah Al-Qadr: 1, Allah says: "We have sent it down in the Night of Glory." There is no mention of the Qur'ān in this sentence, but the context explicitly shows that the antecedent of the pronoun is the Qur'ān. At another place Allah says: "If Allah were to seize the people because of their misdeeds, He would not leave any creature (unpunished) on its back." In this sentence there is no mention of the earth anywhere, but the context clearly shows that "its back" implies "the earth's back". In Sūrah Yā Sīn: 69, it has been said: "We have not taught him poetry, nor does poetry behove him." Here, there is no mention of the Holy Prophet, neither before this sentence nor after it, yet the context is explicit that the antecedent of the pronouns is the Holy Prophet himself. In Sūrah Ar-Rahmān: 26, it has been said: "Whatever exists on it shall perish." There is no mention of the earth either before or after it, but the style clearly shows that the pronoun of *'alaihā* turns to it. In Sūrah Al-Wāqi'ah: 35, it has been said: "We shall have created them especially." There is no noun or pronoun before or after it to which the pronoun of *hunna* may be referring. It is apparent from the context that it signifies the women of Paradise. Thus, as *auḥā illā 'abd-i hī* cannot at all mean that Gabriel revealed to his servant, the meaning necessarily would be that "Gabriel revealed to the servant of Allah", or that "Allah revealed to His own servant through Gabriel."

10. That is, "As the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be peace) observed all this in broad daylight in the waking condition, with open eyes, his heart did not deem it was a delusion, or that it was a jinn or a devil, who had appeared before him, or that it was an imaginary figure, or a vision that he was seeing while awake, but his heart fully confirmed what his eyes saw. He did not

for a moment doubt that it was the Angel Gabriel and the Message he was conveying was indeed God's Revelation to him."

Here, the question arises: How is it that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) did not entertain any doubt at all concerning such a wonderful and extraordinary observation, and he confirmed with full faith that whatever his eyes saw was an actual fact and not an imaginary figure, nor a jinn or devil ? When we consider this question deeply we are led to five reasons for it:

First, that the external conditions in which this observation was made, testified to its truth and validity. The Holy Prophet did not observe this in darkness, or in a state of meditation, or in a vision, or in a sleep-like condition, but the day had dawned and he was fully awake, and he was seeing the whole scene in the broad daylight in the open with his own eyes precisely in the way as one sees the other things in the world. If doubt is cast on this, then whatever we see in the day time, e.g. rivers, mountains, men, houses, etc., also would become doubtful and illusory.

Second, that the Holy Prophet's own internal condition also testified to its validity. He was in his full senses. He had no idea whatever in his mind that he should observe, or that he was going to observe, such a thing. His mind was absolutely free from such a thought and any longing for it, and in this state he met with this experience suddenly. There was no room for doubting that the eyes were seeing an actual scene, but that an imaginary thing had appeared before his eyes.

Third, that the being who had appeared before him in that condition was so marvellous and magnificent, so beautiful and bright, that neither had he ever had any concept of such a being before that he could take it for a product of his own imagination, nor could a jinn or a devil have such an appearance that he would have taken him for a being other than an angel. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "I saw Gabriel in the shape that he had six hundred wings." (Musnad Aḥmad). In another Tradition Ibn Mas'ūd has further explained that each single wing of Gabriel (on whom be peace) was so extensive that it seemed to be covering the whole horizon (Musnad Aḥmad). Allah Himself has described him as *shadīd al-quwā* (one mighty in power) and *dhū-mirra* (one endowed with great wisdom).

Fourth, that the teaching that the being was imparting also testified to the validity of the observation. The Holy Prophet had no concept of the knowledge that he received suddenly through him, a knowledge that comprehended the realities and truths of the whole Universe. About it he could not have the doubt that it consisted of his own ideas which were being set and arranged by his own mind. Likewise, there was no ground for thinking either that it was Satan who was imparting that knowledge to him and thus deluding him, for it is not for Satan that

he should teach, nor can he ever teach, the doctrine of *Tauḥīd* to man as against polytheism and idol-worship, that he should warn of the accountability of the Hereafter, that he should create contempt against ignorance and its practices, that he should invite people to moral excellences, and should exhort a person not only to accept that teaching himself but should also rise to eradicate polytheism, injustice, wickedness and sin from the world and replace these evils by the virtues of *Tauḥīd*, justice, equity and piety.

The fifth and by far the most important reason is that when Allah chooses a certain person for His Prophethood, He cleanses his heart of doubts and suspicions and evil suggestions and fills it with faith and conviction. In this state no hesitation or vacillation is caused in his mind about the validity of whatever his eyes see and his ears hear. He accepts with complete satisfaction of the heart every truth that is revealed to him by his Lord, whether it is in the form of an observation that he is made to witness with the eyes, or in the form of knowledge which he is inspired with, or in the form of a Revelation that is recited to him literally. In all these cases the Prophet is fully aware that he is absolutely safe and secure against Satanic interference of every kind, and whatever he is receiving in any form is precisely and definitely from his Lord. Like all God-given feelings this sense and feeling of the Prophet also is a certainty which does not admit of any misunderstanding. Just as the fish has a God-given sense of being a swimmer, the bird of being a bird, and the man of being a man, and there can be no likelihood of any misunderstanding in this regard, so has the Prophet also a God-given sense of his being a Prophet. He does not even for a moment entertain the doubt that he has perhaps been involved in the misunderstanding of being a Prophet.

11. This is about the Holy Prophet's second meeting with Gabriel (upon whom be peace) in which he appeared before him in his real shape and nature. The place where this meeting took place has been described as *Sidrat-al-muntahā*, along with which it has been said that nearby it is located *Jannat al ma'vā* (Garden of Repose).

Sidrah in Arabic means the lote-tree and *muntahā* the extreme edge or limit. Thus, literally, *sidrat al-muntahā* means "the lote-tree that is situated on the extreme edge or limit". 'Allāma Ālūsī in his *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī* has explained it thus: "At this the knowledge of every learned man comes to an end; whatever is beyond it is known to none but Allah." Almost the same explanation of it has been given by Ibn Jarīr in his commentary, and by Ibn Kathīr in *An-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth wal-Āthār*. It is difficult for us to know what kind of a lote-tree it is that is situated at the farthest end of this physical world and what is its nature and state. These are the mysteries of the Divine Universe which are incomprehensible for

us. In any case, it is some such thing for which there was no more appropriate word than *"sidrah"* in human language, in the sight of Allah.

"Jannat al-ma'vā" literally means "the *Jannat* (Garden) that is to be an abode." Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣri says that this is the same *Jannat* which the believers and righteous will be given in the Hereafter, and from this same verse he has argued that that *Jannat* is in the heavens. Qatādah says that this is the *Jannat* in which the souls of the martyrs are kept; it does not imply the *Jannat* that is to be given in the Hereafter. Ibn 'Abbās also says the same but adds that the *Jannat* to be granted to the believers in the Hereafter is not in the heavens but here on the earth.

12. That is, "its Splendour and Glory exceeds all description. The Divine Glory and effulgence was such as can neither be conceived by man nor can any human language depict it adequately.

13. That is, "On the one hand, the Holy Messenger of Allah was so firm and steadfast that even in the Presence of the great Divine Splendour and Glory his sight was not dazzled and he went on gazing at it with great composure. On the other, he was in such complete control of himself and so exclusively attentive that he kept his mind and his sight focussed upon the object for which he had been summoned, and he did not let his sight wander to any side like a spectator's to have a glimpse of the wonderful objects present there. This can be understood by the example of a person who gets an opportunity to be present in the court of a mighty and powerful king, where he comes across such glory and splendour that had never even been conceived by him before. Now, if he be a shallow person, he would be struck with amazement, and if he be un-initiated in the court etiquette, he would become heedless of the royal presence and would turn his gaze to every side to look at the embellishments of the court. But a noble, reverent and dutiful person will neither be stupefied and confounded, nor will become lost in witnessing the court, but will present himself with full dignity and will keep his mind concentrated on the object for which he had been summoned in the royal court. This very virtue and quality of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has been esteemed in this verse.

14. This verse clearly states that the Holy Prophet had not seen Allah but His wonderful Sings. Even according to the context, this second meeting also took place with the same being with whom the first meeting had taken place. Therefore, one will have to admit that neither the one whom he had first seen on the uppermost horizon was Allah nor he whom he saw afterwards by the farthest lote-tree was Allah. Had he seen Allah Almighty on either occasion it would have been a great thing and must certainly have been mentioned here explicitly. About the Prophet Moses it has been said in the Qur'ān that he had besought to see Allah

and the reply given was: *Lan tarānī* "You cannot see Me." (Al-A'rāf 143). Now, obviously if this honour that was not granted to the Prophet Moses, had been granted to the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), it would by itself have been such an important thing which must have been stated in clear words. But we see that nowhere in the Qur'ān has it been said that the Holy Prophet had seen his Sustainer and Lord. But in Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl also, where mention has been made of the event of *Mi'rāj* (Ascension), it has been said that "We had transported Our servant...so that We may show him some of Our Signs" *(li-nurīya-hū min āyāt-i nā)*, and here in connection with his visit at *Sidrat al-muntahā* also it has been said: "He saw of the greatest Signs of His Lord" *(laqad ra'ā min āyāt-i Rabb-i-hil kubrā)*.

In view of these reasons apparently there was no ground for the dispute whether the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) on both these occasions had seen Allah Almighty or the Angel Gabriel (on whom be peace). But, the reason that has given rise to this dispute is that the traditions of *Ḥadīth* differ on this question. Below we reproduce in their sequence the *Aḥādīth* that have been reported from the different Companions in this regard:

(1) Traditisons of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah:

Hadrat Masrūq has stated in *Kitāb at-Tafsīr* of Bukhārī asked Hadrat 'Ā'ishah: O mother of the faithful! Had Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) seen his Lord and Sustainer? She replied: Your question has terrified me. Why do you forget that if a person lays claim to three of the things, he would lay a false claim ? (The first of these things that Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah mentioned was): Whoever among you says that Muḥammad (upon whom *be* Allah's peace) had seen his Lord and Sustainer, tells a lie. Then Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah recited these verses: *Lā tudriku-hul-abṣār* "Eyes cannot comprehend Him;" and: *Mā kāna li-bashar-in anyyukallima-hullāh-u illā waḥy-an au min-warā-i-ḥijāb-* in' *au yursila rasūl an fayū-ḥiya bi-idhni hi mā yashā-u:* "It is not given to any mortal that Allah should speak to him, face to face; He speaks either through Revelation (secret instruction), or from behind a curtain, or He sends a messenger (an angel), who by Allah's Command, reveals whatever He wills." (Ash-Shūrā: 51). Then she said: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in fact had seen Gabriel (on whom be peace) in his real shape twice."

A part of this *Ḥadīth is* also found in Bukhārī (chapter 4 of *Kitāb at-Tauhīd)* And in the tradition that Bukhārī has cited from Masrūq in *Kitāb Bidā'al-Khalq*, he states: "Hearing this thing from Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, I asked: What would then Allah's words, *Thumma danā fa-tadallā, fa-Kāna qāba qausain-i au adnā*, mean ? She replied: This refers to Gabriel; he always appeared before the Holy

Prophet in human shape, but on this occasion he had appeared before him in his real shape and nature and the whole horizon was filled with him."

In Muslim *(Kitāb al-Īmān, Bābu fī Dhikr Sidrat al-muntahā)* this conversation between Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah and Masrūq has been related in greater detail, its most important part being this: "Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah said: The one who claims that Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had seen his Lord and Sustainer imputes a lie to Allah. Masrūq says: I was leaning back. Hearing this I sat up and said: Mother of the faithful, do not make haste: Has not Allah said: *wa laqad ra'a-hu bil-ufuq-il mubīn*? and *laqad ra'ā-hu nazlat-an ukhrā* ? Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah replied: I was the first one in this *Ummah* who inquired of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about this. He had replied: "It was Gabriel (on whom be peace). I have never seen him in his real shape and form in which Allah has created him except on these two occasions. On these two occasions I saw him descending from the heavens and his great presence was covering the whole space between the earth and the heavens."

Ibn Mardūyah has related this tradition of Masrūq, thus: "Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah said: I was indeed the first person who asked the Holy Prophet: Did you ever see your Lord and Sustainer? He replied: No, I had only seen Gabriel descending from the heavens."

(2) Traditions of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd:

Bukhārī *(Kitāb at-Tafsīr)*, Muslim *(Kitāb al Īmān)* and Tirmidhī *(Abwāb at-Tafsīr)* contain a tradition on the authority of Zirr bin Ḥubaish, saying that Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd gave this commentary of *fa-kāna qāba qausain-i au adnā*: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) saw Gabriel (on whom be peace) in the shape that he had six hundred wings."

In the other traditions of Muslim, Zirr bin Ḥubaish has reported this very commentary of *Ma kadhab al-fu'ādu mā ra'ā* and *laqad ra'ā min āyāt-i Rabbi-hil kubrā* from Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd.

In Musnad Aḥmad this commentary of Ibn Mas'ūd has been reported by 'Abdur Raḥmān bin Yazīd and Abū Wā'il also besides Zirr bin Hubaish. Furthermore, in Musnad Aḥmad two more traditions of Zirr bin Ḥubaish have been related in which Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd commenting upon *wa laqad ra'a-hu nazlat-an ukhrā, 'inda-sidrat-il muntahā* stated: "The Holy Messenger of Allah said that he saw Gabriel by the lote-tree he had six hundred wings. "Imām Aḥmad has cited a tradition on the same subject, on the authority of Shaqīq bin Salamah also, in which he states that he heard Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd saying that the Holy Prophet himself had said that he had seen Gabriel (on whom be peace) in that shape at *sidrat al-muntahā*.

(3) When 'Aṭā' bin Abī Rabāḥ asked Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah the meaning of the verse *laqad ra'ā-hu nazlat-an ukhrā*, he replied: "The Holy Prophet had seen Gabriel (on whom be peace).": (Muslim: *Kitāb al Imān).*

(4) Imām Muslim has related in *kitāb al-Imān* two traditions of 'Abdullah bin Shaqīq on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Abū Dharr Ghifārī, in one of which he says that he asked the Holy Prophet: "Did you ever see your Lord?" The Holy Prophet replied: *Nūr-un annā arā-hu;* and in the other he says that the Holy Prophet gave this answer to his question: *Ra'aitu nūr-an.* Of the first answer of the Holy Prophet Ibn al-Qayyim has given this meaning in his *Zād al-Ma'ād:* "Between me and the sight of my Lord there was Light," and of the second this: "I did not see my Lord but only a Light."

Nasā'ī and Ibn Abī Hātim have reported the saying of Ḥaḍrat Abū Dharr, thus: "The Holy Prophet had seen his Lord with the heart (mind), not with the eyes.

(5) Imām Muslim in his *Kitāb al-Imān* has related this tradition from Ḥaḍrat Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī: "The Holy Prophet said: The sight of no one from among His creatures has reached Allah Almighty."

(6) Traditions of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās:

According to Muslim, when Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās was asked the meaning of: *Mā kadhab al-fu'ādu mā ar'ā, wa laqad ra'ā hu nazlat-an ukhrā,* he said: "The Holy Messenger of Allah saw his Lord twice with his heart." This tradition is also contained in Musnad Aḥmad.

Ibn Mardūyah has cited this saying of Ibn 'Abbās, on the authority of 'Aṭā' bin Abī Rabāḥ: The Holy Messenger of Allah had not seen Allah with the eyes but with the heart."

Nasā'ī contains a tradition from 'Ikrimah saying that Ibn 'Abbās said "Do you wonder at this that Allah made the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) His friend, blessed Moses with His Word and honoured Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) with His sight?" Ḥākim also has cited this tradition and held it as authentic.

In Tirmidhī, there is a tradition from Sha'bī to the effect that Ibn 'Abbas said in a gathering: "Allah had distributed His Sight and His Word between Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and Moses (upon whom be peace). He spoke to Moses twice, and Muḥammad saw Him twice " Hearing these very words of Ibn 'Abbās, Masrūq had approached Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah with the question "Had Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) seen his Lord?" She had replied: "What you have said has made my hair stand on end." After this the same

dialogue that we have cited above under the tradition of Hadrat 'Ā'ishah took place between Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah and Masrūq.

In one of the traditions reported in Tirmidhī from Ibn 'Abbās, he says: "The Holy Prophet had seen Allah Almighty." In yet another he says: "He had seen Him twice", and in a third one; "He had seen Him with the heart."

In Musnad Aḥmad a tradition from Ibn 'Abbās is to the effect: "The Holy Prophet said: I saw my Lord, the blessed, the exalted." In another tradition he says: "The Holy Messenger of Allah said: Tonight my Lord came to me in the best shape." I think that by this the Holy Prophet meant that he saw Allah Almighty in a vision.

Ṭabarānī and Ibn Mardūyah have related this tradition also from Ibn 'Abbās: "The Holy Messenger of Allah had seen his Lord twice, once with the eyes and the second time with the heart."

(7) Muḥammad bin Ka'b al-Qurẓī states that when some of the Companions asked the Holy Prophet,: "Did you ever see your Lord? he replied: I have seen Him twice with my heart." (Ibn Abī Hātim) Ibn Jarīr has related this very tradition, thus: "He said: I have not seen Him with the eye, but with the heart twice."

(8) A tradition of Ḥaḍrat Anas bin Mālik which Imām Bukhārī has cited in his *Kitāb at-Tauḥīd* in connection with the event of the *Mi'rāj*, on the authority of Sharīk bin 'Abdullah, contains words to the effect: "When the Holy Prophet reached *sidrat al-muntahā*, Allah Almighty drew near him and hung suspended above him till there remained between the Holy Prophet and Him a distance equal to two bow-lengths or even less. Then, what Allah revealed to him included the Command for 50 Prayers." But, besides the objections that Imām Khaṭṭābī, Ḥāfiz Ibn Ḥajar, Ibn Hazm and Hāfiz 'Abdul Haq (author of *Al-Jam' bain al-Ṣaḥīḥain)* have raised in respect of the authenticity and subject-matter of this tradition, the main objection against it is that it clearly contradicts the Qur'ān, for the Qur'ān mentions two separate occasions when the experience of the vision took place, the first initially at the uppermost horizon to which reference has been made in: *Danā fa-tadallā, fa-kāna qāba qausain-i au adnā*, and a second time near *sidrat al muntahā*. But this tradition mixes up the two occasions and presents them both as one occasion of the vision. Therefore, because of its being contradictory to the Qur'ān, it cannot be acceptable in any case.

As for the other traditions that we have cited above, the weightiest among them are those that have been related from Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd and Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, for both of them have unanimously reported this saying of the

Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself that on neither occasion he had seen Allah but Gabriel (peace be on him), and these traditions fully conform to the explanations and allusions of the Qur'ān. Furthermore, they are also confirmed by the sayings of the Holy Prophet which Ḥaḍrat Abū Dharr and Ḥaḍrat Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī have reported from him. On the contrary the traditions that have been cited from Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās in the books of *Hadīth* are self-contradictory. In some he regards both the experiences as a vision with the eyes, in some both as a vision with the heart, in some one with the eyes and the other with the heart, and in some he wholly negates the vision with the eyes. In none of these traditions he has cited any saying of the Holy Prophet himself and where he has cited such a saying, it contains no mention of either of the two experiences stated in the Qur'ān; besides, the explanation of one of his traditions given by the other indicates that the Holy Prophet at some time had seen Allah Almighty not in the waking condition but in a vision during sleep. Therefore, in fact, for the commentary of these verses the traditions ascribed to Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās cannot be held as reliable. Likewise, although the traditions of Muḥammad bin Ka'b al-Qurẓī cite a saying of the Holy Prophet, they do not mention the names of the Companions who might have heard this thing from the Holy Prophet himself. Moreover, in one of them it has been said that the Holy Prophet had clearly denied having seen Allah with the eyes.

15. That is, "You regard the teachings being given to you by Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) as erroneous and falsehood, whereas he is being given this knowledge by Allah, and Allah has made him see with his own eyes the verities to which he is testifying before you. Now consider it for yourself as to how irrational are the beliefs that you are following persistently and as to whom you are causing loss by opposing and resisting the person who is guiding you to the Right Way. In this connection, especially the three goddesses that were worshipped generally by the people of Makkah, Ṭā'if and other parts of Ḥejāz have been taken as an example. About them, they have been asked: Have you ever considered rationally whether they could have even the slightest role in the affairs of the Godhead of the earth and heavens? Or could they bear any relationship whatever with the Lord of the Universe?

The shrine of Lāt was in Ṭā'if and the Banī Thaqīf were so devoted to it that when Abraha was advancing to Makkah with his army of elephants to destroy the Ka'bah, the people only in order to save the temple of their deity had provided the wicked man with guides to lead him to Makkah so that he should spare Lāt, whereas like all the Arabs the people of Thaqīf also believed that the Ka'bah is Allah's House. Scholars have disputed the meaning of Lāt. According to Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, it is the feminine gender of Allah, i.e. originally this word was *allahatun* which became al-Lāt. According to Zamakhsharī, it is derived from *lawā yalwī*,

which means to turn to or bow to somebody. As the polytheists turned to it for worship and bowed to it and circumambulated it, it began to be called Lāt. Ibn 'Abbās reads it as *latt* (with a stress on t) and holds it is derived from *latt yalittu*, which means to churn and mix together. He and Mujāhid state that this, in fact, was a man, who lived on a rock near Ṭā'if, and used to entertain the pilgrims to Makkah with barley drinks and food. When he died the people built a shrine to him on the same rock and began to worship him. But this explanation of Lāt, in spite of having been reported on the authority of scholars like Ibn 'Abbās and Mujāhid, is not acceptable for two reasons. First, that in the Qur'ān it has been called Lāt and not Latt; second, that the Qur'ān describes all the three as goddesses, and according to this tradition Lāt was a man, not a woman.

'Uzzā is derived from *'izzat*, and it means the one (female) enjoying veneration and respect. This was the special goddess of the Quraish and her shrine was situated at Ḥurād in the valley of Nakhlah, between Makkah and Ṭā'if. (For the location of Nakhlah, see E.N. 33 of Sūrah Al-Aḥqāf). The people of Banī Shaibān, who were the allies of the Banī Hāshim, were its attendants. The Quraish and the people of other tribes paid visits to it and presented offerings and made sacrifices to it. As for the Ka'bah sacrificial animals were driven to it also and it was held in the highest esteem. Ibn Hishām relates that when Abū Uḥaiḥah was on the point of death, Abū Lahab paid him a visit and found him weeping. Abū Lahab asked, "Why do you weep, Abū Uḥaiḥah ? Are you afraid of death ?—and death is the destiny of everybody !" He said, "By God, I do not weep because of the fear of death, but I am grieved to think as to how 'Uzzā will be worshipped after me." Abū Lahab said, "It was neither worshipped for your sake in your lifetime, nor will it be given up after you have left the world." Abū Uḥaiḥah said, "Now I am satisfied that there are people who will take my place after me."

The shrine of Manāt was situated at Qudaid by the Red Sea between Makkah and Madīnah, and the people of Khuzā'ah and Aus and Khazraj were in particular its great devotees. People visited it as pilgrims, circumambulated it and made offerings and sacrifices before it. In the Ḥajj months as soon as the pilgrims became free from their visit to the Ka'bah and the religious services at Minā and 'Arafāt, they would start raising cries of *"Labbaik, labbaik"* even there for the purpose of visiting Manāt, and the people who intended to go on this second "ḥajj" did not run between the Ṣafā and the Marwah.

16. That is, "You held these goddesses as daughters of Allah, Lord of the worlds, and did not consider while inventing this absurd creed that as for yourselves you regarded the birth of a daughter as disgraceful, and desired to have only male children, but as for Allah you assign to Him only daughters!"

17. That is, "Those whom you call gods and goddesses are neither gods nor goddesses, nor do they possess any attribute of divinity, nor any share whatever in the powers of Godhead. You have of your own whim made them children of God and deities and associates in Godhead. Allah has sent down no authority which you may produce as a proof in support of your presumptions."

18. In other words, the basic causes of their deviation are two: First, that they do not feel any need for the knowledge of reality for the purpose of adopting a creed and relfgion, but make a supposition on the basis of a mere conjecture and then put belief in it as though it were the reality. Second, that they have, in fact, adopted this attitude in order to follow the lusts of their souls: they desire that they should have such a deity as should help them attain their aims and objects in the world, and if at all there is to be a Hereafter, it should take the responsibility to have them granted forgiveness there too. But it should not impose any restriction of the lawful and the nnlawful on them nor should bind them in any discipline of morality. That is why they do not feel inclined to worship One God as taught by the Prophets, and only like to worship these invented gods and goddesses.

19. That is, in every age the Prophets appointed by Allah have been guiding these wicked people to the Truth, and now Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has come to tell them as to whom belongs Godhead in reality in the Universe.

20. Another meaning of this verse can be: "Is man entitled to take anyone he pleases as his god?" Still another meaning can be: "Can the desire of man to have his prayers answered by these gods ever be fulfilled?"

21. That. is, "Even if all the angels together intercede for a person, it cannot be beneficial for him not to speak of the intercession by these invented deities of yours, which can do no one any good. All the powers of Godhead rest with Allah. Even the angels cannot dare intercede for somebody before Him unless He permits it and is pleased to hear their intercession in his behalf."

22. That is, "Their first folly is that they have taken these powerless angels who cannot even intercede for anyone before Allah as their deities; their second folly is that they regard them as female and daughters of Allah. The basic reason for these errors is that they do not believe in the Hereafter. For had they been believers in the Hereafter, they would never have behaved so irrationally and irresponsibly. Their denial of the Hereafter has made them heedless of their end, and they think that believing or disbelieving in God, or believing in a thousand gods, does not make any difference, for none of these creeds seems to entail any good or bad result in the present life of the world. Whether the people are deniers

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وَ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ مَا فِی الْاَرْضِ ۙ لِیَجْزِیَ الَّذِیْنَ اَسَآءُوْا بِمَا عَمِلُوْا وَ
یَجْزِیَ الَّذِیْنَ اَحْسَنُوْا بِالْحُسْنٰی ﴿31﴾ اَلَّذِیْنَ یَجْتَنِبُوْنَ كَبٰٓئِرَ الْاِثْمِ وَ الْفَوَاحِشَ
اِلَّا اللَّمَمَ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ ؕ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ اِذْ اَنْشَاَكُمْ مِّنَ الْاَرْضِ وَ
اِذْ اَنْتُمْ اَجِنَّةٌ فِیْ بُطُوْنِ اُمَّهٰتِكُمْ ۚ فَلَا تُزَكُّوْۤا اَنْفُسَكُمْ ؕ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقٰی ﴿32﴾
اَفَرَءَیْتَ الَّذِیْ تَوَلّٰی ﴿33﴾ وَ اَعْطٰی قَلِیْلًا وَّ اَكْدٰی ﴿34﴾ اَعِنْدَهٗ عِلْمُ الْغَیْبِ فَهُوَ
یَرٰی ﴿35﴾ اَمْ لَمْ یُنَبَّاْ بِمَا فِیْ صُحُفِ مُوْسٰی ﴿36﴾ وَ اِبْرٰهِیْمَ الَّذِیْ وَفّٰۤی ﴿37﴾ اَلَّا تَزِرُ
وَازِرَةٌ وِّزْرَ اُخْرٰی ﴿38﴾ وَ اَنْ لَّیْسَ لِلْاِنْسَانِ اِلَّا مَا سَعٰی ﴿39﴾ وَ اَنَّ سَعْیَهٗ سَوْفَ
یُرٰی ﴿40﴾ ثُمَّ یُجْزٰىهُ الْجَزَآءَ الْاَوْفٰی ﴿41﴾ وَ اَنَّ اِلٰی رَبِّكَ الْمُنْتَهٰی ﴿42﴾ وَ اَنَّهٗ هُوَ اَضْحَكَ
وَ اَبْكٰی ﴿43﴾ وَ اَنَّهٗ هُوَ اَمَاتَ وَ اَحْیَا ﴿44﴾ وَ اَنَّهٗ خَلَقَ الزَّوْجَیْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَ الْاُنْثٰی ﴿45﴾
مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ اِذَا تُمْنٰی ﴿46﴾ وَ اَنَّ عَلَیْهِ النَّشْاَةَ الْاُخْرٰی ﴿47﴾ وَ اَنَّهٗ هُوَ اَغْنٰی وَ
اَقْنٰی ﴿48﴾ وَ اَنَّهٗ هُوَ رَبُّ الشِّعْرٰی ﴿49﴾ وَ اَنَّهٗۤ اَهْلَكَ عَادَا ِۨ الْاُوْلٰی ﴿50﴾ وَ ثَمُوْدَا فَمَاۤ
اَبْقٰی ﴿51﴾ وَ قَوْمَ نُوْحٍ مِّنْ قَبْلُ ؕ اِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا هُمْ اَظْلَمَ وَ اَطْغٰی ﴿52﴾ وَ الْمُؤْتَفِكَةَ
اَهْوٰی ﴿53﴾ فَغَشّٰىهَا مَا غَشّٰی ﴿54﴾ فَبِاَیِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكَ تَتَمَارٰی ﴿55﴾ هٰذَا نَذِیْرٌ مِّنَ
النُّذُرِ الْاُوْلٰی ﴿56﴾ اَزِفَتِ الْاٰزِفَةُ ﴿57﴾ لَیْسَ لَهَا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ كَاشِفَةٌ ﴿58﴾ اَفَمِنْ
هٰذَا الْحَدِیْثِ تَعْجَبُوْنَ ﴿59﴾ وَ تَضْحَكُوْنَ وَ لَا تَبْكُوْنَ ﴿60﴾ وَ اَنْتُمْ
سٰمِدُوْنَ ﴿61﴾ فَاسْجُدُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَ اعْبُدُوْا ﴿62﴾

So, O Prophet, leave him alone who turns away from Our remembrance[24] and seeks nothing but the life of the world,[25]—this[26] only is their amount of knowledge:[27] only your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His Way and who is on the right path, and to Allah belongs everything in the heavens and the earth[28]—so that[29] Allah may recompense the evil doers according to their deeds and give good rewards to those who have adopted the righteous attitude, who avoid grave sins[30] and open indecencies[31] save the minor offences.[32] Surely your Lord is liberal in forgiveness.[33] He knows you well from the time He produced you from the earth and when you were yet embryos in your mothers' wombs. Therefore, do not claim piety for yourselves: He alone knows best who is really pious and Godfearing. 29-32

Then, O Prophet, have you seen him who turned away from God's Way, who gave a little and stopped?[34] Does he possess the knowledge of the unseen that he sees the reality?[35] Has he not heard of those things that have been mentioned in the Books of Moses and in the Books of that Abraham who proved true to his pledge?[36] 33-55

"That no bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another;[37] and that there is nothing for man but what he has striven for;[38] and that his striving shall soon be seen,[39] and then he will be fully rewarded for it; and that to your Lord is the final goal; and that it is He Who made (men) to laugh and to weep[40]; and that it is He Who gave death and granted life; and that it is He Who created the pair of male and female from a sperm-drop when it is emitted;[41] and that it rests upon Him to grant the second life;[42]and that it is He Who made rich and bestowed property;[43] and that He is the Lord of Sirius;[44] and that it is He Who destroyed the former 'Ād,[45] and annihilated Thamūd so as to spare none of them; and before them He destroyed the people of Noah because they were a most wicked and rebellious people. And He overthrew the subverted settlements, then there covered them that which (you know well) covered them.[46] Then,[47] O man, which of your Lord's bounties will you doubt?"[48]

This is a warning of the warnings already given.[49] That which is coming is near at hand.[50] None but Allah can avert it.[51] Is it at these things that you marvel?[52] And you laugh and weep not?[53] And you ward them off by merry-making?[54] Bow down before Allah and 56-62

worship Him.[55]

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of God, or believers in many gods, or in One God, their crops ripen as well as fail, they fall ill as well as recover from illness, and they pass through all kinds of circumstances, good as well as bad. Therefore it is not at all an important and serious matter for them that man should or should not take some one as a deity, or should take as many deities or of any kind as he likes of his choice. When according to them the decision as to what is truth and what is falsehood is to take place in this very world, depending on the results thereof appearing here, obviously the results here do not decide absolutely that one creed is true and another false. Therefore, the adoption of one creed and rejection of another is a matter of mere whim with these people."

23. That is, "They have not adopted this creed about the angels on the ground that they had found through some means of knowledge that they were females and daughters of God, but they have presumed this on mere conjecture and have set up these shrines at which they pray for fulfillment of desires, make offerings and pay tributes."

24. *Dhikr* here may imply the Qur'ān as well as mere admonition; it may also mean that he does not like that even God be mentioned before him.

25. That is, "You should not waste your time in making him understand the truth, for such a person will never be inclined to accept any invitation which is based on God-worship, which calls to objects and values higher than the material benefits of the world, and according to which the real aim of life may be the eternal success and well-being of the Hereafter. Instead of expending your time and energy on such a materialistic and ungodly person, you should devote attention to the people who are inclined to heed the remembrance of Allah and are not involved in the worship of the world."

26. This is a parenthetical sentence which has been inserted here as an explanation of the preceding verse.

27. That is, "These people neither know nor can think anything beyond the world and its immediate gains; therefore, it is futile merely to expend time and energy on them."

28. In other words, neither the question whether a person is gone astray or is on right guidance, is to be decided in this world, nor has its decision been left to the judgement of the people of the world; the decision rests with Allah. He alone is the Master of the earth and heavens and He alone knows which way out of the different ways being followed by the people of the world, is the way of

guidance and which of error and deviation. Therefore, you should least bother if the polytheistic Arabs and the Makkan disbelievers think you are deluded and misguided and regard their own ignorance as truth and guidance. Leave them alone if they wish to remain lost in their falsehood. You need not waste your time in disputing with them.

29. The theme is resumed here and connected as a continuous whole with verse 29. Without the parenthesis, it would read: "Leave him alone so that Allah may requite the evildoers for their evil deeds."

30. For explanation, see E.N. 53 of An-Nisā.

31. For explanation, see E.N. 130 of Al-An'ām and E.N. 89 of An-Naḥl.

32. The word *lamam* as found in the original is used for a small quantity of something, or its slight effect, or its mere closeness, or its existence for a short time. This word is used to express the sense that a person did not commit an act but was very near to committing it.

On the basis of its usages some commentators have taken the word *lamam* in the meaning of minor sins. Some others have taken it in the meaning that a person should practically reach very near a grave sin but should desist from actually committing it. Still others take it in the sense of a person's remaining involved in a sin temporarily and then desisting from it. And according to some it implies that a person should think of, or wish, or intend to commit a sin but should take no practical steps towards it. In this regard, the views of the Companions and their immediate followers are as follows:

Zaid bin Aslam and Ibn Zaid opine, and a saying of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās also is to the same effect, that it signifies those sins which the people had committed in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, then after embracing Islam they refrained from them.

Another view of Ibn 'Abbās is, and the same is also the view of Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'Āṣ, Mujāhid, Ḥasan Baṣri and Abū Ṣāliḥ, that it implies a person's being involved in a grave sin or indecency temporarily, or occasionally, and then giving it up.

Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, Masrūq and Sha'bī say, and the same also has been reported from Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah and Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās in authentic traditions, that this implies a person's approaching the very point of a grave sin and crossing all its preliminaries but then restraining himself at the final stage, *e.g.* a person goes out with the intention of stealing but refrains from it in the end, or has close association with other women, but refrains from committing adultery.

Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Zubair, 'Ikrimah, Qatādah and Ḍaḥḥāk say that this signifies those minor sins for which no punishment has been prescribed in the world nor any threat of punishment held out in the Hereafter.

Sa'īd bin al-Musayyab says that this implies one's thinking of a sin in the mind but restraining oneself from committing it practically.

These are the different explanations which have been reported in the traditions from the Companions and their immediate followers. The majority of the later commentators and doctors of law and jurists are of the opinion that this verse and verse 31 of Sūrah An-Nisā classify sins into two main kinds: the major sins and the minor sins, and these two verses give man the hope that if he abstains from the major sins and open indecencies, Allah will overlook his minor errors. Although some distinguished scholars have also opined that no sin is minor and the disobedience of Allah is by itself a major sin, yet as stated by Imām Ghazāli the distinction between the major and the minor sins is something which cannot be denied, for the sources of knowledge of the *Shari'ah* values and injunctions all point to this.

As for the question, what is the distinction between the major and the minor sins, and what kinds of sins are major and what kinds of them minor ? we are satisfied that: "Every such act is a major sin which has been forbidden by a clear ordinance of the Divine Book and the *Shari'ah* of the Prophet, or for which Allah and His Messenger have prescribed a punishment in the world, or have held out a threat of punishment in the Hereafter, or have cursed the one guilty of committing it, or given the news of infliction of punishment on those guilty of committing it." Apart from this class of sins all other acts which are disapproved by the *Shari'ah*, come under the definition of minor sins. Likewise, the mere desire for a major sin, or an intention to commit it, also is not a major sin but a minor sin; so much so that even crossing all the preliminaries of a major sin does not constitute a major sin unless one has actually committed it. However, even a minor sin becomes a major sin in case it is committed with a feeling of contempt for religion and of arrogance against Allah, and the one guilty of it does not consider the *Shari'ah* that has declared it an evil worthy of any attention and reverence.

33. That is, "The forgiveness for the one guilty of minor sins is not for the reason that a minor sin is no sin, but for the reason that Allah Almighty does not treat His servants narrow-mindedly and does not seize them on trifling faults; if the servants adopt piety and abstain from major sins and indecencies, He will not seize them for their minor errors and will forgive them magnanimously on account of His infinite mercy."

34. The reference is to Walid bin Mughirah who was one of the prominent chiefs of the Quraish. According to Ibn Jarīr Ṭabari, this person had first become inclined to accept the invitation of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), but when a polytheist friend of his came to know of his intention to become a Muslim, he counselled him not to give up his ancestral faith, and asked him that if he was afraid of the punishment of the Hereafter, he should pay him a certain amount of money and he would take the responsibility to suffer the punishment on his behalf. Walid accepted the offer and turned away from Allah's way. Then he paid only a little of the amount that he had promised to pay his polytheist friend and withheld the rest, The allusion to this incident was meant to tell the disbelievers of Makkah what kind of errors and follies they were involved in because of their heedlessness of the Hereafter and their ignorance of the Divine Religion."

35. That is, "Does he know that this conduct is in any way beneficial for him? Does he know that a person can save himself even in this way from the punishment of the Hereafter?"

36. In the following verses a resume is being given of the teachings sent down in the Books of the Prophets Abraham and Moses. The Books of Moses signify the Torah. As for the Books of the Prophet Abraham they have become extinct and no mention of them is found even in the holy scriptures of the Jews and Christians. Only in the Qur'ān at two places have some parts of the teachings contained in the Books of the Prophet Abraham been cited, here and in the concluding verses of Sūrah Al-A'lā.

37. From this verse three cardinal principles are derived: (1) That every person is himself responsible for what he does; (2) that the responsibility of one man's act cannot be transferred to another unless he has a share in the commission of the act; and (3) that even if a person wishes he cannot take on himself the responsibility of another man's act, nor can the actual culprit be let off on the ground that another person is willing to suffer the punishment on his behalf.

38. From this verse also three important principles are derived: (1) That every person will get only the fruit of his own deeds; (2) that the fruit of one man's deeds cannot be given to another unless he has a share in that deed, and (3) that none can attain anything without striving for it.

Some people wrongly apply these three principles to the economic problems of the world and conclude that no person can become the lawful owner of anything except of his own earned income. But this conclusion clashes with several laws and injunctions given by the Qur'ān itself, e.g. the law of inheritance, according to which many individuals inherit a person and are regarded as his lawful heirs, whereas the heritage is not their earned income. As for a

suckling for instance, it cannot be proved by any stretch of imagination that its labour had any share in the wealth left by its father. Likewise, there are the injunctions about the *zakāt* and voluntary charities according to which the wealth of one man is transferred to others only on the basis of their legal and moral entitlement and they become its lawful owners, whereas in the production of this wealth they did not make any contribution at all. Thus, it is against the intention of the Qur'ān to take a verse of it and derive from it such conclusions as clash with the other teachings of the Qur'ān itself.

Some other people regard these principles as concerning the Hereafter and raise the question whether, according to these principles, the deeds of one man can in some way be also beneficial for the other person, and whether the deeds of a person which he does for another person, or on his behalf, can be accepted from him, and whether it is also possible that a person may transfer the reward of his act to another. If the answer to these questions be in the negative the sending of spiritual rewards (*īṣāl thawāb*) for the dead and performing Ḥajj on behalf of another, would be inadmissible; even the prayer of forgiveness for the other person would be meaningless, for this prayer also is not the concerned person's own act and deed. However, this extreme point of view has been adopted by none among the followers of Islam except the Mu'tazilites. Only they take this verse in the meaning that one man's acts and deeds can in no case be beneficial for the other. On the contrary, the followers of the *Sunnah* are unanimous that the prayer of one man is beneficial for the other because it is confirmed by the Qur'ān; however, they differ only in details, and not in principles, as to whether the sending of spiritual rewards for another and doing a good work on behalf of another is beneficial or not.

(1) The term *īṣāl thawāb* means that after a person has performed a good act, he may pray to Allah to grant its rewards to another. In this regard, Imām Mālik and Imām Shāfe'ī have expressed the opinion that the rewards of the pure bodily acts of worship, *e.g.* the Prayer, the Fasting and recitals of the Qur'ān, etc. cannot reach the other person; however, the rewards of one's monetary acts of worship, e.g. charities, or Ḥajj, which is a combination of the monetary and bodily worships, can reach the other, for the principle is that one man's act should not be beneficial for the other. But since according to authentic *Aḥādīth* the rewards of charities can be conveyed and Ḥajj on behalf of another also can be performed, they admit the permissibility of conveying of rewards to the extent of this kind of the acts of worship only. On the contrary, the Ḥanafī viewpoint is that a man can send the reward of each of his virtuous acts as a gift to the other, whether it is the Prayer, or the Fast, or the recitation of the Qur'ān, or remembrance of Allah, or charity, or Ḥajj and 'Umrah. The argument is that just as a man after carrying out a piece of work can tell the master to

pay the wages to such and such other person instead of him, so after performing a good deed also he can pray to Allah to grant its rewards to such and such other person instead of him. In this there is no rational ground for making exception of some kinds of virtues and keeping it restricted to some other kinds of virtues. The same is confirmed by a large number of the traditions:

A Tradition, on the unanimous authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah, Ḥaḍrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah, Ḥaḍrat Abū Rāfi', Ḥaḍrat Abū Ṭalḥah Anṣārī and Ḥudhaifah bin Usaid al-Ghifārī has been reported in Bukhārī, Muslim, Musnad Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah, Ṭabari (in *Awsaṭ*), Mustadrik and Ibn Abī Shaibah, saying that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) got two rams and sacrificed one on behalf of himself and his family and the other on behalf of his Ummah.

Muslim, Bukhārī, Musnad Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd and Nasā'ī have related a Tradition from Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah to the effect that a person said to the Holy Prophet: "My mother has died suddenly. I think if she had a chance to speak, she would have asked me giving away something in charity. Now, if I give away something in charity on her behalf, will she get a reward for it?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes, she will."

In Musnad Aḥmad there is a Tradition from Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'Āṣ to the effect that his grandfather, 'Āṣ bin Wā'il, had vowed in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance to sacrifice 100 camels. His uncle, Hishām bin 'Āṣ, sacrificed fifty camels of his own share. Ḥaḍrat 'Amr bin 'Āṣ, asked the Holy Prophet as to what he should do. The Holy Prophet replied: "If your father had affirmed faith in the Oneness of God, you may observe fasts on his behalf, or give something in charity: this would be beneficial for him."

A Tradition has been reported in Musnad Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd, Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣri, to the effect that Ḥaḍrat Sa'd bin 'Ubādah asked the Holy Prophet: "My mother has died. Should I give something in charity on her behalf?" The Holy Prophet replied in the affirmative. Several other traditions bearing on the same subject also have been related in Bukhāri, Muslim, Musnad Aḥmad, Nasā'ī, Tirmidhī, Abū Da'ūd, Ibn Mājah, etc. on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah and Ḥaḍrat Ibn 'Abbās, according to which the Holy Prophet permitted giving away of something in charity on behalf of the deceased person describing it as beneficial for him.

According to Dāraqutnī a person said to the Holy Prophet: "I have been serving my parents while they were alive; what should I do now when they are dead?" The Holy Prophet replied; "This would also be their service if you offered the Prayer on their behalf along with your own Prayers, and observed the Fast on their behalf along with your own Fast." Another tradition in Dāraqutnī has been

related from Ḥaḍrat 'Alī according to which the Holy Prophet said: "If a person passing by the graveyard recites *"Qul huwallāh-u ahad"* eleven times and gives away its reward for the dead, all the dead ones will be granted their due shares of the rewards."

This large number of the traditions which support one another explicitly state that the transfer of the spiritual rewards is not only possible but rewards of all kinds of acts of worship and virtuous deeds can be sent and conveyed and in it there is no specification of any particular kind of acts and deeds. In this connection, however, four things should be understood well:

First, that the reward of that act only can be transferred, which may have been performed purely for the sake of Allah and according to the *Sharī'ah* injunctions; otherwise obviously an act which is performed for the sake of another than Allah, or in contravention of the *Sharī'ah* injunctions, cannot even entitle its doer himself to any reward, nothing to say of its transfer to another person.

Secondly, the gift of the rewards will certainly reach those righteous persons who are staying as guests with Allah, but no rewards are expected to reach those culprits who are placed in confinement there. The gift can reach the guests of Allah but the criminals of Allah cannot be expected to receive it. If a person sends his rewards to him because of a misunderstanding, it will not go waste but instead of reaching the culprit it will return to the actual worker himself just like the money-order which returns to the sender in case it does not reach the one to whom it has been sent.

Thirdly, the transfer of the reward is possible but not the transfer of punishment. That is, it is possible that one may do a good deed and may willingly transfer its reward to the other and it reaches him, but it is not possible that one may commit a sin and transfer its punishment to the other and it reaches him,

The fourth thing is that a virtuous act is beneficial in two ways: First, on account of its those results which accrue to the soul and morality of the doer himself because of which he becomes worthy of a reward in the sight of Allah; second, on account of the reward which Allah grants him as a gift and favour. The transfer of the spiritual reward does not concern the first but only the second. This can be understood by an example. A person tries to attain proficiency in the art of wrestling by constant practice. The strength and skill thus gained is in any way specially meant for his own self; it cannot be transferred to another. Similarly, if he is attached to a royal court, and there is a stipend fixed for him as a wrestler, he alone will receive it and no one else. However, in respect of the prizes and gifts that his patron may like to grant him as an appreciation for his creditable performance, he may request that they may be given to his coach, or parents, or some other benefactor, on his behalf. The same is the case with the virtuous

deeds: their spiritual benefits are not transferable and their rewards also cannot be transferred to another, but as for their rewards and gifts he can pray to Allah that these may be granted to a near and dear one, or a benefactor of his. That is why it is termed as *iṣāl thawāb* (conveying of spiritual rewards) and not as *iṣāl jazā'* (conveying of material reward).

(2) Another form of a person's work being beneficial for another is that one should either do a virtuous deed on the desire or beckoning of another, or without his desire or beckoning, on his behalf, which, in fact, was obligatory for him to carry out, but which he was unable to carry out himself. In this regard, the Ḥanafī jurists say that the acts of worship are of three kinds: purely physical, e.g. the Prayer; purely monetary, e.g. the *zakāt*; and the compound acts of bodily and monetary worship, e.g. Ḥajj. As for the first kind, nobody can act as an agent of another. As for the second kind, one can act as an agent of the other, e.g. the husband can pay the *zakāt* due on the ornaments of the wife. As for the third kind, one can act as an agent of the other only in case the actual person on whose behalf the act is being performed, is permanently, and not just temporarily, unfit to carry out his obligation himself. For example, Ḥajj can be performed on behalf of another only in case the person concerned is unable to go for Ḥajj himself nor may have the hope that he would ever be able to perform it himself. The Malikīs and the Shāfe'īs also concur on this. However, Imām Mālik lays down the condition that if the father has willed that his son should perform Ḥajj after him, on his behalf, the son can perform Ḥajj on his father's behalf, otherwise not. But the traditions in this regard are very explicit. Whether the father has expressed the desire, or made a will or not, the son can perform Ḥajj on his behalf.

Ibn 'Abbās has related that a woman from the tribe of Khath'am said to the Holy Prophet: "The command for Ḥajj has reached my father at a time when he has become very old: he cannot even sit on the camel's back." The Holy Prophet replied: "You then may perform Ḥajj on his behalf." (Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, Tirmidi, Nasā'ī). A tradition bearing on the same subject has also been related by Ḥaḍrat 'Alī. (Aḥmad, Tirmidhī).

Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Zabair has made mention of a man of the same tribe of Khath'am, who also put a similar question to the Holy Prophet concerning his aged father. The Holy Prophet asked: "Are you his eldest son ?" He answered in the affirmative. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said "If your father had left behind a debt and you paid it off, would it stand paid on his behalf?" He replied that it would. The Holy Prophet said: "Then you should likewise perform Ḥajj also on his behalf." (Aḥmad, Nasā'ī).

Ibn 'Abbās relates that a woman from the tribe of Juhainah came to the Holy Prophet and said: "My mother had vowed to perform Ḥajj but she died before performing her vow. Now, can I perform Ḥajj on her behalf?" The Holy Prophet replied: "If your mother had left behind a debt, would you not have paid it? Likewise, you should also discharge the vow made to Allah, and Allah has a greater right that the vows made to Him be performed." (Bukhārī, Nasā'ī). Bukhārī and Musnad Aḥmad contain another tradition to the effect that a man came and put the same question to the Holy Prophet concerning his sister as has been mentioned above, and the Holy Prophet gave him also the same answer.

These traditions provide a clear proof that so far as the compound acts of bodily and monetary worships are concerned, one can act on behalf of another. As for the purely bodily acts of worship, there are some *Aḥādīth* which prove the permissibility of acting on behalf of another in this kind of worship as well. For example, Ibn 'Abbās has related that a woman from the tribe of Juhainah asked the Holy Prophet: "My mother had vowed to observe the Fast and she died without performing her vow. Now, can I observe the Fast on her behalf?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Observe the Fast on her behalf." (Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd). And Ḥaḍrat Buraidah's tradition that a woman asked concerning her mother: "She had one month's (according to another tradition two months') Fasts to observe; can I observe those Fasts on her behalf?" The Holy Prophet said that she could." (Muslim, Aḥmad, Tirmidhī, Abū Da'ūd). And Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah's tradition that the Holy Prophet said: "If a person dies and he had some Fasts to observe, his guardian should observe those Fasts on his behalf." (Bukhārī, Muslim, Ahmad). In the tradition related by Bazzār the Holy Prophet's words are to the effect: "If his guardian may so like, he may observe those Fasts on his behalf)." On the basis of these very traditions the *Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth* and Imām Auzā'ī and the Ẓāhirīs have formed the view that one is permitted to perform bodily acts of worship also on behalf of the other. But Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām Mālik, Shāfe'ī and Imām Zaid bin 'Alī have given the ruling that a fast cannot be observed on behalf of a dead person, and Imām Aḥmad, Imām Laith and Isḥāq bin Rāhawaih opine that this can be done only in case the deceased person might have so vowed but might not have been able to perform his vow. Those who oppose this give the argument that the reporters of the *Aḥādīth*, which prove its permissibility, have themselves given their rulings against it. Ibn 'Abbās's ruling has been related by Nasā'ī, thus: "No one should offer a Prayer or observe a Fast on behalf of another." And Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah's ruling, according to 'Abdur Razzāq, is: "Do not observe the Fast on behalf of your dead ones; feed (the needy) instead." The same has been related from Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar also by 'Abdur Razzāq that the Fast should not be observed on behalf of the deceased person. This shows that in the beginning it was permissible to perform

acts of bodily worship on behalf of others, but the practice that became established in the end was that it was not permissible to do so; otherwise it was not possible that those who have reported these *Aḥādīth* from the Holy Prophet, should have themselves given rulings against them.

In this connection, it should be understood well that fulfilment of an obligation on behalf of another can be beneficial only to those people who have themselves been keen and desirous of fulfilling their obligations and might have been unable to do so being rendered helpless by circumstances. But a person who deliberately shirked going for Ḥajj although he had the necessary means for it and had no feeling whatever of this obligation in his heart either, cannot be benefited even if several Ḥajj be performed on his behalf afterwards. This would be analogous to the case of a person who deliberately avoided paying his debts and had no intention to pay them till the last. Afterwards even if every penny is paid off on his behalf, he would remain a debtor in the sight of Allah. The payment of the debts by another can relieve only such a person who in his lifetime was desirous of paying off his debts but was unable to do so due to straitened circumstances.

39. That is, "In the Hereafter the people's deeds shall be examined and judged in order to see what provisions they have brought with them." As this sentence occurs immediately after the preceding sentence, it by itself indicates that the preceding sentence relates to the rewards and punishments of the Hereafter, and the view of those who present it as an economic principle relating to this world is not correct. To interpret a verse of the Qur'ān in a way as is irrelevant to the context as well as clashes with the other ordinances of the Qur'ān cannot be right.

40. That is, "Allah provides the means both for joy and for grief. He controls good and ill luck. There is no one else in the Universe, who may have anything to do with making or marring of destinies."

41. For explanation, see E.N.'s 27 to 30 of Sūrah Ar-Rūm, E.N. 77 of Sūrah Ash-Shūrā.

42. When this verse is read with the two preceding verses, the sequence by itself seems to provide the argument for the life-after-death also. The God Who has the power to give death and grant life and the God Who brings about a creature like man from an insignificant sperm-drop, rather brings about two separate sexes — male and female — from the same substance and by the same method of creation, cannot be helpless to resurrect man once again.

43. Different meanings have been given by the lexicographers and commentators of the word *aqnā* as used in the original. According to Qatādah, Ibn

'Abbās took it in the meaning of *ardā* (pleased), and according to 'Ikrimah in the meaning of *qanā'a* (satisfied). According to Imām Rāzī, whatever is given to a person over and above his need and requirement is *iqnā'*. Abū 'Ubaidah and several other lexicographers have expressed the view that *aqnā* is derived from *qunya-tun*, which means lasting and secured property, *e.g.* the house, lands, gardens, cattle, etc. Ibn Zaid, however, has given quite a different meaning of it. He says that *aqnā* here has been used in the sense of *afqara* (made penniless), and the verse means: He made whomever He pleased rich and whomever He pleased penniless.

44. *Shi'rā* is the brightest star in the heavens, which is also known by the names of *Mirzam al-Jawzā'*, *al-Kalb al-Akbar*, *al-Kalb al-Jabbār*, *Ash-Shi'rā al 'Abūr*, etc. In English it is called Sirius, Dog Star and Canis Majoris. It is 23 times as luminous as the Sun, but as it shines over eight light-years away from the earth, it appears to be smaller and less luminous than the Sun. The Egyptians worshipped it, for it made its appearance at about the time of the season when the annual floods were beginning in the Nile; the Egyptians believed that Sirius caused the Nile floods. The pagan Arabs also held the belief that this star influenced human destinies. That is why they worshipped it as a deity, and the Banī Khuzā'ah, the neighbouring tribe of the Quraish, were particularly well-known for being its devotees. What Allah says means: Your destinies are not made and controlled by *Shi'ra* but by the Lord of *Shi'rā*.

45. 'Ād Ūlā signifies the ancient 'Ād to whom the Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him) had been appointed a Prophet. When those people were inflicted with the torment in consequence of denying the Prophet Hūd, the believers only escaped the punishment. Their descendants are called 'Ād Ukhrā, or the latter 'Ād, in history.

46. "The subdued settlements": the settlements of the people of Lot, and "covered them that which covered them" probably imply the waters of the Dead Sea, which spread over their settlements after they had sunk underground, and cover the region even till this day.

47. According to some commentators this sentence also is a part of the resume of the Books of the Prophets Abraham and Moses, and according to others it ended with *Fa-ghashshā-hā mā ghashshā*, and with this begins a new theme. According to the context, however, the first view seems to be preferable, for the following words "This is a warning of the warnings already given," point out that the whole preceding passage is "of the warnings already given", which had been sent down in the Books of the Prophets Abraham and Moses.

48. The word *tatamārā*, as used in the Text, means both to doubt and to wrangle. The address is directed to every listener. To every person who may be listening to this discourse, it is being said: Even after witnessing what has been the fate in human history of denying the bounties of Allah and of wrangling with the Prophets concerning them, will you still commit the same folly? What the former peoples had doubted was whether the bounties and blessings they were enjoying in the world, had been bestowed by One God, or by other associates of His, or by no one, but had become available by themselves. On account of this they wrangled with the Prophets. The Prophets asserted that all these blessings had been granted to them by God, and by One God alone; therefore, they should be grateful to Him and should serve Him alone; but the people did not believe this and wrangled with the Prophets on this very count. Now, O man: "Don't you see in history what fate these nations met for entertaining this doubt and for their wrangling? Will you entertain the same doubt and indulge in the same wrangling as proved disastrous for others?"

In this connection, one should also bear in mind that the 'Ād and the Thamūd and the people of Noah had passed long before the Prophet Abraham, and the people of Lot had met with the torment during his own lifetime. Therefore, there can be no difficulty in regarding this passage as a part of the resume of the Prophet Abraham's Books.

49. The words in the original are: *Hādha nadhīr-un-min-an-nudhur il-ūlā*. The commentators have expressed three points of view in the explanation of this sentence. First, that *nadhīr* here implies the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace); second, that it implies the Qur'ān; third, that it implies the fate of the peoples already destroyed, which has been referred to in the foregoing verses. In view of the context, we are of the opinion that this last commentary is preferable.

50. That is, "Do not be under the delusion that there is yet enough time for thinking and consideration; therefore, you may not give immediate and serious attention to these things and may not decide that you should accept them without further delay. Nay: no one among you knows how much of the respite of life is left to him. Any one of you can die at any time and the Last Hour can also take place suddenly. Therefore, do not think that the Hour of Judgement is yet far off. Whoever has any concern for the Hereafter, should mend his ways forthwith, for one may not have a chance to take a second breath after the present breath."

51. That is, when the Hour of Judgement does arrive, you will not be able to stop it, nor your deities other than Allah have the power to avert it. Allah alone can stop it but He will not.

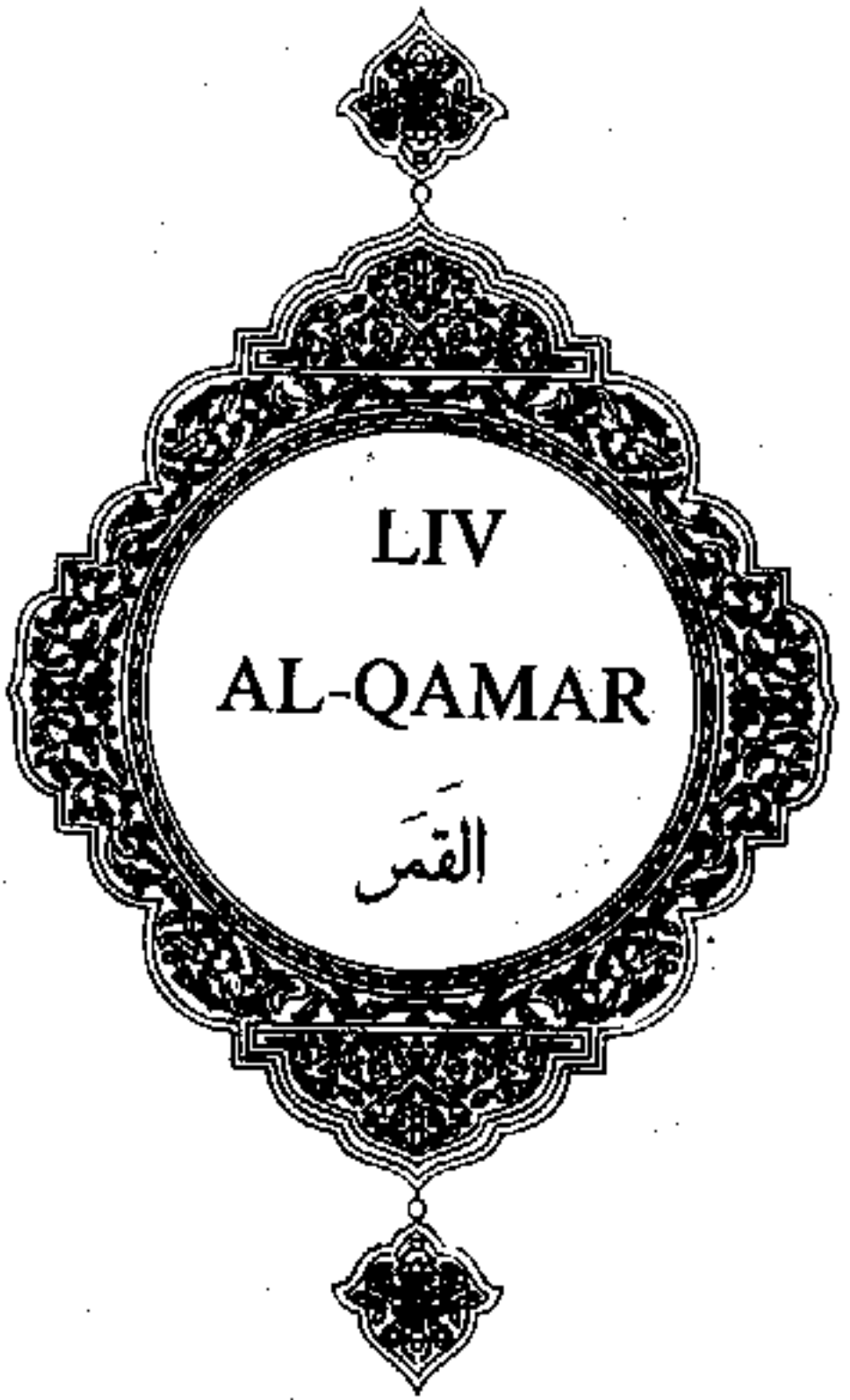
52. The word *hādh-al-Ḥadīth* as used in the original, signifies the whole teaching that was being presented in the Qur'ān through the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and "marvel" implies the marvel that man expresses on hearing a novel and incredible thing. The verse means this: "That to which Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is inviting you is the same that you have already heard. Now, is it this very thing at which you marvel and feel alarmed, and express wonder as if something very strange and novel was being presented before you?"

53. That is, "Instead of weeping at your ignorance and deviation you, on the contrary, are mocking, the Truth".

54. Two meanings have been given of the word *sāmidūn* by the lexicographers. Ibn 'Abbās, 'Ikrimah and Abū 'Ubaidah, the grammarian, are of the view that in the Yamanite tongue *sumūd* means singing and playing, and the verse alludes that the disbelievers of Makkah, in order to suppress the recitation of the Qur'an and to divert the people's attention away from it, would start singing in a loud voice. The other meaning of it given by Ibn 'Abbās and Mujāhid is: "*Sumūd* means bending down the head out of arrogance; when the disbelievers of Makkah passed by the Holy Prophet, they would pass by him angrily with their faces lifted up." Rāghib Iṣphahānī in his *Mufradāt* also has adopted the same meaning; accordingly, Qatādah has translated *sāmidūn* into *ghāfilun* and Sa'īd bin Jubair into *mu'riḍūn*.

55. According to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām Shāfe'ī and many other scholars it is obligatory to perform a *sajdah* on the recitation of this verse. Although Imām Mālik himself used to perform a *sajdah* here (as cited by Qāḍi Abū Bakr ibn al-'Arabī in *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*), yet he held the view that it was not obligatory to perform a *sajdah* here, the basis of his view being this tradition of Hadrat Zaid bin Thābit: "I recited Sūrah an-Najm before the Holy Prophet, and he did not perform a *sajdah*." (Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, Tirmidhi, Abū Da'ūd, Nasa'i). But this *Ḥadīth* does not negate the incumbency of the prostration here, for it is likely that the Holy Prophet did not perform the *sajdah* then due to some reason but might have performed it later. Other traditions on the subject are explicit that the prostration was always performed on this verse. Ḥadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbas and Muṭṭalib bin Abī Wadā'ah have unanimously stated that when the Holy Prophet recited this Sūrah for the first time in the Ka'bah, he had prostrated himself and along with him the whole assembly of the believers and the disbelievers also had fallen down prostrate. (Bukhārī, Aḥmad, Nasā'ī) Ibn 'Umar has reported that the Holy Prophet recited Sūrah an-Najm in the Prayer and prostrated himself and lay long in that state. (Baihaqī, Ibn Mardūyah). Saburat al-

Juhani states that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar recited Sūrah an-Najm in the Fajr Prayer and performed a *sajdah*, then stood up, recited Sūrah al-Zilzāl and performed the *rukū'*. (Sa'id bin Mansūr). Imām Mālik himself has related this act of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar in his *Mu'waṭṭā (Bāb Mā Jā'fi Sujūd al-Qar'ān)*.



LIV

AL-QAMAR

القَمَر

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LIV

AL-QAMAR

القَمَر

INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah takes its name from the very first verse: *Wan shaqq-al-Qamar*, thereby implying that it is a Sūrah in which the word *al-Qamar* has occurred.

Period of Revelation

The incident of the *shaqq-al-Qamar* (splitting of the Moon) that has been mentioned in it, determines its period of revelation precisely. The traditionalists and commentators are agreed that this incident took place at Minā in Makkah about five years before the Holy Prophet's *hijrah to* Madīnah.

Theme and Subject Matter

In this Sūrah the disbelievers of Makkah have been warned for their stubbornness which they had adopted against the invitation of the

Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The amazing and wonderful phenomenon of the splitting of the Moon was a manifest sign of the truth that the Resurrection, of which the Holy Prophet was giving them the news, could take place and that it had approached near at hand. The great sphere of the Moon had split into two distinct parts in front of their very eyes. The two parts had separated and receded so much apart from each other that to the on-lookers one part had appeared on one side of the mountain and the other on the other side of it. Then, in an instant the two had rejoined. This was a manifest proof of the truth that the system of the Universe was neither eternal nor immortal, it could be disrupted. Huge stars and planets could split asunder, disintegrate, collide with each other, and everything that has been depicted in the Qur'ān in connection with the description of the details of Resurrection, could happen. Not only this: it was also a portent that the disintegration of the system of the Universe had begun and the time was near when Resurrection would take place. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) invited the people's attention to this event only with this object in view and asked them to mark it and be a witness to it. But the disbelievers described it as a magical illusion and persisted in their denial. For this stubbornness they have been reproached in this Sūrah.

At the outset it has been said: "These people neither believe in the admonition, nor learn a lesson from history, nor affirm faith after witnessing manifest signs with their eyes. Now they would believe only when Resurrection has taken place and they would be rushing out of their graves towards the Summoner on that Day."

Then, the stories of the people of Noah and of 'Ād and Thamūd and of the peoples of Lot and the Pharaoh have been related briefly and they have been reminded of the terrible punishments that these nations suffered when they belied and disregarded the warnings given by the Prophets of God. After the narration of each story the refrain that has been provided is: "This Qur'ān is an easy means of admonition, which if a nation takes to heart and thereby takes the Right Way, the torment that descended on the former nations could be avoided. But it would indeed be a folly if instead of heeding the admonition through this easy means, one persisted in heedlessness and disbelieved until one was overtaken by the torment itself."

Likewise, after citing admonitary precedents from the history of the former nations, the disbelievers of Makkah have been addressed and warned to this effect: "If you too adopt the same attitude and conduct for which the other nation have already been punished, why will you not be punished for it? Are you in any way a superior people that you should be treated differently from others? Or, have you received a deed of amnesty that you will not be punished for the crime for which others have been punished? And if you feel elated at your great numbers, you will soon see that these very numbers of yours are put to rout (on the battlefield) and on the Day of Resurrection you will be dealt with even more severely."

In the end, the disbelievers have been told that Allah does not need to make lengthy preparations to bring about Resurrection. No sooner does He give a simple command for it than it will take place immediately. Like everything else the Universe and mankind also have destiny. According to this destiny everything happens at its own appointed time. It cannot be so that whenever somebody gives a challenge, Resurrection is brought about in order to convince him. If you adopt rebellion because you do not see it coming, you will only be adding to your own distress and misfortune. For your record which is being prepared by Divine agents, has not left any misdeed of yours, great or small, unrecorded.



اِقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَ انْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ ۝١ وَاِنْ يَّرَوْا اٰيَةً يُّعْرِضُوْا وَيَقُوْلُوْا سِحْرٌ

LIV

AL-QAMAR

اَلْقَمَر

Verses: 55 *Revealed at Makkah*

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

The Hour of Resurrection has drawn near and the Moon has split asunder.[1] Yet whatever Sign these people may see they turn away and say, "This is current magic."[2] They have denied (this too) and followed only their own lusts.[3] Ultimately, every matter has to reach an appointed end.[4] 1-3

1. That is, "The splitting of the Moon asunder is a portent that the Hour of Resurrection of which you are being foretold, has drawn near at hand, and the order of the Universe has begun to be disrupted. Moreover, the incidem that a great sphere like the Moon's has split into two distinct parts, is a specific proof of the fact that Resurrection of which you are being forewarned can take place. Obviously, when the Moon can split, the earth also can split, the orbits of he stars and planets also can change and the whole system of the heavens also can be disturbed. There is nothing eternal and everlasting and stable here so that Resurrection may be improbable."

Some people have taken this sentence to mean: "The Moon will split." Although according to Arabic usage it is possible to take this meaning, the context clearly rejects it. In the first place, if this were the meaning, the first sentence would become meaningless. If the Moon had not actually split at the time when this Revelation was made, but it was going to split some time in the future, it would be absurd to say on the basis of this that the Hour of Resurrection had approached near at hand. After all, how can an incident that is to take place in the future, be regarded as a sign of Resurrection's being near at hand, and how can such a testimony be put forward as a rational argument? Second, with this meaning in mind when we read the following verses, they appear to be altogether incoherent. The verses that follow clearly show that the people at that time had witnessed a sign that was a manifest portent of the possibility of Resurrection, but they rejected it as a magical illusion, and persisted in their belief that Resurrection was not possible. In this context, the words *inshaqq-al-Qamar* can be meaningful only if they are taken to mean: "The Moon split asunder." If they are taken to mean: "The Moon will split asunder," the whole following theme becomes disjointed. It will look like this:

> "The Hour of Resurrection has drawn near and *the Moon will split asunder.* Yet whatever sign these people may see they turn away and say: 'This is current magic !' They have denied and followed only their own lusts."

Therefore, the truth is that the incident of the splitting of the Moon is confirmed explicitly by the words of the Qur'ān and it is not dependent upon the traditions of the *Ḥadīth*. However, the traditions supply its details, and one comes to know when and how it had taken place. These traditions have been related by Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī, Aḥmad, Abū 'Uwānah, Abū Da'ūd Ṭayālisī, 'Abdur Razzāq, Ibn Jarīr, Baihaqī, Ṭabarānī, Ibn Mardūyah, and Abū Nu'aim Isfahānī with many chains of transmitters on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, Ḥaḍrat Hudhaifah, Hadrat Anas bin Mālik and Hadrat Jubair bin Mut'im. Three of these authorities, viz. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd; Hadrat Hudhaifah, and Hadrat Jubair bin Mut'im, state that they were the eye-witnesses of this event; two of them cannot be its eye-witnesses, for this event took place before the birth of one (*i.e.* 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās) and at a time when the other (*i.e.* Anas bin Mālik) was yet a child. But since both these scholars were Companions, obviously they must have reported this event after they had heard it from the aged Companions who had direct knowledge of it.

The information that one gathers from the various traditions is that this incident occurred about five years before the *Hijrah*. It was the 14th night of the lunar month; the Moon had just risen when it suddenly split and its two parts were

seen on either side of the hill in front. Then after a moment or so they rejoined. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) at that time was at Minā. He told the people to mark it and be witnesses to it. The disbelievers said that Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had worked magic on them; therefore, their eyes had been deceived. The other people said: "Muḥammad could have worked magic on us but not on all the people. Let the people from other places come: we shall ask them if they also had witnessed this incident." When the people from other places came, they bore evidence that they also had witnessed the same phenomenon.

Some traditions which have been related from Ḥaḍrat Anas give rise to the misunderstanding that the incident of the splitting of the Moon had happened twice. But, in the first place, no one else from among the Companions has stated this; second, in some traditions of Ḥaḍrat Anas himself also the words are *marratain* (twice), and in some *firqatain* and *shaqqatain* (two pieces); third, the Qur'ān mentions only one incident of the Moon's splitting asunder. The correct view therefore is that this incident happened only once. As for the stories which are current among the people that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had made a gesture towards the Moon and it split into two parts and that one part of the Moon entered the breast of the garment of the Holy Prophet and went out of the sleeve, have no basis whatever.

Here, the question arises: What was the real nature of this incident. Was it a miracle that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) performed on the demand of the disbelievers of Makkah as a proof of his Prophethood? Or, was it only an accident that occurred on the Moon by the power of Allah and the Holy Prophet had only called the people's attention to it and warned them to mark it as a Sign of the possibility and nearness of Resurrection? A large group of the Muslim scholars regards it as among the miracles of the Holy Prophet and holds the view that it had been shown on the demand of the disbelievers. But this view is based only on some of those traditions which have been related from Ḥaḍrat Anas. Apart from him no other Companion has stated this. According to *Fatḥ al Bārī*, Ibn Ḥajar says: "Apart from the narration by Ḥaḍrat Anas, in no other narration of this story have I come across the theme that the incident of the splitting of the Moon had taken place on the demand of the polytheists. *(Bab Inshiqāq al-Qamar).* Abū Nu'aim Iṣfahānī has related a tradition on this subject in *Dalā'il an-Nubuwwat*, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas also, but it has a weak chain of transmitters and none of the traditions that have been related with strong chains of transmitters in the collections of *Ḥadīth* on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdallah bin 'Abbās, contains any mention of this. Furthermore, neither Ḥaḍrat Anas nor Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās was a contemporary of this incident. On

the contrary, none of the Companions from among Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, Ḥaḍrat Ḥudhaifah, Ḥaḍrat Jubair bin Muṭ'im, Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, who were contemporaries of the incident, has stated that the pagans of Makkah had demanded a Sign of the Holy Prophet to testify to his Prophethood on which he might have shown the miracle of the splitting of the Moon. Above all, the Qur'ān itself also is presenting this event not as a Sign of the Prophethood but as a Sign of the nearness of Resurrection. However, this was indeed a conspicuous proof of the Holy Prophet's truthfulness because it testified to the news that he was giving to the people of the coming of Resurrection.

The critics raise two kinds of objections against it. In the first place, they say it is impossible that a great sphere like the Moon should split asunder into two distinct parts, which should get hundreds of miles apart and then rejoin. Secondly, they say if it had so happened, it would be a well-known event in the world and would have found mention in the books of History and Astronomy. But, in fact, both these objections are flimsy. As for the discussion of its possibility, it could perhaps find credibility in the ancient days but on the basis of what man has come to know in the present day about the structure of the planets, it can be said that it is just possible that a sphere may burst because of its internal volcanic action and its two parts may be thrown far apart by the mighty eruption, and then may rejoin under the magnetic force of their centre. As for the second objection, it is flimsy because the event had taken place suddenly and lasted a short time only. It was not necessary that at that particular moment the world might be looking at the Moon. There was no explosion either that might have attracted the people's attention; there was no advance information of it that the people might be awaiting its occurrence and looking up at the sky. It could not also be seen everywhere on the earth but only in Arabia and the eastern lands where the Moon had risen and was visible at that time. The taste and art of writing history also had not yet developed so that the people who might have witnessed it, should have made a record of it and then some historian might have gathered the evidence and preserved it in some book of History. However, in the Histories of Malabar mention has been made of a native ruler who had witnessed this phenomenon that night. As for the books of Astronomy and Calendars, this event might have been mentioned in them only if the event had affected the movement of the Moon, its orbit and the times of its rising and setting. As no such thing happened, it did not attract the ancient astronomers' attention. The observatories also were not so developed that they might have taken notice of everything happening in the heavens and preserved a record of it.

2. The words *sihr-um mustamirr* of the Text can have several meanings:

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(1) That, God forbid, this magical illusion also is one of those magical performances that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has been performing day and night; (2) that this certainly is a work of magic which has been performed with great expertise; and (3) that just as other works of magic have passed, so will this also pass without leaving any lasting effect behind.

3. That is, "They still persisted in the same decision that they had made of denying the Hereafter and have not changed their mind even after having witnessed this manifest Sign, mainly because it clashed with their desires of the flesh."

4. That is, "It cannot be so endlessly that Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) should go on inviting you to the Truth while you persist in your falsehood stubbornly and his Truth and your falsehood should never be established. All affairs ultimately have to reach an appointed end. Likewise, inevitably this conflict between you and Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) has also to reach an end. A time will certainly come when it will be clearly established that he had been in the right and you in the wrong throughout. Likewise, the worshippers of the Truth shall one day see the result of their worshipping the Truth and the worshippers of falsehood of their worshipping the falsehood."

5. In other words, "Leave them to themselves. When every effort has been made to make them understand the Truth in the most rational ways, when instances have been cited from history to show them the evil results of the denial of the Hereafter, when the dreadful fates suffered by the other nations in consequence of their rejecting the Prophetic messages have been brought to their notice and yet they are disinclined to give up their stubbornness, they should be left alone to gloat over their follies. Now, they would believe only when after death they arise from their graves to see with their own eyes that the Resurrection of which they were being forewarned and exhorted to adopt the truth, had actually taken place."

6. Another meaning can be "an unknown thing", a thing which they never could imagine, of which they never had any concept and no idea whatever that it also could occur.

7. "Graves" do not signify only those pits in the earth in which a person might have been properly buried, but he would rise up from wherever he had died, or from wherever his dust lay, on the call of the Caller to the plain of Resurrection.

8. Literally: "Their looks will be downcast. "This can have several meanings: (1) That they will appear terror-stricken; (2) that they will be reflecting disgrace and humiliation, for as soon as they arise out of their graves they would

(Contd. on page 252

مُّسْتَمِرٌّ ﴿٢﴾ وَكَذَّبُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۚ وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُّسْتَقِرٌّ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُم
مِّنَ الْأَنبَاءِ مَا فِيهِ مُزْدَجَرٌ ﴿٤﴾ حِكْمَةٌ بَالِغَةٌ ۖ فَمَا تُغْنِ النُّذُرُ ﴿٥﴾ فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ ۘ
يَوْمَ يَدْعُ الدَّاعِ إِلَىٰ شَيْءٍ نُّكُرٍ ﴿٦﴾ خُشَّعًا أَبْصَارُهُمْ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ
الْأَجْدَاثِ كَأَنَّهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُّنتَشِرٌ ﴿٧﴾ مُّهْطِعِينَ إِلَى الدَّاعِ ۖ يَقُولُ الْكَافِرُونَ
هَٰذَا يَوْمٌ عَسِرٌ ﴿٨﴾ كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مَجْنُونٌ
وَازْدُجِرَ ﴿٩﴾ فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانتَصِرْ ﴿١٠﴾ فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَاءٍ
مُّنْهَمِرٍ ﴿١١﴾ وَفَجَّرْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَالْتَقَى الْمَاءُ عَلَىٰ أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَحَمَلْنَاهُ
عَلَىٰ ذَاتِ أَلْوَاحٍ وَدُسُرٍ ﴿١٣﴾ تَجْرِي بِأَعْيُنِنَا ۖ جَزَاءً لِّمَن كَانَ كُفِرَ ﴿١٤﴾ وَلَقَد
تَّرَكْنَاهَا آيَةً فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٥﴾ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿١٦﴾ وَلَقَدْ
يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٧﴾ كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَ
نُذُرِ ﴿١٨﴾ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي يَوْمِ نَحْسٍ مُّسْتَمِرٍّ ﴿١٩﴾ تَنزِعُ
النَّاسَ ۙ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ مُّنقَعِرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿٢١﴾ وَلَقَدْ
يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِالنُّذُرِ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَقَالُوا أَبَشَرًا
مِّنَّا وَاحِدًا نَّتَّبِعُهُ ۙ إِنَّا إِذًا لَّفِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَأُلْقِيَ الذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِن بَيْنِنَا
بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَشِرٌ ﴿٢٥﴾ سَيَعْلَمُونَ غَدًا مَّنِ الْكَذَّابُ الْأَشِرُ ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّا مُرْسِلُو
النَّاقَةِ فِتْنَةً لَّهُمْ فَارْتَقِبْهُمْ وَاصْطَبِرْ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَنَبِّئْهُمْ أَنَّ الْمَاءَ قِسْمَةٌ بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ
كُلُّ شِرْبٍ مُّحْتَضَرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ فَنَادَوْا صَاحِبَهُمْ فَتَعَاطَىٰ فَعَقَرَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي
وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٠﴾ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَكَانُوا كَهَشِيمِ الْمُحْتَظِرِ ﴿٣١﴾ وَلَقَدْ
يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٣٢﴾ كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ بِالنُّذُرِ ﴿٣٣﴾ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا

There have already come to them narratives (of the former communities) containing enough deterrents to restrain them from rebellion and profound wisdom as serves the purpose of admonition well, but warnings are of little avail with these people. So, O Prophet, turn away from them.[5] The Day the Caller shall call them to a most terrifying event,[6] the people shall rise out of their graves[7] with awe-struck looks[8] as though they were scattered locusts. They will be rushing towards the Caller and the same disbelievers (who denied it in the world) shall say, "This indeed is a hard day!" 4-8

Before them the people of Noah also denied.[9] They called Our servant a liar, and said, "He is a madman," and he was rebuked harshly.[10] At last, he called out to his Lord, saying, " I am overcome: take now Thy vengeance." Then We opened the gates of heaven with torrential rain and We caused the earth to burst forth into springs,[11] and the waters met to fulfil the decreed end. And We bore Noah upon a thing made of planks and nails,[12] which floated under Our care. This was a vengeance for the sake of him who had been slighted.[13] And We left that Ark as a Sign.[14] Then, is there any who would take admonition? Just see how dreadful was My scourge and how true My warnings ! We have made this Qur'ān an easy means of admonition.[15] Then, is there any who would take admonition? 9-17

'Ād also denied. Then behold, how severe was My punishment and how true My warnings ! We sent on them a raging wind on a day of continuous ill-luck,[16] which swept them off as though they were trunks of uprooted palm-trees. Then see how severe was My punishment and how true My warnings! We have made this Qur'ān an easy means of admonition. Then, is there any who would take admonition? 18-22

Thamūd rejected the warnings, and said, "A solitary man he is from among ourselves. Shall we now follow him?[17] If we did so, we should indeed be gone astray and have committed folly. Was he the only person among us to have God's Reminder sent down to him? Nay, but he is an utter liar and a conceited person."[18] (We said to Our Messenger: Tomorrow they shall know who is an utter liar and a conceited person. We are sending the she-camel as a trial for them. Now watch with patience what end they meet. Tell them that the water 23-32

will be divided between them and the she-camel, and each will have water on his own Turn."[19] At last, they called out to their companion, who took up the responsibility and killed her.[20] Then see how severe was My punishment and how true My warnings! We let loose on them a single blast and they became as the trampled twigs of the fence of a foldbuilder.[21] We have made this Qur'ān an easy means of admonition. Then, is there any who would take admonition?

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realize that it was indeed the same second life which they had been denying, for which they had made no preparation, and in which they would have to present themselves before their God as culprits; and (3) that with awe-struck looks they would be watching the dreadful scenes before them, from which they would not be able to avert their eyes.

9. That is, "They denied that the Hereafter has to take place when man will have to render an account of his deeds; they denied the Prophethood of the Prophet who was making his people aware of this truth; and they denied the teaching of the Prophet, which taught them what to believe and what creed and conduct they should adopt in order to pass the reckoning of the Hereafter."

10. That is, "The people not only belied the Prophet but also branded him as a madman; they uttered threats against him, showered him with curses and abuses; and did whatever possibly they could to stop him from preaching the truth, and thus made life extremely difficult for him.

11. That is, the earth so burst forth with springs at the Command of Allah that it was no longer earth but presented a scene of the springs all around.

12. This signifies the Ark which the Prophet Noah had built under Allah's care and guidance even before the coming of the Flood.

13. Literally: "This was a vengeance for the sake of him whose *kufr* had been committed." If *kufr* be taken in the sense of denial, it would mean: "Whose message had been denied and rejected;" and if it is taken in the meaning of ingratitude for a blessing, it would mean: "Who was indeed a blessing for the people, but had been ungratefully rejected."

14. It may also mean: "We left this dreadful punishment as a sign of warning," but in our opinion the preferable meaning is that the Ark was left as a sign of warning. Its resting and existence on a high mountain continued to warn the later generations of the wrath of God for thousand of years and kept on reminding them how the people who had disobeyed God on this earth had met

their doom, and how the believers had been rescued from it. Imām Bukhārī, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, 'Abdur Razzāq and Ibn Jarīr have related traditions on the authority of Qatādah saying that at the time the Muslims conquered 'Irāq and al-Jazīrah, this Ark still existed on Mount Jūdī (and according to a tradition, near the settlement of Bāqirdā), and the early Muslims had seen it. In the modern times also some people during their flights in the aeroplanes have sighted an Ark-like object on a peak in this region, which is suspected to be the Ark of Noah, and on the basis of the same expeditions have been sent from time to time to search it out. (For further details, see E.N. 47 of Al-A'rāf, E.N. 46 of Hūd, and E.N. 25 of Al-'Ankabūt).

15. Some people have misconstrued the words *Yassarnal-Qur'ān* to mean that the Qur'ān is an easy Book; no knowledge is required to understand it; so much so that a person even without the knowledge of the Arabic language, can write a commentary on it, and can deduce any injunctions he likes from its verses independent of the *Ḥadīth* and Islamic Law, whereas the context in which these words occur, indicates that they are meant to make the people realize this: "One means of the admonition are the dreadful torments that descended upon the rebellious nations, and the other means is this Qur'an, which guides you to the right path by argument and instruction. Obviously, this means of admonition is by far the easier one; then, why don't you take advantage of it and insist on meeting with the torment instead? It is indeed Allah's bounty that He has sent this Book through His Prophet and is warning you that the ways you are following lead only to destruction and your well-being lies only in following this way. This method of admonition has been adopted so that you are rescued even before you fall into the pit of destruction. Now, who could be more foolish than the one who does not believe in the admonition and realizes his error only after he has fallen into the pit?"

16. That is, on a day the ill-luck of which continued to rage for several days. In Sūrah Ḥā Mīm As-Sajdah: 16, the words are: *fī ayyāmin naḥisāt:* "in a few ill-omened days," and in Sūrah Al-Ḥāqqah: 7, it has been said: "This wind storm continued to rage for seven nights and eight days. "It is said that the day on which the storm started was Wednesday. From this the idea spread that Wednesday was a day of ill-luck, and no work should be started on this day. Some very weak traditions also have been cited to support this view, which have further strengthened the idea that this day is ill-omened. For example, there is Ibn Mardūyah and Khatīb al-Baghdādī's tradition that the last Wednesday of the month is ill-omened, the ill-omen of which is endless. Ibn Jauzī regards this tradition as fabricated and Ibn Rajab as unauthentic Ḥāfiẓ Sakhāvī; says that all the methods through which this tradition has been reported, are weak. Likewise, Ṭabarānī's tradition ("Wednesday is a day of perpetual ill-luck") also has been declared as weak by the scholars of *Ḥadīth*. In some other traditions one is also forbidden to

start a journey, to do business transactions, to pare the nails, or to visit the sick on a Wednesday. They also say that leprosy starts on this day. But all these traditions are weak and these cannot be made the basis of any belief. The scholar Munawī says: "To abandon Wednesday taking it as ill-omened and to entertain the astrologer's whims in this regard is forbidden, strictly forbidden, for all days belong to Allah; no day is beneficial by itself nor harmful." 'Allāma Ālūsi says: "All days are equal; Wednesday has no peculiarity about it. There is no hour in the night or day which might be good for one person and bad for another. It is Allah Who creates favourable conditions for some people and adverse for others."

17. In other words, there were three reasons for their refusal to obey and follow the Prophet Ṣāliḥ: (1) "He is a human being and not a super-human person so that we may regard him as superior to ourselves." (2) "He is a member of our own nation: he is in no way superior to us." (3) "He is a single man, one from among ourselves. He is not a prominent chief with a large following, or an army of soldiers, or a host of attendants so that we may acknowledge his superiority." They wanted that a Prophet should either be a superman, or if he be a common man, he should not have been born in their own land and nation, but should have descended from above, or sent from another land, and if nothing else, he should at least have been a rich man, whose extraordinary splendour should make the people believe why Allah had selected him alone for the leadership of the nation. This same was the error of ignorance in which the disbelievers of Makkah were involved. They also refused to acknowledge the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) as a Prophet on the ground that he was a man who moved about in the streets like the common men, had been born among them only the other day and now was claiming that God had appointed him as a Prophet.

18. The word *ashir* of the original means a conceited, insolent person given to bragging of his own superiority over others.

19. This explains the verse: "We are sending the she-camel as a trial for them." The trial was that suddenly a she-camel was produced before them and they were told that one day she would drink the water all by herself and the next day they would be allowed to have water for themselves and their cattle. On the day of her turn neither would any of them himself come to any of the springs and wells to take water nor bring his cattle for watering. This challenge was given on behalf of the person about whom they themselves admitted that he had no army and no hosts to support him.

20. These words by themselves indicate that the she-camel roamed at will in their settlements for a long period of time. No one could dare approach a source of water on the day of her turn. At last, they called out to a haughty chief of theirs who was well known for his courage and boldness, and urged him to put an end to her. Emboldened by the false encouragement he took up the responsibility and killed the she-camel. This clearly means that the people were very frightened.

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They felt that she had extraordinary power, and so they dared not touch her with an evil intention. That is why the killing of a mere she-camel especially when the Prophet who had presented her, did not possess any army that could be a deterrent for them, amounted to undertaking a dangerous and difficult task. (For further details, see E.N. 58 of Sūrah Al-A`rāf and E.N.'s 104, 105 of Sūrah Ash-Shua`rā`).

21. The crushed and rotten bodies of the people of Thamūd have been compared to the trampled and trodden twigs and pieces of bush lying around an enclosure for cattle.

22. The details of this story have been given in Sūrah Hūd: 77-83 and Sūrah Al-Hijr: 61-74 above, a resume of which is as follows:

When Allah decided to punish those people with a torment, He sent a few angels in the guise of handsome boys as guests in the house of the Prophet Lot. When the people saw such handsome guests in Lot's house they rushed to it and demanded that they be handed over to them for the gratification of their lust. The Prophet Lot implored them to desist from their evil intention, but they did not listen and tried to enter his house to take hold of the guests forcibly. At this stage suddenly their eyes were blinded. Then the angels told Lot that he and his household should leave the city before dawn; then as soon as they had left a dreadful torment descended on the people. In the Bible also this event has been described. The words are: "And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. But the men (i.e. the angels) put forth their hand and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that *were* at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door." (Gen., 19: 9-11).

23. The address here is directed to the Quraish, as if to say; "When the other nation have been punished for adopting disbelief and showing stubbornness and denying the Truth, why would you not be punished if you adopted the same attitude and conduct ? For you are not a special people in any way."

24. This is a specific prophecy that was made five years before the *hijrah*, saying that the hosts of the Quraish who waxed proud of their strength would soon be put to rout by the Muslims. At that time no one could imagine how such a revolution would take place in the near future. Such was the helplessness of the Muslims that a group of them had already left the country and taken refuge in Habash and the rest of the believers lay besieged in Shi'b Abī Ṭālib, and were being starved by the Quraish boycott and siege. Under such conditions no one could imagine that within only the next seven years the tables were going to turn.

Ikrimah, the pupil of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, has related that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar used to say : "When this verse of Sūrah Al-Qamar was sent down, I wondered

عَلَيْهِمْ حَاصِبًا إِلَّآ اٰلَ لُوْطٍ ؕ نَجَّيْنٰهُمْ بِسَحَرٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ نِّعْمَةً مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا ؕ كَذٰلِكَ
نَجْزِيْ مَنْ شَكَرَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَلَقَدْ اَنْذَرَهُمْ بَطْشَتَنَا فَتَمَارَوْا بِالنُّذُرِ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدُوْهُ
عَنْ ضَيْفِهٖ فَطَمَسْنَآ اَعْيُنَهُمْ فَذُوْقُوْا عَذَابِيْ وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَلَقَدْ صَبَّحَهُمْ بُكْرَةً
عَذَابٌ مُّسْتَقِرٌّ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَذُوْقُوْا عَذَابِيْ وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْاٰنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ
مِنْ مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَ اٰلَ فِرْعَوْنَ النُّذُرُ ﴿٤١﴾ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا كُلِّهَا فَاَخَذْنٰهُمْ
اَخْذَ عَزِيْزٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ ﴿٤٢﴾ اَكُفَّارُكُمْ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ اُولٰٓئِكُمْ اَمْ لَكُمْ بَرَآءَةٌ فِي الزُّبُرِ ﴿٤٣﴾
اَمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ نَحْنُ جَمِيْعٌ مُّنْتَصِرٌ ﴿٤٤﴾ سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّوْنَ الدُّبُرَ ﴿٤٥﴾ بَلِ
السَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ اَدْهٰى وَاَمَرُّ ﴿٤٦﴾ اِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ وَّسُعُرٍ ﴿٤٧﴾
يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُوْنَ فِي النَّارِ عَلٰى وُجُوْهِهِمْ ؕ ذُوْقُوْا مَسَّ سَقَرَ ﴿٤٨﴾ اِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ
خَلَقْنٰهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَمَآ اَمْرُنَآ اِلَّا وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَلَقَدْ اَهْلَكْنَآ اَشْيَاعَكُمْ
فَهَلْ مِنْ مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٥١﴾ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَعَلُوْهُ فِي الزُّبُرِ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَكُلُّ صَغِيْرٍ وَّكَبِيْرٍ مُّسْتَطَرٌ ﴿٥٣﴾
اِنَّ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ فِيْ جَنّٰتٍ وَّنَهَرٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ فِيْ مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ مَلِيْكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

Lot's people denied the warnings. We sent on them a wind charged with stones, which spared none but Lot's household, whom we saved in the last hours of the night through Our grace. Thus do We reward him who is grateful. Lot did warn his people of Our scourge but they doubted all the warnings and paid no heed. Then they sought to prevent him from guarding his guests. Consequently, We blinded their eyes (and said), "Taste now My torment and My warnings!"[22] Early in the morning they were overtaken by a lasting torment. Taste now My torment and My warnings. We have made this Qur'ān an easy means of admonition. Then, is there any who would take admonition ? 33-40

And warnings had come to the people of Pharaoh too, but they belied all Our Signs. Consequently, We seized them like the seizure of an All-Mighty, All-Powerful One. 41-42

Are your disbelievers any better?[23] Or, is there any exemption for you in the Divine Books? Or, do they say, "We are a strong host: We shall defend ourselves?" Soon shall this host be put to rout and they will all show their backs.[24] But the promised time to deal with them is the Hour of Resurrection, a most grievous and bitter Hour! These wicked people are in fact involved in misunderstanding and folly. The Day they are dragged into the Fire, on their faces, it will be said to them, "Taste now the flame of Hell." 43-48

We have created everything with a destiny,[25] and Our Command is but one Command, which takes effect in the twinkling of an eye.[26] We have destroyed many like you.[27] Then, is there any who would take admonition ? Whatever they have done is recorded in registers and everything, small or great, is written therein.[28] 49-53

Those who have avoided disobedience shall be among gardens and canals, in a place of true honour, in the Presence of a most Powerful King. 54-55

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what hosts it is that would be routed. But when in the Battle of Badr the pagan Quraish were routed and they were fleeing from the battlefieled, I saw the Messenger of Allah in his armour rushing forward and reciting this verse: *Sa-yuhzam-al-jam'u yuwallūn-ad-dubur.* Then only did I realize that this was the defeat that had been foretold." (Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abī Ḥātim).

25. That is, "Nothing in the world has been created at random but with a purpose and destiny. A thing comes into being at an appointed time, takes a particular form and shape, develops to its fullest extent, survives for a certain period, and then decays and dies at an appointed time. Even according to this universal principle this world too has a destiny in accordance with which it is functioning till an appointed time and will come to an end at an appointed time. It will neither come to an end a moment earlier than its appointed time of end nor survive a moment longer; it has neither existed since eternity nor will exist till eternity, nor is it the plaything of a child which he may destroy as and when he likes."

26. That is, "We shall not have to make any lengthy preparations for bringing about Resurrection, nor will it take long to come. For no sooner will a Command be issued forth from Us than it will take place in the twinkling of an eye."

27. That is, "If you think that the world is not the Kingdom of a Wise and Just God but the lawless empire of a blind ruler, in which man may behave and conduct himself as he likes, without any fear of accountability, history is proof and an eye-opener for you, which shows that the nations that adopted such a way of life, have been sent to their doom, one after the other."

28. That is, "These people should not be under the delusion that whatever they did in the world has become extinct; nay, they should know that full record of the deeds of every person, every group and every nation, lies preserved and it will be presented before them at the appropriate time."


LV
AR-RAḤMĀN
الرَّحْمٰن

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LV

AR-RAḤMĀN

الرَّحْمٰن

INTRODUCTION

Name

This Sūrah is entitled Ar-Raḥmān, the word with which it begins. This title, however, deeply relates to the subject-matter of the Sūrah too, for in it, from the beginning to the end, the manifestations and fruits of Allah's attribute of mercy and grace have been mentioned.

Period of Revelation

The commentators generally hold the view that this is a Makkī Sūrah, though according to some traditions which have been cited on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, 'Ikrimah and Qatādah, it was revealed at Madīnah. But, firstly, there are also some other traditions from these very authorities, which contradict this view; secondly, its subject-matter bears a closer resemblance with the Makkī Sūrahs than with the Madanī Sūrahs; rather it appears to belong to the very early Makkah period. However, there are several authentic traditions which testify that it had been revealed in Makkah itself many years before the *hijrah*.

Musnad Aḥmad contains a tradition from Ḥaḍrat Asmā', daughter of Abū Bakr (may Allah bless them both), to the effect: "I saw the Messenger of Allah offering his Prayers in the sacred precincts of the Ka'bah facing the corner in which the "Black Stone" is fixed. This relates to the time when the Divine Command, *fasda' bi-mā tu'mar* ("So, proclaim publicly, O Prophet, what you are being commanded") had not yet been revealed. The polytheists at that time were hearing the words, *Fa-bi-ayyi ālāā'i Rabbi-kumā tukadhdhi-bān*, being recited by him in the Prayer." This shows that this Sūrah had been sent down even before Sūrah Al-Ḥijr.

Al-Bazzār, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Al-Mundhir, Dāraqutnī (in *Al-Afrād)*, Ibn Mardūyah and Ibn Al-Khatīb (in *Al-Tarīkh)* have related, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, that once the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān himself, or heard it recited before him: then he said to the people: How is it that I am not hearing from you the kind of good answer that the jinn had given to their Lord? When the people asked what it was he replied: "I recited the Divine Words, *Fa-bi-ayyi ālāā'i Rabbi-kumā tukadhdhibān*, the jinn in response would repeat the words: *Lā bi shai'in'min ni'mati Rabbi-nā nukadhdhib:* "We do not deny any of our Lord's blessings."

A similar theme has been related by Tirmidhī, Ḥākim and Ḥāfiz Abū Bakr al-Bazzār from Ḥaḍrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah. Their tradition contains these words:

"When the people kept silent on hearing the Sūrah Ar-Rahmān, the Holy Prophet said: "I recited this very Sūrah before the jinn in the night when they had gathered together to hear the Qur'ān. They responded to it better than you have. As I recited the Divine Words, *Fa-bi-ayyi ālāā'i Rabbi-kumā tukadhdhibān* ("O jinn and men, which blessings of your Lord will you deny?") they would respond to it, saying: O our Lord, we do not deny any of your blessings: Praise is for You alone'!"

This tradition indicates that on the occasion of the incident that has been related in Sūrah Al-Aḥqāf (vv. 29-32) of the jinn's hearing the Qur'ān from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) he was reciting Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān in the Prayer. This happened in

the 10th year of the Prophethood when the Holy Prophet had halted at Nakhlah on his way back from Ṭā'if. Although in some other traditions it has been reported that the Holy Prophet did not know then that the jinn were hearing him recite the Qur'ān, but afterwards Allah had informed him of this, it is not unreasonable to suppose that just as Allah had informed him of the jinn's hearing the Qur'ān so also Allah Himself might have told him as to what answer they were giving on hearing Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān.

These traditions only indicate that Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān had been revealed even before Sūrahs Al-Ḥijr and Al-Aḥqāf. Besides, we come across another tradition which shows that it is one of those Sūrahs which were the earliest Revelations at Makkah. Ibn Isḥāq has related this on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Urwah bin Zubair: The Companions one day said to one another: "The Quraish have never heard any one recite the Qur'ān publicly to them, and who would read out the Divine Word aloud to them ? Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd said that he would. The Companions expressed the apprehension that he might be subjected to a harsh treatment and said that it should better be done by a person of a powerful family, who would protect him if the Quraish tried to subject him to violence. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah said: 'Let me alone: my Protector is Allah.' So early next morning he went to the Ka'bah while the Quraish chiefs were sitting in their respective conferences. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah arrived at the *Maqām* (station of Abraham) and began to recite Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān raising his voice as he did so. The Quraish first tried for a while to understand what he was saying. Then, when they realized that it was the Word that Muḥammad (peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) was representing as the Word of God, they fell upon him and began to hit him in the face. But Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah was not deterred: he continued to receive the slaps and to read the Qur'ān as long as he could. At last, when he returned with a swollen face, the Companions said that they apprehended the same. He replied: 'God's enemies were never so light for me as they were today. If you say I'll recite the Qur'ān to them again tomorrow.' They all said, "No, you have done enough; you have made them listen to what they didn't want to hear."' (Ibn Hishām, vol. 1, p. 336).

Theme and Subject Matter

This is the only Sūrah of the Qur'ān in which besides men the jinn also, who are the other creation of the earth endowed with freedom

of will and action, have been directly addressed, and both men and jinn have been made to realize the wonders of Allah's power, His countless blessings, their own helplessness and accountability before Him, and have been warned of the evil consequences of His disobedience and made aware of the best results of His obedience. Although at several other places in the Qur'ān there are clear pointers to show that like the men the jinn too are a creation who have been endowed with freedom of will and action and are accountable, who have been granted the freedom of belief and unbelief, of obedience and disobedience, and among them too there are the believers and the unbelievers, the obedient and the rebellious, as among human beings, and among them too there exist such groups as have believed in the Prophets sent by God and in the Divine Books, this Sūrah clearly points out that the message of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Qur'ān is meant both for men and for jinn and that his Prophethood is not restricted to human beings alone.

Although in the beginning of the Sūrah the address is directed only to human beings, for to them only belongs the vicegerency of the earth, among them only have the Messengers of Allah been raised, and in their tongues only have the Divine Books been revealed, yet from verse 13 onward both the men and the jinn have been addressed and one and the same invitation has been extended to both.

The themes of the Sūrah have been couched in brief sentences in a specific sequence:

In vv. 1-4 it has been stated that the teaching of the Qur'ān is from Allah Almighty and it is the very demand of His mercy that He should provide guidance to mankind through this teaching, for it is He Who has created man as a rational and intelligent being.

In vv. 5-6 it has been said that the whole system of the Universe is functioning under Allah's Sovereignty and everything in the earth and heavens is subject to His Command alone.

In vv. 7-9 another important truth that has been expressed is that Allah has established the entire system of the Universe precisely and equitably on justice, and the nature of this system requires that those who dwell in it also should adhere to justice within the bounds of their authority and should not disturb the balance.

In vv. 10-25 besides mentioning the wonders and excellences of Allah's might, references have been made to His those bounties from which the jinn and men are deriving benefit.

In vv. 26-30 both the men and the jinn have been reminded of the truths that in this Universe no one except One God is immortal and imperishable, and there is none, from the lowest to the highest, who does not stand in deed of God for his survival and other requirements. Whatever is happening here, from the earth to the heavens, is happening under His administration and control.

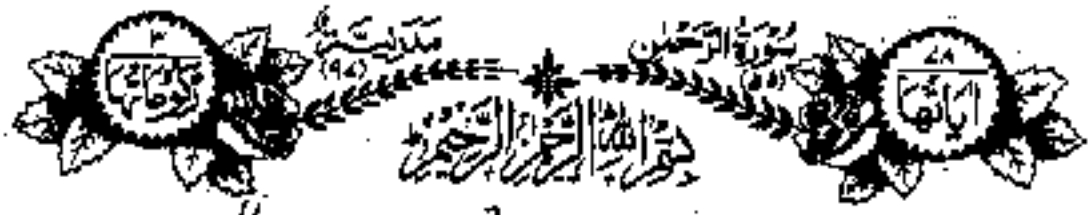
In vv. 31-36 both the groups have been warned that the time is fast approaching when they will be called to account, which they will not be able to avoid, for God's Kingdom is encircling them from every side; it is not in their power to flee it; if they are involved in the misunderstanding that they can, they may try to do so.

In vv. 37-38 it has been said that this accountability will be held on the Day of Resurrection.

In vv. 39-45 the evil end of the guilty ones, from among men and jinn, who have been disobeying Allah in the world has been mentioned.

And from verse 46 to the end of the Sūrah mention has been made of those rewards and blessings which will be granted to the righteous men and jinn who have led pious lives in the world and lived with a clear understanding that they will have to appear before their Lord one day and render an account of their deeds and actions.

This whole discourse is couched in oratorical language. It is a spirited and eloquent address in the course of which after mentioning each of the wonders of Allah's great power, and each of the blessings bestowed by Him, and each of the manifestations of His Sovereignty and dominion, and each of the details of His punishment and rewards, the jinn and men have been over and over again questioned: "Which then of the bounties and favours of your Lord will you deny ?" Below we shall explain that *ālāā'* is a word with many shades of meaning, which has been used in different senses at different places in this discourse, and this question to the jinn and men bears its own special meaning at every place according to the context.



الرَّحْمٰنُ ۙ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْاٰنَ ۚ خَلَقَ الْاِنْسَانَ ۙ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ۚ اَلشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ
بِحُسْبَانٍ ۚ وَّالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدٰنِ ۚ وَالسَّمَآءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيْزَانَ ۙ
اَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيْزَانِ ۚ وَاَقِيْمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيْزَانَ ۚ وَ
الْاَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْاَنَامِ ۙ فِيْهَا فَاكِهَةٌ ۙ وَّالنَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْاَكْمَامِ ۙ وَالْحَبُّ
ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ ۚ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ۚ خَلَقَ الْاِنْسَانَ مِنْ

LV

AR.RAḤMĀN

الرَّحْمٰن

Verses: 78 *Revealed at Makkah*

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

The most Merciful (God) has taught this Qur'ān.[1] He it is Who created man[2] and taught him speech.[3] 1-4

The sun and the moon adhere to a schedule,[4] and the stars[5] and the trees, all bow down in worship.[6] He raised the heaven high and set the balance.[7] Therefore, do not upset the balance: weigh with equity and do not give short weight.[8] 5-9

He[9] set the earth for all creatures,[10] with all kinds of tasty fruits in abundance and palm-trees with sheathed fruit, and a variety of corn with husk as well as grain.[11] So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's blessings[12] will you deny?[13] 10-13

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1. That is, the teaching of this Qur'ān is not the production of a man's mind but its Teacher is the Merciful God Himself. Here, there was no need to tell as to whom Allah had imparted this Qur'ānic teaching for the people were hearing

it from the tongue of the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). Therefore, the situation by itself made it evident that the teaching had been imparted to Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).

To begin the discourse with this sentence is meant, first of all, to tell that the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) himself is not its author, but its Teacher is Allah Almighty. Furthermore, there is another object also to which the word *Raḥmān* (Merciful) is pointing. If the purpose was only to say that that teaching is from Allah, and not the production of the Prophet's mind, there was no need to use an attribute of Allah instead of His proper name, and for that purpose any attribute from among the Divine attributes could have been adopted. But when, instead of saying that Allah, or the Creator, or the Providence, has taught this, it was said: 'The Merciful *(Al-Raḥmān)* has taught this Qur'ān.' it by itself gave the meaning that the revelation of the Qur'ān for the guidance of mankind was nothing but Allah's mercy and grace. As He is most kind and Merciful to His creation, He did not like that He should leave them wandering in the darkness, and His mercy demanded that He should send down this Qur'ān to bless them with the knowledge on which depends their right guidance and conduct in the world and their success and well-being in the Hereafter."

2. In other words, as Allah is the Creator of man, and it is the Creator's responsibility to provide guidance to His creation and show it the way by following which it may fulfil the object of its erection, the revelation of this Qur'ānic teaching from Allah is not only the demand of Allah's mercifulness but also the necessary and natural demand of His being the Creator. Who else would provide guidance to the creation if not the Creator ? And if the Creator did not provide guidance, who else could? And what greater defect could there be for a creator that he should not teach his creation the method of fulfilling the object for which it has been created? Thus, in fact, the arrangement and provision of the teaching for man by Allah is not anything strange; it would be strange if no such arrangement had been made at all. Allah has not just left alone whatever He has created in the Universe, but has given it the most appropriate structure by which it may play its role in the system of nature and has taught it the method of playing that role effectively and successfully. Thus, each single hair and each single cell of man's own body has been born with the knowledge of how it has to carry out the task in the human body for which it has been created. Then, after all how could man himself remain deprived and independent of his Creator's teaching and guidance? This theme has been presented in the Qur'ān at different places in different ways. In Sūrah Al-Lail: 12, it has been said: "Indeed, it is for Us to tell the Way"; in Sūrah An-Naḥl: 9, it is said: "Allah has taken upon Himself to show the Right Way, when there exist crooked ways too." In Sūrah Ṭā Hā (vv. 47-50)

it has been stated that when the Pharaoh heard the prophetic message from the Prophet Moses and asked who was his Lord who had sent him as a Messenger to him, the Prophet replied: "Our Lord is He Who has given a distinctive form to everything and then guided it aright." That is, He has taught it the method by which it could carry out and fulfil the object of its creation in the system of existence. This is the reasoning by which an unbiased mind is satisfied that the coming of the Prophets and the Books from Allah for the instruction of man is the very demand of nature.

3. One meaning of the word *bayān*, as used in the original, is the expressing of one's own mind, i.e. speaking and expressing one's thoughts and intentions. Its other meaning is to make distinction between things, which here signifies the distinction between good and evil, virtue and vice. According to these two meanings this brief sentence completes the above reasoning. Speech is the distinctive quality which distinguishes man from the animals and other earthly creatures. It is not merely the power of speech, but there are working behind it the faculties of reasoning and intellect, understanding and discernment, will and judgement, and other mental powers without which man's power of speech could not operate at all. Therefore, speech is in fact an express symbol of man's being an intelligent being who has been endowed with freedom and authority, and when Allah has blessed man with this distinctive quality, evidently the nature of instruction for him also cannot be the same as would be suitable for the guidance of other creatures. Likewise, another distinctive quality of vital importance in man is that Allah has placed in him moral sense by virtue of which he can naturally distinguish between good and evil, truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, right and wrong, and this intuition and sense does not leave him even when he degrades himself to the lowest state of error and ignorance. The inevitable demand of these two distinctive qualities is that the method of instruction for man's conscious and voluntary life should be different from the innate, natural mode of instruction under which the fish has been taught to swim, the bird to fly, and the eye in the human body itself to wink and see, the ear to hear and the stomach to digest. Man in this sphere of his life himself recognizes the means like the teacher, the book, the school, the verbal and written instruction and reasoning and discussion as the modes of instruction, and does not regard the innate knowledge and intelligence as enough. Why should it then appear strange that for fulfilling the responsibility that falls upon the Creator of educating man, He has made the Messenger and the Book the means of his education and instruction ? The mode of education has to suit the nature of the creation. And very rationally so, The "Qur'ān" alone can be the means of educating the creation that has been taught *"bayān"* (speech) and not any other means that might suit the creatures which have not been taught the speech.

4. That is, "It is a powerful law and unalterable system that binds the great planets together. Man is able to calculate and measure time, days, dates, and crops and seasons only because no change takes place in the rule that Has been laid down for the rising and setting of the sun and of its passing through different stages. The innumerable creatures found on the earth are staying alive only because the sun and the moon have been accurately and precisely placed at particular distances from the earth and any increase or decrease in this distance is made in the right measure, in a particular order; otherwise if their distance from the earth increased or decreased haphazardly, no one could possibly survive here. Likewise, the perfect relationship and harmony that has been established between the movements of the moon round the earth and the sun, has made the moon a universal calendar, which announces the lunar date every night to the whole world with perfect regularity.

5. The word used in the original is *an-najm*, the well-known meaning of which is the star; but in the Arabic lexicon this word is also used for the plants and creepers which do not have a stem, e.g. vegetable, melons, water melons, etc. The commentators have disputed the sense in which this word has been used here. Ibn 'Abbās, Sa'īd bin Jubair, Suddī, and Sufyān Thaurī have taken it in the meaning of stemless vegetation, for just after it the word *ash-shajar* (the tree) has been used and this meaning is more relevant to it. On the contrary, Mujāhid, Qatādah and Ḥasan Baṣri have expressed the opinion that *an-najm* here does not imply the plants of the earth, but the stars of the sky, for this is its well-known meaning. On hearing this word, the mind first turns to this very meaning, and the mention of the sun and the moon has been followed by the stars very naturally and relevantly. Though the majority of the commentators and translators have preferred the first meaning, and it cannot be held wrong either, we hold Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr's this opinion as sound that in view of both the language and the subject-matter the second meaning seems to be preferable. At another place in the Qur'ān (Al-Ḥajj: 18) also mention has been made of the stars and the trees prostrating themselves, and there the word *nujūm* (pl. of *najm)* cannot be taken in any other meaning than of the stars. The words of the verse are: *Alam tara annallāha yasjudu lahū man fis smāwāt-i wa man fil ardi wash-shamsu wal-qamaru wal-nujūmu wal jibālu wash-shajaru wad-dawābbu wa kathīr-um-min-annāsi*.... (Al-Ḥajj: 18). In this verse *nujūm* (stars) have been mentioned along with *shams* (sun) and *qamar* (moon), and *shajar* (trees) along with mountains and animals and it has been said that they all bow down to Allah.

6. That is, "The stars of the heavens and the trees of the earth, all are subject to Allah's Command and obedient to His Law. They cannot exceed the rule that has been set for them."

What is meant to be impressed in these two verses is that the whole system of the Universe has been created by Allah and is functioning in His obedience. Nothing from the earth to the heavens is independent, nor functioning under another's godhead, nor has anyone any share in God's Kingdom, nor has anyone the position that it should be made a deity. All are servants and slaves; the Master is One Almighty Lord alone. Hence, *Tauḥīd* alone is the Truth which is being taught by this Qur'ān. Apart from this, any one who is involved in polytheism and denial of God is, in fact, at war with the whole system of the Universe.

7. Almost all the commentators have interpreted *mīzān* (balance) to mean justice, and "...set the balance" to imply that Allah has established the entire system of the Universe on justice. Had there been no harmony and balance and justice established among the countless stars and planets moving in space, and the mighty forces working in this Universe; and the innumerable creatures and things found here, this life on earth would not have functioned even for a moment. Look at the creatures existing in the air and water and on land for millions and millions of years on this earth. They continue to exist only because full justice and balance has been established in the means and factors conducive to life; in case there occurs a slight imbalance of any kind, every trace of life would become extinct.

8. That is, "As you are living in a balanced Universe, whose entire system has been established on justice, you also should adhere to justice. For if you act unjustly within the sphere in which you have been given authority, and fail to render the rights of others, you would indeed be rebelling against the nature of the Universe; for the nature of this Universe does not admit of injustice and perversion and violation of the rights. Not to speak of a major injustice, even if a person fraudulently deprives another of an ounce of something, by giving him short measure, he disturbs the balance of the entire Universe.—This is the second important part of the Qur'ānic teaching that has been presented in these three verses. The first teaching is *Tauḥīd* and the second is justice. Thus, in a few brief sentences the people have been told what teaching has been brought by the Qur'ān which the Merciful God has sent for the guidance of man."

9. Now from here to verse 20, mention is being made of the blessing and bounties of God and of those manifestations of His might by which both man and jinn are benefiting, and whose natural and moral demand is that although they have the option to believe or not to believe, they should adopt the way of their Lord's service and obedience willingly by their own free choice.

10. The word *waḍa'a* in the original means to compose, make, prepare, keep, and inscribe, and *anām* the creatures, which includes man and all other living things. According to Ibn 'Abbās, *anām* includes every thing which has a

soul. Mujāhid takes it in the meaning of the living creatures. Qatādah, Ibn Zaid and Sha'bī say that all living things are *anām*. Ḥasan Baṣri says that both the men and the jinn are included in its meaning. The same meanings have been given by the lexicographers. This shows that the people who deduce from this verse the command of making land the state property, are in error. This is an ugly attempt to introduce alien theories forcibly into the Qur'ān which are neither supported by the words of the verse nor by the context. *Anām* is not used only for human society but it includes all other creatures of the earth as well, and setting of the earth for *anām* does not mean that it should be the common property of all. Besides, the context here also does not indicate that the object of the verse is to state some economic principle. This, in fact, is meant to impress the truth that Allah made and prepared this earth in such a way that it became a fit abode for every kind of living being. It has not become so by itself, but by the will and power of the Creator. He in His wisdom placed it at a suitable distance and created such conditions on it which made it possible for the different species to exist and stay alive on it. (For explanation, see E.N.'s 73, 74 of An-Naml, E.N.'s 29, 32 of Yā Sīn, E.N.'s 90, 91 of Al-Mu'min, E.N.'s 11 to 13 of Hā Mīm As-Sajdah. E.N.'s 7 to 10 of Az-Zukhruf, E.N. 7 of Al-Jāthiyah).

11. That is, grain for men and husk for the animals.

12. The word *ālāā'* in the refrain as repeated over and over again in the subsequent verses has been translated differently at different places. Therefore, it would be useful to understand at the outset how vast this word is in meaning and what different shades of meaning it contains.

The lexicographers and commentators generally have explained *ālāā'* to mean "blessings" and "bounties". The translators also have given this same meaning of this word, and the same has been reported from Ibn 'Abbās, Qatādah and Ḥasan Baṣrī. The major argument that supports this meaning is the Holy Prophet's own statement that the jinn on hearing this verse being recited would respond to it, saying *Lā bi-shai in-min-ni'matika Rabba-nā nukadhdhib:* "O our Lord, we do not deny any of Your blessings." Therefore, we do not subscribe to the view of some present-day scholars, who say that *ālāā'* is never used in the meaning of the blessing.

Another meaning of this word is power and wonders of power, or excellent manifestations of power. Ibn Jarīr Ṭabari has reported that Ibn Zaid took the words *fa-bi-ayyi ālāā'i Rabbi kumā* in the meaning of *fa bi-ayyi qudrat-Allah.* Ibn Jarīr himself has taken ālāā' in the meaning of power and might in his commentary of vv. 37-38. Imām Rāzī also has made this observation in his commentary of vv.14-16: "These verses do not describe the blessings but the

powers of Allah, and in the commentary of vv. 22-23, this; "These describe the wonders of power and not the blessings."

Its third meaning is virtue, praiseworthy qualities, and prefections. Though this meaning has not been mentioned by the lexicographers and commentators, this word has often been used in this meaning in Arabic poetry. (Examples omitted).

Thus, we have taken this word in its vastest meaning and translated it suitably keeping in view the context in which it occurs. However, at some places the word *ālāā'* may have several senses in one and the same place, but due to limitations of translation we have had to adopt only one meaning. For example, in this verse after making mention of the creation of the earth and of making the best arrangements for the supply of provisions to the creatures, it has been said: "Which of the *ālāā'* of your Lord will you deny?" Here, *ālāā'* has not been used in the meaning of the blessings only but also in the meaning of the manifestations of Allah Almighty's power and His praiseworthy attributes. It is a wonder of His might that He fashioned this earth in such a marvellous manner that countless species of creatures live here and an endless variety of fruits and grain are grown on it. And it is due to His praiseworthy qualities that He not only created these creatures but also made arrangements for their sustenance and the supply of provisions for them; and the arrangements also so perfect that their food is not only nutritious but also pleasing to the taste and sight. In this connection, reference has been made to only one excellence of Allah Almighty's workmanship for the sake of example, viz., the creation of the date-palm fruit in sheaths. Keeping this one example in view one may consider what excellences of art have been devised and shown in the packing of banana, pomegranates, orange, coconut and other fruits, and how each of the different sorts of the grains and pulses which we so thoughtlessly cook and eat, are produced finely packed and covered in ears and pods and clusters.

13. "Denying" implies the several attitudes that the people adopt in respect of Allah Almighty's blessings and manifestations of His might and His praiseworthy attributes. For example, some people do not at all admit that the Creator of all things is Allah Almighty. They think that all this is a mere by-product of the matter, or an accidental happening, which is un-related with any wisdom and skill and workmanship. This is open denial.

Some other people do admit that the Creator of these things is Allah, but regard others beside Him also as associates in Godhead: they render thanks to others for His blessings: they adore others although they eat His provisions. This is another form of denial. Obviously, it would be the height of ingratitude if a

[Contd. on p. 276

صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ ﴿14﴾ وَخَلَقَ الْجَآنَّ مِنْ مَّارِجٍ مِّنْ نَّارٍ ﴿15﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا
تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿16﴾ رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ ﴿17﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿18﴾
مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيٰنِ ﴿19﴾ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَّا يَبْغِيٰنِ ﴿20﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا
تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿21﴾ يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ﴿22﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿23﴾ وَ
لَهُ الْجَوَارِ الْمُنْشَاٰتُ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْاَعْلَامِ ﴿24﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿25﴾ كُلُّ
مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿26﴾ وَّيَبْقٰى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلٰلِ وَالْاِكْرَامِ ﴿27﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ
رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿28﴾ يَسْـَٔلُهٗ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِيْ شَاْنٍ ﴿29﴾
فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿30﴾ سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ اَيُّهَ الثَّقَلٰنِ ﴿31﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا
تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿32﴾ يٰمَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْاِنْسِ اِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ اَنْ تَنْفُذُوْا مِنْ اَقْطَارِ
السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوْا ؕ لَا تَنْفُذُوْنَ اِلَّا بِسُلْطٰنٍ ﴿33﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا
تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿34﴾ يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شُوَاظٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ ۙ وَّنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنْتَصِرٰنِ ﴿35﴾ فَبِاَيِّ
اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿36﴾ فَاِذَا انْشَقَّتِ السَّمَآءُ فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً كَالدِّهَانِ ﴿37﴾ فَبِاَيِّ
اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿38﴾ فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُسْـَٔلُ عَنْ ذَنْۢبِهٖٓ اِنْسٌ وَّلَا جَآنٌّ ﴿39﴾ فَبِاَيِّ
اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿40﴾ يُعْرَفُ الْمُجْرِمُوْنَ بِسِيْمٰهُمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالنَّوَاصِيْ وَ
الْاَقْدَامِ ﴿41﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿42﴾ هٰذِهٖ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِيْ يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا
الْمُجْرِمُوْنَ ﴿43﴾ يَطُوْفُوْنَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيْمٍ اٰنٍ ﴿44﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿45﴾
وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهٖ جَنَّتٰنِ ﴿46﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿47﴾ ذَوَاتَآ
اَفْنَانٍ ﴿48﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿49﴾ فِيْهِمَا عَيْنٰنِ تَجْرِيٰنِ ﴿50﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ
رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿51﴾ فِيْهِمَا مِنْ كُلِّ فَاكِهَةٍ زَوْجٰنِ ﴿52﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿53﴾

He created man from dry, rotten clay like the potter's,[14] and the jinn from the flame of fire.[15] So, O jinn and men, which wonders of your Lord's power[16] will you deny ? 14-16

Both the Easts and both the Wests: He is the Lord and Sustainer of all.[17] So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's powers[18] will you deny? 17-18

He let loose the two seas that they may meet together. Yet there stands between them a barrier which they do not transgress.[19] So, O jinn and men, which manifestations of your Lord's power will you deny? From these seas come out pearls[20] and corals.[21] So, O jinn and men, which excellences of your Lord's power will you deny?[22] 19-23

And His are the ships[23] raised up high like mountains in the sea. So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's bounties will you deny?[24] 24-25

All[25] that exists on the earth shall perish. Only your Lord, possessed of majesty and honour, shall endure for ever. So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's excellences will you deny?[26] Whosoever is there in the earth and the heavens, implores Him for its needs. Every moment He is in a new (state of) glory.[27] So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's glories will you deny?[28] 26-30

O you burdens of the earth,[29] We shall soon be free to call you to account.[30] (Then We shall see) which of your Lord's favours you deny.[31] O company of jinn and men! If you have the power to escape across the bounds of the earth and the heavens, then escape ! You shall not escape, for it requires great power.[32] So, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's powers will you deny? (If you try to escape) a flame of fire and smoke[33] shall be let loose upon you, which you will not be able to withstand. O jinn and men, which of your Lord's powers will you deny? 31-36

Then (how will it be) when the heaven will burst and redden like red leather?[34] O jinn and men, which of your Lord's powers will you (then) deny?[35] 37-38

On that Day no man and no jinn will need be asked concerning his sin.[36] Then (it will be seen) which of your Lord's favours you deny.[37] The culprits there shall be recognized by their faces and they 39-45

shall be seized by their forelock and by their feet and dragged. (Then) which of your Lord's powers will you deny? (At that time it will be said:) This is the same Hell which the culprits were wont to deny." They will wander to and fro between the same Hell and the hot boiling water.[38] Then, which of your Lord's powers will you deny?[39]

46-53 And for everyone who dreads to stand before his Lord[40] there are two gardens.[41] O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny?[42] Full of lush green branches. O which of your Lord's mercies will you deny? In both two springs of running water. O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? In both there will be two kinds of every fruit.[43] O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny?

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person while admitting that a certain person had done him a favour rendered thanks to another, who had not in fact done him that favour, for this act of his would be an express proof that he regarded the other person as his benefactor whom he was rendering the thanks.

There are still others who acknowledge Allah alone as the Creator of all things and the Bestower of all blessings, but do not admit that they should obey the Commands of their Creator and Sustainer and follow His injunctions. This is another form of ingratitude and denial of the blessings, for the person who behaves so denies the right of the Bestower of the blessing although he acknowledges the blessing itself.

Some other people neither disavow the blessing nor deny the right of the Bestower of the blessing, but in practice there is no appreciable difference between their conduct and the conduct of a denier. This is not verbal denial but denial in practice.

14. The order of the initial stages of the creation of man, as given at different places in the Qur'ān seems to be as follows: (1) *Turāb*, i.e. earth or dust; (2) *ṭīn*, i.e. clay made by mixing water with earth; (3) *ṭīn-i-lāzib:* sticky clay, i.e. a clay which becomes sticky when left alone for a long time; (4) *ḥama'in musnūn*, i.e. clay with a stink in it; (5) *ṣalṣāl-im-min ḥama'in masnūn kalfakhkhār*, i.e. the rotten clay which when dried becomes like baked pottery; (6) *bashar*, i.e. the one who was made from this last form of the earth, in whom Allah breathed of His Spirit, to whom the angels were commanded to bow down, and from whose species his mate was created; (7) *thumma ja'ala nasla-hū min sulāla-tin-min-mā'in mahīn:* "then spread his progeny by means of an extract of the nature of a despicable water", for which the word *nutfah* has been used at other places.

For these stages one may look up the following verses of the Qur'ān in sequence: *ka-mathal-i Ādama khalaqa-hū min turāb* (Āl-'Imrān : 59); *bad'a khalq-al insān-i min tīn* (As Sajdah: 7); *Innā khalaq-nā hum min tīn-il-lāzib* (As-Sāāffāt: 11); the fourth and fifth stages have been described in the verse being explained, and the later stages in the following verses : *Innī khāliq-un bashar an-min tīn. Fa-idhā sawwaitu-hū wa nafakhtu-fī -hi min-rūhī fa-qa'ū-lahū sājidīn.* (Suād : 71-72); *khalaqa-kum min-nafs in wāhidatin wa khalaqa min-hā zauja-hā wa baththa min-humā rijāl-an kathīr-an wa nisā-an. (An -Nisā': 1) ; thumma Ja'ala nasla-hu min sulāta-tin-min mmāā'-in -mahin.* (As-Sajdah: 8); *fa-innā khalaq-nā-kum min turāb-in thumma min nutfa-tin.* (Al-Hajj:5).

15. The words in the original are: *mim-mārij-in-min-nar. Nār* signifies fire of a special nature and not the fire which is produced by burning wood or coal, and *mārij* means a pure, smokeless flame. The verse means that just as the first man was created out of earth, then passing through various stages of creation, the clay model adopted the shape of a living man of flesh and blood, and then his progeny spread by means of the sperm-drop, so was the first jinn created from a pure flame of fire, or a fire free of smoke, and then the species of jinn spread from his progeny. The position of the first jinn among the jinn is the same as of Adam (peace be upon him) among human beings. After taking the shape of a living man, the body of Adam and the human beings born of his progeny retained no relationship with the dust from which they were originally created. Though even now our body is entirely a compound of the earthly substances, these substances have taken the from of flesh and blood and after being made a living body it has become quite a different thing from a mere lump of clay. The same also is true of the jinn. Their being also is essentially fiery. But just as we are not a mere lump of earth, so also they are not a mere flame of fire.

This verse proves two things. First, that the jinn are not simply spirit, but are material beings of a special nature, but since they have been composed of pure fiery substances, they remain invisible to human beings who have bean created of earthly substances. The same has been referred to in this verse: "Satan and his party see you from where you cannot see them." (Al-A'rāf: 27) Likewise, the jinn's being fast-moving, their adopting different shapes and forms easily and their penetrating into different places imperceptibly where things made of earthly substances cannot penetrate, or if they do, their penetration becomes perceptible, all these things are possible and understandable only because they are essentially a fiery creation.

The other thing that we come to know from this verse is that the jinn are not only a creation of a wholly different nature from human beings, but the substance of their creation also is absolutely different from that of man, animal, vegetable and solid matter. This verse explicitly points out the error of the

viewpoint of those people who regard the jinn as a kind of human beings. According to their interpretation, the meaning of creating man of the dust and the jinn of the fire is to describe the difference of the temperamental nature of the two kinds of the people; one kind of them are humble by nature, and they are men in the true sense, and the other kind of the people are wicked by nature and fiery in temper, who may better be called devils. This is, however, no commentary of the Qur'ān but its distortion. In E.N. 14 above we have shown in detail how the Qur'ān itself has fully described the meaning of creating man from the earth. After reading all these details, can a reasonable person understand that the object of all this is only to define the humility of the good men ? Moreover, how can a sound-minded person understand that the meaning of creating man of rotten, dry clay and the jinn of the flame of pure fire is the difference of the separate moral characteristics of the two individuals or groups with different temperaments belonging to the same human species? (For further explanation, see E.N. 53 of Sūrah Adh-Dhāriyāt).

16. Here, in view of the context, It is more appropriate to translate ālāā' as "wonders of power", but in this the aspect of the blessing is also present. Just as it is a wonderful manifestation of Allah's power to have brought into existence marvellous creatures like man from the dust and the jinn from the flame of fire, so for both these creatures this is a great blessing also that Allah not only granted them a body but gave each such a structure and endowed each with such powers and capabilities that they became able to perform unique works in the world. Though we do not know much about the jinn, man is present before us. Had he been given the body of a fish or a bird or a monkey along with the human brain, he could not have with that body used the mental powers to any advantage. Then, is it not a supreme blessing of Allah that He blessed man with the most suitable body also, so that he may exploit the mental powers granted to him efficiently? Consider the hands, the feet, the eyes, the ears, the tongue and the erect stature as againts the intellect and reason, and the capabilities of workmanship and artistic skill, and one will feel that the Creator has provided a deep relationship and harmony between them without which the human body would have remained useless. Then, the same thing points out Allah's praiseworthy qualities too. How could the men and jinn of such quality and rank be brought into existence without knowledge, wisdom, mercy and a profound creative power ? For such miracles of creation cannot be performed by accidents and automatic blind and deaf laws of nature

17. "Both the Easts and both the Wests" may mean the two points of sunrise and the two points of sunset on the shortest day of winter and the longest day of summer as well as the easts and the wests of the two hemispheres of the earth. On the shortest day of winter the sun rises and sets making a small acute

angle; on the contrary, on the longest day of summer it rises and sets making a wide obtuse angle. Between them its points of rising and setting go on shifting every day, for which at another place in the Qur'ān (Al-Ma'ārij: 40) the words *Rabbul-mashāriq wal-maghārib* have been used. Likewise, at the time the sun rises in one hemisphere of the earth, it sets in the other hemisphere, thus producing two easts and two wests of the earth. There are several meanings of calling Allah Lord of both the Easts and both the Wests. Firstly, that it is by His Command that the system of the rising and setting of the sun and their changing pattern during the year is functioning. Second, that Allah alone is the Master and Ruler of the earth and the sun; had they their own separate lords, this regular system of the rising and setting of the sun on the earth could not have functioned and continued to function permanently. Third, that the Master and Sustainer of both the Easts and both the Wests is One Allah alone; to Him belong the creations living between them. He alone is nourishing them, and it is for their sustenance that He has established this wise system of the rising and setting of the sun on the earth.

18. Here also, although in view of the context, "power" seems to be a more conspicuous meaning of *ālāā'*, yet, besides, the aspect of "blessing" and "praiseworthy qualities" also is present in it. It is a great blessing that Allah Almighty has prescribed the rule of the rising and setting of the sun, for by means of it the changes of the crops and seasons are regulated with which countless interests of the men and animals and vegetables are attached. Likewise, it is Allah's mercy and providence and wisdom that He has made these arrangements by His power to meet the respective needs and requirements of the creatures He has created on the earth.

19. For explanation, see E.N. 68 of Sūrah Al-Furqān.

20. According to Ibn 'Abbās, Qatādah, Ibn Zaid and Ḍaḥḥāk (may Allah bless them), *marjān* implies small pearls, but according to Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, this word is used for corals in Arabia.

21. Literally: "From both these seas come out..." The objectors say that pearls and corals come out only from salt waters. How is it then that they are stated to come out from both the sweet and salt waters ? The answer is that the seas contain both the sweet and the salt waters; therefore, whether it is said that these things come out from the combination of both, or from both kinds of waters, it would be one and the same thing. And it may well be that further investigations might reveal that both these things originate in the sea at the place where springs of sweet water gush out from the sea bed; and in their birth and development combination of both kinds of the water plays its part. Near Baḥrain which has been famous for its pearl-fisheries for centuries, there exist springs of sweet water at the bottom of the Gulf.

22. Here also though the aspect of power in ālāā' is conspicuous, the aspect of the blessing and praiseworthy qualities also is not hidden. It is a blessing of God that these valuable things come out from the sea, and it is His Providence that for the satisfaction of the aesthetic taste of the creatures whom He had blessed with the taste for beauty and the love and longing for adornment, He created all sorts of these beautiful things in His world.

23. "His are the ships...": Ships became possible only by His power. It is He Who blessed man with the capability and skill that he may build ships for crossing the oceans; it is He Who created on the earth the material from which ships could be built; and it is He Who subjected water to the laws by which it became possible for the mountain-like ships to sail on the surface of the surging oceans.

24. Here, the aspect of the blessing and bounty is conspicuous in ālāā', but the explanation given above shows that the aspect of power and good qualities also is present in it.

25. From here to verse 30, the jinn and the men have been informed of two realities:

First, "Neither you are immortal nor the provisions that you are enjoying in this world everlasting. Immortal and Everlasting is the Being of the High and Supreme God alone Whose greatness this Universe testifies, and by Whose grace and kindness you have been favoured with these bounties. Now, if some one among you behaves arrogantly, it would be due to his own meanness. If a foolish person assumes haughtiness in his tiny sphere of authority, or becomes god of a few helpless men who fall into his hand, this farce would not last long. A godhead that lasts for a mere score or two score years in a corner of the earth whose size in this limitless Universe is not even equal to a pea seed, and then becomes a legend of the past, is not something of which one may feel proud and arrogant."

The other important truth of which both these creations have been warned is: "None of those whom you have set up as deities and removers of hardships and fulfillers of needs, apart from Allah, whether they are angels or prophets or the moon and the sun, or some other creation, can fulfil any of your needs. These helpless creatures and things themselves stand in need of Allah's help for their needs and requirements. They themselves pray to Him for help: when they are not able to remove their own hardships how will they remove your hardships? Whatever is happening in this limitless Universe, from the earth to the heavens, is happening under the Command of One God alone. No one else has any share in His Godhead: no one therefore can influence anyone else's destiny in any way.

26. Here, as the context itself shows, the word *ālāā'* has been used in the sense of excellences and perfections. Whoever of the mortal creatures is involved in vanity and self-arrogance and struts about thinking that his false godhead is everlasting, disavows Lord of the world's glory and majesty by his conduct, if not by his tongue. His pride and arrogance by itself is a denial of Allah Almighty's greatness and glory. Whatever claim he may make to an excellence by his tongue, or arrogate to himself such an excellence, it is indeed a disavowal of the rank and station of the real Possessor of excellences and perfections.

27. That is, "He is continuously and endlessly functioning in this Universe and creating countless new things with new and yet new forms and designs and qualities. He is giving death to one and life to another, exalting one and debasing another, causing one to recover and another to remain ill, rescuing a drowning one and drowning a floating one. He is providing sustenance to countless creatures in a variety of ways. His world never stays in the same state: it is changing every moment and its Creator arranges it in a new state and fashion every time, which is different from every previous form and fashion and state."

28. Here, *ālāā'* seems to have been used in the sense of qualities and glories. Every person who commits polytheism of any kind, in fact, disavows one or the other of Allah's attributes. A person's saying that such and such a saint has removed his disease, in fact, amounts to saying that Allah is not the Remover of disease and Restorer of health but the saint. Another one's saying that such and such a holy one has got him a job, in fact, amounts to saying that Allah is not the Sustainer and Lord but the particular holy person. Still another one's saying that his prayer has been answered at a particular shrine, in fact, amounts to saying that the command governing the world is not Allah's but the shrine's. In short, every polytheistic belief and utterance, in the final analysis, leads up to the disavowal of the Divine attributes. Polytheism is nothing but that one should ascribe the Divine attributes of being All-Hearing and All-Seeing, Almighty and All-Powerful, etc., to others than Allah, and should deny that Allah alone is the Possessor of all these attributes.

29. *Thaqalān* is derived from *thiql*, which means a burden, and *thaqal* is the burden loaded on a conveyance. *Thaqalān* (dual) therefore would mean: "two loaded burdens". Here this word refers to the jinn and men; who are both loaded on the earth. As the addressees here are those jinn and men who have turned away from the service and obedience of their Lord and Sustainer, they have been addressed as: "O burdens of the earth." In other words, the Creator is warning these two unworthy groups of His creation, saying: "O you who have become a burden for My earth, I am soon going to take you to task."

30. This does not mean that Allah at this time is too busy to call the disobedient servants to account, but it means that Allah has arranged a special time-table according to which He will first bring into existence generation after generation of the jinn and men in the world till an appointed time, and will provide them with an opportunity to work in this examination centre of the world; then at a specific Hour the examination will be suddenly brought to a close, and all the jinn and men living at that time will be given death simultaneously. Then at another time which is preordained with Allah for calling the jinn and men to account, all the former and the latter generations of both the species will be resurrected and mustered at one and the same time. In view of this time-table the two species have been warned, as if to say: "We are yet busy with the work of the first period, and the time for the second period has not yet come, not to speak of embarking on the work of the third period. But you may rest assured. The time is fast approaching when We shall be free to take you to task." This lack of leisure does not mean that Allah is too occupied with one kind of work to attend to another kind of work. But its nature is analogous to the occupation of a person who has set a time-table for different sorts of the works and in respect of a work whose time has not yet arrived according to the time-table, he may say that he at the moment is not free for it.

31. Here, *ālāʾ* can also be taken in the meaning of powers. In view of the context, each meaning seems to be appropriate in its own way. According to the first meaning, it would mean: "Today you are being ungrateful for Our blessings and are being treacherous and disloyal by adopting the different attitudes of disbelief, polytheism, atheism, sin and disobedience, but tomorrow when the time comes for accountability, We shall see which of Our blessings you prove to be the result of a mere accident, or the fruit of your own ability, or a manifestation of the kindness of a god or goddess or saint." In the second case, the meaning would be: "Today you are mocking the doctrine of Resurrection and the gathering together of all mankind and jinn on the Day of Judgement and the accountability and the Heaven and Hell, and are harbouring the misunderstanding that such things are not at all possible, but when We gather you together for accountability and all that you deny today will appear before you, then We shall see which of Our powers you deny."

32. "The earth and the heavens": the Universe or the Kingdom of God. The verse means to impress this: "It is not in your power to escape Allah's grasp. When the time for the accountability of which you are being foretold comes, you will be seized and brought before God in any case wherever you may be. To go out of God's reach you will have to flee from the Universe of God for which you do not have the required power. If you feel that you have the power, then you may use that power if you so will."

33. The word *shuwāẓ*, as used in the original, means the pure, smokeless flame, and *nuḥās* is the gross smoke without a flame. These two things, one after the other, will be let loose upon the men and jinn, when they try to escape the accountability of Allah.

34. This refers to the Day of Resurrection. Bursting of the heavens implies loosening of the discipline of the heavens, scattering of the celestial bodies, upsetting of the system of the heavens. And the meaning of "reddening like red leather" is that during that great upheaval anyone who looks up towards the sky, will feel as though the entire heavens were on fire.

36. That is, "Today you deem Resurrection impossible; you think Allah has no power to bring it about. But when it will have taken place and you see with your eyes all that you are being foretold, which of the powers of Allah will you then deny ?"

36. This is being explained by the subsequent sentence: "The culprits there shall be recognized by their faces." It means that in that great assembly where all the former and the latter generations will have gathered together, there will be no need to ask as to who are the culprits, nor will any man or jinn need be asked whether he is a culprit or not. The dejected faces of the culprits, their terror-stricken eyes, their disturbed and alarmed countenances will themselves be enough to expose the secret that they are the culprits. When a crowd comprising both the guilty and the innocent people, is encircled by the police, the calm and tranquil of the innocent people and the bewildered and disturbed state of the guilty ones tell at one glance as to who in the crowd is the culprit and who is innocent. This general rule is in most cases belied in the world, because the worldly police do not enjoy the reputation of being fair and just, rather on many an occasion they have turned out to be more bothersome for the gentle and innocent people than for the culprits. Therefore, here it is possible that when encircled by the police the gentle and innocent people might become even more terror-stricken than the criminals, but in the Hereafter, when every noble person will have complete faith in the justice of Allah, bewilderment will afflict only those whose conscience will be conscious of their being the culprits themselves, and who on their very arrival in the Court of God will become certain of their doom, which they had regarded as impossible or doubtful in the world and so had been committing every heinous sin and crime.

37. The real basis of the crime according to the Qur'an is that the servant who is benefiting by the Blessings of his Sustainer, should harbour the misunderstanding that the blessings have been bestowed by no one, but have reached him of their own accord, or that the blessings are not the gift of God but the fruit of his own ability or good fortune, or that they are the gift of God, but

God has no right on His servants, or that God Himself has not done him those favours but some other being has got these done him. These are the wrong concepts on account of which man becomes independent of God and being free from His obedience and service performs acts which He has forbidden, and avoids acts which He has enjoined. Seen in this light every crime and every sin is, in reality, a disavowal of the favours of Allah whether a person denies them by the word of mouth or not. But the person who, in fact, has no intention of the denial, but acknowledges the favours in the depths of his heart, commits an error occasionally because of human weakness, he shows repentance on it and tries to avoid it. This saves him from being included among the deniers. Apart from this, all other culprits are, in fact, beliers of Allah's blessings and deniers of His favours. That is why it has been said: "When you will have been seized as culprits, then We shall see as to which of Our favours you deny." In Sūrah Takāthur: 8 the same thing has been put thus: "On that Day you will certainly be called to account for the blessings you had been granted." That is, it will be asked: "Had We granted you these blessings or not? Then, what attitude did you adopt towards your Benefactor, and in what ways did you use His Blessings?"

38. That is, "In Hell they will feel oppressed with thirst again and again, and will rush towards the springs of water, but will find only boiling water, which will not satisfy their thirst, and they will thus continue to wander to and fro between Hell and the springs for ever and ever."

39. That is, "Will you even at that time be able to deny that God can bring about Resurrection, can give you another life after death, can call you to account, and can also make this Hell in which you are suffering punishment today?"

40. "Who dreads... Lord": who fears God in whatever he does in the world, and dreads his accountability before Him in the Hereafter. Whoever holds this belief will inevitably avoid serving the lusts of his self, will avoid following every path blindly, will distinguish between the truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, pure and impure, and the lawful and the unlawful, and will not turn away deliberately from following the Commands of God. This is the real ground for the reward that is being mentioned below.

41. *Jannat* actually means a garden. At some places in the Qur'ān the entire world in which the righteous people will be kept, has been called *Jannat*, as though the whole of it was a garden. And at others it has been said that they will have *Jannāt* (Gardens) under which canals will be flowing. This means that that big Garden will comprise countless other gardens; and here precisely it has been stated that every pious man will be given two gardens in that big Garden, which will be particularly meant for him; it will have his own palaces in which he will

live with his family and attendants like a king, and in it he will be provided with all that is being mentioned below.

42. From here till the end, the word *ālāʾ* has been used both for the blessings and for the powers, and there is an aspect of the praiseworthy qualities too, in it. If we take the first meaning, the meaning of repeating the refrain in this context will be: "If you like to deny the blessings of Allah, you may do so. The righteous will certainly receive these blessings from their Lord." In the second case the meaning would be: "If you think it is impossible for Allah to create the Garden and bless His righteous servants with these bounties in it, you may think so. Allah certainly has the power to do this work and He will surely accomplish it." According to the third meaning, it means: "You think that after having created this big world Allah now doesn't bother whether a person behaves unjustly here or justly, works to promote the truth or falsehood, spreads evil or good: He will neither punish the oppressor nor redress the grievances of the oppressed, will neither appreciate good nor abhor evil. Then, as you think, He is helpless too. He can build the heavens and the earth but cannot prepare Hell for punishing the wicked and cannot make Heaven for rewarding the followers of the Truth. Thus, you may deny His praiseworthy attributes as you may, but tomorrow when He hurls the evildoers into Hell and blesses the worshippers of the truth in Heaven, will you even then be able to deny His these attributes?"

43. This can have two meanings: (1) "The fruits of the two gardens will have their own special flavors and tastes. In one garden he will find one kind of the fruit clustering on its branches, and in the other, another kind." (2) "In each garden there will be two kinds of fruit; one kind of the familiar fruit known and tasted in the world, though much superior to that found in the world, and the other kind of the rare fruit never imagined and tasted before."

44. That is, "When their lining will be of such superior quality, you may imagine what will be the quality of the outer layer of the carpets."

45. This is the real character of the woman: she should neither be shameless nor immodest, but should have modesty in her looks.

That is why Allah while making a mention of women among the blessings of Paradise has first of all praised their modesty and chastity, and not their beauty and physical charms. Beautiful women can get together in mixed clubs and film studios and beauty contests where the select beautiful women only are admitted, but a person of low taste and mentality only can show any interest in them. No noble person can find any charm in the beauty that attracts every evil look and is ready to fall in every lap!

46. This means that in the worldly life whether a woman died a spinster, or as the wife of somebody, or died young, or as an old woman, in the Hereafter

[Contd. on page 287

مُتَّكِـِٔيْنَ عَلٰى فُرُشٍۭ بَطَآئِنُهَا مِنْ اِسْتَبْرَقٍ ؕ وَجَنَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ فَبِاَيِّ
اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٥٥﴾ فِيْهِنَّ قٰصِرٰتُ الطَّرْفِ ۙ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ اِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَ
لَا جَآنٌّ ﴿٥٦﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٥٧﴾ كَاَنَّهُنَّ الْيَاقُوْتُ وَ الْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٥٨﴾ فَبِاَيِّ
اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٥٩﴾ هَلْ جَزَآءُ الْاِحْسَانِ اِلَّا الْاِحْسَانُ ﴿٦٠﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا
تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٦١﴾ وَ مِنْ دُوْنِهِمَا جَنَّتٰنِ ﴿٦٢﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٦٣﴾ مُدْهَآمَّتٰنِ ﴿٦٤﴾
فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٦٥﴾ فِيْهِمَا عَيْنٰنِ نَضَّاخَتٰنِ ﴿٦٦﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا
تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٦٧﴾ فِيْهِمَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَّ نَخْلٌ وَّ رُمَّانٌ ﴿٦٨﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٦٩﴾
فِيْهِنَّ خَيْرٰتٌ حِسَانٌ ﴿٧٠﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٧١﴾ حُوْرٌ مَّقْصُوْرٰتٌ فِى
الْخِيَامِ ﴿٧٢﴾ فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٧٣﴾ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ اِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَآنٌّ ﴿٧٤﴾
فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٧٥﴾ مُتَّكِـِٔيْنَ عَلٰى رَفْرَفٍ خُضْرٍ وَّعَبْقَرِيٍّ حِسَانٍ ﴿٧٦﴾
فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ﴿٧٧﴾ تَبٰرَكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِى الْجَلٰلِ وَالْاِكْرَامِ ﴿٧٨﴾

The dwellers of Paradise shall be reclining on carpets lined with thick silk,[44] and the branches of the gardens will be hanging down (on them) with fruit. O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? Amidst these blessings will be those of bashful looks,[45] whom neither man nor jinn will have touched before them.[46] O which of your Lord's bounties will you deny? As beautiful as rubies and pearls. O which of your Lord's bounties will you deny? 54-59

Could the reward of goodness be anything but goodness?[47] Then, O jinn and men, which of your Lord's praiseworthy attributes will you deny?[48] And besides those two, there will be two other gardens.[49] O which of your Lord's bounties will you deny? Dark-green and well-watered.[50] O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? In both two gushing springs. O which of your Lord's favours will you deny ? In them plenty of fruit, and dates and pomegranates. O which of 60-77

your Lord's blessings will you deny? Amidst these blessings chaste and beautiful wives. O which of your Lord's bounties will you deny? Houris kept in their tents.[51] O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? No man or jinn will have touched them before them. O which of your Lord's blessings will you deny? They will be reclining on green cushions and fine, rich carpets.[52] O which of your Lord's bounties will you deny?

Full of blessings is the name of your Lord, Owner of Glory and Honour! 78

[*Contd. from page 285*]

when all the righteous women enter Paradise, they will be made young and virgins; and any of the women who is made a life-partner of a righteous man, will not have been possessed by anyone before that husband, in Paradise.

This verse also shows that the righteous jinn too will enter Paradise like the righteous men. Men will have women from their own kind and the jinn their wives from their own kind; both the kinds will have their mates from their own particular kind. No person of one kind will be made a partner of a member of another kind with whom he cannot live as husband or wife naturally. The words of the verse: "...whom neither man nor jinn will have touched before them," do not mean that the women there will only be of human species and they will not have been touched by any man or jinn before their husbands, but its real meaning is: In Paradise there will be women of both the jinn and the human species; they all will be modest and untouched: neither a jinn female will have been touched by a jinn male before her husband in Paradise, nor a human female will have been touched by a human male before her husband in Paradise.

47. That is, "How, after all, is it possible that Allah should allow to go waste the sacrifices of those righteous servants and should deny them their rewards, who kept themselves subjected to restrictions throughout their lives for the sake of Allah, who avoided the unlawful and remained content with the lawful, who performed their duties faithfully and sincerely, rendered the rights of those to whom rights were due, and endured hardships against evil and upheld good?"

48. Obviously, the parson who is a denier of Paradise and its rewards, actually denies many of Allah Almighty's praiseworthy attributes. Even if he believes in Allah, he holds a bad opinion about Him. In his view He is a perverse ruler in whose lawless kingdom doing good is an exercise in futility. He is either blind and deaf and is, therefore, wholly unaware as to who in his kingdom is making sacrifces of life, wealth and labour for His sake; or He is un-appreciative and cannot distinguish between good and evil; or, as he seems to think, He is helpless and powerless: He may be very appreciative of the good but is unable to

reward the doer of it. That is why it has been said: "When in the Hereafter good will be rewarded with good in front of your very eyes, will you even then disavow the praiseworthy attributes of your Lord?"

49. The word *dūn* as used in *min dūn-i-himā Jannatān*, is employed in three different meanings in Arabic (1) To be situated at a lower level than another thing; (2) to be inferior to something of better and nobler quality; and (3) to be over and above something else. On account of this difference in meaning, one probable meaning of these words is that every dweller of Paradise will be given two more gardens besides the two previously mentioned; another probable meaning is that these two gardens will be inferior in quality and rank to both the first mentioned gardens; that is, the first two gardens will either be situated at a higher level than these two, or the first two gardens will be of a superior kind and these two of an inferior kind as compared to them. If the first probability is adopted, it would mean that these two additional gardens also will be for those dwellers of Paradise, who have been mentioned above, And in case the second probability is adopted, the meaning would be that the first two gardens will be for "those nearest to Allah", and these two for "the people of the right hand." This second probability is strengthened by the two kinds of the righteous men as mentioned in Sūrah Al-Wāqi'ah. First, the foremost, who have also been called the *"muqarrabūn"*; second, the people of the right hand, who have also been entitled *"aṣḥāb al-maimanah"*; and for both these separate qualities of the two kinds of the gardens have been mentioned. Furthermore, this probability is also strengthened by the *Ḥadīth* which Abū Bakr has related on the authority of his father, Ḥaḍrat Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, In this he says: The Holy Prophet said; "Two *jannats* (gardens) will be for the foremost among the righteous (or the *muqarrabin)*, in which the utensils and articles of decoration will be of gold, and two *jannats* for the followers (or the *ashab al-yamin*), in which everything will be of silver," *(Fatḥ al-Bari, Kitab at-Tafsir:* Sūrah Ar-Raḥman).

50. The word *madhaammatan* has been used in praise of these gardens. *Mudhaammatun* is such luxuriant vegetation which because of its extreme luxuriance assumes a darkish hue.

51. For the explanation of *ḥūr* see E. N's 28, 29 of Sūrah Aṣ-Ṣaaffat and E.N. 42 of Sūrah Ad-Dukhan the tents probably will be similar to those pitched for the nobles and rich people in the public parks. Most probably the wives of the dwellers of Paradise will live with them in their palaces and in their parks there will be tents pitched here and there in which there will be the houris to entertain them. Our this presumption is based on this that in the foregoing verses beautiful and chaste wives have been mentioned; now, here, mention of the houris signifies that they will be a different kind of women from the wives. This presumption is further strengthened by the *Ḥadith* which Hadrat Umm Salamah

has reported. She says: "I asked: O messenger of Allah, who are better: the women of the world or the houris! The Holy Prophet replied: The women of the world are superior to the houris in the same way as the outer layer of a garment is superior to its lining. I asked: On what grounds ? he replied: On the ground that the women have offered their Prayers, observed their Fasts, and performed other devotions." (Tabarani). This shows that the wives of the dwellers of Paradise will be the women who affirmed the faith in the world and left the world while they practised good and right. They will enter Paradise in consequence of their faith and good deeds, and will deserve the blessings of Paradise on merit. They would either become the wives of their previous husbands of their own free will and choice, if they too happened to be dwellers of Paradise, or Allah will wed them to some other dweller of Paradise, if the two would like to live together as husband and wife. As for the houris they will not be entitled to dwell in Paradise as a result of any righteous deed of their own, but Allah will create them as young, beautiful women and bestow them also as a blessing among the other blessings on the dwellers of Paradise so that they may enjoy their companionship. But they will not in any case be creatures of the kind of the jinn and fairies, for man cannot cohabit with a kind other than his own. Therefore, most probably these would be those innocent girls who died immature, and whose parents did not deserve Paradise so that they could be admitted to Paradise with them as the children of their righteous parents.

52. The word *abqari* in the original is from *'abqar*, the capital city of the jinn in the legends of the pre-Islamic Arabia. It was on that account that the Arabs called every fine and rare thing *'abqari* as if it belonged to the fairyland and had no match in the material world. So much so that in their idiom the man who possessed extraordinary abilities and who performed wonderful works was also called *abqari*. The English word genius also is spoken in the same sense and is also derived from genii which is a synonym of jinn. That is why the word *'abqari;* has been used here to give an idea of the extraordinary exquisiteness of the provisions of Paradise to the Arabs.


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AL-WĀQI'AH
الواقعه

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LVI

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INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah takes its name from the word *al-wāqi'ah* of the very first verse.

Period of Revelation

According to the chronological order that Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās has given of the Sūrahs, first Sūrah Tā Hā was sent down, then Al-Wāqi'āh and then Ash-Shu'arā' (Suyūti: *Al-Iqān).* The same sequence has been reported from 'Ikrimah. (Baihaqi: *Dalā'il an-Nubuwwat*).

This is supported also by the story that Ibn Hishām has related from Ibn Isḥāq about the affirmation of the Faith by Ḥaḍrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him). It says that when Ḥaḍrat 'Umar entered his sister's house, Sūrah Ṭā Hā was being recited. Hearing his voice the people of the house hid the pages of the Qur'ān. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar first seized his brother-in-law and when his sister rose in defence of her husband, he hit her also and wounded her on the head. When 'Umar saw blood on his sister, he was sorry for what he had done, and said to her: "Show me the manuscript that you have concealed so that I may see what it contains." The sister said: "You are unclean because of your polytheism: *wa anna-hū lā yamassu-hā illl-aṭ-ṭāhir:* Only a clean person can touch it." So, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar rose and washed himself, and then took up the manuscript to read it. This shows that Sūrah Al-Wāqi'ah had been sent down by that time for it contains the verse: *la yamassuhū ill-al-muṭahharūn;* and it has been established historically that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar embraced Islam after the first migration to Ḥabash, in the fifth year of the Prophethood.

Theme and Subject Matter

Its theme is the Hereafter, *Tauḥīd* and refutation of the Makkan disbelievers' suspicions about the Qur'ān. What they regarded as utterly incredible was that Resurrection would ever take place, when the entire system of the earth and heavens would be upset, and when all the dead would be resurrected and called to account, after which the righteous would be admitted to Paradise and the wicked cast into Hell. They regarded all this as imaginary, which could not possibly happen in actual fact. In answer to this, it was said: "When the inevitable event will take place, there will be none to belie its happening, nor will anyone have the power to avert it, nor prove it to be an unreal happening. At that time all peoples will be divided into three classes:

(1) The foremost in rank and position; (2) the common righteous people; and (3) those who denied the Hereafter and persisted in disbelief and polytheism and major sins till the last." How these three classes of the people will be rewarded and punished has been described in detail in vv. 7-56.

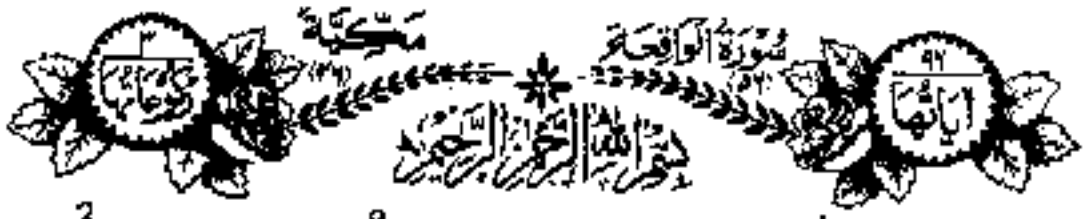
Then, in vv. 57-74 arguments have been given, one after the other, to prove the truth of the two basic doctrines of Islam, which the

disbelievers were refusing to accept, viz. the doctrines of *Tauḥīd* and the Hereafter. In these arguments, apart from every thing else that exists in the earth and heavens, man's attention has been drawn to his own body and to the food that he eats and to the water that he drinks and to the fire on which he cooks his food, and he has been invited to ponder the question: What right do you have to behave independently of, or serve any other than, the God Whose creative power has brought you into being, and Whose provisions sustain you ? And how can you entertain the idea that after having once brought you into existence He has become so helpless and powerless that He cannot recreate you once again even if he wills to?

Then, in vv. 75-82 their suspicions in respect of the Qur'ān have been refuted and they have been made to realize how fortunate they are that instead of deriving any benefit from the great blessing that the Qur'an is, they are treating it with scant attention and have set only this share of theirs in it that they deny it. If one seriously considers this matchless argument that has been presented in two brief sentences about the truth of the Qur'ān, one will find in it the same kind of firm and stable system as exists among the stars and planets of the Universe, and the same is the proof of the fact that its Author is the same Being Who has created the Universe. Then the disbelievers have been told that this Book is inscribed in that Writ of Destiny which is beyond the reach of the creatures, as if to say: "You think it is brought down by the devils to Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), whereas none but the pure angels has any access to the means by which it reaches Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) from the well-guarded Tablet."

In conclusion, man has been warned, as if to say: "You may brag and boast as you like and may shut your eyes to the truths in your arrogance of independence, but death is enough to open your eyes. At death you become helpless: you cannot save your own parents; you cannot save your children; you cannot save your religious guides and beloved leaders. They all die in front of your very eyes while you look on helplessly. If there is no supreme power ruling over you, and your this assumption is correct that you are all in all in the world, and there is no God, then why don't you restore to the dying person his soul ? Just as you are helpless in this, so it is also beyond your power to stop Allah

from calling the people to account and mete out rewards and punishments to them. You may or may not believe it, but every dying person will surely see his own end after death. If he belongs to those nearest to God, he will see the good end meant for them; if he be from among the righteous, he will see the end prepared for the righteous; and if he be from among the deniers of the truth, he will see the end destined for the criminals.



إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ۝١ لَيْسَ لِوَقْعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ۝٢ خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ ۝٣ إِذَا رُجَّتِ
الْأَرْضُ رَجًّا ۝٤ وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا ۝٥ فَكَانَتْ هَبَاءً مُّنْبَثًّا ۝٦ وَكُنْتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا
ثَلَاثَةً ۝٧ فَأَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ ۝٨ وَأَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ مَا
أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ ۝٩ وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ ۝١٠ أُولَٰئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ۝١١ فِي جَنَّاتِ
النَّعِيمِ ۝١٢ ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝١٣ وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ ۝١٤ عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ ۝١٥
مُّتَّكِئِينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَابِلِينَ ۝١٦ يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ ۝١٧ بِأَكْوَابٍ وَّ

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Verses:96 *Revealed at Makkah*

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

When the inevitable event happens, there shall be none to belie its happening.[1] It will be a calamity which will abase and exalt.[2] The earth shall be shaken all of a sudden,[3] and the mountains shall crumble and become as scattered dust. You, them, shall be divided into three classes:[4] People of the right hand:[5] Oh, how (fortunate) shall be the people of the right hand! And the people of the left hand:[6] Oh, how (unfortunate) shall be the people of the left hand! And the foremost shall still be the foremost.[7] They will be those nearest (to God). They shall abide in the Gardens of bliss. Most of them will be from among the former people and a few from among those of latter day.[8] They will be reclining on jewelled couches facing each other. 1-6

1. Opening the discourse with this sentence by itself signifies that this is

an answer to the objections that were then being raised in the disbelievers' conferences against Resurrection. This was the time when the people of Makkah had just begun to hear the invitation to Islam from the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon be Allah's peace and blessing). In it what seemed most astonishing and remote from reason to them was that the entire system of the earth and heavens would one day be overturned and then another world would be set up in which all the dead, of the former and the latter generations, would be resurrected. Bewildered they would ask: "This is just impossible ! Where will this earth, these oceans, these mountains, this moon and sun go? How will the centuries-old dead bodies rise up to life ? How can one in his senses believe that there will be another life after death and there will be gardens of Paradise and the fire of Hell ?" Such were the misgivings that were being expressed at that time everywhere in Makkah. It was against this background that it was said: "When the inevitable event happens, there shall be no one to belie it."

In this verse the word *"wāqi'ah"* (event) has been used for Resurrection, which nearly means the same thing as the English word 'inevitable', signifying thereby that it is something that must come to pass. Then, its happening has been described by the word *"waqi'ah,"* which is used for the sudden occurrence of a disaster. *Lāisa li waq'at-i-hā kādhibat-un* can have two meanings: (1) That it will not be possible that its occurrence be averted, or stopped, or turned back: or, in other words, there will be no power to make it appear as an unreal event; and (2) that there will be no living being to tell the lie that the event has not taken place.

2. Literally: "that which causes (something or somebody) to rise and to fall." Its one meaning can be that it will upset every order; it will turn things upside-down. Another meaning also can be that it will exalt the lowly and bring low the high and mighty; that is, on its advent the decision as to who is noble and who is ignoble among the people will be made on quite a different basis. Those who posed as honourable people in the world, would become contemptible and those who were considered contemptible would become honourable.

3. That is, it will not be a local earthquake that may occur in a restricted area, but it will shake the whole earth to its depths all of a sudden, and it will experience a tremendous jolt and tremors all through.

4. Although the address apparently is directed to the people to whom this discourse was being recited, or who may read it or hear it read now, in fact the entire mankind is its addressee. All human beings who have been born since the first day of creation and will be born till the Day of Resurrection, will ultimately be divided into three classes.

5. The word *maimanah* in *ashāb al-maimanah*, in the original, may have

been derived from *Yāmīn,* which means the right hand, and also from *yumn,* which means good omen. If it is taken to be derived from *yamīn, aṣḥāb al-maimanah* would mean: "those of the right hand." This, however, does not imply its lexical meaning, but it signifies the people of exalted rank and position. The Arabs regarded the right hand as a symbol of strength and eminence and honour, and therefore would seat a person whom they wished to do honour, on the right hand, in the assemblies. And if it is taken as derived from *yumn, aṣḥāb al-maimanah* would mean fortunate and blessed people.

6. The word *mash'amah* in *ashāb al-mash'amah,* in the original, is from *shu'm* which means misfortune, ill-luck and bad omen; in Arabic the left hand also is called *shūmā.* The Arabs regarded *shimāl* (the left hand) and *shu'm* (bad omen) as synonyms, the left hand being a symbol of weakness and indignity. If a bird flew left on the commencement of a journey, they would take it as a bad omen; if they made a person sit on their left, it meant they regarded him as a weak man. Therefore, *aṣḥāb al-mash'amah* implies ill-omened people, or those who would suffer disgrace and ignominy, and would be made to stand on the left side in the Court of Allah.

7. *Sābiqūn* (the Foremost) implies the people who excelled others in virtue and love of the truth and in good works and responded to the call of Allah and His Messenger before others. They were also in the forefront in their response to the call for *Jihad,* for expending their wealth for the sake of the needy and for public services, or for inviting others to virtue and truth, in short, for spreading the good and wiping out evil and making sacrifices and exerting themselves whenever there was need for it. On this very basis, in the Hereafter too, they will be placed in the forefront.

Thus, mankind, so to say, will be ranged in Allah's Court like this: On the right hand, there will be the righteous, on the left the wicked, and in the forefront (nearest in Divine Presence) the *Sābiqūn* (the Foremost in Faith and good deeds). According to a *Ḥadīth* reported by Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) asked the people: "Do you know who, on the Day of Resurrection, will be the first to be accommodated under the Divine Shade ?" The people said Allah and His Messenger only had the best knowledge. Thereupon the Holy Prophet replied: "Those who were such that when the Truth was presented before them, they accepted it forthwith; when a right was asked of them, they discharged it gracefully; and their decision in respect of others was the same as in respect of their own selves." (Musnad Aḥmad).

8. The commentators have differed as to who are implied by āthe former

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أَبَارِيقَ ۙ وَكَأْسٍ مِّن مَّعِينٍ ﴿١٨﴾ لَّا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنزِفُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَفَاكِهَةٍ
مِّمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَحُورٌ عِينٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ كَأَمْثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ
الْمَكْنُونِ ﴿٢٣﴾ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْثِيمًا ﴿٢٥﴾
إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَامًا سَلَامًا ﴿٢٦﴾ وَأَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ ۙ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٢٧﴾ فِي سِدْرٍ
مَّخْضُودٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَطَلْحٍ مَّنضُودٍ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَظِلٍّ مَّمْدُودٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَمَاءٍ مَّسْكُوبٍ ﴿٣١﴾ وَفَاكِهَةٍ
كَثِيرَةٍ ﴿٣٢﴾ لَّا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَفُرُشٍ مَّرْفُوعَةٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ إِنَّا أَنشَأْنَاهُنَّ
إِنشَاءً ﴿٣٥﴾ فَجَعَلْنَاهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا ﴿٣٦﴾ عُرُبًا أَتْرَابًا ﴿٣٧﴾ لِّأَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٣٨﴾ ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ
الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَأَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ ۙ مَا أَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ ﴿٤١﴾
فِي سَمُومٍ وَحَمِيمٍ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَظِلٍّ مِّن يَحْمُومٍ ﴿٤٣﴾ لَّا بَارِدٍ وَلَا كَرِيمٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ إِنَّهُمْ
كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَٰلِكَ مُتْرَفِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَكَانُوا يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى الْحِنثِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَكَانُوا
يَقُولُونَ أَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَإِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ أَوَآبَاؤُنَا الْأَوَّلُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾
قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ لَمَجْمُوعُونَ ۙ إِلَىٰ مِيقَاتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٥٠﴾ ثُمَّ
إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا الضَّالُّونَ الْمُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ لَآكِلُونَ مِن شَجَرٍ مِّن زَقُّومٍ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَمَالِئُونَ
مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَشَارِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٥٤﴾ فَشَارِبُونَ شُرْبَ الْهِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾
هَٰذَا نُزُلُهُمْ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿٥٦﴾ نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ فَلَوْلَا تُصَدِّقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ أَفَرَأَيْتُم
مَّا تُمْنُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾ أَأَنتُمْ تَخْلُقُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْخَالِقُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ نَحْنُ قَدَّرْنَا بَيْنَكُمُ
الْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوقِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾ عَلَىٰ أَن نُّبَدِّلَ أَمْثَالَكُمْ وَنُنشِئَكُمْ فِي مَا لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ النَّشْأَةَ الْأُولَىٰ فَلَوْلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ أَفَرَأَيْتُم مَّا
تَحْرُثُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ أَأَنتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ حُطَامًا

Eternal youths[9] shall go round them briskly with brimful goblets and beakers and cups of wine from a flowing spring, which will neither cause them giddiness nor affect their sense.[10] And they shall present before them every kind of tasty fruit, whichever they may choose; and the flesh of fowls, whichever they may desire.[11] And for them there shall be beautiful-eyed houris, as lovely as well-guarded pearls.[12] All this they will receive in reward for what they had done in the world. There they shall neither hear vain talk nor sinful speech.[13] Whatever they hear shall be right and pure.[14] 17-26

And the people of the right hand: —Oh, how fortunate will be the people of the right hand ! They shall be among thornless lote-trees,[15] and piled up bananas, one upon the other, and outspread shade and ever flowing waters and abundant fruit[16] neither failing in supply nor forbidden, and in upraised couches. We shall create their wives anew and make them virgins,[17] lovers of their husbands[18] and of equal age.[19] All this is for the people of the right hand. A good number of them will be from among the former people and a good number also from among those of latter day. 27-40

And the people of the left hand:—Oh, how unfortunate will be the people of the left hand ! They will be in the scorching wind and the boiling waters and the shadow of black smoke, which will be neither cool nor refreshing. These will be the people who had lived in ease and comfort before meeting this fate. They persisted in heinous sin[20] and used to say, "What, when we are dead and become dust and bones, shall we be raised up again? And our forefathers too, who have gone before?" Say to them, "Surely, the former and the latter, all shall be gathered together one day, the hour of which has already been appointed. Then, O deviators and deniers, you shall eat of the zaqqūm-tree[21] and fill your bellies with it, and drink on top of that boiling water like the thirsty camel. This shall be the entertainment of the people of the left hand on the Day of Recompense. 41-56

We have created you;[22] then why don't you confirm?[23] Have you ever considered the spermdrop that you emit ? Is it you who create the child from it, or are We the Creators?[24] We have distributed death among you,[25] and We are not helpless that We may change your forms and create you in another form that you do not know.[26] You already 57-62

know well your first creation. Why then you do not take heed?[27].

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and the latter people "One group of them has expressed the view that the "former people" were the communities that passed away since the time of the Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) till the time of the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), and the "people of the latter day" those who will have lived in the world since the advent of the Holy Prophet till the Day of Resurrection. Accordingly the verse would mean: "The number of the *Sabqin* (the Foremost in Faith and good deeds) among the people who passed away during the thousands of years before the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) would be greater, and the number of those who would attain to the rank of the *Sābiqīn* among those people who have been born since the advent of the Holy Prophet, or will be born till the Day of Resurrection, will be less." The second group says that the former and the latter in this verse imply the former and the latter people of the Holy Prophet's own *Ummah* itself. That is, in his *Ummah* the people belonging to the earliest period were the former among whom the number of the *Sābiqīn* will be greater, and the people of the later periods are the latter among whom the number of the *Sābiqīn* will be smaller. The third group holds the view that this implies the former and the latter people of every Prophet's own *Ummah*. That is, there will be numerous *Sābiqīn* among the earliest followers of every Prophet, but among his later followers their number will decrease. The words of the verse bear all the three meanings, and possibly all three are implied, for there is no contradiction between them. Besides, they give another meaning also and that too is correct: every early period of a Prophet's following the proportion of the *Sābiqīn* in human population would be greater and in the later period less, for the number of the workers of good and right does not increase at the rate of increase of the human populations. They may be more numerous as against the *Sābiqīn* of the earliest period, but on the whole their number as against the world population goes on becoming less and less.

9. This implies boys who will ever remain boys and stay young. Ḥaḍrat 'Alī and Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣrī say that these will be those children of the people, who died before reaching their maturity; therefore, they will neither have any good works to their credit for which they may be rewarded, nor any evil deeds for which they may be punished. But obviously, this could imply those people who would not deserve Paradise. For, as for the true believers, about them Allah has guaranteed in the Qur'ān that their children will be joined with them in Paradise (At-Ṭūr: 21). This is also supported by the *Ḥadīth*, which Abū Da'ūd Ṭayālisi, Ṭabarānī and Bazzār have related on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Anas and Ḥaḍrat

Samurah bin Jundub, according to which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said that the children of the polytheists will be attendants of the people of Paradise. (For further explanation, see E.N. 26 of Aṣ-Ṣāaffāt, E.N. 19 of Aṭ-ṭūr).

10. For explanation, see E.N. 27 of Aṣ-Ṣāaffāt, E.N. 22 of Sūrah Muhammad, E. N. 18 of Aṭ-Ṭūr.

11. For explanation, see E.N. 17 of Sūrah At-tūr.

12. For explanation, see E.N.'s 28, 29 of Aṣ-Ṣāaffāt, E.N. 42, of Ad-Dukhān, E.N. 61 of Ar-Raḥmān.

13. This is one of the major blessings of Paradise, which has been mentioned at several places in the Qur'ān, viz. that in Paradise human ears will remain secure against idle and frivolous talk, lying, backbiting slander, invective, boasting and bragging, taunts and mockery, satire and sarcasm. It will not be a society of foul-mouthed, indecent people who will throw mud at each other, but a society of noble and civilized people free of such frivolities. A person who has been blessed with some decency of manner and sense by Allah can very well feel what an agony it is in worldly life a hope of deliverance from which has been given to man in Paradise.

14. Some commentators and translators have taken the words, *illā qīlan salāmu-an salāmā*, to mean that in Paradise one will hear only the greeting of 'Peace, peace' on every side; the correct view, however, is that it implies healthy and wholesome speech, i.e. such speech as may be free of the vices and blemishes, faults and evils, that have been mentioned in the preceding sentence. Here the word *salam* has been used nearly in the same sense as the English word sane.

15. That is, lote-trees without thorns on them. This will be a superior kind of the lote-tree to be only found in Paradise, and its fruit likewise will be much superior to that found in the world.

16. The word *la maqtu'ah* of the Text means: This fruit will neither be seasonal that its supply may fail when the season is over, nor its production will cease as it happens in a garden after its fruits has been picked. But in Paradise every kind of fruit will remain available in abundance in every season and will continue to be produced and supplied no matter how much of it is consumed. And *lā mamnū'ah* means that there will be no prohibition or hindrance in obtaining fruit as it is in the gardens of the world, nor will it be out of reach because of thorns or height.

17. This signifies the virtuous women of the world, who will enter Paradise on the basis of their faith and good works. Allah will make them young no matter how aged they might have died in the world; will make them beautiful whether or not they were beautiful in the world; and will make them virgins

whether they died virgins in the world or after bearing children. If their husbands also entered Paradise with them, they would be joined with them, otherwise Allah will wed them to another dweller in Paradise. This very explanation of this verse has been reported from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) in several *Aḥādīth*. According to *Shamā'il Tirmidhī*, an old woman requested the Holy Prophet to pray for her admission to Paradise. The Holy Prophet replied: "No old woman will enter Paradise." Hearing this the woman went back crying. Thereupon the Holy Prophet said to the people: "Tell her that she will not enter Paradise as an old woman, for Allah says: 'We shall create them anew and make them virgins'." Ibn Abī Ḥātim has related, on the authority of Hadrat Salamah bin Yazid, that he heard the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) explain this verse, thus: "This implies the women of the world, whether they died virgins or married." Ṭabarānī contains a lengthy tradition related from Ḥaḍrat Umm Salamah according to which she asked the Holy Prophet the meaning of the several references in the Qur'ān to the women of Paradise. In answer, he explained this very verse and said: "These are the women who died as aged and decayed women, with sticky eyes and gray hair; after this old age Allah will again make them young and virgins." Ḥaḍrat Umm Salamah asked: "If a woman had several husbands in the world, one after the other, to whom will she belong in Paradise ?" The Holy Prophet replied "She will be asked to make her own choice, and she will choose the one who had the best moral character. She will say: O my Lord, make me his wife, for he was the best in his conduct and dealings with me. O Umm Salamah, good moral conduct has carried off all the good of this world and the Hereafter." (For further explanation, see E.N. 51 of Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān).

18. The word *'urubān* is used for the best feminine qualities of the woman in Arabic. This signifies a woman who is graceful and elegant, well-mannered and eloquent, and brimful of feminine feelings, who loves her husband with all her heart, and whose husband also loves her with all his heart.

19. This can have two meanings: (1) That they will be of equal age with their husbands; and (2) that they will be of equal age among themselves; i.e. all the women in Paradise will be of the same age and will eternally stay young. Both these meanings may be correct at one and the same time, i.e. these women may be of equal age among themselves and their husbands also may be made of equal age with them. According to a *Ḥadīth*, "When the dwellers of Paradise enter it, their bodies will be without hair, their moustaches will be just appearing, but will yet be beardless, they will be handsome and fair-complexioned, with sturdy bodies and collyrium- stained eyes; they will all be 33 years of age." (Musnad Aḥmad: Marwiyāt *Abī Hurairah*). Almost the same theme has been related in Tirmidhi by Ḥaḍrat Mu'ādh bin Jabal and Ḥaḍrat Abū Sa'īd Khudri also.

20. That is, "Their prosperity had an adverse effect on them. Instead of being grateful to Allah Almighty, they had become deniers of His blessings. Lost in pleasure-seeking they had forgotten God and persisted in heinous sinning. "Heinous sinning" includes disbelief, polytheism and atheism as well as every grave sin of morality and conduct."

21. For the explanation of *zaqqūm*, see E.N. 34 of Aṣ-Ṣāāffāt.

22. The arguments from here to verse 74 provide the reasoning to prove both the doctrines of *Tauḥīd* and of Hereafter rationally. For it was there two basic doctrines of the Holy Prophet's teaching that the people of Makkah were debating and objecting to at that time.

23. That is, "Why don't you confirm that We alone are your Lord and God and We have the power to create you once again?"

24. In this brief sentence a very important question has been put before man. Apart from all other things in the world, if man only considers as to how he himself has come into being, he can then neither have any doubts left about the doctrine of *Tauḥīd* presented by the Qur'ān nor about its doctrine of the Hereafter. The process of man's own creation starts when the male has conveyed his sperm to the womb of the female. But the question is: Has the sperm by itself become endowed with the capability of producing a child, and necessarily a human child ? Or, has it been created by man himself, or, by another than God? And, is it in the power of the man, or of the woman, or of another agency in the world, to cause conception by this sperm? Then, who is responsible for the gradual formation and development of the foetus in the mother's womb, its shaping and moulding into a unique child, the provision in a particular proportion of different mental and physical powers and qualities in each child, so that it develops into a unique person, except One God? Has another than God any role to play in this? Is it done by the parents themselves? Or, by a doctor? Or, by the prophets or saints, who were themselves created in this very way? Or, by the sun and the moon and the stars, which are themselves subject to a law? Or, by nature, which is devoid of any knowledge, wisdom, will and authority? Then, is it also in the power of another than God to decide whether the child is to be a boy or a girl? Whether it is to be beautiful or ugly, strong or weak, blind and deaf and a cripple or sound-bodied, intelligent or stupid? Then, is it another than God who decides as to people of what calibre, good or and are to be created in a particular nation at a particular time, who would cause its rise or fall? If a person is not obdurate and stubborn, he will himself realize that no rational answer can be given to these questions on the basis of polytheism and atheism. Their rational answer is only one and it is this: Man is wholly and entirely the creation of God; and when the

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فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُوْنَ ﴿٦٥﴾ إِنَّا لَمُغْرَمُوْنَ ﴿٦٦﴾ بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُوْمُوْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾ أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ الْمَآءَ
الَّذِيْ تَشْرَبُوْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ءَأَنْتُمْ أَنْزَلْتُمُوْهُ مِنَ الْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنْزِلُوْنَ ﴿٦٩﴾ لَوْ
نَشَآءُ جَعَلْنٰهُ أُجَاجًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٧٠﴾ أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ النَّارَ الَّتِيْ تُوْرُوْنَ ﴿٧١﴾ ءَأَنْتُمْ
أَنْشَأْتُمْ شَجَرَتَهَآ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنْشِـُٔوْنَ ﴿٧٢﴾ نَحْنُ جَعَلْنٰهَا تَذْكِرَةً وَّمَتَاعًا
لِّلْمُقْوِيْنَ ﴿٧٣﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيْمِ ﴿٧٤﴾ فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِمَوٰقِعِ النُّجُوْمِ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَ
إِنَّهٗ لَقَسَمٌ لَّوْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾ إِنَّهٗ لَقُرْءَانٌ كَرِيْمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾ فِيْ كِتٰبٍ مَّكْنُوْنٍ ﴿٧٨﴾ لَّا
يَمَسُّهٗٓ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُوْنَ ﴿٧٩﴾ تَنْزِيْلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾ أَفَبِهٰذَا الْحَدِيْثِ أَنْتُمْ
مُّدْهِنُوْنَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَتَجْعَلُوْنَ رِزْقَكُمْ أَنَّكُمْ تُكَذِّبُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾ فَلَوْلَآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلْقُوْمَ ﴿٨٣﴾
وَأَنْتُمْ حِيْنَئِذٍ تَنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَلٰكِنْ لَّا تُبْصِرُوْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾
فَلَوْلَآ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ غَيْرَ مَدِيْنِيْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾ تَرْجِعُوْنَهَآ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٨٧﴾ فَأَمَّآ إِنْ
كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِيْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾ فَرَوْحٌ وَّرَيْحَانٌ ۙ وَّجَنَّتُ نَعِيْمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾ وَأَمَّآ إِنْ كَانَ
مِنْ أَصْحٰبِ الْيَمِيْنِ ﴿٩٠﴾ فَسَلٰمٌ لَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحٰبِ الْيَمِيْنِ ﴿٩١﴾ وَأَمَّآ إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ
الْمُكَذِّبِيْنَ الضَّآلِّيْنَ ﴿٩٢﴾ فَنُزُلٌ مِّنْ حَمِيْمٍ ﴿٩٣﴾ وَّتَصْلِيَةُ جَحِيْمٍ ﴿٩٤﴾ إِنَّ هٰذَا
لَهُوَ حَقُّ الْيَقِيْنِ ﴿٩٥﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيْمِ ﴿٩٦﴾

Have you ever considered the seeds that you sow? Is it you who cause them to grow into crops, or do We?[28] If We so pleased We could turn these crops into chaff, and you would then be left lamenting, "We have incurred penalties! Ah, we are undone!" 63-67

Have you ever seen (with open eyes) the water that you drink? Is it you who cause it to rain from the clouds, or do We?[29] If We so 68-70

pleased We could make it salt.[30] Then why don't you be grateful[31]?

Have you ever considered the fire that you kindle? Is it you who 71-73
have created its tree,[32] or are We its Creator "We have made it a means
of remembrance[33] and a provision of life for the needy.[34]

So, O Prophet, glorify the name of your Lord, the Supreme![35] 75

But nay![36] I swear by the positions of the stars—and it is a great 75-82
oath, only if you knew it—that this is a glorious Qur'ān,[37] inscribed in a
well-guarded Book,[38] which none can touch but the purified.[39] This has
been sent down by the Lord of the worlds. Then, do you regard this
discourse as unworthy of serious attention?[40] And do you have in this
blessing only this share that you deny it?[41]

If you think you are subject to nobody, and you deem you are 83-94
right in thinking so, then why don't you restore to the dying person his
soul when it has come up to the throat and you are helplessly watching
that he is at the point of death? At that time We are closer to him than
you, but you do not see Us. Then, if the dying person be of those
nearest to Us, for him there is comfort and good provision and the
blissful Garden. And if he be of the people of the right hand, he is
greeted with "Peace be to you: You are of the people of the right!"
And if he be of the deniers, gone astray, his entertainment is of boiling
water and burning in Hell.

All this is absolute truth. So, O Prophet, glorify the name of 95-96
your Lord, the Supreme![42]

[Contd. from p 305]

truth is this, what right has this man, the creation of God, to claim freedom and independence as against his Creator, or serve another beside Him?

As it is for *Tauhīd*, so it is with regard to the Hereafter too. Man is created from a germ which cannot be seen without a powerful microscope. This germ combines in the darkness of the mother's body with the ovum (female germ) which is like itself an insignificant microscopic germ. Then by their combination a tiny living cell comes into being, which is the starting-point of human life. This cell also is too small to be seen without a microscope. Allah develops this insignificant cell in the mother's womb for nine months or so into a living human, and when its development and formation becomes complete, the mother's body itself pushes it out to raise a storm in the world. All human beings have been born

into the world in this very way and are witnessing day and night this phenomenon of the birth of human beings like themselves. After this, only a foolish person could assert that the God Who is creating human beings in this way today would not be able to create the human beings created by Himself in some other way tomorrow.

25. That is, "Like your birth your death too, is under Our control. We decide as to who is to die in the mother's womb itself, who is to die soon after birth, and who is to die at a later stage. No power in the world can cause death to a person before the time appointed for his death by Us, nor can keep him alive after it even for a moment. The dying ones die in big hospitals even before the eyes of eminent doctors; and the doctors themselves also die at their appointed time. Never has anyone been able to know the time of death in advance, nor has anyone been able to avert the approaching death, nor to find out as to how and where and by what means will a certain person die."

26. That is, "Just as We were not powerless to create you in your present form and appearance, so also We are not powerless to change the method of your creation and bring you into being in another form and shape with another set of qualities and characteristics. Today the method We have adopted for your creation is that conception takes place by your sperm then you are gradually form and developed in your mother's womb, and then you are brought out as a child. This method of creation also has been devised by Us. But this is not the only method apart from which We may not be knowing, or may not be able to adopt, any other method. On the Day of Resurrection We can create you in the form of the man of the same age at which you died. Today We have set one particular mesure for your sight and hearing and other faculties. But this is not the only measure that We have for man, which We may not have the power to change. On the Day of Resurrection We shall change it absolutely; so much so that you will be able to see and hear things which you cannot see and cannot hear here. Today your skin and your limbs and your eyes do not possess the power of speech. But, it is We Who have given the tongue the power of speech; so We are not powerless to cause your every limb and every part of the skin of your body to speak by Our command on the Day of Resurrection. Today you live up to a certain age and then die. Your this living and dying also is controlled by a law ordained by Us. Tomorrow We can make another law to control your life under which you may never die. Today you can endure punishment only to a certain extent: you cannot survive if the punishment is increased beyond it. This rule also has been made by Us. Tomorrow We can make another rule for you under which you will be able to suffer much severer punishments endlessly, and death would not come to you even if you were given the severest torment. Today you cannot imagine that an old man could return to youth, that he could never become ill, that a young man could

never be old, and, that he could stay young for ever and ever. But youth here changes into old age according to the biological laws made by Us. Tomorrow We can make some other laws for your life under which every old man may become young as soon as he entered Paradise and stay young and healthy eternally.

27. That is, "You already know how you were created in the first instance, how the sperm was transferred from the loins of the father by which you came into being, how you were nourished in the mother's womb, which was no less dark than the grave, and formed into a living human being, how an insignificant speak was developed and endowed with the heart and brain, eyes and ears, and hands and feet, and how it was blessed with the wonderful faculties of intellect and sense, knowledge and wisdom, workmanship and inventiveness, etc. Is this miracle in any way less wonderful than raising the dead back to life ? And when you are witnessing this wonderful miracle with your own eyes and are yourselves a living evidence of it in the world, why don't you then learn the lesson that the same God Who by His power is causing this miracle to take place day and night, can also cause the miracle of life after death, Resurrection and Hell and Heaven to take place by the same power?"

28. The above question drew the people's attention to the truth that they have been developed and nourished by Allah Almighty and have come into being by His act of creation. Now this second question draws their attention to this important truth that the provisions which sustain them, are also created only by Allah for them, as if to say: "Just as in your own creation human effort has nothing more to do than that your father may cast the sperm in your mother, so in the supply of the provisions for you also human effort has nothing more to do than that the farmer should sow the seed in the soil. The land in which cultivation is done, was not made by you. The power of growth to the soil was not granted by you. The substances in it that become the means of your food are not provided by you. The seed that you sow is not made capable for growth by you. The capability in every seed that from it should sprout up the tree of the same species of whose seed it is, has not been created by you. The process for changing this cultivation into blooming crops that is working under the soil and of arranging the required kind of weather and air and water above it does not owe anything in any way to your planning and skill. All this is the manifestation of Allah's power and providence. Then, when you have come into being only by His act of creation and are being sustained by His provision, how can you then have the right to pose yourself as independent of Him, or serve another than Him as your deity?

Although apparently this verse reasons out *Tauhīd*, yet if one considers its theme a little more deeply, one finds in it the argument for the Hereafter, too. The seed that is sown in the soil is by itself dead, but when the farmer buries it under the soil, Allah infuses it with plant life, which puts out sprouts and blooms into

spring. Thus, these countless bodies are rising from the dead in front of our eyes daily. Is this miracle in any way less wonderful so that a person may regard the other wonderful miracle of the life hereafter, which is being foretold by the Qur'ān, as impossible?

29. That is, "We have not only made arrangements of satisfying your hunger, but also of satisfying your thirst. This water that is even more essential for your life than bread has been arranged by Us, not by you. The seas in the earth have been created by Us. It is the heat of Our sun that causes their water to evaporate, and it is Our winds that cause the vapours to rise. Then it is by Our power and wisdom that the vapours collect and form into clouds. Then, by Our command the clouds divide in a particular proportion and spread over different regions of the earth so that the share of the water appointed for a particular region, should reach it. And in the upper atmosphere also We bring about the cool that causes the vapours to change back into water. We have not only brought you into being but are also busy making all these arrangements for your sustenance without which you could not survive at all. Then, when the fact is that you have come into being by Our act of creation, are eating Our provisions and drinking Our water, wherefrom have you got the right that you should pose to be independent of Us and serve another beside Us?"

30. In this sentence an important manifestation of Allah's power and wisdom has been pointed out. Among the wonderful properties that Allah has created in water one property also is that no matter what different substances are dissolved in water, when it changes into vapour under the effect of heat, it leaves behind all adulterations and evaporates only with its original and actual component elements. Had it not possessed this property the dissolved substances also would have evaporated along with the water vapours. In this case the vapours that arise from the oceans would have contained the sea salt, which would have made the soil saline and uncultivable wherever it rained. Then, neither could man have survived by drinking that water, nor could it help grow any vegetation. Now, can a man possessed of any common sense claim that this wise property in water has come about by itself under some blind and deaf law of nature? This characteristic by virtue of which sweet, pure water is distilled from saltish seas and falls as rain, and then serves as a source of water-supply and irrigation in the form of rivers, canals, springs and wells, provides a clear proof of the fact that the Providence has endowed water with this property thoughtfully and deliberately for the purpose that it may become a means of sustenance for His creatures. The creatures that could be sustained by salt water were created by Him in the sea and there they flourish and multiply. But the creatures that He created on the land and in the air, stood in need of sweet water for their sustenance and before making arrangement

of the rainfall for its supply He created this property in water that at evaporation it should rise clear and free of everything dissolved in it.

31. In other words, "Why do you commit this ingratitude in that some of you regard the rainfall as a favour of the gods, and some others think that the rising of the clouds from the sea and their raining as water is a natural cycle that is working by itself, and still others, while acknowledging it as a mercy and blessing of God, do not admit that God has any such right on them that they should bow to Him alone? How is it that while you derive so much benefit from this great blessing of Allah, in return you commit sins of disbelief and polytheism and disobedience of Him?"

32. The tree here either implies the tree that supplies wood for lighting a fire, or the trees of *markh* and *'afār*, green sticks of which were struck one against the other to produce sparks in ancient Arabia.

33. Making the fire "a means of remembrance" means: "The fire by virtue of its quality of being kindled at all times reminds man of his forgotten lesson that without it human life could not be any different from animal life. Because of the fire only did man learn to cook food for eating instead of eating it raw like the animals, and then new and ever new avenues to industry and invention went on opening up before him. Obviously, if God had not created the means of kindling the fire and the substances that could be kindled, man's inventive potentialities would have remained dormant. But the man has forgotten that his Creator is a wise Sustainer, Who created him with human capabilities on the one hand, and on the other, created such materials on the earth by which his these capabilities could become active and operative. If he is not lost in heedlessness, the fire alone is enough to remind him of the favours and bounties of his Creator, which he is so freely enjoying in the world."

34. The word *muqwīn* in the original has been interpreted differently by the lexicographers. Some have taken it in the meaning of the travellers who have halted in the desert, some in the meaning of a hungry man, and some take it in the meaning of all those who derive benefit from the fire, whether it is the benefit of cooking food or of light or of heat.

35. That is, "Mention His blessed name and proclaim that He is free from and far above the defects and faults and weaknesses that the pagans and polytheists ascribe to Him, and which underlie every creed of disbelief and every argument that is presented by the deniers of the Hereafter."

36. That is, "The truth is not what you seem to think it is." Here, the use of the word *la* (nay) before swearing an oath by the Qur'ān's being Allah's

Revelation by itself shows that the oath has been sworn to refute certain objections that the disbelievers were raising with regard to the Qur'ān.

37. "The positions of the stars": the positions and phases and orbits of the stars and planets. The oath implies that just as the system of the celestial bodies is firm and stable, so also is this Divine Word firm and stable. The same God Who has created that system has also sent down this Word. Just as there exists perfect consistency and harmony among the countless stars and planets found in the countless galaxies of the Universe, whereas apparently they seem to be scattered, so also this Book presents a perfectly consistent, and systematic code of life in which detailed guidance has been given, on the basis of belief, about morals, modes of worship, civilization and culture, economic and social life, law and justice, peace and war, in short, about every aspect of human life, and there is nothing out of harmony with the other, whereas this system of thought has been expressed in scattered verses and discourses given on different occasions. Then, just as the system of the heavens set and planned by God is stable and unalterable, and does not ever admit of the slightest variation, so also are the truths and instructions given in this Book stable and unalterable: no part of these can be changed or displaced in any way.

38. This implies the well-guarded Tablet *(lauḥ-maḥfūẓ)*. For it the word *Kitāb maknūn* has been used, which means a writing kept hidden, i.e. a writing that is inaccessible to all. The Qur'ān's having been inscribed in this well guarded Book means that before its being sent down to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) it lay inscribed in the Divine Writ of Destiny in which there is no possibility of any alteration or corruption taking place, for it is inaccessible to every kind of creation.

39. This is a refutation of the accusation that the disbelievers used to level against the Qur'ān. They regarded the Holy Prophet as a sorcerer and asserted that he was being inspired with the Word by the jinn and satans. An answer to it has been given at several places in the Qur'ān, e.g. in Sūrah Ash-Shu'arā', where it has been said: "This (lucid Book) has not been brought down by satans, nor does this work behove them, nor are they able to do it. They have indeed been kept out of its hearing." (vv. 210-212). The same theme has been expressed here, Saying: 'None but the purified can touch it." That is to say "Not to speak of its being brought down by the satans, or its being tampered within any way when it is being revealed, none but the pure angels can come anywhere near it when it is being revealed from the well-guarded Tablet *(Lauḥ-maḥfūẓ)* to the Prophet." The word *muṭahharūn* has been used for the angels in the sense that Allah has kept them free of every kind of impure feeling and desire.

This same commentary of this verse has been given by Anas bin Mālik, Ibn 'Abbās, Sa'īd bin Jubair, 'Ikrimah, Mujāhid, Qatādah, Abul 'Āliyah, Suddī, Ḍaḥḥāk and Ibn Zaid, and the same also fits in with the context. For the context itself shows that after refuting the false concepts of the Makkan disbelievers about *Tauḥīd* and the Hereafter, now their false accusations against the Qur'ān are being answered, and by swearing an oath by the positions of the stars, it is being stated that the Qur'ān is an exalted Book, which is inscribed in the well-guarded Divine Writ, in which there is no possibility of any interference by any creation, and it is revealed to the Prophet in such a safe way that none but the pure angels can touch it.

Some commentators have taken *lā* in this verse in the sense of prohibition, and have interpreted the verse to mean: "None who is unclean should touch it." Although some other commentators take *lā* in the sense of negation and interpret the verse to mean: "None but the clean and pure touch this Book," they express the opinion that this negation is a prohibition in the same way as the Holy Prophet's saying is a prohibition: "A Muslim is a brother of a Muslim: he does not treat him unjustly." Although in it, it has been said that a Muslim does not treat the other Muslim unjustly, you it enjoins that a Muslim is not to treat the other Muslim unjustly. Likewise, although in this verse it has been state that none but the clean and pure angels touch this Book, yet it enjoins that unless a person is purified, he should not touch it.

The fact, however, is that this commentary does not conform to the context of the verse. Independent of the context, one may take this meaning from its words, but if considered in the context in which the verse occurs, one does not see any ground for saying that "None is to touch this Book except the clean and purified people." For the addressees here are the disbelievers and they are being told, as if to say: "This Book has been sent down by Allah Lord of the worlds. Therefore, your suspicion that the satans inspire the Prophet with it, is wrong." What could be the occasion here to enunciate the *Sharī'ah* injunction that no one should touch it without purification? The most that one could say in this regard is that although this verse has not been sent down to enjoin this command, yet the context points out that just as only the purified *(muṭahharīn)* can touch this Book in the presence of Allah, so in the world also the people who at least believe in its being Divine Word should avoid touching it in the impure and unclean state.

The following are the traditions that bear upon this subject:

(1) Imām Mālik has related in Mu'aṭṭā this tradition on the authority of 'Abdullah bin Abī Bakr Muḥammad bin 'Amr bin Ḥazm: "The written instructions that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had sent to the Yamanite chiefs by the hand of 'Amr bin Ḥazm contained this instruction

also: *Lā yamass-ul Qur'ān a illā ṭāhir-un:* No one should touch the Qur'ān except the pure one." This same thing has been related by Abū Da'ūd from Imām Zuhrī in the Traditions which are immediately traced to the Holy Prophet *(marāsīl)*, saying that the writing that he had seen with Abū Bakr Muḥammad bin 'Amr bin Ḥazm contained this instruction as well.

(2) The traditions from Ḥaḍrat 'Alī in which he says: 'Nothing prevented the Holy Prophet of Allah from reciting the Qur'ān but the state of uncleanness due to sexual intercourse." (Abū Da'ūd, Nasā'ī, Tirmidhī).

(3) The tradition of Ibn 'Umar in which he states: "The Holy Messenger of Allah said: The menstruating woman and the one who is unclean on account of sexual intercourse should not read any portion of the Qur'ān." (Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhi).

(4) The tradition of Bukhārī in which it has been said that the letter which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) sent to Heraclius, the Roman emperor, also contained this verse of the Qur'ān: *Yā ahl al-Kitāb-i ta'ālau illā kalimat-in sawā'un bainanā wa baina-kum ...*

The views that have been related from the Holy Prophet's Companions and their immediate followers are as follows:

Salmān, the Persian, saw no harm in reading the Qur'ān without the ablutions, but even according to him touching the Qur'ān with the hand in this state was not permissible. The same also was the view of Ḥaḍrat Sa'd bin Abī Waqqās and Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar. And Ḥadrat Ḥasan Baṣrī and Ibrahīm Nakha'ī also regarded touching the Qur'ān with the hand without the ablutions as disapproved, (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān)).* The same has been reported from 'Aṭā', Ṭa'us, Sha'bī and Qāsim bin Muhammad also. (Ibn Qudāmah, *Al-Mughnī).* However, according to all of them, reading the Qur'ān without touching it with the hand, or reciting it from memory, was permissible even without the ablutions.

Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, Ḥaḍrat Ḥaṣan Baṣrī, Ḥaḍrat Ibrahim Nakha'ī and Imām Zuhri regarded reading the Qur'ān in the state of uncleanness due to sexual intercourse and menstruation and bleeding after childbirth as disapproved. But Ibn 'Abbās held the view, and the same also was his practice, that one could recite from memory the portion of the Qur'ān that one usually recited as one's daily practice. When Ḥaḍrat Sa'id bin al-Musayyab and Sa'id bin Jubair were asked about their view in this regard, they replied: "Is not the Qur'ān preserved in the memory of such a person ? What then is the harm in reciting it ?" *(Al-Mughnī, Al-Muḥallā* by Ibn Ḥazm).

The following are the viewpoints of the jurists on this subject:

The Ḥanafī viewpoint has been explained by Imām 'Alā-'uddīn al-Kashānī in his *Bada'i as-Sanā'i*, thus "Just as it is not permissible to offer the Prayer without the ablutions, so also it is not permissible to touch the Qur'ān without the ablutions. However, if the Qur'ān is in a case or a cover, it may be touched." According to some jurists, the case or cover implies the binding, and according to others, the bag or the envelope or the wrapper in which the Qur'ān is kept and can also be taken out. Likewise, the books of the commentary also should not be touched without the ablutions, nor anything else in which a Qur'ānic verse may have been written. However, the books of *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) may be touched although preferably they too may not be touched without the ablutions, for they also contain Qur'ānic verses as part of argument and reasoning. Some Ḥanafī jurists hold the opinion that only that part of the Qur'ān where the Text may have been written should not be touched without the ablutions. As for the margins there is no harm in touching it, whether they are blank or contain notes on the Text. The correct thing, however, is that the margins also are a part of the Book and touching them amounts to touching the Book. As for reading the Qur'ān, it is permissible without the ablutions." In *Fatāwa 'Ālamgiri* children have been made an exception from this rule. The Qur'ān can be given in the children's hand for teaching purposes whether they are in the state of ablutions or not.

The Shafi'i viewpoint has been stated by Imām Nawawī in *Al Minhāj*, thus, "As it is for the Prayer and the circumambulation of the Ka'bah, it is also forbidden to handle the Qur'ān or to touch a leaf of it without the ablutions. Likewise, it is also forbidden to touch the binding of the Qur'ān, and also a bag, or a bow containing the Qur'ān, or a tablet on which a part of the Qur'ān may have been written for instructional purposes. However, it is lawful to touch the baggage of a person containing the Qur'anic inscription. A child may touch the Qur'ān without the ablutions, and a person without ablutions may turn over a leaf with a piece of wood, or something else, if he wants to read the Qur'ān.

The Mālikī position as stated in *Al-Fiqh 'alal-Madhāhib al-'Arbah* is: They concur with the other jurists in this that the state of ablutions is a pre-requisite for touching the Qur'ān, but in the matter of imparting instruction in the Qur'an they make both the teacher and the taught an exception from the rule, and allow even a menstruating woman to touch the Qur'ān if she is engaged in learning or teaching it. Ibn Qadāmah has cited in *Al-Mughnī* this saying of Imām Mālik: Although reading the Qur'an in the state of uncleanness due to sexual intercourse is forbidden, the woman who is discharging the menses is permitted to read it, for she would forget her recitations if prohibited from reading the Qur'an for a long time.

The Ḥanbali viewpoint as stated by Ibn Qadāmah is as follows: In the state of uncleanness due to sexual intercourse and menstruation and bleeding after childbirth it is not permissible to read the Qur'ān or any complete verse of it. However, it is permissible to recite *bismillah, al-hamdu-lillah*, etc. for although these also are parts of one or the other verse, their recitation does not amount to recitation of the Qur'ān. As for handling the Qur'ān, it is not permissible in any case without the ablutions. However, one is not forbidden to touch a letter, or a book of *Fiqh*, or some other writing containing a Qur'ānic verse. Likewise, one may handle even without the ablutions, something that contains the Qur'ān. The state of ablutions is also no pre-requisite for handling the books of exegesis. Furthermore, if a person who is not in the state of ablutions is required to handle the Qur'ān under an immediate need, he may do so after purification with the dust *(tayaqqumum)*. "*Al-Fiqh 'alal-Madhāhib al-'Arabah* contains this ruling also of the Ḥanbali *Fiqh:* It is not right for the children to handle the Qur'ān without ablutions even when receiving instruction in it, and it is the duty of their guardians to make them perform the ablutions before they give the Qur'ān to them.

The Ẓāhirī viewpoint is that reading the Qur'ān and handling it is permissible under all conditions, whether one is without the ablutions, or unclean due to sexual intercourse, or even if the woman is menstruating. Ibn Ḥazm has discussed this question fully in *Al-Muḥallā* (vol. I, pp. 77-84) and given arguments for the validity of this viewpoint and has concluded that none of the conditions laid down by the jurists for reading the Qur'ān and handling it, is supported by the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*.

40. Literally, *idhān* (from which *mudhinūn* of the Text is derived) means to treat something with contempt, to deny its due importance, to regard it as unworthy of serious attention, to hold it in light esteem.

41. In his commentary of *taj'alūna rizqa-kum*, Imām Rāzī has expressed the view that probably the word *rizq* here means livelihood. Since the disbelieving Qaraish regarded the message of the Qur'ān as harmful to their economic interests and feared that if it succeeded it would deprive them of their means of livelihood, the verse may also mean this: "You have made the denial of this Qur'ān a question of your economic interests, and for you the question of the right and wrong is of no consequence; the only thing of real importance in your sight is the bread for the sake of which you would least hesitate to oppose the truth and adhere to the falsehood."

42. Ḥadrat 'Uqbah bin 'Āmir Juhni relates that when this verse was sent down the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) commanded that the people put it in their *ruku'*, i.e. they should recite *Subḥāna Rabbi-yal-'Aẓīm* in *ruku'*

position in the Prayer. And when the verse *Sabbiḥ-ismi-Rabb-i-kal-A'lā* was sent down, he enjoined that they put it in their *sajdah*, i.e. they should recite *Subḥāna Rabb-i-yal-A'lā* in *sajdah*. (Musnad Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd, Ibn Mājah, Ibn Ḥibbān, Ḥākim). This show that even the most minor details of the procedure enjoined by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) for the Prayer are derived from the allusions given in the Qur'ān.



LVII

AL-ḤADĪD

الحديد

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LVII

AL-ḤADĪD

الحديد

INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah takes its title *from* the sentence, *wa anzalna'l-ḥadīda, of verse 25.*

Period of Revelation

This is unanimously a Madani Sūrah, and a study of its subject matter shows that it was probably sent down some time during the interval between the Battle of Uhud and the Truce of Ḥudaibiyah. This was the time when the tiny Islamic State of Midīnah had been hemmed in by the disbelievers and the handful of the ill-equipped Muslims were entrenched against the combined power of entire Arabia. In this state Islam not only stood in need of the sacrifice of life from its followers, but it also needed monetary help and assistance. In Sūrah further appeal has been made for the same, This view is further strengthened by verse 10 in which Allah has addressed the believers to the effect: "Those of

you who would spend and fight after the victory can never be equal to those who have spent and fought before the victory." And the same is supported by the traditions that Ibn Mardūyah has related on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Anas. In respect of the verse: *Alamya'n-i lilladhina amanū an takhsha'a qulūbuhum li-dhikrillah-i*, he says that 17 years after the commencement of the revelation of the Qur'ān this verse was sent down to arouse the believers to action. Reckoned thus the period of the revelation of this Sūrah falls between the 4th and the 5th year after the *hijrah*.

Theme and Subject Matter

The theme of this Sūrah is to exhort the Muslims to spend in the cause of Allah. At the most critical juncture of the history of Islam when it was engaged in a life-and-death struggle against Arab paganism, this Surah was revealed to persuade the Muslims to make monetary sacrifices in particular, and to make them realize that Islam did not merely consist in verbal affirmation and some outward practices, but its essence and spirit is sincerity towards Allah and His Religion. The faith of the one who was devoid of this spirit and who regarded his own self and wealth as dearer to himself than Allah and His Religion, was hollow and therefore of little worth in the sight of Allah.

For this object, first the attributes of Allah Almighty have been mentioned so that the listeners may fully realize as to Who is addressing them. Then, the following themes have been expressed in sequence:

(1) The inevitable demand of the Faith is that one should not shirk spending one's wealth for the sake of Allah. This would not only be contrary to the Faith but also wrong realistically. For the wealth indeed belongs to Allah, on which man has been given proprietary rights only as His vicegerent. Yesterday this wealth was in other people's possession, today it is with one particular man, and tomorrow it will pass into some one else's hand. Ultimately, it will go back to Allah, Who is the inheritor of everything in the universe. Only that much of this wealth will be of any use to a man, which he spends in the cause of Allah during the period it is in his possession.

(2) Although making sacrifices for the sake of Allah is commendable in any case, the true worth of these sacrifices is determined by

the nature of the occasion. There is an occasion when the power of paganism is overwhelming and there is a danger that it might subdue and overcome Islam completely; there is another occasion when Islam is in a stronger position in its struggle against un-Islam and the believers are attaining victories. Both these states are not equal as regards their respective importance. Therefore, the sacrifices that are made in these different states would also not be equal. Those who sacrifice their lives and expend their wealth to further promote the cause of Islam when it is already strong cannot attain to the rank of those who struggled with their lives and their wealth to promote and uphold the cause of Islam when it was weak.

(3) Whatever is spent for the cause of the Truth is a loan on Allah, and Allah will not only return it in-creasing it manifold but will also give from Himself the best reward for it.

(4) In the Hereafter the Light shall be bestowed only on those believers who would have spent their wealth in the cause of Allah. As for the hypocrites who watched and served only their own interests in the world, and who least bothered whether the Truth or falsehood prevailed will be segregated from the believers in the Hereafter although they might have lived in close association with them in the world. They will be deprived of the Light, and they will be counted among the disbelievers.

(5) The Muslims should not behave like those followers of the earlier Books, whose lives have been spent in the worship of the world and whose hearts have become hardened due to negligence with the passage of time. He cannot be a believer whose heart does not melt at the remembrance of Allah and does not bow to the Truth sent down by Him.

(6) The sincere upholders of the Truth and the true witnesses of the Faith in the sight of Allah are only those believers who spend their wealth in His way sincerely, without any desire of show.

(7) The life of this world is only a short-lived spring and a means of pride and now. Its sports and pastimes, its adornments and decorations, its pride of place, its wealth and possessions, for which the people try to vie with one another, are transient. Its likeness is of the crop which flourishes and blooms, then turns

pale and then finally is reduced to chaff. The everlasting life is the life hereafter when results of great consequence will be announced. Therefore, if one has to vie with another for something, one should strive for Paradise.

(8) Whatever good man meets with and whatever hardship he suffers in the world, are pre-ordained by Allah. A true believer is he who does not lose heart in affliction and is not puffed up with pride in good times. It is the character of a hypocrite and disbeliever that he is puffed up with pride when Allah favours him with His blessings, behaves boastfully and shows stinginess when called upon to spend in the cause of the same God Who blessed him, and also counsels others to be stingy like himself.

(9) Allah sent His Messengers with clear signs and the Book and the Law of Justice so that the people may adhere to justice; besides, He sent down iron also so that power may be used to establish the Truth and vanquish falsehood. Thus, Allah likes to see as to who from among the people would rise to support and succour His true Religion even at the risk of their lives. These opportunities Allah has created for man's own advantage and development; otherwise Allah does not stand in need of others for His works.

(10) Prophets came from Allah in the past, and by their preaching some people adopted the Right Path, but most of them persisted in wickedness. Then the Prophet Jesus came, whose teachings brought about many moral improvements in the lives of the people, but his community invented monasticism. Now Allah has sent the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be His peace and blessings). Those who affirm faith in him and pass their life fearing Allah's accountability, will be given by Allah a double share of His mercy and He will bless them with the Light by which they will *see and* walk the straight path among the crooked paths met with at every step in the life of this world. Although the followers of the earlier revelation regard themselves as the monopolists of Allah's bounties, the fact remains that Allah Himself controls His bounties; He may bless with these whomever He pleases.



سَبَّحَ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ ۚ وَ هُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۝١ لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَ الْاَرْضِ ۚ يُحْيٖ وَ يُمِيْتُ ۚ وَ هُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝٢ هُوَ الْاَوَّلُ وَ الْاٰخِرُ
وَ الظَّاهِرُ وَ الْبَاطِنُ ۚ وَ هُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ۝٣ هُوَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ

LVII

AL-ḤADĪD

الحديد

Verses: 29

Revealed at Madīnah

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

All that there is in the heavens and the earth has glorified Allah[1], and He alone is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise[2]. To Him belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth: He alone grants life and causes death and has power over everything. He is the First as well as the Last, the Manifest as well as the Hidden[3]., and He has knowledge of everything. 1-3

1. That is, "It has always been so that everything in the universe has proclaimed the truth that its Creator and Sustainer is free from every blemish and defect, every weakness, error and evil. He is glorified in His essence, He is

glorified in His attributes, He is glorified in His works as well as His commands whether they relate to the creation, or to the religious law for mankind. Here *sabbaḥa* has been used in the past tense; at other places *yusabbiḥu* has been used which includes both the present and the future tenses. This would signify that every particle in the universe has always been extolling the glory of its Creator and Sustainer in the past, is doing so at present and will continue to do the same in the future for ever and ever."

2. That is, not only is He All-Mighty and All-Wise, but the truth is that He alone is All-Mighty and All-Wise. The word 'Azīz signifies a mighty and powerful Being Whose decrees cannot be prevented by any power in the world from being enforced, Whom no one can oppose and resist, Who has to be obeyed by every one whether one likes it or not, Whose rebel cannot escape His accountability and punishment in any way; and *Ḥakīm* signifies that whatever He does He does it wisely. His creation, His administration and rule, His commands and guidance, all are based on wisdom. None of His works is tarnished by any trace of folly or ignorance.

There is another fine point here, which one should fully understand. Seldom in the Qur'ān has Allah's attribute of 'Azīz (All-Mighty) been accompanied by His attributes of being *Qawī* (Strong), *Muqtadir* (Powerful), *Jabbār* (Omnipotent), *Dhuntiqām* (Avenger) and the like, which only signify His absolute power, and this has been so only in places where the context demanded that the wicked and disobedient be warned of Allah's relentless punishment. Apart from such few places, wherever the word 'Aziz has been used for Allah, it has everywhere been accompanied by one Or other of His attributes of being *Ḥakim* (Wise), *'Alīm* (Knower), *Rahīm* (Merciful), *Ghafūr* (Forgiving), *Wahhāb* (Generous) and *Ḥamīd* (Praiseworthy). The reason is that if a being who wields un-limited power is at the same time foolish, ignorant, un-forgiving as well as stingy and devoid of character, its power and authority cannot but lead to injustice and wickedness Thus, wherever injustice and wickedness is being committed in the world, it is only because the one who wields authority over others, is either using his power un-wisely and foolishly, or he is merciless and hardhearted, or evil-minded and wicked. Wherever power is coupled with these evil traits of character, *no* good can be expected to result. That is why in the Holy Qur'ān Allah's attribute of 'Azīz has necessarily been accompanied by His attributes of being All-Wise and Knowing, Compassionate and Forgiving, Praiseworthy and Generous, so that man may know that the God Who is ruling this universe has, on the one hand, such absolute power that no one, from the earth to the heavens, can prevent His decrees from being enforced, but, on the other, He is also All-Wise: His each decision is based on perfect wisdom; He is also All-Knowing whatever decision He makes, it precisely according to knowledge; He is also Compassionate: He does not use infinite power mercilessly; He is Forgiving as

well: He does not punish His creatures for trifling faults, but overlooks their errors; He is also Generous: He does not treat His subjects stingily, but liberally and benevolently; and He *is* also Praiseworthy: He combines in Himself all praiseworthy virtues and excellences.

The full importance of this statement of the Qur'an can be better understood by those people who are aware of the discussions of the philosophy of politics and law on the question of sovereignty. Sovereignty connotes that the one who possesses it should wield un-limited power: there should be no internal and external power to change or modify his decision or prevent it from being enforced, and none should have any alternative but to obey him. At the mere concept of this infinite and un-limited power, man's common-sense necessarily demands that whoever attains to such power, should be faultless and perfect in knowledge and wisdom, for if the one holding this power is ignorant, merciless and evil, his sovereignty will inevitably lead to wickedness and corruption. That is why the philosophers who regarded a single man, or a man-made institution, or an assembly of men as the holder of this power, have had to presume that he or it would be infallible. But obviously, neither can un limited sovereignty be actually attained by a human power, nor is it possible for a king, or a parliament, or a nation, or a party that it may use the sovereignty attained by it in a limited circle faultlessly and harmlessly. The reason is that the wisdom that is wholly free of every trace of folly, and the knowledge that fully comprehends all the related truths, is not at all possessed even by entire mankind, not to speak of its being attain d by an individual, or an institution, or a nation. Likewise, as long as man is man, his being wholly free of and above selfishness, sensuality, fear, greed, desires, prejudice and sentimental love, anger and hate is also not possible. If a person ponders over these truths, he will realize that the Qur'ān is indeed presenting here a correct and perfect view of sovereignty. It says that no one except Allah in this universe is possessor of absolute power, and with this unlimited power He alone is faultless, All-Wise and All-Knowing, Compassionate and Forgiving, and Praiseworthy and Generous in His dealings with His subjects.

3. That is, "When there was nothing, He was, and when there will be nothing, He will be. He is the most Manifest of all the manifest, for whatever manifests itself in the world, does so only by His attributes and His works and His light. And He is the Most Hidden of all the hidden, for not only do the senses fail to perceive Him but the intellect and thought and imagination also cannot attain to His essence and reality. The best commentary in this regard are the words of a supplication of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), which Imām Aḥmad, Muslim, Tirmidhi, and Baihaqī have related on the authority

[Contd. on p. 330

الْاَرْضَ فِیْ سِتَّةِ اَیَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوٰی عَلَی الْعَرْشِ ؕ یَعْلَمُ مَا یَلِجُ فِی الْاَرْضِ
وَمَا یَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا یَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ وَمَا یَعْرُجُ فِیْهَا ؕ وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ اَیْنَ
مَا كُنْتُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِیْرٌ ۝ لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ وَاِلَی
اللّٰهِ تُرْجَعُ الْاُمُوْرُ ۝ یُوْلِجُ الَّیْلَ فِی النَّهَارِ وَیُوْلِجُ النَّهَارَ فِی الَّیْلِ ؕ وَهُوَ
عَلِیْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ۝ اٰمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَاَنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ مُّسْتَخْلَفِیْنَ
فِیْهِ ؕ فَالَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مِنْكُمْ وَاَنْفَقُوْا لَهُمْ اَجْرٌ كَبِیْرٌ ۝ وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوْنَ
بِاللّٰهِ ۚ وَالرَّسُوْلُ یَدْعُوْكُمْ لِتُؤْمِنُوْا بِرَبِّكُمْ وَقَدْ اَخَذَ مِیْثَاقَكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ
مُّؤْمِنِیْنَ ۝ هُوَ الَّذِیْ یُنَزِّلُ عَلٰی عَبْدِهٖۤ اٰیٰتٍۭ بَیِّنٰتٍ لِّیُخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ
اِلَی النُّوْرِ ؕ وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِكُمْ لَرَءُوْفٌ رَّحِیْمٌ ۝ وَمَا لَكُمْ اَلَّا تُنْفِقُوْا فِیْ سَبِیْلِ
اللّٰهِ وَلِلّٰهِ مِیْرَاثُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ لَا یَسْتَوِیْ مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ اَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ
الْفَتْحِ وَقٰتَلَ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ الَّذِیْنَ اَنْفَقُوْا مِنْۢ بَعْدُ وَقٰتَلُوْا ؕ
وَكُلًّا وَّعَدَ اللّٰهُ الْحُسْنٰی ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِیْرٌ ۝ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِیْ یُقْرِضُ
اللّٰهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَیُضٰعِفَهٗ لَهٗ وَلَهٗۤ اَجْرٌ كَرِیْمٌ ۝ یَوْمَ تَرَی الْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ وَ
الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ یَسْعٰی نُوْرُهُمْ بَیْنَ اَیْدِیْهِمْ وَبِاَیْمَانِهِمْ بُشْرٰىكُمُ الْیَوْمَ جَنّٰتٌ
تَجْرِیْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِیْنَ فِیْهَا ؕ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِیْمُ ۝ یَوْمَ
یَقُوْلُ الْمُنٰفِقُوْنَ وَالْمُنٰفِقٰتُ لِلَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوا انْظُرُوْنَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِنْ نُّوْرِكُمْ ۚ قِیْلَ
ارْجِعُوْا وَرَآءَكُمْ فَالْتَمِسُوْا نُوْرًا ؕ فَضُرِبَ بَیْنَهُمْ بِسُوْرٍ لَّهٗ بَابٌ ؕ بَاطِنُهٗ فِیْهِ
الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرُهٗ مِنْ قِبَلِهِ الْعَذَابُ ۝ یُنَادُوْنَهُمْ اَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَّعَكُمْ ؕ قَالُوْا
بَلٰی وَلٰكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنْتُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْاَمَانِیُّ حَتّٰی

It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then ascended the Throne [4] He knows whatever ever goes into the earth and whatever comes out of it, and whatever comes down from heaven and whatever goes up into it[5]. He is with you wherever you may be[6] and sees whatever you do. To Him belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and all matters are referred to Him for decision It is He who causes the night to enter into the day and the day to enter into the night and He knows the hiddenmost secrets of the hearts, 4-6

Believe in Allah and His Messenger[7], and spend out[8] of what He has made you successor.[9] For those of you who will believe and expend of their wealth[10], there is a great reward What is the matter with you that you do not believe in Allah, whereas the Messenger is inviting you to believe in your Lord[11] and has taken a pact from you[12], if you are true believers? Allah it is Who is sending down clear Revelations to His servants that he may bring you out of the darknesses into the light. And the fact is that Allah is most Kind and Most Merciful to you. What is the matter with you that you do not spend in the Way of Allah, whereas Allah's is the inheritance of the heavens and the earth?[13] Those of you who will spend and fight after the victory can never be equal to those who have spent and fought before the victory. They are higher in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards, though Allah has made good promises to both.[14] Allah is well aware of whatever you do.[15] 7-10

Who is he who will give to Allah a loan?—a good loan, so that Allah may return it manifold; and he shall have the best reward.[16] That Day when you see the believing men and women, with their light running on before them and on their right hand,[17] (it will be said to them:) "There is good news for you today!" There will be Gardens underneath which rivers will be flowing, in which they shall live for ever, This is the supreme success. On that Day the hypocrites, men and women, will say to the believers, "Look towards us awhile so that we may benefit by your light."[18] But it will be said to them, "Go away! *seek* your light elsewhere." Then a well shall be set up between them with a gate in it. Within the gate shall be mercy and outside of it torment.[19] They will cry out to the believers and say, "Were we not with you?"[20] The believers will reply, "Yes, but you led yourselves into temptation,[21] served the time,[22] entertained doubts,[23] and false hopes deluded you until Allah's Judgement came,[24] and the great 11-15

deceiver[25] deceived you concerning Allah till the last moment. Therefore, no ransom shall be accepted from you today nor from those who disbelieved openly [26] Your abode is Hell: that will be your patron,[27] and this is an evil end."

Contd. from p. 327]

of Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah, and Ḥāfiẓ Abū Ya'lā Moṣulī in his Musnad on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah:

> *"Antal 'Awwal, fa-laisa qablaka shai'in; wa Antal Ākhir, fa-laisa ba'daka shai'in; wa Antal Ẓahir, fa laisa fauqaka shai'in; wa Antal Bāṭin, fa laisa dūnaka shai'in."* "You alone are the First; none is before You; You alone are the Last: none is after You; You alone are the Exalted none is above You; You alone are the Hidden: none is more hidden than You."

Here, the question arises: How does this accord with the immortality and eternal life of the dwellrs of Paradise and Hell mentioned in the Qur'ān when Allah alone is the Last and Eternal? Its answer has been provided by the Qur'ān itself: "Everything is perishable except Allah Himself." (Al-Qaṣaṣ: 88). In other words no creature is immortal in its personal capacity; if a thing exists or continuos to exist, it does so because Allah keeps it so, and can exist only by His letting it exist; otherwisa in its own capacity everything is perishable except Allah. Immortality in Heaven and Hell will not he bestowed upon somebody because he is immortal by himself, but because Allah will grant him eternal life. The same is true of the angels: they are not immortal by themselves. When Allah willed they came into existence, and will continue to exist only as long as Her wills.

4. That is, He alone is the Creator of the universe as well as Its Ruler. (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 41, 42 of Al-A'rāf, E.N.4 of Yūnus. E.N.'s 2 to 5 of Ar-Ra'd, E.N.'s 11 to 15 of Ḥā Mīm As-Sajdah).

5. In other words, He is not only the Knower of the wholes but also of the parts. He knows each seed that goes under the layers of the soil, each leaf and bud that comes out of the soil, each rain-drop that falls from the sky, and each molecule of the vapour that ascends from the seas and lakes to the sky. He is aware of every seed lying anywhere under the soil. That is how He causes it to split and sprout up and develop. He Is aware of how much vapour has risen from each different place and where it has reached. That is how he collects it into cloud and distributes it and causes it to fall as rain in due measure on different place of the earth. The same is true of the details of everything that goes into the earth and comes out of it, and of everything that ascends to the sky and descends from it. If all this were not comprehended by Allah in His knowledge, it would not be

possible for Him to plan and order each thing separately and to regulate and control it in a wise manner.

6. That is, "Nowhere are you outside Allah's knowledge, His power, His rule, His management and administration. Allah knows wherever you are, whether in the earth, or the air, or the water, or in a secret place. Your being alive there is by itself a proof that Allah is providing for you in that very place. If your heart is beating, if your lungs are breathing, if your hearing and your sight are functioning, it is only because all parts of your body are working under Allah's rule. And if death comes to you at any place, it comes because Allah takes a decision to stop providing for you and to recall you from the world."

7. The addressees here are not the non-Muslims, but, as is borne out by the whole subsequent discourse, the Muslims who had affirmed the Faith and joined the ranks of the believers, but were not fulfilling the demands of the Faith and conducting themselves as true believers should. It is obvious that non-Muslims cannot be invited to affirm the Faith and then immediately asked to subscribe generously to the cause of *Jihād* for the sake of Allah, nor can they be told that whoever would fight and spend his wealth in the cause of Allah before the victory, would attain to a higher rank than him who would perform these services later, For, when a non-Muslim is invited to the Faith, the preliminary demands of it only are presented before him and not the-ultimate once, Therefore,. in view of the context, the meaning of saying "Believe in Allah and His messenger" here would be: "O people, who profess to have affirmed the Faith and have joined the ranks of the Muslims,. believe in Allah and Messenger sincerely and conduct yourselves as the true and sincere believers should."

8. Here, by spending is not implied spending on public welfare, but, as is clearly borne out by the words of verse 10, it implies subscribing to the cause of the war effort that was being waged at that time under the leadership of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) to uphold Islam against paganism. Two things, in particular, were such for which the Islamic Government at that time stood in great need of financial help. First, the war equipment; second, supporting and sustaining the oppressed Muslims, who, due to persecution by the disbelievers had emigrated, and were still emigrating, to Madinah from every corner of Arabia. The sincere Muslims were trying their best to render as much help as they could but meeting the entire expenses in this regard was much beyond their means and resources, and their this same spirit of sacrifice has been commended in vv. 10, 12, 18 and 19 below. But among the Muslims there were quite a number of well-to-do people, who were watching this struggle between Islam and paganism as mere spectators and had no feeling whatever that the faith they claimed to believe in imposed certain rights also on their life and wealth. This

second kind of people are the addressees of this verse. They have been exhorted to believe sincerely, and to spend their wealth in the cause of Allah.

9. This has two meanings and both are implied here. The first meaning is "The wealth that you possess is not, in fact, your personal property but has been given to you by Allah. You are not its exclusive master and owner. Allah has given you proprietary right over it as His vicegerent. Therefore, you should have no hesitation in spending it in the service of the real Master. It is not for the vicegerent to withhold the Master's wealth from being spent for the Master's own sake." The second: "Neither has this wealth been with you since ever nor will it remain in your possession for ever. Yesterday it was in some other people's possession; then Allah made you their successor and entrusted it to you. A time will come when it will not remain with you but some other people will succeed you as its owners. Therefore, in this short-lived ownership, when you are its trustees, spend it in the cause of Allah so that in the Hereafter You may be rewarded for it permanently and eternally. This same thing has been stated by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in a *Ḥadīth*. Tirmidhī relates that once a goat was slaughtered in the Holy Prophet's house and its flesh was given away to the poor. When he came to the house and asked: "What remains of the goat?" Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah replied: "Nothing but a shoulder." Thereupon the Holy Prophet remarked: "Nay, the whole goat but the shoulder!" That is, "Whatever has been given away for the sake of Allah, has, in fact, been saved." According to another *Ḥadīth*, a person asked: "O Messenger of Allah, what kind of charity brings the highest reward? He replied: That you should give away a thing In charity when you are hale and hearty: when you feel it could be saved and may like to invest it in the hope of earning more. Do not wait till death when you may say: Give this to so and so and that to so and so, for at that time the wealth has in any case to pass on to so and so."(*Bukhārī, Muslim*). According to still another *Ḥadīth*, the Holy Prophet said: "Man says: 'My wealth! My wealth!' whereas his own share in his wealth is no more than what he has eaten up, or worn away, or passed on in charity? Whatever remains will leave him and will be passed on to others." *(Muslim)*

10. Here again, expending wealth in the cause of *Jihād* has been regarded as an essential demand of the Faith and a proof of one's sincerity in it, as if to say: "The true and sincere believer is he who does not shirk spending wealth on such an occasion."

11. That is, "You are adopting this unbelieving attitude and conduct at a time when the Messenger of Allah is present among you, and you are receiving the invitation to the Faith not through an indirect and remote means but directly through the Messenger of Allah himself."

12. Some commentators have taken this pledge to imply the pledge of service to Allah, which had been taken at the beginning of creation from the future offspring of Adam (peace be upon him), and some others take it for the pledge with which man has been naturally endowed to serve and obey Allah. But the truth is that it implies the conscious pledge of obedience to Allah and His Messenger that every Muslim makes to his Lord by the affirmation of the Faith At another place in the Qur'ān this same pledge has been referred to thus;

"Keep in mind the blessing Allah has bestowed upon you and do not forget the solemn covenant which He made with you (and which you confirmed), when you said: 'We have heard and submitted.' Fear Allah for Allah knows the very secrets of the hearts." (Al-Mā'idah: 7)

Ḥaḍrat 'Ubādah bin Ṣamit relates: "The Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be His peace and blessings) had made us pledge that we would listen and obey both in sound health and in ill health; would spend in the cause of Allah both in prosperity and in adversity would enjoin the good and forbid the evil; would proclaim the truth for the sake of Allah and would not fear the blame of any one in this regard." *(Musnad Ahmad)*

13. This has two meanings: (1) "Your wealth is not going to stay with you for ever. One day you will leave it behind; then Allah alone will inherit it. Thus the best thing would be that you should spend it yourself in the cause of Allah so that your reward for it is guaranteed with Allah. If you do not spend it yourself, it will in any case return to Allah, but then you will not be entitled to any reward from Him." (2) "You should have no fear of indigence and poverty when you spend it in the cause of Allah, because Allah for Whose sake you would spend your wealth, is the Owner of all the treasures of the heavens and the earth. He possessed not only what He has bestowed on you today but has much more to bestow on you tomorrow." This same thing has been expressed at another place, thus:

"O Prophet, say to there: 'My Lord gives abundantly to whomever of His servants He wills and sparingly to whomever He wills. Whatever you spend, He replenishes it by other provisions: He is the best of Providers'." (Sabā: 39)

14. That is, "Although both are entitled to the reward, yet the former are necessarily higher in rank than the latter, for they faced greater risks for the sake of Allah in difficult circumstances, which the latter not. They spent their wealth at a time when there appeared no remote chance of victory that would compensate for their expenditure, and they fought the disbelieves at a critical time when there was an ever present apprehension that the enemy might overpower and crush the followers of Islam completely." Mujāhid, Qatādah and Zaid bin Aslam, from among the commentators, say that the word "victory" in this verse has been used

for the Conquest of Makkah, and 'Āmir Sha'bī says that it refers to the Truce of Ḥudaibiyah. The former view has been adopted by most of the commentators, and in support of the latter this tradition from Ḥaḍrat Abū Sa'īd Khudrī is presented: "During the time when the Truce of Hudaibiyah was concluded, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said to us: 'In the near future there will appear the people, whose deeds will make you look upon your own deeds as mean and trifling, but even if one of them possessed a mountain of gold and he expended all of it in the cause of Allah, he would not attain to your spending two pounds, or even one pound of it." (Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, ibn Mardūyah, Abū Nu'aim Isfahānī). Further, more, it is also supported by the *Ḥadīth* which Imam Ahmad has related on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Anas. He says: "Once a dispute arose between Ḥaḍrat Khalid bin Walīd and Ḥaḍrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf, in the course of which Ḥaḍrat Khālid said to Ḥaḍrat 'Abdur Rahmān: "You people assume your superiority over us on account of your past services.' When this thing came to the Holy Prophet's notice, he said: 'By God in whose hand is my life, even if you people spent gold equal (in weight) to Mount Uḥud, or equal to other mountains, you would not attain to the deeds of these people." From this it is argued that in this verse "victory" refers to the Truce of Ḥudaibiyah, for Ḥaḍrat Khālid bin Walid had embraced Islam after this Truce and had participated in the Conquest of Makkah. However, whether "victory" in this particular case is taken to imply the Truce of Hudaibiyah or the Conquest of Makkah, in any case the verse does not mean that the distinction of the ranks is confined to this one victory alone, but as a general principle it shows that those who fight and spend in the cause of Islam at the time when disbelief and disbelievers appear to be dominant and Islam seems to have no remote chance of victory, are far superior in rank to those who make sacrifices after the conflict between Islam and paganism has been decided in favour of Islam."

15. That is, "Allah does not bestow His favours blindly. He sees who has performed what deeds, under what kind of circumstances, and with what motive and then determines the rank and the reward of the deed of each person with full justice and awareness."

16. How Generous and Beneficent is Allah that if a man spends the wealth granted by Himself in His way, He calls it a loan Himself, provided that it is a good loan, that is, a loan which in given with a pure intention, without any selfish motive of winning reputation and renown, or of doing favour to somebody, but only for the sake of Allah's approval and to win His good-will and rewards. Allah makes two promises in this regard: (1) That He will repay it increasing it manifold; and (2) that He will also give from Himself the best reward for it.

According to a *Ḥadīth* reported by Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, when this verse was revealed and the people heard it from the Holy Prophet (upon

whom be Allah's peace), Ḥaḍrat Abud-Dahdah Ansārī asked: "O Messenger of Allah, does Allah want a loan from us? The Holy Prophet replied: Yes, O Abud-Dahdāh,. He said Kindly show me your hand. The Holy Prophet extended his hand towards him. He took his hand in his own hand and said: I give away my garden in loan to my Lord." Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd says that the garden had 600 date-palms and his own house also in which his family lived- Saying this to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) he went straight back home, and calling out to his wife said: "Come out, O mother of Dahdāh, I have loaned this garden to my Lord." She replied: "Dahdāh's father, you have made a, good bargain !' and she immediately vacated and left the garden with her effects and children." (Ibn Abī Hātim). This incident throws light on the conduct of the sincere believers of that time, and from this one can also understand the kind of the "good loan" that Allah has promised to return increasing it manifold with a rich reward in addition.

17. This and the following verses show that the Light on the Day of Judgement will be specifically meant for the righteous believers only. As for the disbelievers and the hypocrites and the wicked people, they will be wandering about in the darkness as they had been in the world. The light there will be the light of righteous deeds. The sincerity of the faith and the piety of the character and conduct will turn into light that will lend brightness to the personality of the virtuous. The brighter the deed the more luminous will be his person, and when he will walk towards Paradise, his light will be running forward before him. The best explanation of it is Qatādah's *mursal* tradition in which he says; "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) said: "The light of some one will be so strong and sharp that it will be running on before him equal to the distance between Madīnah and 'Adan, of another equal to the distance between Madinah and Saṇ'a, and of another even less than that; to much so that there will be a believer whose light will Dot extend beyond his steps." (Ibn Jarīr). In other words, the intensity of the light of a person will be proportionate to the extent of the good done and spread by him in the world, and the beams of his light will be running on before him in the Hereafter extending as far as his good will have extended in the world.

Here, a question may arise in the mind of the reader "One can understand the meaning of their light running on before the believers but what does their light running on only on their right hand mean? Will there be darkness on their left side? The answer is: When a man is walking with a light on his right hand, his left side also will be bright, though the fact of the matter is that the light will be on his right hand. This has been explained by the *Ḥadīth*, which Ḥaḍrat Abū Dharr and Abū Dardā' have reported, saying that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: "I shall recognize the righteous people of my *Ummah* by their light,

[Contd. on page 338

جَآءَ اَمْرُ اللّٰهِ وَغَرَّكُمْ بِاللّٰهِ الْغَرُوْرُ ﴿١٤﴾ فَالْيَوْمَ لَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْكُمْ فِدْيَةٌ وَّلَا
مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ؕ مَاْوٰىكُمُ النَّارُ ؕ هِيَ مَوْلٰىكُمْ ؕ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿١٥﴾ اَلَمْ يَاْنِ
لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوْبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۙ وَلَا
يَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْاَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ ؕ
وَكَثِيْرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿١٦﴾ اِعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحْيِ الْاَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ؕ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا
لَكُمُ الْاٰيٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿١٧﴾ اِنَّ الْمُصَّدِّقِيْنَ وَالْمُصَّدِّقٰتِ وَاَقْرَضُوا اللّٰهَ
قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُّضٰعَفُ لَهُمْ وَلَهُمْ اَجْرٌ كَرِيْمٌ ﴿١٨﴾ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖٓ
اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الصِّدِّيْقُوْنَ ۖ وَالشُّهَدَآءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ؕ لَهُمْ اَجْرُهُمْ وَنُوْرُهُمْ ؕ
وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَكَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَآ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ الْجَحِيْمِ ﴿١٩﴾ اِعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّمَا الْحَيٰوةُ
الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَّلَهْوٌ وَّزِيْنَةٌ وَّتَفَاخُرٌۢ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْاَمْوَالِ وَالْاَوْلَادِ ؕ
كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ اَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهٗ ثُمَّ يَهِيْجُ فَتَرٰىهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُوْنُ
حُطَامًا ؕ وَفِي الْاٰخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيْدٌ ۙ وَّمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ ؕ وَمَا
الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَآ اِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُوْرِ ﴿٢٠﴾ سَابِقُوْٓا اِلٰى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ
عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَآءِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۙ اُعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ ؕ ذٰلِكَ
فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ يُؤْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ ﴿٢١﴾ مَآ اَصَابَ مِنْ مُّصِيْبَةٍ
فِي الْاَرْضِ وَلَا فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اِلَّا فِيْ كِتٰبٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ نَّبْرَاَهَا ؕ اِنَّ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ
يَسِيْرٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ لِّكَيْلَا تَاْسَوْا عَلٰى مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوْا بِمَآ اٰتٰىكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ
فَخُوْرِ ﴿٢٣﴾ الَّذِيْنَ يَبْخَلُوْنَ وَيَاْمُرُوْنَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّتَوَلَّ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ
الْحَمِيْدُ ﴿٢٤﴾ لَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ وَاَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْمِيْزَانَ لِيَقُوْمَ

Has not the time yet arrived for the believers that their hearts 16-17
should melt with the remembrance of Allah and should submit to the Truth sent down by Him,[28] and they should not be like those who were given the Book before them, and long ages passed over them and their hearts became hardened and today most of them are sinners?[29] Know it well that Allah gives life to the earth after its death. We have shown you the signs clearly: may be that you use your common sense.[30]

Surely those from among men and women who practice charity[31] 18-19
and who have lent to Allah a good loan, shall be repaid manifold, and for them there is a generous reward. And those who have believed in Allah and His Messengers,[32] are indeed the most truthful[33] and the true witnesses[34] in the sight of their Lord. For them is their reward and their light.[35] As for those who have disbelieved and denied Our Revelations, they are the dwellers of Hell.

Know it well that the life of this world is nothing but a sport and 20-21
pastime, and a show and boasting among yourselves and a rivalry in wealth and children. Its example is of vegetation after a shower of rain, which delighted the tillers, then the same ripens and you see it turn yellow, then it becomes straw. Contrary to this, in the life to come there is severe torment and forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure. The life of this world is nothing but illusion-[36] Therefore, strive in rivalry with one another[37] in hastening towards the Paradise the vastness of which is like the vastness of the heavens and earth,[38] prepared for those who have believed in Allah and His Messengers. This is Allah's bounty which He bestows on whomever He wills, and Allah's bounty is immense!

No affliction befalls in the earth or in your own selves, which 22-24
We have not recorded in a Book[39] before bringing it into being.[40] This is an easy thing for Allah,[41] (This is done so that) you are not disheartened over what you may lose nor feel exultant over what Allah may give you.[42] Allah does not love those who are arrogant and boastful, who are themselves stingy and also urge others to be stingy.[43] Now whosoever turns away (should know that) Allah is All-Sufficient and All-Praiseworthy[44]

We sent Our Messengers with clear signs and instructions and 25
sent down with them the Book and the Balance so that the people may

stand by justice.[45] And We sent down iron which has great strength and other benefits for men.[46] This has been done so that Allah may know who helps Him and His Messengers, unseen. Surely, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty.[47]

Contd. from p.335]

which will be running on before them and on their right and on their left." (Hākim, Ibn Abī Ḥatim, Ibn Mardūyah).

18. It means that when the believers will be going towards Paradise, the light will be before them, and the hypocrites will be stumbling about in the darkness behind. At that time they will call out to the believers, who lived with them together in the same Muslim society in the world, saying: "Look back towards us awhile so that we also may get some light."

19. This means that the people of Paradise will enter it awhile this gate and the gate will then be closed. On one side of the gate there will be the blessings of Paradise and on the other the torment of Hell. For the hypocrites it will not be possible to cross the barrier that will stand between them and Paradise.

20. That is, "Did we not live with you together in the same Muslim society? Did we not affirm the Faith? Did we not offer the Prayers along with you and observe the Fast and perform the Ḥajj and pay the *Zakāt*? Did we not sit with you in your assemblies and were we not bound in marriage ties and kinship with you? Then, how is it that we have been separated from you today?"

21. That is In spite of your claim to be Muslims, you never believed like true and sincere Muslims and remained suspended between belief and unbelief. You still had your interests attached to disbelief and the disbelievers and you never gave yourselves up wholly to Islam."

22. *Tarabbus* (from which *tarabbastum* of the Text is derived) means to wait and tarry for an opportunity. When a person is unable to decide which of the two alternative ways he should choose but stands and waits to consider which way should be more favourable for him to follow, he is involved in *tarabbus*. The hypocrites had adopted the same attitude during the critical time of the conflict between Islam and un-Islam. Neither were they siding with disbelief openly nor were spending their energy to support and help Islam with full conviction. They were sitting on the fence, waiting to set which party in the conflict became dominant, so that if it was Islam they may join it on the basis of their affirmation of the faith, and if it was unbelief they may side with its supporters taking advantage of their neutral position in the conflict.

23. This implies different kinds of doubts that a hypocrite suffers from, and the same also are the actual causes of his hypocrisy. He doubts the existence

of God, the Prophethood of the Prophet, the Qur'ān's being Allah's book, the Hereafter, its accountability, and its rewards and punishments, and he doubts whether the conflict between the Truth and falsehood is real, or a mere delusion; as for himself he considers the only truth to be that one should enjoy life and its pleasures to the full. For unless a person is involved in such doubts he can never be a hypocrite.

24. This can have two meanings: (1) "Until death came to him, you could not shed this delusion till the last moment"; and (2) "that Islam became dominant, while you looked on unconcerned."

25. That is, Satan.

26. This clearly shows that in the Hereafter the hypocrites will be doomed to the same fate as the disbelievers.

27. The words *hiya maulā kum* (Hell is your *maulā)* can have two meanings: (1) "That Hell is the only proper place for you"; and (2) "that you never took Allah as your *maulā* (friend, patron) so that He may look after you; now Hell only is your *maulā;* therefore, Hell now will look after you."

28. Here again, the word "believers" is general, but it does not apply to all the Muslims; it refers to those particular Muslims who had professed the faith verbally and joined the followers of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) though their hearts were devoid of any concern for Islam. They were watching that the pagan forces were bent upon wiping out Islam; they had encircled the handful of Muslims from all sides, who were being made the target of persecution everywhere in Arabia, and thus oppressed the Muslims were fleeing to Madinah empty-handed for refuge: the sincere Muslims were extending to them whatever economic help they could; yet they were, at the same time, engaged in a life and-death struggle with the enemy. But, in spite of this, these people who professed the faith were not being moved at all. So, here, they are being put to shame, as if to say: "What kind of believers are you? At this critical juncture for Islam, is it not yet time that your hearts should melt at the mention of Allah and be filled with the spirit of sacrifice for the sake of His Religion? Can the believers be such that they may have no feeling for Islam when it is confronted with hard times, that they may sit un-concerned when they are summoned in the name of Allah, that the hearts may neither tremble out of fear of Allah nor bow to His Command when He Himself should make an appeal for contributions in the Book sent down by Him, declaring it as a loan on Himself and plainly telling that the one who would regard his wealth as dearer than the cause of the true Faith would be a hypocrite and not a believer?"

29. That is, "The Jews and Christians seem to have lost fervour and degenerated spiritually and morally hundreds of years after the passing away of their Prophets; but have you already become so depraved that while the Prophet is still present among you, and the Book of God is still being revealed, and not much time has passed over you since you affirmed the Faith, and you have started behaving like the Jews and Christians who have reached this state through centuries of playing and tempering with the Book of Allah and its verses?"

30. The point contained here should be well understood. At several places in the Qur'ān the Prophethood and the revelation of the Book have been compared to the rainfall, for the effects produced by them on humanity are precisely like those produced by rain on the soil. Just as the dead earth swells and blooms as soon as it receives a shower of rain, so it is with the dead humanity in a country where a Prophet is raised through Allah's mercy and Revelation begins to be sent down to him. It starts revealing those virtues which lay hidden and suppressed for ages; it starts manifesting from within itself excellent morals and good deeds and virtues of every kind. Allusion has been made to this truth here so as to open the eyes of the Muslims of the weak faith and to make them ponder their state. The way humanity was being reformed by the blessed rainfall of the Prophethood and Revelation and the way it was being richly and generously blessed in every way was not a remote story for them. They were observing it themselves in the pious and righteous society of the Companions and experiencing it day and night around them. Polytheism with all its evils was present before them while the virtues and good things emanating from Islam also were blooming and flourishing before their eyes. Therefore, they did not need to be told any details. An allusion was enough to the effect, "The signs of how Allah grants life to the dead earth through the rainfall of His mercy have been shown to you; now you should use your common sense and consider it for yourself as to what benefit you are deriving from this blessing."

31. *Ṣadaqah*, as an Islamic term, is the charity given sincerely and with a pure intention only with a view to seek Allah's good pleasure without making any show of it, and without the intention of doing any favour to the recipient. The donor should give it only because he has a true feeling of the service of his Lord. The word is derived from *ṣidq;* therefore, *ṣadāqat* (sincerity) is of its essence. No charity and no expending of the wealth can be a *ṣadaqah* unless it springs from a sincere and pure motive of spending only for the sake of Allah.

32. Here, the believers imply those people of true faith whose attitude and conduct was absolutely different from that of the people of weak faith and the false claimants to Islam, and who were at that time vying with one another in making monetary sacrifices and were struggling with their lives in the cause of the true Faith.

33. *Ṣiddīq* (most truthful) is the superlative from *ṣidq;* however, one should clearly understand that *ṣidq is* not merely a statement conforming to the truth, but a statement which is not only true in itself but its sayer also upholds it as a truth sincerely. For instance, if a person says that Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is Allah's Messenger, this is by itself precisely according to the truth for the Holy Prophet is truly Allah's Messenger, but the person would be true in his statement only if he also believed and upheld him as Allah's Messenger. Therefore, a thing would be *ṣidq* if what was said was in conformity with the truth as well as with the sayer's own conscience. Likewise, *ṣidq* also contains the sense of faithfulness, sincerity and practical righteousness. *Ṣadiq ul-wa'd* would be the person who kept his promise practically, who never broke it. *Ṣādiq (true* friend) would be he who did full justice to friendship in the time of need, and who never proved faithless to any body in any way. In war, *sādiq fil-qitāl* (true soldier) would be the one who fought with all his heart and body and established his valour practically. Thus, *ṣidq* in essence implies that one's deed should fully conform to one's word. The one who acts contrary to his word cannot be *Ṣādiq.* On that very basis, the one who preaches one thing and acts contrary to it, is regarded as a false preacher. With this meaning of *ṣidq* and *ṣādiq* in view one can fully appreciate the meaning of the superlative *ṣādiq.* It would inevitably imply a righteous person who is free from every impurity, who has never swerved from the truth and piety, who could never be expected to say anything against his conscience, who believed in whatever he believed with full sincerity and remained faithful to it under all circumstances, and who has practically proved that he is a true believer in the full sense of the word. (For further explanation, see E.N. 99 of An-Nisā).

34. The early commentators have differed about the explanation of this verse. Ibn 'Abbās, Masrūq, Ḍaḥḥāk, Muqātil bin Ḥayyān and others say that the previous sentence ended with *humuṣṣiddīqūn;* and *wash-shuhādā'-u 'inda Rabbihim la-hum ajru-hum wa nūru-hum* is a separate and independent sentence According to this explanation, the translation of the sentence would be: "Those who have believed in Allah and His Messenger, are indeed the most truthful *(aṣ ṣiddīqun);* as for the true witnesses *(ash-shuhādā'),* they will have their reward and their light from their Lord." Contrary to this, Mujāhid and several other commentators regard this whole expression as one sentence. According to them the translation would be that which we have given in the text above. The two commentaries differ because the first group has taken the word *Shahid* in the meaning of the martyr in the way of Allah, and seeing that every believer is not *a shahīd* in this sense, has taken *wash-shuhādā'-u 'inda Rabbi-him* as a separate sentence. But the other group takes *shahīd in* the meaning of the witness of the Truth, and not in the sense of the martyr, and in this sense every believer is a *shahīd.* We are of the opinion that this second commentary is preferable and this is

supported by the Qur'ān as well as the *Ḥadīth*. The Qur'an says:

"Thus have We made you a community of the 'Golden Mean' so that you may be witnesses in regard to mankind and the Messenger may be a witness in regard to you." (Al-Baqarah: 143).

"Allah had called you "Muslims" before this and has called you (by the same name) in this (Qur'ān) also so that the Messenger may be a witness in regard to you and you may be witnesses in regard to the rest of mankind." (Al-Ḥajj: 78)

In a *Ḥadīth*, Ḥadrat Barā' bin 'Āzib has related that he heard the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) say: "The believers of *my Ummah* are *shahīd* (the witnesses); then he recited this very verse of Sūrah Al-Hadid." (Ibn Jarīr) Ibn Marduyah has related on the authority of Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' the tradition that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: "The one who emigrates from a land in order to save his life and his faith from temptation, is recorded as a *Ṣiddīq* (most truthful), and when he dies, Allah takes his soul as a *shahīd* (true witness). Then after this, the Holy Prophet recited this very verse." (For the explanation of this meaning of shahādat, see E.N. 144 of Al-Baqarah, E.N. 99 of An-Nisā', E.N. 82 of Al-Aḥzāb).

35. That is, "Each one of them will receive the reward and the light of the measure and degree he deserves. They will all get their own respective rewards and lights, and their shares have already been reserved for them."

36. To understand this theme fully one should keep the following verses of the Qur'ān in mind: Imrān: 14- 15, Yūnus: 24-25, Ibrāhīm: 18, Al-Kahf: 45-46, An Nūr: 39. In all those verses the truth that has been impressed on the mind is. The life of this world is a temporary life: its spring as well as its autumn is temporary, There is much here to allure man, but this, in fact, consists of base and insignificant things which man because of his shallowness of mind regards as great and splendid and is deluded into thinking that in attaining them lies supreme success, The truth however is that the highest benefits and means of pleasure and enjoyment that one can possibly attain in the world, are indeed base and insignificant and confined to a few years of temporary life, and can be destroyed by just one turn of fate. Contrary to this, the life hereafter is a splendid and eternal life: its benefits are great and permanent and its losses too are great and permanent. The one who attains Allah's forgiveness and His goodwill there, will indeed have attained the everlasting bliss beside which the whole wealth of the world and its kingdom become pale and insignificant. And the one who is seized in God's torment there, will come to know that he had made a bad bargain even if he had attained all that he regarded as great and splendid in the world.

37. *Musābaqat* (from which *sābiqū* of the original is derived) means to compete and vie with each other in order to excel. The meaning is: "Give up your

rivalries with one another for amassing wealth and pleasures and benefits of the world and instead make the forgiveness of your Lord and Paradise the object of your struggle and rivalries."

38. Some commentators have taken the word *'ard* in *'arduhā ka-'ard is-samā' wal-ard* in the sense of breadth, but actually this word has been used here in the meaning of spaciousness and extensiveness. In Arabic the word *'arḍ* is not only used for breadth, as a counterpart of length, but also for spaciousness, as it has been used in Ḥa Mīm As-Sajdah: 51: *fa-dhū du'ā in'arīḍ:* "Then he is full of wordy supplications." Besides, one should also understand that the object here is not to foretell the area or extent of Paradise, but to give an idea of its vastness and extensiveness. Here its vastness has been described as the vastness of *the* heaven and earth, and in Sūrah .Al-'Imrān it has been said: "Hasten to follow the path that leads to your Lord's forgiveness and to Paradise whose vastness is that of the universe, which has been prepared for the righteous " (v. 133) When both these verses are read together, one gets the idea that the; gardens and palaces man will receive in Paradise will only serve as his dwelling-place (but the entire universe will be his home He will not be restricted to one place as be is in this world, where just for reaching the Moon, his nearest neighbour in space, he has had to struggle hard for years and expend excessive resources only to overcome the difficulties of a short journeny. There the whole universe will be accessible to him: he will be able to see whatever he would desire from his station and be able to visit whichever place he would like easily.

39. "A Book": the Writ of destiny,

40. Here, "it" may be referring to the affliction as well as to the earth, or the self of man, or in view of the context, to all the creatures.

41. That is, it is not at all difficult for Allah to pre-ordain the destiny of each and every one of His creatures.

42. In order to understand why this has been said in that context, one should keep in mind the conditions through which the Muslims were passing at the time this Sūrah was revealed. An ever present danger of attack by the enemy, battles in quick succession, a state of constant siege, hardships caused by economic boycott by the disbelievers, persecution of the converts to Islam everywhere in Arabia, these were the conditions that the Muslims were confronted with at that time. The disbelievers looked upon these as a proof of the Muslims having been forsaken and rejected, and the hypocrites took these as a confirmation of their own suspicions and doubts. As for the sincere Muslims, they were facing these bravely and resolutely, yet the excess of hardship and suffering would sometimes become trying even for them. So, the Muslims are being consoled, as if to say: "No affliction, God forbid, has befallen you without the knowledge of

your Lord. Whatever you are experiencing is according to the pre-ordained scheme of Allah, which is already recorded in the Writ of destiny. And you are being made to pass through these trials and tribulations for the sake of your own training for the great service that Allah wills to take from you. If you are made to attain to success without passing through these hardships, weaknesses will remain in your character due to which you will neither be able to digest power and authority nor withstand the tempests and furies of falsehood."

43. The allusion is to the trait of character that everyone could experience among the hypocrites in the Muslim society itself. As regards the outward affirmation of the Faith, they could not be distinguished from the true Muslims. But owing to lack of sincerity they were not receiving the sort of training that was being given to the sincere Muslims. Therefore, the little prosperity and leadership that they were enjoying in an ordinary town of Arabia, was causing them to be swollen with pride. As for their stinginess, not only were they themselves unwilling to give away a penny in the cause of God Whom they professed to believe in and the Messenger whom they professed to follow and the Faith which they professed to have accepted, but tried to prevent others also from making any contribution, for, they thought, it was a useless cause. Obviously, if there had been no trials and tribulations, these worthless people, who were of no use to Allah, could not be separated from the sincere and worthy believers, and without weeding them out a mixed crowd of sincere and insincere Muslims could not be entrusted with the high office of leadership of the world, the great blessings of which the world subsequently witnessed in the rightly-guided Caliphate.

44. That is, "Even if after hearing these words of admonition a person does not adopt the way of sincerity, faithfulness and sacrifice for the sake of Allah and His Religion, and wishes to persist in his stubbornness, which Allah disapproves, then Allah has no use for him, for Allah is All-Sufficient and Independent of His creatures: He does not stand in need of their help in any way. And He is All-Praiseworthy: people of good qualities only are acceptable to Him; people of evil character cannot be entitled to receive any favour from Him."

45. In this brief sentence the whole essence of the mission of the Prophets has been compressed, which one should clearly understand. It says that all the Messengers who came to the world from Allah, brought three things:

(1) *Bayyinātāt:* manifest signs which clearly showed that they were really Allah's Messengers, and were not impostors; convincing arguments which made it evident that what they were presenting as Truth was really the Truth, and what they condemned as falsehood was really falsehood clear instructions which told without any ambiguity what was the right way for the people in respect of beliefs, morals, acts of worship and dealings, which they should adopt, and what were the wrong ways which they should shun and avoid.

(2) *Kitāb:* the Book which contained all the teachings required for the guidance of man so that people may turn to it for enlightenment.

(3) *Mīzān:* the Criterion of truth and falsehood which may precisely indicate, like a balance, the golden mean between the extremes in matters of thought, morals and dealings.

The object for which the Prophets were sent with these three things was that man's conduct in the world and the system of human life, individually as well as collectively, should be established with justice. On the one hand, every man should precisely know the rights of God, the rights of his self and the rights of all these people with whom he may have to deal in any way, and should fulfil them faithfully; and, on the other, the system of collective life should be built on such principles as should eliminate every kind of injustice from society, should safeguard every aspect of civilization and social life against extremism, should establish correct balance and equity in all spheres of collective life, so that all elements of society should receive their rights equitably and fulfil their obligations and duties responsibly. In other words, the object of sending the prophets was to establish individual as well as collective justice. They wanted to establish justice in the personal life of each individual so as to bring about poise and equilibrium in his mind, his character, his conduct and his dealings. They also wanted to establish the whole system of human society on justice so that both the individual and the society should assist and cooperate with each other in their spiritual, moral and material well-being instead of being a hindrance and obstacle.

46. Sending down iron means creating iron in the earth just as in Az-Zumar: 6 it has been said: "He Sent down for you eight heads of cattle, male and female." As whatever exists in the earth, has come here by Allah's command, and has not appeared by itself, its being created has been expressed in the Qur'ān as its being sent down.

The mention of "sending down iron which has great strength and other benefits for men" immediately after stating the object of the mission of the Prophets by itself indicates that by iron here is meant political and military power. Thus the verse means: "Allah did not raise His Prophets in the world just to present a scheme for the establishment of justice, but it was also a part of their mission to endeavour to enforce it practically, to collect necessary power to establish justice in all spheres of life, to punish those who might disrupt it and to break the power of those who might resist it."

47. That is, "Allah does not need this help because He is weak and cannot use His power to accomplish this work, but He has adopted this method for the trial of men: man can advance on the way of his progress and well-being only by passing through this trial. Allah indeed has the power to subdue all the disbelievers by one command whenever He wills and give to His Messengers complete

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النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ
يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَجَعَلْنَا
فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ فَمِنْهُمْ مُهْتَدٍ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ ثُمَّ
قَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِمْ بِرُسُلِنَا وَقَفَّيْنَا بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ ۙ
وَجَعَلْنَا فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ۟ ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا
كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا ۖ فَآتَيْنَا الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا مِنْهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَ
آمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ وَ
يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ لِئَلَّا يَعْلَمَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَلَّا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ مِنْ
فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٩﴾

We[48] sent Noah and Abraham and placed in the progeny ot them 26-27
both the Prophethood and the Book.[49] Then some of their descendants adopted guidance but many became transgreessors.[50] After them We sent Our Messengers, one after the other and followed them with Jesus son of Mary and gave him the Gospel, and We put in the hearts of those who followed him, compassion and mercy,[51] but monasticism[52] they themselves invented–we did not prescribe it for them: they invented it themselves[53] in order to seek Allah's good will. But then they did not observe it as it should have been observed.[54] We gave those of them who had believed their rewards, but most of them are transgressors.

O you who have believed, fear Allah and believe in His 28-29
Messenger (Muhammad, upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings)[55]: Allah will grant you a double portion of His mercy and will give you a light in which you will walk,[56] and will forgive your errors.[57] Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful. (You should adopt this way) so that the people of the Book may know that they do not have the sole right to

Allah's bounty, and that Allah's bounty is in His own hand, which He bestows on whomsoever He wills, and Allah's bounty is infinite.

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dominance over them, but in that case the believers in the Messengers would have nothing to do for which they should become entitled to rewards. That is why Allah instead of accomplishing this mission through His dominant power adopted the method of sending His Messengers to human beings with the Signs and the Book and the Criterion, and enjoined them to present the way of justice before the people and exhort them to refrain and desist from wickedness sad injustice. At the same time He gave us full option to accept the message of the Messengers or to reject it. He summoned those who accepted the invitation to come forward and help Him and His Messengers to establish justice, and to exert their utmost against those the were bent upon retaining the unjust system. Thus, Allah wants to see who among us rejects the invitation to justice, who exert with their lives in order to retain injustice as against justice, who shirk: supporting d struggling for the cause of the message of justice after they have accepted it, and who stake their lives and their possessions for the sake of unseen God to help the truth become dominant in the world. Only for those who emerge successful in this test will avenues to future progress be opened up."

48. Now it is being told what corruptions appeared among those who believed in the Prophets who came to the world before the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) with the Signs and the Book and the Criterion.

49. that is, whichever Messenger came with Allah's Book, was from the progeny of the Prophet Noah and, after him, from the progeny of the Prophet Abraham.

50. "Became transgressors" became disobedient.

51 The words in the Text are *rāfat* and *raḥmat*, which are almost synonymous: But when they are used together, *rāfat* implies the compassion that a person feels on seeing another person in pain and distress, and *raḥmat is* the feeling under which be tries to help him. As the Prophet Jesus was highly compassionate and merciful towards the people, his this trait of character deeply influenced his disciples: therefore, they treated the people with pity ant sympat by and served them with all their heart and soul.

52. The root *rahb* (from which *rabāniyyat or ruhbāniyyat* is derived) means fear; thus *rahbāniyyat* means a mode of life which reflects fear and terror. and *ruhbāniyyat* means the mode of life of the terrified. As a term it implies a person's abandoning the world out of fear (whether it is the fear of somebody's

tyranny, or far of the worldly temptations and distractions, or fear of one's personal weaknesses) and taking refuge in the jungles and mountains, or living alone as a hermit.

53. The words in the original can have two meanings: (1) "That We did not enjoin monasticism *rahbāniit)* upon them: We enjoined upon them only the seeking of Allah's good pleasure:" and (2) "that monasticism was not enjoined by Us: they of their own accord enjoined it on themselves, to seek Allah's good pleasure." In both cases this verse makes it explicit that monasticism is an un-Islamic creed, and it has never been part of the true Faith. The same thing has been stated by the Holy Prophet thus: "There is no monasticism in Islam." *(Musnad Aḥmad).* In another *Ḥadīth* the Holy Prophet said: "The monasticism of this *Ummah is to* fight in the way of Allah." (Musnad Aḥmad, Musnad Abi Ya'lā). That is, he way for this Ummah to attain to spiritual piety lies not in abandoning the world but in fighting in Allah's way: this *Ummah* does not flee to the jungles and mountains out of fear of temptations and distractions but counteracts them by resort to fighting in Allah's way. According to a tradition related both by Bukhārī ant by Muslim, one of the Companions said that he would keep up Prayers throughout the night; another said that he would fast perpetually without ever observing a break; and a third one said the he would never marry and would have nothing to do with women. When the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) came to know of what they had resolved, he said: "By God, I fear Allah the most and remain conscious of Him at all times; yet my way is that I observe the fast as well as break it; I keep up the Prayer during the night as well as have sleep; and I marry the women also. The one who does not follow my way, does not belong to me." Ḥadrat Anas says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) used to say: "Do not be- hard and severe to yourselves lest Allah should be hard and severe to you. A community had adopted this way of severity towards itself; then Allah also seized it in severity. Look, the remainder of them are found in the monasteries and churches." *(Abū Da'ūd).*

54. That is, they were involved in a double error: first, they imposed on themselves the restrictions which Allah had not imposed; second, They did not observe in the right spirit the restrictions that they had imposed upon themselves with a view to attain to Allah's goodwill, and conducted themselves in a way as to earn Allah's wrath instead *of* His good pleasure.

To understand this theme fully we should have a look at the history of Christian Monasticism.

Until 200 years after the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) the Christian Church knew no monasticism. Its germs, however, were found in Christianity from the very beginning. To look upon asceticism as a moral ideal and to regard celibacy as superior to matrimonial and mundane life is the basis of monasticism,

Both these existed in Christianity from the beginning. Owing to the sanctification of celibacy in particular, it was considered undesirable for those the performed religious services in the church to marry, have children and be involved in domestic chores; so much so that by the 3rd century monasticism began to spread like an epidemic in Christiandom. Historically, it had three main causes!:

First, sensuality, immorality and worship of the world had so permeated the ancient polytheistic society that in their zeal to counteract it the Christian scholars adopted the extremist way instead of the way of moderation. They so stressed chastity that the relationship between man and woman by itself came to be looked upon as filthy, even if it was within marriage. They reacted so violently to mammonism that to possess property of any kind ultimately was considered a sin for a religious person and to live like a poor man and ascetic the criterion of moral excellence. Likewise, in their reaction to the sensualism of the polytheistic society they touched the other extreme. They made withdrawal from pleasure and all material comforts, self denial and curbing of the desires the object of morality and regarded torturing the body by different sorts of harsh discipline as the climax and proof of a person's spirituality.

Secondly, when Christianity started achieving successes and spreading rapidly among the common people, the Church in its zeal to attract more and more adherents went on imbibing every evil that was prevalent in society. Thus, saint-worship replaced the ancient deities. Images of Christ and Mary began to be worshipped instead of the idols of Horus and Isis. Chrismas took the place of Saturnalia. Christian monks began to practise every kind of occult art like curing the sick by amulets and magic incantations, taking omens and fortune-telling, driving out spirits, etc. as were prevalent in ancient days. Likewise, since the common people looked upon a ditty and naked person who lived in a cave or den as a holy and godly man, this very concept of saintlihood became prevalent in the Christian Church, and legends of their miraculous powers began to abound in the memoirs of the Christian saints.

Thirdly, the Christians possessed no detailed law and definite traditions and practices to determine the bounds of religion. They had given up Mosaic Law and the Gospel by itself afforded no perfect code of guidance. Therefore, the Christian doctors went on permitting every kind of innovation to enter the religion partly under the influence of alien philosophies, customs and practices and partly under their personal preference and whim. Monasticism was one such innovation. Christian scholars and doctors of law took its philosophy and rules and practices from the Buddhist monks, Hindu Yogis and ascetics, Egyptian Anchorites, Iránian Manicheans, and the followers of Plato and Plotinus, and made the same the means ant methods of attaining self-purification, spiritual loftiness and nearness to Allah. Those who committed this error were not ordinary men. From the 3rd to

the 7th century (i.e. till about the time the Qur'ān began to be revealed) the religious personalities who were recognized as the foremost scholars and religious guides and leaders of Christendom, both in the East and in the West,—St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Bazianzus, St. Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Benedict, St. Gregory the Great—all were monks themselves and great upholders of monasticism. It was under their influence that monasticism became popular in the Church.

Historically, monasticism among the Christians started from Egypt. Its founder was St. Anthony (A.D. 250 -350) who is regarded as the father of Christian Monasticism. He set up the first monastery at Pispir (now Der al Memum) in the Fayum. Later he established another monastery on the coast of the Rod Sea, which is now called Der Mar Antonius The basic rules *of* Christian Monasticism are derived from his writings and instructions. After this beginning the monastic movements spread like a flood in Egypt and monasteries for monks and nuns were set up everywhere in the land in some of which lived three thousand monks at a time. In 325 another ascetic, pachomius, appeared in Egypt, who founded ten major monasteries and nunneries for the monks and nuns. The monastic movement then began to spread in Palestine and Syria and different countries of Africa and Europe. The Christian Church in the beginning experienced some confusion in connection with monasticism, for although it recognized abandonment of the world, celibacy and voluntary poverty as an ideal of spiritual life, yet it could not declare marriage, producing children and possessing property or money to be sinful as the monks did. Subsequently, under the influence of holy men like St. Athanasius (d. 373), St. Basil (d. 379), St. Augustine (d. 430) and Gregory the Great (d. 609) many of the monastic rules became part and parcel of the Church.

This monastic innovation has some characteristics which are briefly as follows:

(1) Inflicting pain on the body by severe exercises and novel methods. In this thing every monk tried to surpass the other. The achievements of these holy men as related in the memoirs of the Christian saints are to this effect: St. Macarius of Alexandria constantly carried on himself a weight of 80 pounds. For six months he slept in a swamp while poisonous flies preyed on his naked body. His disciple, St. Eusebius, even surpassed his master in suffering severities and rigours. He moved about carrying a weight of 150 pounds, and lay in a dry well for three years. St. Saba ate the maize that would start stinking having been soaked in water for a whole Month. St. Bassarion lay in thorny bushes for 40 days and did not rest his back on the ground for 40 years. St. Pachomius passed 15 years of his life, and according to another tradition 50 years, without rating his back on the ground. St. John remained standing in worship for three years

during which he neither sat nor lay down; he would only recline at times against a rock. His food consisted of the offering that was brought for him every Sunday. St. Simeon Styltes (390-449), who is counted among the most illustrious Christian saints, used to observe an un-broken 40 days fast and smiling. Owing to such concepts the bond of marriage between man and woman came to be looked upon as filthy. A monk was forbidden even to look at a woman, not to speak of marriage, and was required to abandon his wife if he was married. As for men it was also impressed on the women that if they wished to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, they should shun marriage and remain spinsters; and if they were married, they should separate from their husbands. St. Jerome, the distinguished Christian scholar, ruled that the woman who remained a spinster as a nun for the sake of Christ, was the bride of Christ, and her mother was the mother-in-law of Christ, i.e. God. Elsewhere St. Jerome says: "To cut asunder the bond of marriage with the axe of chastity is the primary duty of the true devotee of God." The first impact these teachings had on a Christian man or Christian woman, under religious fervour, was that his or her married life was ruined. And since there was no provision for divorce or separation in Christianity, the husband and the wife would separate from each other while they remained bound in wed-lock. St. Nilus was father of two children. When he came under the spell of monasticism, he immediately separated from his wife. St. Ammon, on the first night of his marriage, gave his bride a sermon on the filthiness of the marriage bond and then the two between themselves decided to keep aloof from each other throughout life. St. Abraham abandoned his wife on the very first night of marriage. The same was done by St. Alexis. The memoirs of the Christian saints are full of such incidents.

The Church continued to resist in one way or the other these extremist concepts for three centuries. In those days it was not required of a priest to be single and unmarried. If he was married before being appointed a minister, he could keep his wife. However, he was forbidden to marry after his appointment. Moreover, a person could not be appointed a minister if he had married a widow, or a divorced woman, or had two wives, or possessed a concubine. Gradually, by the 4th century, the concept became firm that for a married person it was odious to perform religious services in the Church. The Council of Gengra (A.D. 362) was the last one in which such ideas were held as anti-religious, but a little later in 386, Roman Synod counselled the priests to avoid marriage relations and the following year Pope Siricius decreed that the priest who married, or continued to have sex relations with his wife if already married, should be dismissed from office. Illustrious scholars like St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine upheld this decision most fervently, and after a little resistance it became fully enforced in the Western Church. In this period several councils were convened to consider the complaints to the effect that the people who were already married were having

"illicit" relations with their wives even after their appointment to perform religious duties. Consequently, with a view to reform them, rules were made to the effect that they should sleep in the open, should never meet their wives in private, and should meet them only in the presence of at least two other men. St. Gregory has made mention of a wonderful priest who did not have any relation with his wife for 40 years, and when the woman approached him at his death-bed, he rebuked her, saying: "Woman, keep away !"

(4) The most painful and pathetic chapter of ascetic monasticism is that it cut asunder man's relations with his parents, with his brothers and sisters, and even his children For the Christian saints love of the parents for son, love of the brothers and sisters for brother and love of the children for father also was sinful. They believed it was necessary for man to break off all those relations for the sake of spiritual progress. In the biographies of the Christian saints one comes across highly pathetic and heart-rending incidents. A monk, St. Evagrius, had been undergoing severe exercises in the desert for many years. Suddenly one day letters reached him from his father and mother, who were passing their days in great agony without him. The saint, fearing that the letters might arouse feelings of human love in his heart, cast the letters immediately into the fire, without even opening them. The mother and sister of St. Theodorus came to the monastery where he was staying, with recommendatory letters from many priests, and desired to have only a glimpse of him, but the saint refused to come out before them. St. Marcus' mother went to the monastery to see him. She somehow obtained the abbot's permission for it and requested him to order her son to come out before her, but the son was adamant to her prayers. At last, he implemented the abbot's orders by appearing before his mother disguised and with closed eyes. Thus, neither was the mother able to recognize her son, nor the son saw his mother. Another saint, St. Poemen ant his six brothers lived in a desert monastery of Egypt. Years later their old mother came to know of their whereabouts and went to see them in the monastery. As soon as the brothers saw their mother coming, they hurried into their cell and shut the door. The mother started crying and wailing outside saying: "I have travelled in this old age from a distant place only to have a glimpse of you. There will be no harm if only I see you. Am I not your mother ?" But the saints did not open the door and told the mother that they would meet her in the next world. Even more painful and piteous is the story of St. Simeon Stylites, who left his parents and remained away from them without any trace of his whereabouts for 27 years. The father died *of* grief. When the fame of the son's piety and holiness spread the mother, who was still living in agony, came to know of his whereabouts. She came to the monastery to see him but women were not allowed to enter. She prayed that either the son should call her in, or he should himself come out to let her have a glimpse of him, but "the saint"

before Easter every year. Once he kept standing on one leg for a whole year. Often he would leave his monastery and retire to a well. Later he got a 60 foot high pillar erected near Antioch, which was three feet wide at the top and railed round. He spent the last 30 years of his life on this pillar and remained permanently exposed to the elements. His disciples carried food to him by ladder and removed his filth. He had even tied himself to the pillar by a string, which cut into his flesh; when the flesh became rotten, it bred worms; whenever a worm fell out, he would restore it to the sore, saying: "Eat what God has given you." Crowds of pilgrims flocked to him from far and near. When he died the Christian world proclaimed that he was the best model of a Christian saint.

The memoirs of the Christian saints of this period are full of such instances. One particular saint had the characteristic that he observed silence for 30 years: he was never seen speaking. Another had tied himself to a rock; another roamed the jungles and lived on grass; another moved about carrying a heavy load; another kept his limbs and body tied in fetters and chains; some saints lived in the dens of beasts, or in dry wells, or in old graves; and some others remained naked and concealed their private parts under long hair and would crawl on the ground. After death the bones of the illustrious saints were preserved in monastery. I saw a full library decked with such bones in St. Catherine's monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai. There were skulls and foot-bones and hand-bones arranged separately. A glass-case contained the whole skeleton of a saint.

(2) Their second characteristic was that they were dirty and strictly cleanliness and bodily care. Washing or applying water to the body was regarded as opposed to God-worship, for according to them purification of the body was tantamount to pollution of the soul. St. Athanasius has faithfully described this virtue of St. Anthony that he never washed his feet during life. St. Abraham from the day he entered Christianity neither washed his face nor feet for 50 years. A famous nun, Virgin Sylvia, never allowed any part of her body except the fingers to become wet with water throughout life It is said of 130 nuns of 8 convent that they never washed their feet and would shudder with horror at a mere reference to bath.

(3) Monasticism practically forbade married life and ruthlessly discarded the institution of marriage. All religious writings of the 4th and 5th centuries are replete with the thought that celibacy is the highest moral virtue, and chastity meant that one should strictly abstain from sexual relation even if it was between husband and wife. The perfection of a pure spiritual life lay in complete self-denial, with no desire for physical pleasure. It was necessary to suppress any carnal desire because it strengthened animality. For them pleasure and sin were synonymous so much so that being happy was regarded as being forgetful of God. St. Basil forbade even laughing.

refused to oblige her. The woman lay at the entrance for three days and three nights and at last breathed her last in the same state. Then the holy man emerged from his seclusion, mourned his mother's death and prayed for her forgiveness.

In the same harsh way these saints treated their sisters and children. There is the story of Mutius, a prosperous man by all means. Drawn out suddenly by the religious impulse, he took his 8-year-old son and went to a monastery. But for the sake of his progress to holiness it was necessary that he should give up love of his son. Therefore, first the son was separated from him. Then the innocent child was subjected to harsh treatment before his very eyes and he watched it patiently. Then, the abbot of the monastery ordered him to go and Cast the child into the river. He became ready even for this; then right at the time when he was going to throw the child into the river, the monks saved the child's life. then it was admitted that he had actually attained td the rank of a holy man.

The viewpoint of Christian monasticism in these matters was that the one who sought love of God, should break off all relations of human love that bound him in the world to his parents, his brothers and sisters, and his children. St. Jerome says, "Even if your nephew clings to you with his hands round your neck; even if your mother calls you back in the name of having suckled you; even if your father obstructs your way and lies down before you, you should hasten out to the banner of the cross, trampling the body of your father, without shedding a tear. Ruthlessness in this matter is piety itself." St. Gregory writes, "A young monk who could not give up love of his parents, left the monastery one night in order to pay them a visit. God punished him for this error, for as soon as he returned to the monastery, he died. His body was buried in the grave but the earth did not accept it. He was placed in the grave again and again, and the earth threw him out every time. At last, St. Benedict placed a sacred offering on his chest, and then the grave accepted him." Of a nun it is said that for three days after her death, she remained subject to a torment because she had not been able to cleanse her heart of her mother's love. About a saint it is written that he never treated anyone harshly except his relatives.

(5) Their practice of meting out ruthless, cruel and harsh treatment to their nearest relatives, made their human feeling dead, with the result that they would treat with utmost enmity those with whom they had any religious differences. By the beginning of the 4th century, 80 to 90 religious sects had arisen in Christianity. St. Augustine has made mention of 88 sects of his own time, each of which regarded the other with extreme hatred. And the fire of this hatred also was fanned by the monks, who were always in the forefront to harm and destroy the opponent sects by their machinations. Alexandria was a great center of this sectarian conflict.

There, in the beginning the Bishop of the Arian sect attacked the Athanasius party. Virgin nuns were dragged out of their convents, stripped naked and beaten with thorny branches and branded in order to make them give up their creed. Then, when the Roman Catholics came to power in Egypt, they treated the Arian sect likewise; so much so that according to the prevalent view Arius himself also was poisoned. Once on the same city of Alexandria the monks of St. Cyril created a turmoil. They seized a nun of the opponent sect and took her into their church; they killed her, hacked her body to pieces, and cast it into the fire. Rome was not any different from this. In 366, at the death of Pope Liberius, two sects nominated their respective candidates for papacy; this resulted in great bloodshed; so much so that in one day 137 dead bodies were taken out from one church.

(6) Side by side with this retreat from the world and life of seclusion and poverty, wealth of the world also was amassed most avariciously. By the beginning of the 5th century the condition was that the bishop of Rome lived in his palace like kings, and when his conveyance emerged in the city, it would be as stately and splendid as of the emperor himself. St. Jerome complains of the conditions of his time (later part of the 4th century) saying that the feast hosted by many of the bishops out classed the feasts of the governors. The flow of wealth to monasteries and churches had assumed the proportions of a deluge by the beginning of the 7th century (the age of the revelation of the Qur'ān). It had been deeply impressed on the minds that a person who happened to commit a grave sin could be redeemed only by making an offering at a saint's shrine, or a sacrifice at the altar of a church or monastery. Then the same world and its luxuries and comforts abstention from which was the mark of distinction of the monks, lay at their feet. The factor which, in particular, caused this decline was that when the common people developed extreme reverence for the monks because of their undergoing severe exercises of self-discipline and self-denial, hosts of world seeking people also donned the monk's garments and entered their ranks. Then under the garb of feigned poverty they turned acquisition of worldly wealth and possessions into a flourishing business.

(7) In the matter of chastity also monasticism was repeatedly defeated in its fight against nature and defeated well and proper. In the monasteries some exercises of self-mortification were such as required the monks and nuns to live together in one and the same place, and they had often to pass the night in the same bed in their enthusiasm for more and more temptations. St. Evagarius, the well-known monk, has praised the self-control acquired by the Palestinian monks, saying: "They had mastered their passion so

completely that although they bathed with the women together, looked at their bodies, touched them, even embraced them, yet they remained invincible to nature." Although bathing was an odious thing in monasticism, such baths were also taken for the sake of exercise in self-control. At last, about the same Palestine, St. Gregory of Nyssa (d. 396) writes that it has become a centre of wickedness and immorality. Human nature avenges itself *on* those who fight it. Monasticism fought it and ultimately fell in the pit of immorality the story of which is a most shameful blot on the religious history of the 8th to 11th centuries. An Italian bishop of the 10th century writes: "If the penal law for misconduct is practically enforced against those who perform religious services in the church, none would escape punishment except the boys, and if the law to remove illegitimate children from religious services was also enforced, there might perhaps be left no boy among the attendants of the church." Books of the medieval authors are replete with the complaints that the nunneries had become houses of prostitution. Within their four walls new-born babies were being massacred; the priests and religious attendants of the church had developed illicit connections even with forbidden relatives; the crime of the unnatural act had spread like an epidemic in the monasteries; and the practice of confession had become a means of immorality in the churches.

From these details one can fully appreciate what corruption of Christianity is the Qur'ān alluding to when it says: "The Christians themselves invented monasticism, but they did not observe it as it should have been observed."

55. The commentators differ in the explanation of this verse. One group says that the address here is directed to the people who believed in the Prophet Jesus. It is being said to them, "Believe in the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) now; for this you will be given a double reward, one reward for believing in the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) and the other reward for believing in the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). The second group says that the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) are being addressed. They are being admonished to the effect: "Do not rest content with your verbal affirmation of the Faith only, but you should believe sincerely and truly. For this you will be given a double reward: one reward for giving up disbelief and turning to Islam, and the second reward for believing sincerely in Islam and remaining steadfast to it. "The first commentary is supported by vv. 52-54 of Sūrah Al-Qasas, and furthermore by the tradition reported by Ḥaḍrat Abū Mūsā al-Ash'ari, according to which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "There are three men who will get a double reward, one of them is a person from among the followers of the earlier Books who believed in this earlier Prophet

and then believed in the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace)." *(Bukhārī, Muslim).* The second commentary is supported by verse 37 of Sūrah Sabā', which says that the righteous believers will have a double reward. From the point of view of argument both the commentaries are equally weighty. However, considering the theme that follows, one feels that the second commentary is more in keeping with the context here; and in fact the whole theme of this Sūrah, from beginning to end, supports this very commentary. From the beginning of this Sūrah the addressees are the people who had entered Islam after affirming the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet and it is they whom the Sūrah invites to believe sincerely and truly and not merely verbally with the tongue.

56. That is, "He will bless you with such a light of knowledge and vision in the world by which you will be able clearly distinguish at every step the straight way of Islam from the crooked paths of ignorance in different matters of life, and in the Hereafter He will grant you the Light that has been mentioned in verse 12 above."

57. That is, "He will forgive you your errors that you may happen to commit due to human weaknesses in spite of your sincere efforts to fulfil the demands of the Faith, and will also forgive those sins of yours that you *had* committed in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance."



LVIII
AL
MUJĀDALAH

المجادلة

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LVIII

AL-MUJĀDALAH

المجادلة

INTRODUCTION

Name

This Sūrah is entitled *Al-Mujādalah as* well as Al-*Mujādilah*, the title being derived from the word *tujādiluka* of the very first verse. As at the outset mention has been made of the woman who pleaded with the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) the case of *ẓihār* pronounced by her husband and urged him to suggest a way out of the difficult situation in order to save her and her children's life from ruin, and Allah has described her pleading by the word *"mujādalah"*, the Sūrah came to be known by this very title. If it is read as *"mujādalah"*,

it would mean "pleading and arguing", and if it is read as "*mujādilah*" it would mean "the woman who pleaded and argued."

Period of Revelation

There is no tradition to tell as to when this incident of pleading and arguing took place, but there is a hint in the subject-matter of the Sūrah on the basis of which it can be said with certainty that it happened some time after the battle of the Trench (Shawwāl, 5 A.H.). In Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb, Allah while negating that an adopted son could be one's real son, had just said this and no more: "And Allah has not made those of your wives whom you divorce by *ziḥār* your mothers." But in that Sūrah there was nothing to the effect that to divorce a wife by *ziḥār* was a sin or a crime, nor anything about the legal injunction concerning it. Contrary to it, in this Sūrah the whole law relating to *ziḥar* has been laid down, which shows that these detailed injunctions were sent down some time after the brief reference to it in Surah Al-Aḥzāb.

Subject Matter and Topics

In this Sūrah instructions have been given to the Muslims about the different problems that confronted them at that time.

From the beginning of the Sūrah to verse 6 legal injunctions about *zihār* have been given, along with which the Muslims have been strictly warned that it is contrary to their profession of the Faith that they should still persist in the practices of ignorance after they have accepted Islam, that they should break the bounds set by Allah, or refuse to abide by them, or that they should make their own rules and regulations contradictory to them. For this there is not only the punishment of disgrace and humiliation in the world but in the Hereafter too there will be strict accountability for it.

In vv. 7-10 the hypocrites have been taken to task for their secret whisperings and consultations by which they conspired and intrigued against the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), and because of their hidden malice and grudge greeted him, like the Jews, in a manner as to wish him ill instead of well. In this connection, the Muslims have been consoled, as if to say: "These whisperings of the hypocrites can do no harm to you; therefore, you should go on doing your duty with full trust in Allah". Besides, they have also been taught

this moral lesson: "The true believers, when they talk secretly together, do not talk of sin and transgression and disobedience to the Messenger; if they have to talk secretly together they should talk of goodness and piety."

In vv. 11-13 the Muslims have been taught certain manners of social behaviour and given instructions to eradicate certain social evils which were prevalent among the people then as they are today. If some people are sitting in an assembly, and more people arrive, they do not show even the courtesy as to squeeze in so as to make room for others, with the result that the new-comers have to keep standing, or to sit in the door-way, or to go back, or seeing that there is enough room yet start jumping over the people's heads to find room for themselves. This often used to be experienced in the Holy Prophet's assemblies. Therefore, Allah gave the instruction, as if to say: "Do not behave selfishly and narrow-mindedly in your assemblies but do accommodate the new-comers also with an open heart."

Likewise, another vice found among the people is that when they go on a visit to somebody (an important person, in particular), they prolong their sitting and do not at all mind that encroaching upon his time unduly would cause him hardship. Then, if he tells them to leave, they mind it; if he himself rises up from their assembly, they complain of his lack of manners; if he tells them indirectly that he has some other business also to attend to, for which he needs time, they turn a deaf ear to his request. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself also had to experience such misconduct of the people, who in their earnestness to benefit by his teaching did not at all see that they were wasting his precious time so badly needed for other important works. At last, Allah in order to eradicate this bad manner, enjoined that when the people are asked to rise up from an assembly, they should rise up and disperse.

Another vice prevalent among the people was that each person wished to have secret counsel individually with the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) without any real need, or would like that he should approach him during an assembly and whisper something to him. This was not only embarrassing for the Holy Prophet but also annoying for the people who sat in the assembly. That is why Allah imposed the

restriction that anyone who wanted to consult him in private, should first give away something in charity. The object was that the people should be warned of this bad manner and made to give it up. Thus, the restriction was kept in force for a short while; and when the people had corrected their behaviour, it was withdrawn.

From verse 14 to the end of the Sūrah members of the Muslim society, which was a mixture of the sincere Muslims and the hypocrites and the waverers, have been told plainly as to what is the criterion of sincerity in Islam. One kind of Muslims are those who are friends with the enemies of Islam; they do not hesitate for the sake of their interests to be treacherous to the religion which they profess to believe in; they spread all sorts of doubts and suspicions against Islam and prevent the people from adopting the Way of Allah. But since they are part of the Muslim community their false profession of Faith serves them as a cover and shield. The second kind of Muslims are those who, in the matter of Allah's Religion, do not care even for their own father, brother, children, and family, to say nothing of others. They do not cherish any feeling of love for the person who is an enemy of God and His Messenger and His Religion. Allah in these verses has explicitly stated that the people of the first kind, in fact, belong to Satan's party how ever hard they may try to convince others of their Islam by swearing oaths. And the honour of belonging to Allah's party is possessed only by the Muslims of the second kind. They alone are the true Muslims: they alone will attain to true success, and with them alone is Allah well pleased.



قَدْ سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِيْ تُجَادِلُكَ فِيْ زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِيْٓ اِلَى اللّٰهِ

وَاللّٰهُ يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَكُمَا ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌۢ بَصِيْرٌ ۝١ اَلَّذِيْنَ يُظٰهِرُوْنَ مِنْكُمْ
مِّنْ نِّسَآئِهِمْ مَّا هُنَّ اُمَّهٰتِهِمْ ۭ اِنْ اُمَّهٰتُهُمْ اِلَّا الّٰۗيْ وَلَدْنَهُمْ ۭ وَاِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُوْلُوْنَ
مُنْكَرًا مِّنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُوْرًا ۭ وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَعَفُوٌّ غَفُوْرٌ ۝٢ وَالَّذِيْنَ يُظٰهِرُوْنَ مِنْ
نِّسَآئِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُوْدُوْنَ لِمَا قَالُوْا فَتَحْرِيْرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّتَمَاۗسَّا ۭ
ذٰلِكُمْ تُوْعَظُوْنَ بِهٖ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ۝٣ فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ
شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّتَمَاۗسَّا ۚ فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَاِطْعَامُ سِتِّيْنَ

LVII

AL-MUJĀDALAH

المجادلة

Verses:22

Revealed at Madīnah

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

Allah[1] has indeed heard the words of the woman who is pleading with you concerning her husband and is making her complaint to Allah. Allah is hearing your mutual conversation.[2] He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. Those of you who put away their wives by *zihār*[3] (should know that) their wives are not their mothers. Their mothers are only those who gave them birth.[4] They utter a monstrous thing and a lie.[5] And Allah is All-Pardoning, All Forgiving.[6] Those[7] who pronounce *zihār* with regard to their wives, then wish to go back on what they had said,[8] shall have to free a slave before the two touch each other. This you are advised to do,[9] and Allah is well aware of whatever you do.[10] And the one who does not find a slave, should fast two

1-4

successive months before the two touch each other. And the one who is unable to do even this, should feed sixty needy ones.[11]

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1. Here, hearing does not merely imply hearing a complaint but also redressing the grievances

2. The translators generally have translated these sentences in the past tense, which tends to give the meaning that the woman had left after relating her complaint and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) some time later might have received this Revelation. That is why Allah has said: "We indeed heard what the woman said, who was pleading with you and complaining to Us, and We were at that time hearing the conversation of both of you." But in most of the traditions that have been reported in the *Hadīth* about this incident, it has been stated that right at the time when the woman was relating the *zihār* pronounced by her husband and complaining to the Holy Prophet to the effect that if she was separated from her husband, she and her children would be ruined, the state of receiving Revelation appeared on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and these verses were sent down. On this basis we have preferred rendering these sentences in the present tense.

The lady concerning whom these verses were sent down was Khaulah bint-Tha'labah of the Khazraj tribe, and her husband, Aus bin Ṣāmit Anṣāri, was brother of Ḥaḍrat 'Ubādah bin Ṣāmit, the chief of the Aus tribe. The story of the *ẓihār* upon her is related in detail below. What is worth mentioning here is that the incident of the lady's complaint being heard by Allah Almighty and the coming down of the Divine Command immediately to redress her grievance was an event that earned her a place of honour and esteem among the Companions. Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Baihaqī have related that once Ḥaḍrat 'Umar was on his way out with *some* companions. On the way he came across a woman, who stopped him; he immediately stopped and listened to what she had to say patiently with his head bent down, and did not move till she had finished. One of the companions said: "O Commander of the Faithful, you held back the Quraish chiefs for so long for the sake of this old woman!" Ḥaḍrat 'Umar said: "Do you know who she is?— She is Khaulah bint-Tha'labah, the lady whose complaint was heard at the seventh heaven. By God! even if she had kept me standing till the night, I would have kept standing; I would only have excused myself at the Prayer times." Ibn 'Abdul Barr has related in *Al-Isti'āb* this tradition from Qatādah: "When Ḥaḍrat 'Umar came across this lady on the way, he greeted her. After answering his greeting, she said, "Hey, O 'Umar, there was a time when I saw you at the 'Ukāẓ festival. Then you were called 'Umair. You tended goats with the shepherd's staff in your hand. Then, not very long after this, you began to be called 'Umar. Then a time came when the people began addressing you as Commander of the Faithful. So,

fear Allah with regard to your subjects, and remember that the one who fears Allah's punishment, for him the stranger also is like a close kinsman, and the one who fears death, may well lose that very thing which he wants to save.' At this, Jārūd 'Abdī, who was accompanying Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, said: O woman, you have talked insolently to the Commander of the Faithful." Thereupon Ḥaḍrat 'Umar said: "Let her say whatever she has to say. Do you know who she is?—She was heard at the seventh heaven. So, she deserves to be heard longer and with greater attention by 'Umar." Imām Bukhārī also has related briefly a story resembling this in his History.

3. Among the Arabs it often so happened that during a family quarrel, the husband in the heat of the moment would say to his wife: *Anti 'alayya ka-ẓahri ummī*, which literally means: "You are for me as the back of my mother." But its real meaning is: "To have sexual relations with you would be like having sexual relations with my mother." Such words are still uttered by the foolish people, who, as the result of a family quarrel, declare the wife to be like their mother, or sister, or daughter, and make her unlawful for themselves like the prohibited women. This is called *ẓihār*. *Ẓahr* in Arabic is metaphorically used for riding and mounting. Thus, the beast of conveyance is called *zahr*, because man rides on its back. As this word was employed in order to make the wife unlawful, the formula was termed "*ẓihār*". In the pre-Islamic days this was looked upon as tantamount to the pronouncement of divorce, even of greater effect than that, for they took it to mean that the husband was not only severing his marital relations with his wife but was also declaring her to be unlawful for himself like his mother. On this very basis, the Arabs thought reunion could be possible after a divorce but it was impossible after *ẓihār*.

4. This is Allah's first decision concerning *ẓihār*. It means that if a person shamelessly compares the wife to his mother, his this utterance does not make his wife his mother, nor is she endowed with the sanctity that the mother enjoys. The mother's being mother is an actual fact, for she has given birth to the man. On this very ground, she is eternally sacred and prohibited. Now, how will the woman who has not given him birth become his mother simply by a word of mouth, and how will sanctity and prohibition be established for her by reason, morality and law, which, by virtue of this actual fact, is only reserved for the mother who gave birth? Thus, Allah by this condemnation abolished the custom of the pre-Islamic ignorance according to which the marriage contract between the husband pronouncing *ẓihār* and the wife stood dissolved and she became absolutely forbidden for him like the mother.

5. That is, "To liken the wife to the mother is, in the first place, an absurd and shameful thing which no noble person should ever think of, not to speak of uttering it with the tongue. Secondly, it is also a falsehood, for if the one

who says such a thing is giving the news that his wife has now become his mother for him, he is uttering falsehood, and if he is declaring that he has henceforth bestowed on his wife the sanctity of the mother, even then his claim is false, for God has not given him the authority that he may treat a woman as his wife as long as he likes and then start treating her as his mother as and when he likes. The law-giver is Allah Almighty, not he, and Allah has included in the order of motherhood the grandmothers, both paternal and maternal, mother-in-law, foster-mother and the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) along with the woman who gave birth. Nobody has the right to include of his own whim another woman in this order, not to speak of the woman who has been his wife. This gives the second legal injunction. To pronounce *ẓihār* is a grave sin and forbidden act, the violation of which deserves to be punished.

6. That is, "Such an utterance actually deserves to be punished much more severely, but it is Allah's kindness that He has, firstly, abolished the custom of ignorance and saved your family life from utter ruin, and secondly, has prescribed the lightest punishment for the culprits. And His supreme kindness is that the punishment too, is not any form of physical torture or imprisonment, but a few acts of worship and virtue, which are meant to reform you and help spread good in your society." In this connection, one should also understand that the acts of worship that have been prescribed by Islam as expiations for certain crimes and sins are neither mere punishments that they may be without the spirit of worship, nor mere acts of worship that they may entail no pain and suffering of the punishment. But both the aspects have been combined in them so that the culprit may experience pain as well as expiate his sin by means of performing a virtue and act of worship.

7. From here begins the statement of the legal injunctions concerning *ẓihār*. To understand this, it is necessary that one should keep in mind the incidents of *ẓihār* that took place in the time of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), for the code of law pertaining to *ẓihār* is derived from the verses and the judgements that the Holy Prophet gave after the revelation of these verses in the cases of *ẓihār* brought before him.

According to Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, the first case of *ẓihār* in Islam was the one relating to Aus bin Ṣāmit Anṣārī, on whose wife Khaulah's complaint Allah sent down these verses. Although the details of this case that the traditionists have cited from several reporters contain minor differences, yet the elements of legal import and significance are almost agreed upon. A resume of these traditions is as follows:

Ḥaḍrat Aus bin Ṣāmit had grown a little peevish in old age and according to some traditions, had also developed an ailment resembling insanity. The

reporters have described it by the word *lamam* which is not exactly madness in Arabic but a state resembling it. In this state he had also pronounced *ẓihār* on his wife several times before, but in Islam this was the first occasion that *he* pronounced it as the result of a quarrel with her. Thereupon, his wife appeared before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and relating the whole story to him, said: "O Messenger of Allah: Is there any way out of this situation that could save me and my children from ruin?" The Holy Prophot's reply has been reported in different words by different reporters. In some traditions the words are to the effect: "No command has been given to me so far in this regard," and in some others the words are: "In my opinion you have become unlawful to him," and in still others: "You are unlawful to him." At this, she began to cry and complain and told the Holy Prophet over and over again that her husband had not pronounced the words of divorce; therefore, he should suggest a way by which she and her children and her old husband's life could be saved from ruin. But the Holy Prophet gave her the same reply every time. In the meantime he underwent the state of receiving revelation and these verses were revealed. After this, he said to her (and according to other traditions, he called her husband and told him) to free a slave. When they expressed their inability to do so, he said that the husband would have to observe two months' fast consecutively. She said: "Aus is such a man that unless he eats and drinks three times a day, his sight starts failing him." The Holy Prophet said, "Then, you will have to feed 60 poor people." They submitted that they did not have the means for that unless they were helped out by him. Thereupon the Holy Prophet gave them food articles that could suffice 60 men for two meals. Different quantities of it have been mentioned in different traditions. According to some traditions Ḥaḍrat Khaulah herself gave to her husband food articles equal in quantity to those given by the Holy Prophet so that he may perform the expiation. *(Ibn Jarīr, Musnad Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd, Ibn Abī Ḥātim).*

The second incident of *ẓihār* relates to Salamah bin Ṣakhr Bayāḍī. He had a somewhat abnormal appetite for sex. When the fasting month of Ramadān came, he, fearing that he might lose self-control in daytime in the state of fasting, pronounced *ẓihār on* his wife till the end of Ramaḍān. But he could not adhere to his pledge and went in to his wife one night. Penitent he appeared before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and told him what he had done. He told him to release a slave. He said he had no one else beside his wife, whom he could release. The Holy Prophet then told him to observe two months' consecutive fast. He replied that it was during obligatory fasting itself that he had been unable to control himself and had become involved in trouble. The Holy Prophet then said that he should feed 60 poor people. He replied that they were poor themselves and had gone to bed at night without food. Thereupon the Holy Prophet got him a

sufficient quantity of food articles from the collector of the *ẓihār* of Banī Zurayq so that he may feed 60 persons and may also save some thing for his children. *(Musnad Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī).*

The third incident that has been related without any reference to the name is that a man pronounced *ẓihār* on his wife and then had sexal intercourse with her even before making the expiation Then, when he came to the Holy Prophet to ask for the legal verdict, he commanded him to abstain from her till he had made the expiation. *(Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī Ibn Mājah),*

The fourth incident is that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself heard a man calling his wife as sister. Thereupon he said to him angrily: "Is she your sister?" But he did not regard it as *ẓihār*,. *(Abū Da'ūd).*

These four are the reliable incidents that have been related in the *Ḥadīth* through authentic channels, and through them only can one adequately understand the Qur'ānic injunctions that have been laid down in the following verses.

8. Literally: "that they return to that which they said," but in view of the Arabic language and idiom great differences have occurred in determining the meaning of these words:

Their one meaning can be: "If they repeat the words of *ẓihār* after they have uttered them once." The Ẓāhirīyyah and Bukair bin al-Ashajj and Yaḥyā bin Ziyād al-Farrā' hold this very view, and a saying from 'Atā' bin Abī Rabāḥ also has been reported in support of the same. According to them, the pronouncement of *zihār* once is forgiven; however, if a person repeats it, he becomes liable to make the expiation. But this commentary is expressly wrong for two reasons: first, that Allah has condemned *ẓihār* as an absurd thing and a falsehood and then prescribed a penalty for it. Now, it is not conceivable that if a man utters falsehood or absurdities once he should be excused and if he utters it the second time he should make himself liable to punishment. The second reason of its being wrong is that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) never asked the man pronouncing *ẓihār* whether he had pronounced it once or twice.

Its second meaning is "If the people who were used to uttering *ẓihār* in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, repeat it in Islam, they will incur this punishment." This would mean that *ẓihār* shpuld by itself be liable to punishment, and whosoever utters the words of *ẓihār* for his wife, should become liable to make the expiation, whether he may divorce the wife after it, or his wife may die, or he may have no intention of resuming conjugal relations with his wife. This view is held by Ṭā'ūs, Mujāhid, Sha'bī, Zuhrī, Sufyān Thaurī and Qatādah from among the jurists. They say that if the woman dies after the *ẓihār*, the husband cannot inherit her unless he mades the expiation.

The third meaning is: "If after uttering the words of *ẓihār* the man may wish to go back on his words and make amends for what he said." In other words, *'āda limā qāls* means that the man revoked what he had said.

The fourth meaning is: "If the man may wish to make lawful what he had made unlawful for himself by pronouncing the *ẓihār*." In other words, it would mean that the person who had made a thing unlawful for himself has now returned to make it lawful.

Most of the jurists have preferred and adopted one of these last two views.

9. In other words: "This you are being enjoined for your own correction and admonition so that the members of Muslim society may give up this evil custom of ignorance and none of you may commit this folly. If you have to quarrel with your wife, you may quarrel with her like good people; if you intend to divorce her, then you should divorce her gracefully. It is absurd that you should compare her to your mother and sister whenever you have a quarrel with her."

10. That is, "Allah will certainly know, even if nobody else does, if a person pronounces *zihār*, and then quietly resumes normal conjugal relations with his wife without first atoning for the offence. Such people cannot in any way escape Allah's punishment."

11. This is the Divine Commandment in respect of *ẓihār*. The following are the details of the law that the Jurists of Islam have derived from the words of this verse, the judgements of the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and the general principles of Islam.

(1) This law of *ẓihār* abrogates the Arabian custom of ignorance according to which the marriage contract stood annulled and the woman became permanently forbidden to the husband. Likewise, this law annuls all those laws and customs which regard *ẓihār* as a meaningless custom, which is of no legal effect, and permit man to continue having marital relations with his wife as usual even after having compared her to his mother and other prohibited relations. For in the sight of Islam the sanctity of the mother and other prohibited relations is not such an ordinary thing that a man may even think of the comparison between them and his wife, not to speak of uttering it with the tongue. Between the two extremes the position adopted by the Islamic law in this regard is based on three principles: (a) That the marriage contract is not annulled *by ẓihār*, but the woman continues to be the husband's wife as usual, (b) that the woman becomes only temporarily prohibited to the man by *ẓihār*, and (c) that this prohibition operates till the time that the husband makes the expiation, and that the expiation only can remove the prohibition

(2) As for the person pronouncing *ẓihār*, it is agreed that the *ẓihār* of that husband is only reliable, who is of sound mind and mature age and pronounces the words of *ẓihār* in his right senses; the *ẓihār* of the child or of the insane person is not reliable. Moreover, the *ẓihār* of the person who might not be in his right senses at the time of pronouncing its words is also not reliable, e.g. if he mutters words during sleep, or is senseless, due to any reason. However, the jurists have differed on the following points:

(a) About the person who pronounces *ẓihār* in the state of intoxication a great majority of them including the four *Imāms* have given the verdict that since he has intentionally used the intoxicant, his *ẓihār*, like his divorce, will be regarded as valid legally, for he has undergone this state deliberately. However, if he has taken a medicine on account of illness and has been intoxicated, or has been compelled to take wine in intense thirst in order to save life, his *ẓihār* and divorce pronounced in that state will not be enforced. This very view is held by the Ḥanafīs and the Shāfe'īs and the Ḥanbalīs and the same also was the view commonly held by the Companions of the Holy Prophet. Contrary to it, Hadrat 'Uthmān held the view that the *ẓihār* and divorce pronounced in the state of intoxication are not reliable. Imām Ṭaḥāwī and Karkhī from among the Ḥanafīs hold this view as preferable and a statement of Imām Shāfe'ī also supports it. According to the Mālikīs the *ẓihār* pronounced in the state of intoxication will be reliable in case the person concerned has not wholly lost his senses, but talks sensibly and coherently and knows what he is saying.

(b) According to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and Imām Mālik, only the *ẓihār* of the husband who is a Muslim is reliable. These injunctions do not apply to the non-Muslim subjects of the Islamic state, for the Qur'ānic words: *Alladhīna yaẓāhirūna minkum*: "those from among you who put away their wives by *ẓihār*, have been addressed to the Muslims, and the fasting, which is one of the three kinds of the expiations prescribed in the Qur'ān, obviously cannot be applicable to the non-Muslim subjects. According to Imām Shāfe'ī and Imām Aḥmad, these injunctions will be applicable both to the Muslims and to the non-Muslims; however, there is no fasting for the non-Muslim subject: he may only free a slave or feed 60 poor.

(c) Can a woman also, like a man, pronounce *ẓihār*? For instance will it be *ẓihār* if she says to her husband: "You are for me as my father, or I am for you like your mother?" The four Imāms say that this is not *ẓihār* and the legal injunctions of *ẓihār* do not apply to it at all. For the Qur'ān in express words has laid down these injunctions in respect of the cases

where the husbands pronounce *ẓihār* on their wives, and the authority to pronounce *ẓihār*, can be held only by him who holds the authority to pronounce divorce. Just as the *Sharī'ah* not given the woman the power to divorce the husband, so also it has not given her the power to make her own self unlawful to her husband. This same is the view of Sufyān Thaurī, Isḥāq bin Rāhawaiyh, Abū Thaur and Laith bin Sa'd. They regard such a pronouncement by a woman as meaningless and without effect Imām Abū Yūsuf says that though this is not *ẓihār*, it will entail for the woman the atonement of the oath, for the pronouncement of such words by the woman means that she has sworn not to have marital relations with her husband. This same is the view of Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal as cited by Ibn Qudāmah. Imām Auzā'ī says that if before marriage the woman said that if she married a particular man he would be for her as her father, it would be *ẓihār*, and if she says such a thing after marriage it would be in the nature of an oath, which would entail the atonement for the oath. Contrary to it, Ḥasan Baṣrī, Ẓuhrī, Ibrahīm Nakha'ī and Hasan bin Ziyād Lu'lu'ī say that this is *ẓihār* and will entail the expiation prescribed for *zihār* by the woman; however, the woman will not have the right to prevent the husband from coming in to her before making the expiation. Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī has cited this incident in supprt of this view. Muṣ'ab, son of Ḥadrat Zubair, sent a proposal of marriage to 'Ā'ishah bint Talhah. She turned down the proposal, saying: "If I married him, he would be for me as the back of my father *(huwa 'alayya ka-ẓahr-i abī)*." After some time, she became willing to marry him. When the jurists of Madīnah were asked for their ruling on it, many jurists including several Companions of the Holy Prophet ruled that 'Ā'ishah would have to make an expiation for the *ẓihār*. After citing this incident Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī has expressed his own opinion, saying that if 'Ā'ishah had said this thing after the marriage, it would not have entailed the expiation. But since she said this before marriage when she had the option to marry, or not to marry, the expiation became obligatory on her.

(3) The excuse of a sensible and mature person, who pronounces the express words of *ẓihār* in his full senses, cannot be acceptable that he uttered the words in a state of anger, or in jest, or in love, or that he had no intention of the *ẓihār*. However, in respect of the words which are not express in this regard, and which can give different meanings, the injunction will vary according to their nature. Below we shall tell what words of *ẓihār* are express and what words are not express.

(4) It is agreed upon by all that *ẓihār* can be pronounced on the woman who is a wedded wife of the man. However, there is a difference of opinion

whether *ẓihār* can be pronounced on the other woman also or not. In this matter, the following are the different viewpoints:

The Ḥanafīs say that if a man says to the other woman: "If I marry you, you will be for me as the back of my mother," then whenever he marries her, he will not be allowed to touch her without first making the expiation. This same is the verdict of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar. During his caliphate a man said such words to a woman and afterwards married her. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar ruled that he would have to make the expiation for the *ẓihār*.

The Mālikis and the Ḥanbalis also have expressed the same opinion, and they add this to it: If the woman was not specified, but the man said words to the effect that all women were for him like that, then whichever woman he married, he would have to make the expiation before touching her. The same is the opinion of Sa'īd bin al-Musayyab, 'Urwah bin Zubair, 'Aṭā' bin Abī Rabāḥ, Ḥasan Baṣrī and Ishāq bin Rāhawaiyh.

The Shāfe'īs say that *ẓihār* before marriage is meaningless. Ibn 'Abbās and Qatādah also hold the same opinion.

(5) Can *ẓihār* be pronounced for a fixed term? The Ḥanafīs and the Shāfe'īs say that if a man has pronounced *ẓihār* for a certain period of time, he will have to make the expiation if he touches the wife before the expiry of that time; however, the *ẓihār* will become ineffective when the time has elapsed. Its argument is the incident concerning Salamah bin Ṣakhr Bayāḍī, who had pronounced *ẓihār* upon his wife for the month of Ramaḍān, and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) did not tell him that the fixation of the time limit was meaningless. On the contrary, Imām Mālik and Ibn Abī Lailā say that whenever *ẓihār* is pronounced it will be for ever and the specification of time will be of no effect, for the prohibition that has occurred cannot become void of its own accord on the expiry of the time.

(6) If the *ẓihār* is conditional, expiation will become incumbent whenever the condition is violated. For instance, if a man says to his wife: "If I enter the houses you will be to me as the back of my mother," then whenever he enters his house, it will be unlawful for him to touch his wife without first making the expiation.

(7) In case the words of *ẓihār*, are repeated several times to a wife, the Ḥanafīs ant the Shāfe'īs say that whether this is done in one sitting or in several sittings, it will entail as many expiations as the number of the times the words were repeated, unless the man might have repeated the words only to stress what he had said before. Contrary to this, Imām Mālik and Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal say that no matter how often the

words are repeated, it will entail only one expiation. The same is the view of Sha'bī, Ṭā'ūs, 'Aṭā' bin Abī Rabāh Ḥasan Baṣrī and Auzā'ī (may Allah show mercy to all of them). Ḥaḍrat 'Alī's ruling is that if the repetition is made in one sitting, there will be only one expiation, and if in different sittings, then there will be as many expiations as the number of the sittings in which the repetition was made. The same is the view of Qatādah ant 'Amr bin Dinār.

(8) If *ẓihār* is pronounced upon two or more wives simultaneously in one and the same set of words, *e.g.* if addressing them the husband says: "You are to me as the back of my mother," the Ḥanafīs and the Shāfe'īs say that separate expiations will have to be made to make each of them lawful. The same is the opinion of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, 'Urwah bin Zubair, Ṭā'ūs, 'Atā, Ḥasan Baṣri, Ibrāhīm Nakha'i, Sufyān Thaurī and Ibn Shihāb Zuhrī. Imām Mālik and Imām Aḥmad say that in this case one and the same expiation will suffice for all. Rabī'ah, Auzā'ī, Isḥāq bin Rāhawaiyh and Abū Thaur also have expressed the same opinion.

(9) It is agreed upon by all that if a man repeats *ẓihār*, again after making expiation for it once, the wife will not be lawful to him unless he makes another expiation.

(10) Although it is sinful, according to the four Imāms, to establish marital relations with the wife before malting the expiation, and the man should ask for Allah's forgiveness for it, and should refrain from repeating such a thing, yet it will entail only one expiation. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had exhorted the people who had committed such an offence in his time to implore Allah for forgiveness and not to touch the wife unless they had made the expiation, but *he* did not enjoin any additional expiation besides the expiation for *ẓihār* Ḥaḍrat 'Amr bin 'Āṣ, Qabiṣah bin Dhu'aib, Sa'īd bin Jubair, Zuhrī and Qatādah say that it will entail two expiations, and Ḥasan Baṣrī and Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī have given the opinion that this will entail three expiations, Probably the *Aḥādīth* in which the Holy Prophet gave his ruling on this matter did not reach these scholars.

(11) As to comparison of the wife to whom would be *ẓihār*, the jurists have expressed different views:

'Āmir Sha'bī says that her comparison to the mother only is *ẓihār*, and the Ẓāhiriyyah say that her comparison only to the mother's back is *ẓihār*, for the injunction does not supply to anything else. No section of the Islamic jurists, however, agrees with them in this regard, for the reason given by the Qur'ān of the wife's comparison to the mother being sinful is that it is absurd and a lie. Now, obviously comparison of the wife to the women whose sanctity is just like

the mother's would be as absurd as it is in the case of the mother Therefore, there is no reason why the commandment in that case should not be the same as in the can of the comparison to the mother.

The Ḥanafis say that in this command are included all those women, who are permanently prohibited to man on the basis of lineage, fosterage, or marital relationship, but the women who may only be temporarily prohibited and can become lawful at any time, are not included in this, *e.g.* the wife's sister, her maternal and paternal aunts, or another woman, who is not the men's wedded wife. It will be *ẓihār* if comparison is made with such a part of the permanently prohibited woman's body as is forbidden for men to look at. However, it will not be *ẓihār* if comparison is made of the wife's hand, foot, head, hair, tooth, etc. to the back of a permanently prohibited woman, or of the wife to her head, hand, foot, etc. for it is not unlawful to look at these parts of the mother's or sister's body. Likewise, to say to the wife: "Your hand is like my mother's hand, or your foot is like my mother's foot," is not *ẓihar*.

The Shāfe'is say that in this command are included only those women, who were, and are, permanently prohibited, i.e. mother, sister, daughter etc. but this does not include those women, who may have been lawful at some time, e.g. the foster-mother, foster-sister, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, or those who may become lawful at nay time, e.g. the wife's the wife's sister. Apart from these temporarily prohibited women, it will be *ẓihār* to compare the wife to such parts of the permanently prohibited woman's body as are not normally mentioned out of reverence and respect, As for those parts which are mentioned out of reverence and respect, it will be *ẓihār* to make a comparison with them only in case this is done with the intention of *ẓihār;* for instance, if a man says to his wife: "Your are to me like my mother's eye or life, or like my mother's hand, foot or belly," or he compares the wife's belly, or breast, with the mother's belly, or breast, or says that the wife's head, back or hand is to him as his mother," it will be *ẓihār* if said with the intention of *ẓihār* and reverence if said with the intention of reverence.

The Mālikīs say that to compare the wife to any of the prohibited women is *ẓihār*: so much so that even if a man says to his wife, "You are to me like the back of such and such other woman," it would be *ẓihār*. Furthermore, they say that it would be *ẓihār* to compare any part of the mother's body, or of an eternally prohibited woman's body, to the wife, or to any part of the wife's body, without any condition that the parts thus compared be such as may look at any part of the mother's body as he looks at the wife's.

The Ḥanbalīs include in this command all those women, who may be eternally prohibited, though they may have been lawful before, *e.g.* the mother-in-law, or foster-mother. As for the women who may become lawful at any time later

(*e.g.* the wife's sister), Imām Aḥmad's one statement concerning them is that comparison to them is not *ẓihār*. Moreover, according to the Ḥanbalīs to compare any part of the wife's body to any part of the prohibited woman's comes under *ẓihār*. However, the non-permanent parts like the hair, nails, teeth, etc. are excluded from this command.

(12) The jurists are agreed that to say to the wife: "You are to me like the back of my mother," is expressly *ẓihār*, for the Arabs used this very formula for *ẓihār*, and the Qur'ānic command also was sent down only concerning this. However, the jurists have disputed as to which of the other words are such as clearly come under *ẓihār*, and which are such whose amounting or not amounting to *ẓihār* will be dependent upon the speaker's intention.

With the Ḥanafīs the express words *of ẓihār* are those in which a lawful woman (the wife) may have been clearly compared to an unlawful woman (i.e. any woman from among the eternally prohibited women), or compared to such part of the body which is forbidden for a man to look at, like saying: "You are to me like the belly or the thigh of my mother, or of such and such prohibited woman." Apart from these, the other words are disputed. According to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, if the man says: "You are forbidden to me like the back of my mother," it is expressly *ẓihār*, but according to Imāms Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad, it would be *ẓihār if* there was the intention of *ẓihār* and divorce if there was the intention of divorce. The view generally held by the Ḥanafīs is that if the man says: "You are as my mother, or like my mother," it is *ẓihār* if said with the intention of *ẓihār* and irrevocable divorce if said with the intention of divorce, and meaningless if there was no such intention at all. However, according to Imām Muḥammad this is express *ẓihār*. If the man calls his wife his mother or sister or daughter, it is an absurdity upon which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had expressed great anger, but he did not regard it as *ẓihār*. If the man says "You are forbidden to me like my mother", it would be *ẓihār* if said with the intention of *ẓihār* and divorce if said with the intention of divorce, and *ẓihār if* there was no intention at all. If he says: "You are to me like my mother, or as my mother," his intention will be questioned: if he said this out of respect and reverence, it would be respect and reverence, if with the intention of divorce, it would be diverce: if there was no intention whatever, it would be meaningless according to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, but would entail the atonement of the oath, though not of *ẓihār* according to Imām Abū Yūsuf, and would be *ẓihār* according to Imām Muḥammad.

With the Shāfe'īs the express words of *ẓihār* are that a man should say to his wife: "You are to me, or with me, or for me, like the back of my mother, or you are like the back of my mother, or your body, or your self, is to me like the

body or self of my mother." Apart from these, in respect of all other words the decision will be dependent on the speaker's intention

According to the Ḥanbalīs, every such word by which a man may have compared his wife, or a part from among the permanent parts of her body, to a prohibited woman, or to a part from among the permanent parts of the prohibited woman's body clearly, would be regarded as express in the matter of *ẓihār*

The Mālikīs' viewpoint also is almost the same. However, in the details they have given different rulings. For instance, according to them, a man's saying to his wife: "You are to me as my mother, or like my mother," is *ẓihār*, if said with the intention of *ẓihār*, divorce if said with the intention of divorce, and *ẓihār* if there was no intention at all. According to the Ḥanbalīs, it may be regarded only as *ẓihār* provided there was the intention. If a man says to his wife: "You are my mother," this is *ẓihār* according to the Mālikīs, but according to the Ḥanbalīs it would be *ẓihār* if said in a state of anger on account of a quarrel, and it would not be *ẓihār* if it was said out of love and affection, although it is wrong. If a man says: "You have divorce on you: you are like my mother," according to the Ḥanbalīs this is divorce, not *ẓihār*, and if he says: "You are like my mother: you have divorce on you," both *ẓihār* and divorce will take place. To say: you are forbidden to me as the back of my mother," is *ẓihār* according to both the Mālikīs and the Ḥanbalīs, whether the words were said with the intention of divorce, or without any intention.

In this discussion about the words of *ẓihār* one should clearly understand that all the disputes of the jurists in this regard relate to the words and usage of the Arabic language. Obviously the people who speak other languages will neither pronounce *ẓihār* in Arabic nor will utter an exact and accurate translation of the Arabic words and sentences at the time they pronounce *ẓihār*. Therefore, if one has to decide whether a word or a sentence comes under the definition of *ẓihār*, or not, one should not examine it from the point of view of its being an exact translation of the words given by the jurists, but one should only see whether the speaker had compared his wife in the sexual context clearly to any of the women in the prohibited degrees, or whether there was the probability of other meanings also in his words. Its most conspicuous example is the Arabic sentence itself about which all the jurists and commentators are agreed that this very sentence was used for *ẓihār* in Arabic, i.e. *Anti 'alayya ka-ẓahri umm*i ("You are to me like the back of my mother"). Probably in no other language of the world can the man pronouncing *ẓihār* use words that may be a literal translation of this Arabic sentence. However, he can certainly use words of his own language, which may have precisely the same meaning for which an Arab used this sentence. The meaning of this sentence was: "To have sexual intercourse with you would be like

having sexual intercourse with my mother," or as some foolish person might say to his wife: "If I come in to you, I would be going in to my mother."

(13) In the Holy Qur'an what has been mentioned as entailing the expiation is not the mere *ẓihār* but one's *'aud* (returning) after the *ẓihār*. That is, if a man only pronounces the *ẓihār* and does not "return", he does not incur any expiation. Now, the question is: What is this *'aud* (returning) that entails the expiation? In this regard, the jurists have held the following viewpoints:

The Ḥanafīs say that *'aud* is the intention to have the sexual intercourse, but it does not mean that the mere intention should entail the expiation; so much so that the man may have to make the expiation even if he does not take any practical step after the intention. But its correct meaning is that the man who wishes to remove the prohibition that he had imposed on him by by pronouncing *ẓihār* of severing marital relations with his wife, should first make the expiation, for this prohibition cannot be removed without the expiation.

Three statements have been cited from Imām Mālik in this regard, but his most well known and authentic statement, according to the Mālikīs, is in full agreement with the Ḥanafī viewpoint as stated above. He says that what the man had made unlawful for himself *by ẓihār* was the sexual relation with his wife. Now, *'aud* means that he should return to establish the same relation with her.

Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal's view as cited by Ibn Qudāmah is almost the same as of the two Imāms as noted above. He says that after the *ẓihār* expiation has necessarily to be made to make the sexual intercourse lawful. The man who wants to make it lawful after having pronounced *ẓihār*, in fact, wants to return from the prohibition. Therefore, he has been enjoined to make the expiation before making it lawful for himself, precisely like the man who wants to make the other woman lawful for himself and has to marry her before she could be lawful for him.

Imām Shāfe'īs viewpoint is quite different. He says that a man's keeping his wife as usual and detaining her in wedlock as before after having pronounced *ẓihār*, is *'aud*, for as soon as he pronounced *ẓihār* he in fact, forbade himself to keep her as wife. Therefore, if he did not divorce her immediately on pronouncing *ẓihār* and kept her back for so long that he could utter the words of divorce, he committed *'aud* and the expiation became incumbent upon him. This means that if after pronouncing *ẓihār* the man did not pronounce divorce in the next breath, expiation would become incumbent, whether afterwards he might decide not to keep the woman as wife and might have no intention of having marital relations with her. So much so that even if he divorced his wife after a few moments' thought, according to Imām Shāfe'ī, he would still have to make the expiation.

(14) The Qur'ānic injunction is that the pronouncer of *ẓihār* must make the expiation before the two (the husband and the wife) "touch" each other. All the four Imāms are agreed that according to this verse not only is the sexual intercourse prohibited before the expiation but it is also prohibited that the husband touch the wife in any way. The Shāfe'ī's regard' only touching with desire as prohibited. The Ḥanbalīs regard every kind of pleasure-seeking as forbidden; and the Mālikis regard even casting of the look at the wife's body for the sake of pleasure as unlawful. According to them only casting of the look at the face and hands is an exception.

(15) If after *ẓihār* a man divorces his wife, he cannot touch her without first making the expiation in case it is a revocable divorce. If it is an irrevocable divorce, and he re-marries her, he still will have to make the expiation before he could touch her. So much so that even if he has divorced her thrice, and the woman after marrying another man becomes a widow, or is divorced, and then the pronouncer of *ẓihār* re-marries her, she will not be lawful to him unless he first makes the expiation. For he has forbidden her to himself by comparing her to his mother or other prohibited woman, and this prohibition cannot be removed without the expiation. All the four Imāms agree about this.

(16) It is incumbent upon the woman that she should not allow the husband who has pronounced *ẓihār* on her to touch her until he makes the expiation. And since the marital relationship is a right of the woman of which the husband has deprived her by *ẓihār*, she can go to the court of law if he does not make the expiation. The court will compel the husband to make the expiation to remove the barrier he has raised between himself and her. And if he does not comply, the court can award him lashes or imprisonment or both. This also is agreed upon by all the four schools of law. However, the difference is that in the Hanafī Fiqh this is the only way out for the woman; if the court does not help her out of the situation, she will remain suspended under *ẓihār* indefinitely. For *ẓihār* does not dissolve the marriage contract, it only forbids the husband to have marital relations with the wife. According to the Mālikī school if the husband pronounces *ẓihār* and keeps the wife suspended with a view to punish her, the law of *īlā'* will be applied against him, which means that he cannot keep her suspended for more than four months. (For the law of *īlā*, see E.N.'s 245 to 247 of Al-Baqarah). According to the Shāfe'īs, although in *ẓihār* the law of *īlā'* can be applied only if the husband might have pronounced *ẓihār* for a specific period, which does not exceed four months, yet since according to them the expiation becomes incumbent upon the husband from the very moment he keeps back the woman as

wife, it is not possible that he may keep her suspended for along period indefinitely.

(17) The express commandment of the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* is that the first expiation for *ẓihār* is to free a slave. If a man cannot afford this, he can expiate by fasting two months consecutively; and if he cannot do even this, then he can feed 60 poor. But if a man cannot expiate in any of the three ways, he will have to wait till he has the means to act in one or the other way. because the *Sharī'ah* has not prescribed any other form of expiation. However, the *Sunnah* confirms that such a person should be helped out so that he can make the third kind Of the expiation. The Holy Prophet helped such people out of the public treasury, who were caught in this awkward situation by a mistake of their own, and were helpless to expiate in any of the three prescribed ways.

(18) The Qur'an enjoins to release a neck (raqabah) as expiation, which applies both to a male and a female slave, and there is no restriction of the age in it. It would be sufficient to release a suckling child who may be in the state of slavery. However, the jurists have disputed whether both the believing and the unbelieving slaves can be released, or whether only the believing slave will have to be released. the Ḥanafīs and the Ẓāhiriyyah say that it is enough to release a slave, whether a believer or an unbeliever, as expiation for *ẓihār*, for the *Qur'ān* only mentions *raqabah* (the neck); it does not say that it has to be a believer. On the contrary, the Shāfe'īs, the MālikIs and the Ḥanbalīs impose the condition that it has to be a believing slave. They have held this injunction as analogous to the other expiations in which release *of raqabah* has been made conditional upon his being a believer.

(19) If the pronouncer of *ẓihār* cannot afford to release a slave, the Qur'an enjoins him to fast for two successive months before the two can touch each other. As for the details of acting on this Divine Command, the viewpoints of the different juristic schools are as follows:

(a) All are agreed that the months imply the lunar months. If fasting is begun with the sighting of the new moon, one will have to complete two months' un-interrupted fasting. If fasting is begun on another date in the month, according to the Ḥanafīs and the Ḥanbalīs, one will have to fast for 60 days consecutively; and acoording to the Shāfe'īs, one will observe a total of 30 fasts in the first and the third months and observe the whole of the middle lunar month, whether it is of 29 days or 30 days.

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مِسْكِيْنًا ۚ ذٰلِكَ لِتُؤْمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ ۚ وَتِلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَلِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابٌ
اَلِيْمٌ ۝ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يُحَآدُّوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ كُبِتُوْا كَمَا كُبِتَ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ
قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ وَقَدْ اَنْزَلْنَآ اٰيٰتٍۢ بَيِّنٰتٍ ۚ وَلِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِيْنٌ ۝ يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ
اللّٰهُ جَمِيْعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوْا ۚ اَحْصٰىهُ اللّٰهُ وَنَسُوْهُ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ شَهِيْدٌ ۝ اَلَمْ تَرَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۚ مَا
يَكُوْنُ مِنْ نَّجْوٰى ثَلٰثَةٍ اِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ اِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَ
لَآ اَدْنٰى مِنْ ذٰلِكَ وَلَآ اَكْثَرَ اِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ اَيْنَ مَا كَانُوْا ۚ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا
عَمِلُوْا يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ۝ اَلَمْ تَرَ اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ نُهُوْا
عَنِ النَّجْوٰى ثُمَّ يَعُوْدُوْنَ لِمَا نُهُوْا عَنْهُ وَيَتَنٰجَوْنَ بِالْاِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ
وَمَعْصِيَتِ الرَّسُوْلِ ۫ وَاِذَا جَآءُوْكَ حَيَّوْكَ بِمَا لَمْ يُحَيِّكَ بِهِ اللّٰهُ ۙ وَ
يَقُوْلُوْنَ فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْ لَوْ لَا يُعَذِّبُنَا اللّٰهُ بِمَا نَقُوْلُ ۚ حَسْبُهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ
يَصْلَوْنَهَا ۚ فَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا تَنَاجَيْتُمْ فَلَا تَتَنَاجَوْا
بِالْاِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَمَعْصِيَتِ الرَّسُوْلِ وَتَنَاجَوْا بِالْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوٰى ۚ وَاتَّقُوا
اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْٓ اِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ۝ اِنَّمَا النَّجْوٰى مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوْا وَلَيْسَ بِضَآرِّهِمْ شَيْـًٔا اِلَّا بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝
يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا قِيْلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوْا فِي الْمَجٰلِسِ فَافْسَحُوْا يَفْسَحِ اللّٰهُ
لَكُمْ ۚ وَاِذَا قِيْلَ انْشُزُوْا فَانْشُزُوْا يَرْفَعِ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مِنْكُمْ ۙ وَالَّذِيْنَ
اُوْتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجٰتٍ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا
نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُوْلَ فَقَدِّمُوْا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوٰىكُمْ صَدَقَةً ۚ ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَ

This is being enjoined so that you may believe in Allah and His Messenger.[12] These are the bounds set by Allah and for the disbelievers there is a painful punishment.[13] Those who oppose Allah and His Messeger,[14] shall be abased as were those before them.[15] We have sent down clear Revelations, and for the disbelievers there is a disgraceful torment.[16] (This torment shall be meted out) on the Day when Allah will raise up all of them again, and will tell them what they had done. They have forgotten it but Allah has kept a full record of all their deeds,[17] and Allah is witness over everything. 4-6

Are you not aware[18] that Allah has the knowledge of everything in the heavens and the earth? It cannot be that three men whisper together and Allah is not the fourth of them; or five men whisper together and Allah is not the sixth of them.[19] Whether they are fewer than this or more, Allah is with them wherever they are.[20] Then, on the Day of Resurrection, He will tell them what they have done. Allah has the knowledge of everything. Have you not seen those who were forbidden to hold secret consultations, yet they persist in what they were forbidden?[21] They converse secretly together of sin and transgression and disobedience to the Messenger. And when they come to you, they greet you in a way in which Allah has not greeted you,[22] and say to themselves, "Why does Allah not punish us for what we say?"[23] Hell is enough for them: they will become its fuel. What an evil end! 7-8

O you who have believed, when you talk secretly together, then do not talk of sin and transgression and disobedience to the Messenger but talk of virtue and piety, and fear that God, before Whom you shall all be mustered together.[24] Conspiring secretly is the work of Satan. This is done in order to cause grief to the believers, whereas it cannot harm them at all unless it be by Allah's leave. And let the believers put their trust in Allah alone[25] 9-10

O you who have believed, when you are told to make room in your assemblies, you should make room: Allah will make room for you.[26] And when you are told to rise up, you should rise up.[27] Those of you who have believed and have been granted knowledge, Allah will exait them in ranks,[28] and Allah is well aware of whatever you do. 11

O you who have believed, when you consult the Messenger in 12

private, you should give something it charity before your consultation.[29] This is better for you and purer. However, if you do not have the means to give charity. Allah is indeed All-Forgiving, All-Merciful

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(b) The Ḥanafīs and the Shāfe'īs say that fasting should be begun at a time when within the next two months there should neither fall the month of Ramadān nor the two 'Id days, nor the day of sacrifice, nor the Tashrīq days (10th to 13th of Dhil-Ḥajj) for the observance of the Ramaḍān fast and its abandonment on the 'Id days and the day of Sacrifice ant Tashrīq days, in the course of the expiation fasting, would break the succession of the fasting, and the pronouncer of *ẓihār* would have to start fasting afresh. The Hanbalīs say that observance of the Ramadān fast and its abandoment on the forbibben days do not break the succession.

(c) In the course of the two months whether one abandons a fast on account of a valid excuse, or without a valid excuse, in both cases the succession will break according to the Ḥanafīs and the Shāfe'īs, and one will have to start fasting afresh. The same is the opinion of Imām Muḥammad Bāqir, Ibrāhīm Nahka'ī, Sa'īd bin Jubair, and Sufyān Thaurī. According to Imām Mālik and Imām Aḥmad, fasting can be abandoned on account of illness or a journey and this does not break the succession; however, succession does break if the fast is abandoned without a valid reason. Their reasoning is that the nature of the expiation fast is not obligatory as of the Ramaḍān fast: when that fast can be abandoned on account of an excuse, there is no reason why this cannot be. The same is the viewpoint of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, Ḥasan Baṣrī, 'Atā' bin Abī Rabāḥ, Sa'īd bin al-Masayyab, 'Amr bin Dīnār, Sha'bī, Tā'ūs, Mujāhid, Isḥāq bin Rāhawaiyh, Abū Ubaid and Abū Thaur.

(d) If the man commits sexual intercourse with the wife under *ẓihār* within the two months of fasting, according to all the Imāms, the succession will break, and he will have to begin fasting anew, for he has been enjoined to fast for two successive months before he could touch the wife.

(20) According to the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*, the third kind of expiation (feeding the 60 poor) can be made only by him who does not have the power to make the second expiation (fasting for two months successively). The details of acting on this command as worked out by the jurists are as follows:

(a) According to all the four Imāms, being powerless to observe the fast means that one should either be powerless due to old age, or due to illness, or due to the reason that one may not be able to abstain from sexual intercourse for two successive months, and may become impatient at any time in the course of fasting. The validity of all these three excuses is confirmed by the *Aḥādith* that have been cited in connection with the cases of Aus bin Sāmit Anṣārī and Salamah bin Ṣakhr Bayāḍī. However, about illness there is a little difference of opinion among the jurists. The Ḥanafīs say that the excuse of illness will be valid only in case there is no hope of recovery, or there is the fear that the disease may worsen on account of fasting. The Shāfe'īs say that if fasting is likely to cause a severe hardship by which the man may feel the danger of its being interrupted, this excuse also can be valid. The Mālikis say that if the man strongly feels that he will be able to observe the fast in the future, he may wait till then, and if he has no such feeling, he should feed the poor. The Ḥanbalīs say that the apprehension that the disease will worsen by fasting is a sufficient excuse for not fasting.

(b) Food can be given only to those poor people whose maintenance is not the obligatory responsibility of the man concerned.

(c) The Ḥanafīs say that food can be given to both the Muslim and the non-Muslim subjects of the Islamic State, but not to the belligerent disbelievers and to those who have been given protection. The MMālikīs, the Shāfe'īs and the Ḥanbalīs say that the Muslim needy ones only can be fed.

(d) There is full agreement that feeding implies to feed two times a day to fill. However, there is a difference of opinion about the meaning of feeding. The Ḥanafīs say that it is equally valid to feed with cooked food two times a day or to give away grain sufficiient to meet the food requirements of a needy person two times a day, For the Qur'ān has used the word *it'ām,* which means both to provide food and to feed. But the Mālikis, the Shafe'īs and the Ḥanbalīs do not regard feeding with cooked food as correct; they think it is necessary to give away grain. In case grain is given, there is full agreement that the grain should be the staple food in the city or area, and all the poor people should be given it equally.

(e) According to the Ḥanafīs, it is also vaild if one and the same poor person is fed or given food for 60 days, though it is not correct to give him food for 60 days on one and the same day. However, the other three schools do not think it is valid to provide food to one and the same poor man; it is necessary to give food to 60 pesons. It is not permissible

in any of the four schools to provide food to 60 men at one time and to another 60 at another time.

(f) This also is not permissible according to any of the four schools that one may fast for 30 days and then feed 30 poor ones, for two different expiations cannot be combined. If one has to fast one should fast for two months successively, and if one has to feed, one should feed 60 poor ones.

(g) Although in connection with the expiation of feeding the Qur'ān does not use words to the effect that this expiation also should be made before the husband and the wife can touch each other, yet the context demands that this restriction will apply to this third kind of expiation as well. That is why the four Imāms do not regard it as permissible that the man should go to his wife during the time the expiation of feeding is being performed. However, the difference is that according to the Ḥanbalīs the man who commits this offence, will have to feed the poor afresh, but the Ḥanafīs show leniency, for in respect of this third expiation there is no mention of "before the two touch each other" in the Qur'ān, and this provides a basis for the concession.

Bibliography:

Ḥanafī Fiqh: Hedāyah; Fatḥ al-Qadīr; Badā'i'-'us-Ṣanā't'; Al-Jaṣṣās. Aḥkām al-Qur'ān.

Shāfe'ī Fiqh: An-Nawawī, *Al-Minhāj* together with *Sharḥ Mughnī al-Muḥtāj; Tafsīr Kabīr.*

Mālikī Fiqh: Ḥāshiah ad-Dusūqī 'ala-sh-Sharh al-Kabīr; Hedāyet al-Mujtahid; Ibn al-'Arabī, Aḥkām al-Qur'ān.

Ḥanbalī Fiqh: Ibn Qudāmah, *Al-Mughnī.*

Ẓāhiriyyah Fiqh: Ibn Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā.*

12. "So that you may believe": "So that you may adopt the attitude of a true and sincere believer." Obviously, the addressees of this verse are not the pagans and polytheists, but the Muslims who had already affirmed the Faith To tell them after reciting before them a *Sharī'ah* injunction: "This is being enjoined so that you may believe in Allah and His Messenger," clearly signifies that the conduct of the person who continues to follow the traditional law of paganism even after hearing the Divine Command, would be contradictory to his profession of the Faith. It is not the character of a believer that when Allah and His Messenger have prescribed a law for him in some matter of life, he should set it

aside and follow some other law of the world, or go on following his own whims and desires.

13. Here "disbeliever" does not imply the denier of Allah and His Messenger, but the person who adopts the attitude and conduct of a disbeliever even after affirming faith in Allah and His Messenger. In other words, it means: "This, in fact, is a characteristic of the disbelievers that even after hearing the Command of Allah and His Messenger, they should go on following their own whims, and continue to practice the customs of ignorance, for a true and sincere believer would never adopt such an attitude. The same thing has been said in Sūrah Āl-'Imrān after enjoining the imperative duty of Ḥajj: "And the one who disbelieves (i.e. does not obey this commandment), then Allah is Self-Sufficient and does not stand in need of anyone in the worlds." (v. 97) At neither place has the word *"kufr"* been used in the sense that whoever continues to have marital relations with the wife after *ẓihār* without making the expiation, or thinks that divorce has taken place by the mere pronouncement of *ẓihār* on the wife, or does not go to perform Hajj, in spite of the means, should be declared an apostate and disbeliever by the religious court and regarded as excommunicated by the Muslims. But it means that in the sight of Allah such people as may reject His Commandments by word or deed, or may least bother to know as to what bounds their Lord has set for them, what He has forbidden and what He has enjoined, what He has made lawful and what unlawful, are not counted among the believers.

14. "Those who oppose...": Those who do not recognize the bounds set by Allah and instead set some other bounds for themselves. Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī has given this commentary of this verse: "That is, the people who resist Allah with regard to the bounds and duties enjoined by Him, and set for themselves some other bounds instead of the bounds set by Him." Baiḍāwī has given this commentary of it: "That is, they show hostility towards and dispute with Allah and His Messenger, or set other bounds for themselves than the bounds set by them, or adopt the bounds set by others." *Ālūsī* in his *Rūḥ al-Mā'āni* has concurred with Baidawi in this commentary and cited the statement of Shaikh-ul-Islām Sa'dullah Chalpī to the effect: "In this verse a threat has been held out to those kings and evil rulers, who have framed many such rules as are opposed to the bounds set by the *Shari'ah*, and called them law." Here, 'Allāma Ālūsī has dwelt upon the constitutional status (i.e, constitutional from the Islamic viewpoint) of the man-made laws as against the *Shari'ah* laws and concluded thus:

"There can be no doubt in the disbelief of the person who regards this law as commendable and superior to the *Shari'ah* and says that it is wiser and better suited to the genius of the people. And when the *Shari'ah* injunction in a particular matter is pointed out to him, he is angry, as we have seen some of those who are under the curse of Allah."

15. The word used in the original is *kabt,* which means to disgrace, to destroy, to curse, to drive off, to push out, to debase. What is meant to be said is that the communities of the former Prophets who resisted Allah and His Messenger and rebelled against His Commandments have already gone to their doom. Now those from among the Muslims who adopt the same attitude in life will also meet with the same evil end. Whenever the people made their own laws contradictory to Divine Law, or adopted laws made by others, they were deprived of Allah's bounty and grace, with the result that their lives were filled with deviations, immoralities and moral and social evils, which caused them to be ultimately degraded and humiliated even in this world. If the same error now is committed by the community of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), there is no reason why it should continue to be regarded with favour by Allah and He may go on protecting it from a disgraceful destruction for ever and ever. Allah had neither any ill will against the communities of His former Messengers nor has He any special connection with the community of this Messenger.

16. A little consideration of the context shows that here two punishments of this attitude have been mentioned: (1) *Kabt,* i.e. debasement and humiliation of this world; and (2) *'adhāb muhīn, i.e.* a disgraceful torment that they will suffer in the Hereafter.

17. That is, their having forgotten their own attitude and conduct does not mean that it is dead and forgotten altogether. For them the disobedience of God and resistance to His Commands may be an ordinary matter which they may forget easily once they have indulged in it and may not even regard it as anything objectionable, which they should have avoided, yet in the sight of God it is no ordinary matter at all. With Him every misdeed of theirs has been noted down, His Register contains a full record of every deed doneby a person, of when and where it was done, what was his own reaction to it, what were its consequences and how far and in what forms did they appear and spread in the world.

18. From here to verse 10 continuously the hypocrites have been taken to task for the attitude they had adopted in the Muslim society. Although apparently they were a part of the Muslim community, secretly they were a separate group from the believers, Whenever the Muslims saw them, they found them whispering secretly together. That is how they conspired and made all sorts of plans in order to create rifts in the ranks of the Muslims, and to cause alarm and spread mischief among them.

19. The question may arise Why have three and five been mentioned here instead of two and three? Why has two, and then four, been left out? The commentators have given many answers to this question but in our opinion the

correct answer is that this style has been adopted for maintaining the literary beauty of the Qur'ān. Without this the style would have suffered from blemishes. Therefore, after making mention of three and five whisperers the gap has been filled up in the following sentence by saying: whether the whisperers are fewer than three, or more than five, in any case Allah is always with them.

20. This Allah's being associated with them is, in fact, in the sense of Allah's being All-Knowing and All-Aware, All-Hearing and All-Seeing, and His being absolute in power, and not in the sense that Allah, God forbid, is a person who is secretly and invisibly present among the five persons as their sixth associate. This, in fact, is meant to make the people realize that they may be holding secret counsels in safe and hidden places and may be able to conceal their plans from the world, but they cannot keep them concealed from Allah, that they may escape from every power of the world, but they cannot escape the grasp of Allah.

21. This shows that before the revelation of this verse the Holy Prophet (upon whom by Allah's peace) had forbidden the people this practice. Yet when they did not desist, Allah directly sent down this verse containing His warning and wrath for such people.

22. This was the common practice of the Jews and the hypocrites. According to several traditions, some Jews came before the Holy Prophet (upon be Allah's peace) and said: *"As-sām 'alaika yā abul-Qāsim."* That is, they pronounced *as-sām 'alaika* in such a manner as to give the impression that they had said *as-salām 'alaika* (peace be on you), which is the Islamic way of greeting. But actually they had said *"Sām"*, which means death. In response the Holy Prophet said: *"wa 'alaikum."* Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah retorted: "May death visit you and the curse of Allah!" The Holy Prophet warned her, saying: " 'Ā'ishah, Allah does not like abusive language," She submitted: "Didn't you hear, O Messenger of Allah, what they said?" The Holy Prophet replied: "And didn't you hear what reply I gave? I said: and the same upon you." (Bukhārī, Muslim, Ibn Jarīr Ibn Abī Hātim). Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās has stated that both the Jews and the hypocrites had adopted this very way of greeting. (Ibn Jarīr).

23. That is, they regarded it as a proof of the Holy Prophet's not being a Messenger. They thought that if he had been a true Messenger, they would be punished by a torment as soon as they greeted him in that way. Since there was not torment while they were greeting him day and night like that, he was not a Messenger of Allah.

24. This shows that *najwā* (talking secretly together) by itself is not forbidden, but it s being lawful or unlawful depends upon the character of the people who hold secret consultations and upon the circumstances under which

such consultations are held, and upon nature of the consultations themselves, If the people whose sincerity, righteousness and purity of character are well known, are seen talking secretly together, nobody would have any misgiving that they were planning mischief. On the contrary, the whispering and secret consultations of the people who are notorious for their evil and wicked character, produce in every mind the suspicion that they are engaged in a new conspiracy. Likewise, if a couple of persons talk for some time together on some matter secretly, it is not objectionable, but if some people have formed themselves into a gang and constantly engaged in a whispering campaign against the Muslim community, this would indeed be a prelude to some mischief. If nothing else, it would at least stir up divisions among the Muslims. Above all, the thing that decides whether *najwā* (secret counsel) is lawful or unlawful is the nature of the things talked of it. If two men hold a secret counsel in order to bring a dispute the an end, or to restore a person's right, or to bring a dispute an end, or to restore a person's right, or to promote a good cause, it is no evil, but rather and act of virtue, On the contrary, if the same secret counsel between two men is held with a view to creating mischief, or usurping the rights of others, or committing a sin, obviously the object itself would be evil and the secret counsel about it evil added to evil.

In this connection, the teaching given by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) of social etiquette is: "When three men are sitting together, no two of them should whisper to each other, for this would cause anguish to the third." *(Bukhārī,* Muslim, *Musnad Aḥmad, Tirmidhī, Abū Da'ūd).* In another *Ḥadīth,* the Holy Prophet said: "Two men should not whisper together, without the leave of the third, for this would cause him anguish." *(Muslim).* This objectionable sort of whishering also applies to the case when two of the three men start talking in a language which is not understood by the third, and even more objectionable would be that during their whispering they should look towards the third person or gesticulate in a manner as to suggest that he is the topic of discussion between them.

25. This has been said so that if a Muslim watches some other people whispering, which causes him the doubt that it is directed against him, he should not feel so offended as to start planning a counter-attack on the basis of mere suspicion, or begin to nourish grief, or malice, or undue concern in his heart. He should understand that no one can harm him except by Allah's leave. This conviction would inspire him with such confidence that he would feel delivered of many a useless worry and imaginary danger and leaving the wicked to themselves would remain engaged in peacefully doing his duty. The believer who has trust in Allah is neither a faint-hearted person, whose peace of mind could be ruined by every doubt and suspicions nor so shallow and mean-minded as would lose his

cool when confronted by the evildoers and start behaving in an unjust manner himself.

26. This has been explained in the Introduction to the Sūrah above. Some commentators regard this Command as restricted to the assemblies of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace). But as pointed out by Imām Mālik, the correct view is that this is a general instruction for the assemblies held by the Muslims. One of the rules of etiquette taught by Allah and His Messenger to the Muslims is that when they are sitting in an assembly and some more people arrive, they should have the courtesy to accommodate the new comers and should squeeze in together as far as possible to make room for them to sit. The new-comers also should have the courtesy not to press in forcibly and make others rise up in order to take their place. In the *Ḥadīth* Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah have reported that the Holy Prophet said: Nobody should make another person rise up so as to take his place, but you should yourself make room for others." *(Musnad Aḥmad Bukhārī Muslim).* And Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'As reports that the Holy Prophet said: "It is not lawful for a person that he should forcibly press in between two men except by their leave." (*Musnad Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī).*

27. 'Abdur Rahmān bin Zaid bin Aslam has stated that the people used to prolong their sitting in the Holy Prophet's as semblies and tried to sit till the end. This caused him inconvenience and discomfort as well as hindrance in his daily chores. At this Allah sent down this Command, teaching the people the etiquette: "When you are told to rise up from the assembly, you should rise up and disperse." (Ibn *Jarīr, Ibn Kathīr).*

28. That is, "You should not think that if in the Holy Prophet's assembly you had to sit a little farther away from him for the sake of making room for others, you would be reduced in rank, or if you were asked to rise up and disperse from the assembly, you were disgraced. The real means of exaltation of ranks is faith and knowledge, and not an opportunity to sit nearest to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in his assembly and sit the longest. If a person happened to sit nearer to him, it does not mean that he became exalted in rank, for the high ranks belong only to those who have attained to the wealth of knowledge and faith. Likewise, the person who prolonged his sitting with the Holy Prophet only to cause him inconvenience and discomfort, in fact, displayed lack of good manners. His mere sitting near him for a long time will not exalt him in rank in any way. Far higher and exalted in rank in the sight of Allah is he who attained to true faith and knowledge and imbibed the morals that should belong to a believer.

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أَطْهَرُ ۚ فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَجِدُوْا فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ ءَ أَشْفَقْتُمْ أَنْ تُقَدِّمُوْا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوٰىكُمْ صَدَقٰتٍ ۚ فَإِذْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوْا وَتَابَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقِيْمُوا
الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ وَأَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٣﴾
أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِيْنَ تَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ مَا هُمْ مِّنْكُمْ وَلَا مِنْهُمْ ۙ
وَيَحْلِفُوْنَ عَلَى الْكَذِبِ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٤﴾ أَعَدَّ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيْدًا ۚ إِنَّهُمْ
سَآءَ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٥﴾ اِتَّخَذُوْٓا أَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ
فَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِيْنٌ ﴿١٦﴾ لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ
شَيْئًا ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ أَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿١٧﴾ يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللّٰهُ جَمِيْعًا
فَيَحْلِفُوْنَ لَهٗ كَمَا يَحْلِفُوْنَ لَكُمْ وَيَحْسَبُوْنَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلٰى شَيْءٍ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّهُمْ
هُمُ الْكٰذِبُوْنَ ﴿١٨﴾ اِسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ فَأَنْسٰهُمْ ذِكْرَ اللّٰهِ ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ
حِزْبُ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطٰنِ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ
يُحَآدُّوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗٓ أُولٰٓئِكَ فِي الْأَذَلِّيْنَ ﴿٢٠﴾ كَتَبَ اللّٰهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا وَ
رُسُلِيْ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيْزٌ ﴿٢١﴾ لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُّؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ
يُوَآدُّوْنَ مَنْ حَآدَّ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ وَلَوْ كَانُوْٓا اٰبَآءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ
أَوْ عَشِيْرَتَهُمْ ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ كَتَبَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمُ الْإِيْمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُمْ بِرُوْحٍ مِّنْهُ ۚ وَ
يُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۚ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ
وَرَضُوْا عَنْهُ ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ حِزْبُ اللّٰهِ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللّٰهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

Are you afraid that before your consultation in private, you will have to give charity? Well, if you do not do so—and Allah has forgiven you this—then establish the *salāt* and practise the *zakāt* regularly and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah is aware of whatever you do.[30] 13

Have you not seen those who have taken as friends a people who are under Allah's wrath?[31] They are neither yours nor theirs,[32] and they swear to a falsehood knowingly.[33] Allah has prepared a severe torment for them. Evil are the deeds they are doing! They have made their oaths a covering under which they debar others from the Way of Allah.[34] For this they shall have a disgraceful torment. Neither shall their riches avail them anything to protect them from Allah nor their children. They are the fellows of Hell in which they shall live for ever. The Day Allah raises them up all, they shall swear to Him as they swear to you,[35] thinking that their oaths will avail them something. Know it well that they are utter liars. Satan has overpowered them and has caused them to forget God's remembrance. They are of Satan's party. Know it well that those of Satan's party indeed are the real losers. Surely the most abject of the creatures are those who resist Allah and His Messenger. Allah has written down: "I and My Messengers shall most certainly prevail."[36] Allah is All-Powerful and All-Mighty. 14-21

You will never find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who have opposed Allah and His Messenger, even though they be their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kinsfolk.[37] They are those in whose hearts Allah has inscribed faith and has strengthened them with a spirit from Himself. He will admit them to such Gardens underneath which rivers will be flowing, to dwell therein for ever. Allah is well pleased with them and they with Allah. They are of Allah's party. Know it well that those of Allah's party alone are truly successful! 22

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29. According to Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, this Command was sent down because the Muslims had started requesting the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) for private counsel much too frequently; and this put him to great inconvenience. At last, Allah willed to relieve His Prophet of this burden. *(Ibn Jarīr).* Zaid bin Aslam says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) would never turn down the request of anyone, who wanted to consult him

in private. Whoever desired to have private counsel with him, he would oblige him. Often it so happened that the people would ask for private counsel in matters in which there was no real need. This was the time when all of Arabia was engaged in war against Madīnah. Sometimes after a person had made such a request, Satan would whisper into the ears of the people the idea that he had brought to the Holy Prophet the news of invasion by such and such tribes, and this would cause rumours to spread in Madinah. On the other hand, this would give the hypocrites an opportunity to say that Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) was a credulous person, who listened to and believed in whatever anyone told him. Because of this Allah imposed the restriction that anyone who wanted to have private counsel with the Prophet should first give away something in charity. (Ibn 'Arabī: *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*). Qatādah says that some people talked to the Holy Prophet in private in order to show their superiority to others.

Ḥaḍrat 'Alī says when this was enjoined the Holy Prophet asked him, "What should be the quantity of the charity? Should it be one dīnar? I said: This is more than the people can afford. The Holy Prophet then asked: Should it be half a dīnār? I said: This too is too much. Then he asked what it should be. I said . Gold equal to a barley grain. The Holy Prophet remarked: Your advice is for too little!" *(Ibn Jarīr, Tirmidhī, Musnad Abū ya'lā).* In another tradition Ḥaḍrat 'Alī says: "This is a verse of the Qur'ān which no one acted upon except me. As soon as it was enjoined, I offered the charity and consulted the Holy Prophet about a problem. " *(Ibn Jarīr, Hākim, Ibn al-Mundhir, 'Abd bin Ḥumaid).*

30. This second Command was sent down some time after the first Command, and it cancelled the injunction of giving something in charity. However, there is a difference of opinion as to how long the injunction remained in force. Qatādah says it remained in force for less than a day and then was abrogated. Muqātil bin Ḥayyān says that it remained in force for ten days; and this is the longest period of its life mentioned in any tradition.

31. The allusion is to the Jews of Madīnah whom the hypocrites had taken for friends.

32. That is, they are neither sincere in their connections with the believers, nor with the Jews; their relations with both are based on selfish interests.

33. "A falsehood": that they have believed in and have accepted Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) as their guide and leader and are faithful to Islam and the Muslims

34. That is, on the one hand, they swear oaths to their faith and fidelity to make the Muslims believe that they belong to them, and on the other, they sow

doubts and suspicions against Islam and the followers of Islam and the Prophet of Islam in the hearts of the people, so that they should turn away from Islam in disgust taking their word to be a true inside picture of Islam, coming from the "Muslims" themselves.

35. That is, "Not being content with swearing oaths before the people in this world, they will swear false oaths also before Allah Himself in the Hereafter, for falsehood and fraud has become second nature with them, which they will not give up even after death."

36. For explanation, see E.N. 93 of Sūrah As-Sāāffāt.

37. Two things have been stated in this verse: first, a matter of principle, and the second, a statement of fact. The matter of principle is that faith in the true Religion and love of the opponents of the Religion are contradictory things, which cannot conceivably co-exist in one and the same place. It is absolutely impossible that love of the Faith and love of the enemies of Allah and His Messenger should co-exist in one and the same heart, just as a person's love for himself and his love for his enemy cannot co-exist in his heart simultaneously. This is as if to say: "If you see a person who professes the Faith as well as keeps relations of love with the opponents of Islam, you should never be involved in the misunderstanding that he might perhaps be true in his profession in spite of his this attitude and conduct. Likewise, the people who have established relations with Islam and the opponents of Islam simultaneously, should themselves also consider their position well and see what they actually are. Are they believers or hypocrites? And what actually they want to be to they want to live as believers or as hypocrites? If they have any righteousness left in them, and any feeling that from the moral viewpoint hypocrisy is the meanest and most abject attitude for man, they should give up their attempt to ride in two boats simultaneously. Faith wants them to be decisive. If they want to remain believers, they should sever and sacrifice all those connections that clash with their relationship with Islam; if they hold another relation dearer to themselves than the relationship with Islam, then they should better give up their false profession of Islam.

Here, Allah has not just stated the principle but has also presented the actual fact as a model before those who professed the Faith. The true believers had in actual fact severed all connections that clashed with their relationship with Allah's Religion. This had been witnessed by entire Arabia in the battles of Badr and Uhud. The emigrants from Makkah had fought against their own tribe and closest kinsmen only for the sake of Allah and His Religion. Ḥaḍrat Abū 'Ubaidah killed his father, 'Abdullah bin al-Jarrāh. Ḥaḍrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair killed his brother, 'Ubaid bin 'Umair; Ḥaḍrat Umar killed his maternal uncle, 'Ās bin Hisham bin Mughirah; Ḥaḍrat 'Abū Bakr became ready to fight his son 'Abdur

Raḥmān; Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, Ḥaḍrat Hamzah and Ḥaḍrat 'Ubaidah bin al-Ḥārith killed 'Utbah, Shaibah and Walīd bin 'Utbah, who were their close kinsmen. About the prisoners of war captured at Badr, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar gave the opinion that they should all be put to the sword, and proposed that a relative should kill a relative. In the same battle of Badr when Ḥaḍrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair saw that an Anṣārī Muslim had captured his real brother, Abu 'Azīz bin 'Umair, and was tying him, he shouted out to him, saying: "Tie him tight: his mother is a rich woman: she will pay you a large ransom." Abū 'Azīz said: "You are a brother and say this?" Ḥaḍrat Mus'ab replied: "Not you, but this Anṣarī; Muslim is my brother now, who has captured you." In the same battle of Badr Abul 'Āṣ., the son-in-law of the Holy Prophet (upon whom he Allah's peace), was taken a prisoner and was shown no special favour any different from the other prisoners on account of his relationship with the Holy Prophet. Thus, the world was made a witness to the actual fact and shown the character of the sincere Muslims and their profound relationship with Allah and His Messenger.

Dailamī has related this invocation of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Mu'ādh: *"Alla-humma lā taj'al il-fājir-in* (and according to another tradition, *il-fāsiq-in*) *'alayya yadan wa lā ni'mata fa-yuwadda-hū qalbī fa-innī wajad-tu fīmā uḥītu ilayya lā tajidu qaum-an-yu'minūna billāhi wal-yaum il-ākhir-i yuwāddūna man hādd-Allāha wa Rasūlahū:* "O God, let not the wicked (and according to another tradition, the sinful) do me a favour because of which I may have love for him in my heart, for in the Revelation sent down by You, I have also found this: 'You will never find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His Messenger'."



LIX

AL-ḤASHR

الحَشْر

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LIX

AL-ḤASHR

الحَشْر

INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah derives its name from the mention of the word *al-ḥashr* in verse 2, thereby implying that it is the Sūrah in which the word *al-ḥashr* has occurred.

Period of Revelation

Bukhārī and *Muslim* contain a tradition from Ḥaḍrat Sa'īd bin Jubair to the effect: When I asked Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās about Sūrah Al-Ḥashr, he replied that it was sent down concerning the battle against the Banī an-Naḍīyr just as Sūrah Al-Anfāl was sent down concerning the Battle of Badr." In another tradition from Ḥaḍrat Sa'īd bin Jubair, the words cited from Ibn 'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him) are: *Qul: Sūrah an-Naḍīr:* Say, it is Sūrah an-Naḍīr." The same

thing has been related also from Mujāhid, Qatādah, Zuhrī Ibn Zaid, Yazid bin Rūmān, Muḥammad bin Isḥāq and others. They are unanimous that the followers of the Book whose banishment has been mentioned in it, imply the Bani an-Naḍīr. Yazid bin Rūmān, Mujāhid and Muḥammad bin Isḥāq have stated that this whole Sūrah, from beginning to end, came down concerning this very battle.

As for the question as to when this battle took place, Imām Zuhrī has stated on the authority of 'Urwah bin Zubair that it took place six months after the Battle of Badr. However, Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hishām and Balādhurī regard it as an event of Rabī' al-Awwal, A.H. 4, and the same is correct. For all traditions agree that this battle took place after the incident of Bi'r Ma'ūnah, and historically also it is well .known that the incident of Bi'r Ma'ūnah occurred after the Battle of Uḥud and not before it.

Historical Background

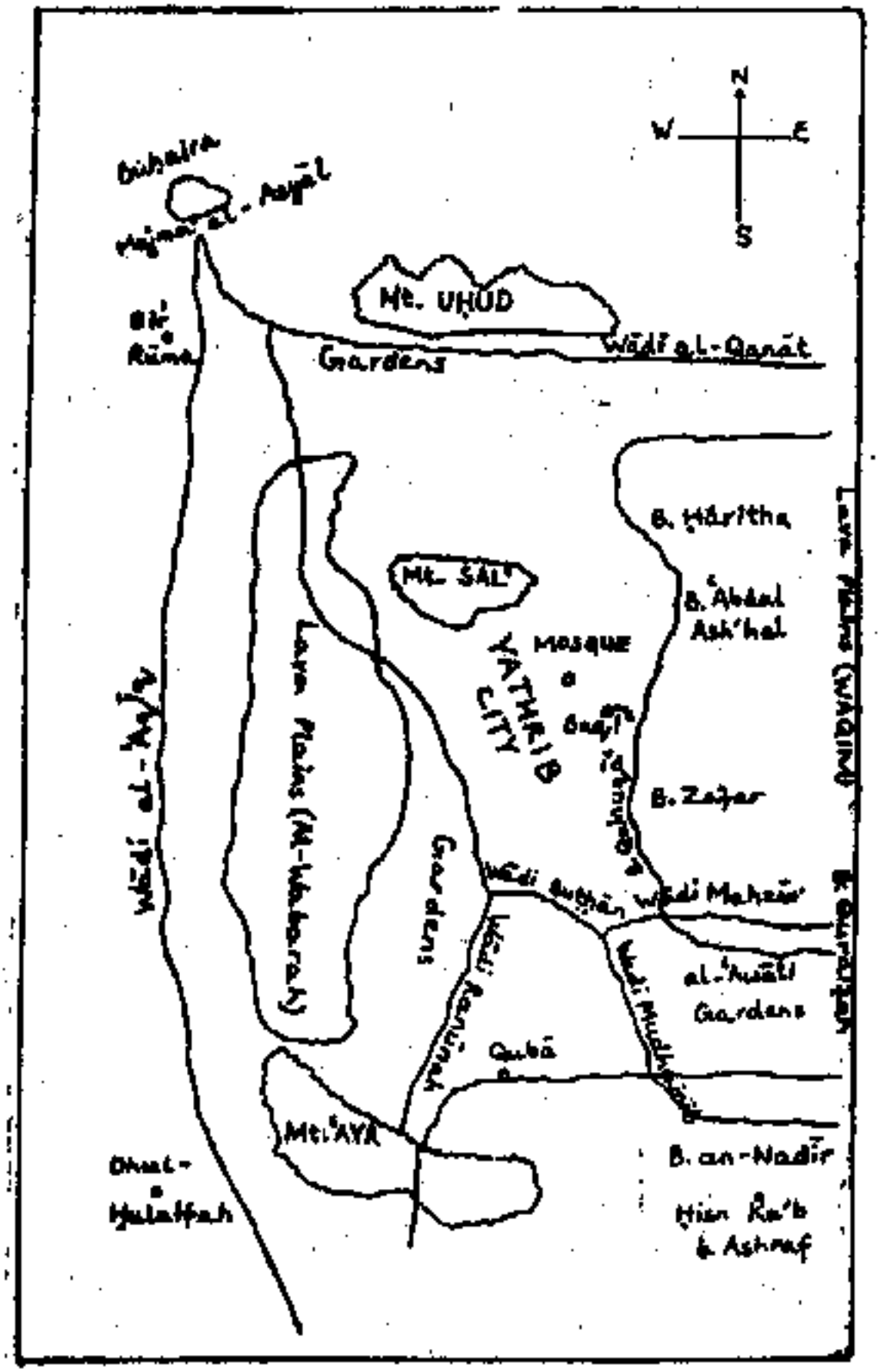
In order to understand the subject-matter of this Sūrah well, it is necessary to have a look at the history of the Madīnah and Ḥejāz Jews, for without it one cannot know precisely the real causes of the Holy Prophet's dealing with their different tribes the way he did.

No authentic history of the Arabian Jews exists in the world. They have not left any writing of their own in the form of a book or a tablet which might throw light on their past, nor have the Jewish historians and writers of the non-Arab world made any mention of them, the reason being that after their settlement in the Arabian peninsula they had detached themselves from the main body of the nation, and the Jews of the world did not count them as among themselves. For they had given up Hebrew culture and language, even the names, and adopted Arabism instead. In the tablets that have been un-earthed in the archaeological research in the Ḥejāz no trace of the Jews is found before the first century of the Christian era, except for a few Jewish names. Therefore, the history of the Arabian Jews is based mostly on the verbal traditions prevalent among the Arabs most of which had been spread by the Jews themselves.

The Jews of the Ḥejāz claimed that they hard come o settle in Arabia during the last stage of the life of the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him). They said hat/ the Prophet Moses had despatched an army to

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(facing p. 99)



exple the Amalekites from the land of Yathrib and had commanded it not to spare even a single so I of that tribe. The Israelite army carried out the Prophet's command, but spared the life of a handsome prince of he Amalekite king and returned with him to Palestine. By that time the Prophet Moses had passed away. His successors took great exception to what the army had done, for by sparing the life of an Amalekite it had clearly disobeyed the Prophet and violated the Mosaic law. Consequently, they excluded the army from their community, and it had to return to Yathrib and settle ere for ever. *(Kitāb al-Aghāni, vol. xix, p. 94).* Thus the Jews claimed that they had been living in Yathrib since about 1200 B.C. But, this had in fact no historical pasis and probably the Jews had invented this story in order to overawe the Arabs into believing that they ere of noble lineage and the original inhabitants of the land.

The second Jewish immigration, according to the Jews took, place in 587 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzer, the king of Babylon, destroyed Jerusalem and dispersed the Jews throughout the world. The Arab Jews said that several of their tribes at that time had come to settle in Wādi al-Qurā, Taimā' and Yathrib. (Al-Balādhurī, *Futuḥ al-Buldān).* But this too has no historical basis. By this also they might have wanted to prove that they were the original settlers of the area

As a matter of fact, what is established is that when in A.D 70 the Romans massacred the Jews in Palestine, and then in A.D. 132 expelled them from that land, many of the Jewish tribes fled to find an asylum in the Ḥejāz, a territory that was contiguous to Palestine in the south. Here, they settled wherever they found water springs and greenery, and then by intrigue and through money-lending business gradually occupied the fertile lands. Ailah, Maqnā, Tabūk, Taimā', Wādi al-Qurā Fadak and Khaiber came under their control in that very period; and Banī Quraiẓah, Banī al-Naḍīr, Banī Bahdal and Banī Qainuqā' also came in the same period and occupied Yathrib.

Among the tribes that settled in Yathrib the Banī al-Naḍīr and the Banī Quraiẓah were more prominent, for they belonged to the Cohen or priest class. They were looked upon as of noble descent and enjoyed religious leadership among their co-religionists. When they came to settle in Madīnah there were some other tribes living there before, whom they subdued and became practically the owners of this green and

fertile land About three centuries later, in A.D. 450 or 451, the great flood of Yaman occurred which has been mentioned in vv. 16-17 of Sūrah Sabā above. As a result o this different tribes of the people of Sabā were compelled to leave Yaman and disperse in different parts of Arabia. Thus, the Banī Ghassān went to settle in Syria, Bani Lakhm in Ḥīrah (Iraq), Banī Khazraj between Jeddah and Makkah and the Aus and the Khazraj went to settle in Yathrib. As Yathrib was under Jewish domination, they at first did not allow the Aus and the Khazraj to gain a footing and the two Arab tribes had to settle on lands that had not yet been brought under cultivation, where they could hardly produce just enough to enable them to survive. At last, one of their chiefs went to Syria to ask *for* the assistance of their Ghassanide brothers; he brought an army from there and broke the power of the Jews. Thus, the Aus and the Khazraj were able to gain complete dominance over Yathrib, with the result that two of the major Jewish tribes, Banī an-Nadir and Banī Quraiẓah, were forced to take quarters outside the city. Since the third tribe, Bans Qainuqā', was not on friendly terms with the other two tribes, it stayed inside the city as usual, but had to seek protection of the Khazraj tribe. As a counter measure to this Banī in-Naḍīr and Banī Quraiẓah took protection of the Gus tribe so that they could live in peace in the suburbs of Yathrib. The map will show where under the new set up the Jewish settlements were located in Yathrib and around it.

Before the Holy Prophet's arrival at Madīnah until his emigration the following were the main features of he Jews' position in Ḥejāz in general and in Yathrib particular;

(1) In the matter of language, dress, civilization and way of life they had completely adopted Arabism, even their names had become Arabian.' Of the 12 Jewish tribes that had settled in Ḥejāz, none except the Banī za'ūrā' retained its Hebrew name. Except for a few scattered scholars none knew Hebrew. In fact, there is nothing in poetry of the Jewish poets of the pre-Islamic days to distinguish it from the poetry of the Arab poets in language, ideas and themes. They even intermarried with the Arabs. In fact, nothing distinguished them from the common Arabs except religion. Notwithstanding this, they had not lost their identity among the Arabs and had kept their Jewish prejudice alive most

ardently and jealously. They had adopted superficial Arabism because they could not survive in Arabia without it.

(2) Because of this Arabism the western orientalists have been misled into thinking that perhaps they were not really Israelites but Arabs who had embraced Judaism, or that at least majority of them consisted of the Arab Jews. But there is no historical proof to show that the Jews ever engaged in any proselytizing activities in Ḥejāz, or their rabbis invited the Arabs to embrace Judaism like the Christian priests and missionaries. On the contrary, we see that they prided themselves upon their Israelite descent and racial prejudices. They called the Arabs the Gentiles, which did not mean illiterate or un-educated but savage and un-civilized people. They believed that the Gentiles did not possess any human rights: these were only reserved for the Israelites, and therefore, it was lawful and right for the Israelites to defraud them of their properties by every fair and foul means. Apart from the Arab chiefs, they did not consider the common Arabs fit enough to have equal status with them even if they entered Judaism. No historical proof is available, nor is there any evidence in the Arabian traditions, that some Arab tribe or prominent clan might have accepted Judaism. However, mention has been made of some individuals, who had become Jews. The Jews, however, were more interested in their trade and business than in the preaching of their: religion. That is why Judaism did not spread as a religion and creed in Ḥejāz but remained only as a mark of pride and distinction of a few Israelite tribes. The Jewish rabbis, however, had a flourishing business in granting amulets and charms, fortune-telling and sorcery, because se of which they were held in great awe by the Arabs for their "knowledge" and practical wisdom.

(3) Economically they were much stronger than the Arabs. Since they had emigrated from more civilized and culturally advanced countries of Palestine and Syria, they knew many such arts as were unknown to the Arabs; they also enjoyed trade relations with the outside world. Hence, they had captured the business of importing grain in Yathrib and the upper Ḥejāz and exporting dried dates to other countries. Poultry farming and fishing also

were mostly under their control. They were good at cloth-weaving too. They had also set up wine-shops here and there, where they sold wine which they imported from Syria. The Banī Qainuqā' generally practised crafts such as that of the goldsmith, blacksmith and vessel-maker. In all these occupations, trade and business these Jews earned exorbitant profits, but their chief occupation was trading in money-lending in which they had ensnared the Arabs of the surrounding areas. More particularly the chiefs and elders of the Arab tribes who were given to a life of pomp, bragging and boasting on the strength of borrowed money were deeply indebted to them. They lent money on high rates of interest and then would charge compound interest, which one could hardly clear off once one was involved in it. Thus, they had rendered the Arbas economically hollow, but it had naturally induced a deep rooted hatred among the common Arabs against the Jews.

(4) The demand of their trade and economic interests was that they should neither estrange one Arab tribe by befriending another, nor take part in their mutual wars. But, on the other hand, it was also in their interests, that they should not allow the Arabs to be united and should keep them fighting and entrenched against each other, for they knew that whenever the Arab tribes united, they would not allow them to remain in possession of their large properties, gardens and fertile lands, which they had come to own through their profiteering and money-lending business. Furthermore, each of their tribes also had to enter into alliance with one or another powerful Arab tribe for the sake of its own protection so that no other powerful tribe should overawe it by its might. Because of this they had not only to take part in the mutual wars of the Arabs but they often had to go to war in support of the Arab tribe to which their tribe was tied in alliance against another Jewish tribe which was allied to the enemy tribe. In Yathrib the Banī Quraiẓah and the Banī An-Naḍīr were the allies of the Aus while the Banī Quraizah' of the Khazraj. A little before the Holy Prophet's emigration, these Jewish tribes had confronted each other in support of their respective allies in the

bloody war that took place between the Aus and the Khazraj at Bu'āth.

Such were the conditions when Islam came to Madīnah and ultimately an Islamic State came into exitence after the Holy Prophet's (upon whom be Allah's peace) arrival there. One of the first things that he accomplished soon after establishing this state was unification of the Aus and the Khazraj and the Emigrants into a brotherhood, and the second was that he concluded a treaty between the Muslims and the Jews on definite conditions, in which it was pledged that neither party would encroach on the rights of the other, and both would unite in a joint defence against the external enemies. Some important clauses of this treaty are as follows, which clearly show what the Jews and the Muslims had pledged to adhere to in their mutual relationship:

"The Jews must bear their expenses and the Muslims their expenses. Each must help the other against anyone who attacks the people of this document. They must seek mutual advice and consultation, and loyalty is a protection against treachery. They shall sincerely wish one another well. Their relations will be governed by piety and recognition of the rights of others, and not by sin and wrongdoing. The wronged must be helped. The Jews must pay with the believers so long as the war lasts. Yathrib shall be a sanctuary for the people of this document....If any dispute or controversy likely to cause trouble should arise, it must be referred to God and to Muhammad the Apostle of God. Quraish and their helpers shall not be given protection. The contracting parties are bound to help one another against any attack on Yathrib....Every one shall be responsible for the defence of the portion to which he belongs." *(Ibn Hishām, vol. ii,* pp. 147 to 150).

This was on absolute and definitive covenant to the conditions of which the Jews themselves had agreed. But not very long after this they began to show hostility towards the Holy Prophet of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace) and Islam and the Muslims, and their hostility and perverseness went on increasing day by day. Its main causes were three:

First, they envisaged the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) merely as a chief of his people, who should be content to have concluded a political agreement with them and should only concern himself with the worldly interests of his group. But they found that he

was extending an invitation to belief in Allah and the Apostleship and the Book (which also included belief their own Prophets and scriptures), and was urging the people to give up disobedience of Allah and adopt obedience to the Divine Commands and abide by the moral laws of their own prophets. This they could not put up with. They feared that if this universal ideological movement gained momentum it would destroy their rigid religiosity and wipe out their racial nationhood.

Second, when they saw that the Aus and the Khazraj and the Emigrants were uniting into a brotherhood and the people from the Arab tribes of the surrounding areas, who entered Islam, were also joining this Islamic Brotherhood of Madinah and forming a religious community, they feared that the selfish policy that they had been following of sowing discord between the Arab tribes for the promotion of their own well-being and interests for centuries, would not work in the new system, but they would face a united front of the Arabs against which their intrigues and machinations would not succeed.

Third, the work that the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace) was carrying out of reforming the society and civilization included putting an end to all unlawful methods in business and mutual dealings. More than that, he had declared taking and giving of interest also as impure and unlawful earning. This caused them the fear that if his rule became established in Arabia, he would declare interest legally forbidden, and in this they saw their own economic disaster and death.

For these reasons they made resistance and opposition to the Holy Prophet their national ideal. They would never hesitate to employ any trick and machination, any device and cunning, to harm him. They spread every kind of falsehood so as to cause distrust against him in the people's minds. They created every kind of doubt, suspicion and misgiving in the hearts of the new converts so as to turn them back from Islam. They would make false profession of Islam and then would turn apostate so that it may engender more and more misunderstandings among the people against Islam and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace). They would conspire with the hypocrites to create mischief and would cooperate with every group and tribe hostile to Islam. They would create rifts between the Muslims and would do

whatever they could to stir them up to mutual feuds and fighting. The people of the Aus and the Khazraj tribes were their special target, with whom they had been allied for centuries. Making mention of the war of Bu'āth before them they would remind them of their previous enmities so that they might again resort to the sword against each other and shatter their bond of fraternity into which Islam had bound them. They would resort to every kind of deceit and fraud in order to harm the Muslims economically. Whenever one of those with whom that had business dealings, would accept Islam, they would do whatever they could to cause him financial loss. If he owed them something they would worry and harass him by making repeated demands, and if they owed him something, they would withhold the payment and would publicly say that at the time the bargain was made he professed a different religion, and since he had changed his religion, they were no longer under any obligation towards him. Several instances of this nature have been cited in the explanation of Sūrah A 'Imrān given in the commentaries by Ṭabari, Nisābūrī, Ṭabrisī and in *Rūḥ al-Ma'āni*.

They had adopted this hostile attitude against the covenant even before the Battle of Badr. But when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and the Muslims won a decisive victory over the Quraish at Badr, they were filled with grief and anguish, malice and anger. They were in fact anticipating that in that war the powerful Quraish would deal a death blow to the Muslims. That is why even before the news of the Islamic victory reached Madīnah they had begun to spread the rumour that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had fallen a martyr and the Muslims had been routed, and the Quraish army under Abu Jahl was advancing on Madīnah. But when the battle was decided against their hopes and wishes, they burst with anger and grief. Ka'b bin Ashraf, the chief of the Banī an-Naḍīr, cried out: "By God, if Muḥammad has actually killed these nobles of Arabia, the earth's belly would be better for us than its back." Then he went to Makkah and incited the people to vengeance by writing and reciting provocative elegies for the Quraish chiefs killed at Badr. Then he returned to Madīnah and composed lyrical verses of an insulting nature about the Muslim women. At last, enraged with his mischief, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) sent Muḥammad bin Maslamah Anṣārī in

Rabī' al-Awwal, A.H. 3, and had him slain. *(Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hishām, Ṭabarī).*

The first Jewish tribe which, after the Battle of Badr, openly and collectively broke their covenant were the Banī Qainuqā'. They lived in a locality inside the city of Madīnah. As they practised the crafts of the goldsmith, blacksmith and vessel maker, the people of Madīnah had to visit their shops fairly frequently. They were proud of their bravery and valour. Being black-smiths by profession even their children were well-armed, and they could instantly muster 700 fighting men from among themselves. They were also arrogantly aware that they enjoyed relations of confederacy with the Khazraj and 'Abdullah bin Ubbay, the chief of the Khazraj, was their chief supporter. At the victory of Badr, they became so provoked that they began to trouble and harass the Muslims and their women in particular, who visited their shops. By and by things came to such a pass that one day a Muslim woman was stripped naked publicly in their bazaar. This led to a brawl in which a Muslim and a Jew were killed. Thereupon the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself visited their locality, got them together and counselled them on decent conduct. But the reply that they gave was: "O Muḥammad, you perhaps think we are like the Quraish; they did not know fighting; therefore, you overpowered them. But when you come in contact with us, you will see how men fight." This was in clear words a declaration of war. Consequently, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) laid siege to their quarters towards the end of Shawwāl (and according to some others, of Dhī Qa'dah) A.H. 2. The siege had hardly lasted for a fortnight when they surrendered and all their fighting men were tied and taken prisoners. Now 'Abdullah bin Ubayy came up in support of them and insisted that they should be pardoned. The Holy Prophet conceded his request and decided that the Banī Qainuqā.' would be exiled from Madīnah leaving their properties, armour and tools of trade behind. *(Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Hishām, Tarīkh Ṭabarī).*

For some time after these punitive measures (i.e. the banishment of the Qainuqā' and killing of Ka'b bin Ashraf), the Jews remained so terror-stricken that they did not dare commit any further mischief. But later when in Shawwāl, A H. 3, the Quraish in order to anvenge themselves for the defeat at Badr, marched against Madīnah with great preparations, and the Jews saw that only a thousand men had marched

out with the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) as against three thousand men of the Quraish, and even they were deserted by 300 hypocrites who returned to Madīnah, they committed the first and open breach of the treaty by refusing to join the Holy Prophet in the defence of the city although they were bound to it. Then, when in the Battle of Uḥud the Muslims suffered reverses, they were further emboldened. So much so that the Banī an-Naḍīr made a secret plan to kill the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) though the plan failed before it could be executed. According to the details, after the incident of Bi'r Ma'ūnah (Ṣafar, A.H. 4) 'Amr bin Umayyah Damrī slew by mistake two men of the Banī 'Amir in retaliation, who actually belonged to a tribe which was allied to the Muslims, but 'Amr had mistaken them for the men of the enemy. Because of this mistake their blood-money became obligatory on the Muslims. Since the Banī an-Naḍīr were also a party in the alliance with the Banī 'Amir, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) went to their clan along with some of his Companions to ask for their help in paying the blood-money. Outwardly they agreed to contribute, as he wished, but secretly they plotted that a person should go up to the top of the house by whose wall the Holy Prophet was sitting and drop a rock on him to kill him. But before they could execute their plan, Allah informed him in time and he immediately got up and returned to Madīnah.

Now there was no question of showing them any further concession. The Holy Prophet at once sent to them the ultimatum that the treachery they had meditated against him had come to his knowledge; therefore, they were to leave Madīnah within ten days; if anyone of them was found staying behind in their quarters, he would be put to the sword. Meanwhile 'Abdullah bin Ubayy sent them the message that he would help them with two thousand men and that the Banī Quraiẓah and Banī Ghaṭafān also would come to their aid; therefore, they should stand firm and should not go. On this false assurance they responded to the Holy Prophet's ultimatum saying that they would not leave Madīnah and he could do whatever was in his power. Consequently, in Rabī' al-Awwal, A.H. 4, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) laid siege to them, and after a few days of the siege (which according to some traditions were 6 and according to others 15 days) they agreed to leave Madīnah on the condition that they

could retain all their property which they could carry on their camels, except the armour. Thus, Madīnah was rid of this second mischievous tribe of Jews. Only two of the Banī an-Naḍīr became Muslims and stayed behind. Others went to Syria and Khaiber.

This the event that has been discussed in this Sūrah.

Theme and Subject Matter

The theme of the Sūrah as stated above, is an appraisal of the battle against the Banī an-Naḍīr. In this, on the whole, four things have been discussed.

(1) In the first four verses the world has been admonished to take heed of the fate that had just befallen the Banī an-Naḍīr. A major tribe which was as strong in numbers as the Muslims, whose people boasted of far more wealth and possessions, who were by no means equipped militarily, and whose forts were well-fortified, could not stand siege even for a few days, and expressed their readiness to accept banishment from their centuries old, well-established settlement even though not a single man from among them was slain. Allah says that this happened not because of any power possessed by the Muslims but because the Jews had tried to resist and fight Allah and His Messenger, and those who dare to resist the power of Allah, always meet with the same fate.

(2) In verse 5, the rule of the law of war that has been enunciated is: the destruction caused in the enemy territory for military purposes does not come under "spreading mischief in the earth."

(3) In vv. 6-10 it has been stated how the lands and properties which come under the control of the Islamic State as a result of war or peace terms, are to be managed. As it was the first ever occasion that the Muslims took control of a conquered territory, the law concerning it was laid down for their guidance.

(4) In vv. 11-17 the attitude that the hypocrites had adopted on the occasion of the battle against the Banī an-Naḍīr has been reviewed and the causes underlying it have been pointed out.

(5) The whole of the last section (vv. 18-24) is an admonition for all those people who had professed to have affirmed the faith and joined the Muslim community, but were devoid of the true spirit of the faith. In it they have been told what is the real demand of the Faith, what is the real difference between piety and wickedness, what is the place and importance of the Qur'ān which they professed to believe in, and what are the attributes of God in Whom they claimed to have believed.

سُوْرَةُ الْحَشْرِ ٢٤ اٰيَاتُهَا ٣ رُكُوْعَاتُهَا مَدَنِيَّةٌ ١٠١

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

سَبَّحَ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۝١ هُوَ
الَّذِيْٓ اَخْرَجَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِاَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ ۭ
مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ اَنْ يَّخْرُجُوْا وَظَنُّوْٓا اَنَّهُمْ مَّانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُوْنُهُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ فَاَتٰىهُمُ
اللّٰهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوْا ۤ وَقَذَفَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ يُخْرِبُوْنَ بُيُوْتَهُمْ
بِاَيْدِيْهِمْ وَاَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۤ فَاعْتَبِرُوْا يٰٓاُولِي الْاَبْصَارِ ۝٢ وَلَوْلَآ اَنْ كَتَبَ
اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَلَاۗءَ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا ۭ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ عَذَابُ النَّارِ ۝٣
ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ شَاۗقُّوا اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّشَاۗقِّ اللّٰهَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ
الْعِقَابِ ۝٤ مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِّنْ لِّيْنَةٍ اَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوْهَا قَاۗىِٕمَةً عَلٰٓى اُصُوْلِهَا فَبِاِذْنِ
اللّٰهِ وَلِيُخْزِيَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ۝٥ وَمَآ اَفَاۗءَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰي رَسُوْلِهٖ مِنْهُمْ فَمَآ اَوْجَفْتُمْ
عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَّلَا رِكَابٍ وَّلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُسَلِّطُ رُسُلَهٗ عَلٰي مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۭ وَ
اللّٰهُ عَلٰي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝٦ مَآ اَفَاۗءَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰي رَسُوْلِهٖ مِنْ اَهْلِ الْقُرٰى
فَلِلّٰهِ وَلِلرَّسُوْلِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيْلِ ۙ كَيْ
لَا يَكُوْنَ دُوْلَةًۢ بَيْنَ الْاَغْنِيَاۗءِ مِنْكُمْ ۭ وَمَآ اٰتٰىكُمُ الرَّسُوْلُ فَخُذُوْهُ ۤ وَمَا
نَهٰىكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوْا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝٧ لِلْفُقَرَاۗءِ
الْمُهٰجِرِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُخْرِجُوْا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَاَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُوْنَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ
اللّٰهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَّيَنْصُرُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ الصّٰدِقُوْنَ ۝٨ وَالَّذِيْنَ
تَبَوَّؤُ الدَّارَ وَالْاِيْمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّوْنَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ اِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُوْنَ

LIX

AL-ḤASHR

الحَشْر

Verses: 24

Revealed at Madinah

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

All that there is in the heavens and the earth has glorified only Allah, for He alone is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.[1] He it is Who drove the disbelievers from among the people of the Book out of their houses[2] at the very first assault.[3] You did not think that they would ever go out, and they too on their part were thinking that their fortresses would protect them from Allah;[4] but Allah came upon them whence they had little expected.[5] He cast terror into their hearts with the result that they were destroying their dwellings by their own hands as well as by the hands of the believers.[6] So, take heed, O you who have eyes to see![7] 1-2

Had Allah not decreed banishment for them, He would have chastised them in this world,[8] and in the Hereafter there certainly awaits them the torment of the Fire. All this happened because they resisted Allah and His Messenger, and whoever resists Allah (should know that) Allah is stern in inflicting punishment. 3-4

Whatever palm-trees you cut down, or whatever you left standing upon their roots, it was only by Allah's leave.[9] And (Allah gave the leave) in order to disgrace the transgressors.[10] 5

And the properties that Allah took out from their possession and restored to His Messenger,[11] are not such that you might have rushed your horses and camels upon them, but Allah gives His Messengers authority over whomever He wills, and Allah has power over everything[12] Whatever Allah restored to His Messenger from the people of the settlements, belongs to Allah and the Messenger and the kinsfolk and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarers,[13] so that it does not 6-9

remain circulating among your rich people only.[14] Take whatever the Messenger gives you, and refrain from whatever he forbids you. Fear Allah, for Allah is stern in inflicting punishment.[15] (Moreover, the properties) are for those poor emigrants who have been expelled from their homes and their possessions.[16] They seek Allah's bounty and His goodwill, and are ever ready to succour Allah and His Messenger. They indeed are the truthful. (And it is also for those) who believed even before the arrival of the emigrants and were staying in the Abode of Migration.[17] They love those who have migrated to them and entertain no desire in their hearts for what is given to them and prefer others to themselves even though they may be needy.[18] The fact is that those who are saved from the greed of their own hearts, ale truly successful.[19]

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1. For explanation, see E.N.'s 1, 2 of Sūrah Al-Ḥadīd. The object of this introductory sentence before making an appraisal of the banishment of the Banī an-Naḍīr is to prepare the mind to understand the truth that the fate this powerful tribe met was not the result of the power of the Muslims but a manifestation of the power of Allah.

2. Here, the reader should understand one thing at the outset so as to avoid any confusion about the banishment of the Banī an-Naḍīr. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had concluded a formal written treaty with the Banī an-Naḍīr. They had not broken this agreement as such that it should have become void But the reason why they were attacked was that after making different kinds of minor violations of it, they at last committed such an offence which amounted to the breach of trust. That is, they plotted to kill the leader of the other party to the treaty, *i.e.* the Islamic State of Madīnah. The plot became exposed, and when the were accused of breaking the agreement they could not deny it Thereupon, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) told them either to leave Madīnah or to be ready for a war. This notice was in accordance with this injunction of the Qur'ān: "If you ever fear treachery from any people, throw their treaty openly before them." (Al-Anfāl: 58) That is why Allah is describing their exile as His own action, for it was precisely in accordance with Divine Law. In other words, they were not expelled by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and the Muslims but by Allah Himself. The other reason why Allah has described their exile as His own action, has been stated in the following verses.

3. The word *ḥashr* in the Text means to gather the scattered individuals to gether, or to take out scattered individuals after mustering them together. Thus, the words *li-awwal-il-ḥashr* mean: with the first *ḥashr*, or on the occasion of the

first *ḥashr*. As for the question, what is implied by the first *ḥashr* here, the commentators have disputed it. According to one group it implies the banishment of the Banī an-Naḍīr from Madīnah, and this has been described as their first *ḥashr* in the sense that their second *ḥashr* took place in the time of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, when the Jews and the Christians were expelled from the Arabian peninsula, and the final *ḥashr will* take place on the Day of Resurrection. According to the second group it implies the gathering of the Muslim army together to fight the Banī an-Naḍīr; and *li-awwal-il-ḥashr* means that as soon as the Muslims had gathered together to fight them and no blood yet had been shed, they, by the manifestation of Allah's power, offered to be banished from Madīnah of their own accord. In other words, these words have been used here in the meaning of "at the very first assault". Shāh Waliullah has translated it "at the first gathering of the army". Shāh 'Abdul Qādir has translated it "at the first mustering." In our opinion this translation very nearly gives the meaning of these words.

4. To understand this one should keep in mind the fact that the Banī an-Naḍīr had been well established here for centuries. They lived in compact populations outside Madīnah without any lien element. Their settlement was well fortified, which had fortified houses as are generally built in feud-ridden tribal areas. Then heir numerical strength also equalled that of the Muslims, and inside Madīnah itself many of the hypocrites were their supporters. Therefore, the Muslims could never expect that they would, even without fighting, be so unnerved by the siege as to leave their homes willingly. likewise, the Banī an-Naḍīr also could not have imagined that some power would compel them to leave their homes within six days. Although the Banī Qainuqā' had been expelled before them, and their false pride of valour had proved to be of no avail, they lived in a locality inside Madīnah and did not have any separate fortified settlement; therefore, the Banī an-Naḍīr thought that their inability to withstand the Muslims was not exceptionable. Contrary to this, in view of their own fortified settlement and strongholds they could not imagine that some power could turn them out so easily. That is why when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) served a notice on them to leave Madīnah within ten days, they boldly retorted, saying: "We are not going to quit; you may do whatever you please."

Here, the question arises: On what basis has Allah said: 'They were thinking that their fortresses would save them from Allah'. Did the Banī an-Naḍīr really know that they were not facing Muḥammad bin 'Abdullah (upon whom be Allah's peace) but Allah? And did they, in spite of knowing this, think that their fortresses would save them from Allah? This is a question which would confound every such person who does not know the psychology of the Jewish people and their centuries-old traditions. As regards the common men, no one can imagine that despite their knowing consciously that they were facing Allah, they would

entertain the false hope that their forts and weapons would save them from Allah. Therefore, an ignorant person would interpret the Divine Word, saying that the Banī an-Naḍīr in view of the strength of their forts were apparently involved in the misunderstanding that they would remain safe from the Holy Prophet's attack, but in reality they were fighting Allah and from Him their forts could not save them. But the fact is that the Jews in this world are a strange people, who have been knowingly fighting Allah: they killed the Prophets of Allah knowing them to be His Prophets, and they declared boastfully and arrogantly that they had killed the Prophets of Allah. Their traditions say that their great Patriarch, the prophet Jacob, wrestled with Allah throughout the night and Allah could not throw him even till daybreak. Then, when at daybreak Allah asked Jacob to let Him go, Jacob replied that he would not let Him go until He blessed him. Allah asked him his name, and he answere 'Jocob Allah said that his name would no longer be Jacob, but Israel, "because you strove with God and with men, and prevailed." (See Gen. 32: 25-29 in the latest Jewish translation; *The Scriptures Scriptures,* published by the Jewish Publication Society of America 1954). In the Christian translation of the Bible too this subject has been rendered likewise. In the foot-note of the Jewish translation, "Israel" has been explained as: ;He who striveth with God." In the *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature* the meaning given of "Israel" by the Christian scholars is: "Wrestler with God." Then in Hosea (O.T.) the Prophet Jacob has been praised thus: "By his strength he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed." (Ch. 12: 3-4). Now, obviously, the people of Israel are the children of the same Prophet Israel who, according to their faith, had striven with God and wrestled with Him. For them it is not at all difficult that they should stand firm and fight even God. On this very basis, they, even according to their own profession, killed the Prophets of God, and under the same false pride they put the Prophet Jesus on the cross and bragged: "We have killed Jesus Christ, son of Mary, Messenger of Allah." Therefore, it was not against their traditions that they fought Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) despite their knowledge that he was Allah's Messenger. If not their common people, their rabbis and learned men knew full well that he was the Messenger of Allah. The Qur'ān itself contains several evidences to this effect. (For instance, see E.N.'s 79, 95 of Al-Baqarah, E.N.'s 190, 191 of An-Nisā, E.N.'s 70, 73 of As-Sāāffāt).

5. Allah's coming down upon them does not mean that Allah was staying in another place whence He attacked them. But this i9 a metaphoric expression. The object is to give the idea that while facing Allah they were thinking that Allah could chastise them only by bringing an army against them from the front and they were confident that they would resist that force by their fortifications, But Allah attacked them from whence they had not thought it possible; and this was that He

made them weak and broke their power of resistance from within after which neither their weapons nor their strongholds could help them.

6. That is, "The destruction occurred in two ways: from outside the Muslims besieged them and started demolishing their fortifications, and from within, first they raised obstacles of stone and wood to stop the Muslims from advancing, and for this purpose broke their own houses for the material; then, when they became certain that they would have to vacate the place, they started pulling down their houses, which they had so fondly built and decorated, with their own hands, so as to render them useless for the Muslims Later, when they settled peace with the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) on the condition that they would be spared their lives but would have the permission to carry away whatever they could, except the weapons and armour, they started removing the frames of the doors and windows, even pegs; so much so that some people removed the beams and wooden ceilings, which they put upon the back of their camels and left."

7. There are many lessons which one can learn from this event, which have been alluded to in this brief but eloquent sentence. These Jews were none other but the followers of the former Prophets: they believed in God, in the Book, in the former Prophets and the Hereafter. Accordingly, they were the former Muslims. But when they turned their back on religion and morality and adopted open hostility to the truth only for the sake of their selfish desires and worldly motives and interests, and showed scant regard for their treaties and agreements, Allah's grace was turned away from them, otherwise Allah had no personal enmity with them. Therefore, first of all, the Muslims themselves have been admonished to heed their fate and learn a lesson from it, lest they too should start behaving as if they were the beloved children of God, as the Jews did, and should be involved in the misunderstanding that their being included among the followers of the Last Prophet of God would by itself guarantee for them Allah's bounty and His support, apart from which they were not bound to adhere to any demand of religion and morality. Besides, those people of the world also have been asked to learn a lesson from this event, who oppose the truth consciously, and then place reliance upon their wealth and power, their means and resources, thinking that these would save them from the Divine punishment. The Jews of Madīnah were not unaware that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) had not risen for the supremacy of a people or tribe, but he was presenting an ideological invitation the addressees of which were all men, and every man, no matter what race or country he belonged to, could join his *Ummah* by accepting the invitation, without discrimination or distinction. They were themselves witnessing that Bilāl of Ḥabash, Ṣuhaib of Rome, and Salmān of Persia enjoyed the same position and status in the Muslim community as was enjoyed by

the people of the Holy Prophet's own house. Therefore, they were not feeling any danger that the Quraish and the Aus and the Khazrij would gain an upper hand over them. Nor were they unaware that the ideological invitation that he was presenting was precisely the same as their own Prophets had been presenting. The Holy Prophet never put forward the claim that he had come with a new religion, unknown to the people, and that the people should give up their former religion and accept his religion instead. But what he claimed was that the religion being presented by him was the same that the Prophets of God had been preaching and presenting since the beginning of creation. And from their Torah they could themselves confirm that it was actually the same religion, the principles of which were not any different from the principles of the religion of the Prophets. On the same basis they were told in the Qur'ān: "Affirm faith in the teaching sent down by Me, which confirms the teaching that you already possess, and you should not be its first deniers." They were also witnessing what character and morals the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) possessed, and what revolution had taken place in the lives of those who had accepted his message. For a long time the Anṣār of Madīnah had been their closest neighbours. They knew what kind of people they had been before embracing Islam and what they became after their conversion to Islam. Thus, they were well aware of the invitation, of the inviter and of the results of accepting the invitation. But in spite of witnessing and knowing all this, only on account of their racial prejudice and worldly interests, they expended all their energy against the message of truth about which there was no room for doubt at least in their minds. After such an obvious and open hostility to the truth they expected that their strongholds would save them from Allah, whereas the whole human history bears evidence that the one who is resisted by the power of God, cannot save and protect himself by any weapon, means or device.

8. "Would have chastised them in the world": world have caused them to be annihilated. That is, had they fought instead of surrendering to save their lives, they would have been completely wiped out. Their men would have perished in the war and their womenfolk and children would have been taken prisoners and there would be no one to have them ransomed.

9. The reference is to the fact that the Muslims cut down or burnt many of the palm-trees that stood in the oases around the settlement of the Banī an Naḍīr in order to facilitate the siege, However, they left those trees standing which did not obstruct the military operations. At this the hypocrites of Madīnah and the Banī Quraiẓah, and the Banī an-Naḍīr themselves, raised a clamour, saying that, on the one hand, Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) prohibited spreading disorder in the world, but, on the other, fruit trees were being cut down by his command, which amounted to spreading disorder in the world. At this

Allah sent down the Command: "Whatever trees you cut down, or whatever you left standing, your neither act was unlawful, but it had Allah's permission." The legal injunction that is derived from this verse is that the destruction caused for the sake of military operations does not come under "spreading disorder in the world." But spreading disorder in the world is that an army under the fit of war hysteria should intrude into the enemy territory and start destroying the crops, cattle, gardens, houses and everything in its way without any reason. In this matter, the general instruction is the same which Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq gave while despatching the Muslim army to Syria: "Do not cut down fruit trees; do not destroy crops; do not ravage the settlements." This was precisely in accordance with the Qur'anic teaching, which condemns those who spread chaos; "When they get power they direct all their efforts towards spreading corruption in the land, destroying harvests and killing people." (Al-Baqarah: 205). But the specific command in respect of the war exigencies is that if destruction is necessary for military operations against the enemy, it is lawful. Thus, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd has given this explanation in the commentary of this verse: 'The Muslims had cut down only those trees of the Banī an-Naḍīr that stood on the battlefield." (Tafsīr Nīsābūrī). Some *of* the Muslim jurists have overlooked this aspect of the matter and expressed the opinion that the permissibility of cutting the trees of the Bani an-Naḍīr was confined only to that particular event. It does not make it generally permissible that whenever war necessitates trees of the enemy be cut down and burnt. Imām Auzā'ī, Laith and Abū Thaur hold this same opinion. But the majority of the jurists hold the view that for the sake of important military operations it is permissible. However, this is not permissible for the purpose of mere destruction and pillage.

One may ask: This verse of the Qur'ān could satisfy the Muslims, but how could those who did not accept the Qur'ān as Divine Word be satisfied at this reply to their objection that both acts were permissible as they had Allah's permission for it? The answer is: This verse of the Qur'ān was sent down to satisfy only the Muslims; it was not sent down to satisfy the disbelievers. Since due to the objection of the Jews and the hypocrites, or due to their own thinking, they had been involved in the misgiving whether they were guilty of spreading disorder in the earth, Allah gave them the satisfaction that both the acts, cutting down some trees to facilitate the siege and leaving some other trees standing which did not obstruct the siege, were in accordance with Divine Law.

The traditionists in their traditions have disputed the point whether the order to cut and burn the trees had been given by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself, or whether the Muslims had done it of their own accord, and then later asked the Holy Prophet about its legal aspect. Ḥaḍrat Abdullah bin 'Umar has reported that the Holy Prophet himself had ordered it.

(Bukhārī, Muslim , Musnad Aḥmad, Ibn Jarīr). The same also has been reported by Yazīd bin Rūmān *(Ibn Jarīr)*. On the contrary, Mujāhid and Qatādah say that the Muslims had on their own cut down the trees; then a dispute arose among them whether what they had done was permissible or not. Some said it was permissible and some said it was not. At last Allah sent down this verse and approved the act of both. *(Ibn Jarīr)*. The same thing is supported by a tradition of Ḥadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās: 'The Muslims were confused because Some of them had cut the trees and others had not; therefore, they wanted to ask the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) as to who would be rewarded for the act and who would be punished.' *(Nasā'ī)*. Those of the jurists who have preferred the first tradition give the argument that this was the Holy Prophet's personal judgement, which was later ratified by revelation from Allah, and this a proof of the fact that in matters where no Divine Command existed, the Holy Prophet used to follow his personal judgement. On the other hand, those jurists who have preferred the second tradition, argue that the two groups of the Muslims had adopted two different views on the basis of their own personal judgements and Allah ratified both. Therefore, if the learned men arrive at different conclusions by judicious exercise of their personal judgement, then although their opinions might differ, they would all be correct in the Divine *Sharī'ah*.

10. That is, "Allah willed that they should be disgraced if you cut down the trees and also if you left them standing." In the first case, they were disgraced when they saw that the trees of the gardens which they had planted with their own hands and which they had owned since ages, were being cut down before their very eyes and they were watching it helplessly. Even an ordinary peasant and gardener cannot tolerate another's misappropriation or intrusion into his field or garden. He would protect his field or garden at the risk of his life if somebody tried to destroy it in his presence. For if he cannot prevent destruction-n of his property, it would be a sign of his extreme humiliation and weakness. But here a whole tribe, which had been living at this place fearlessly and boldly for centuries, was watching helplessly that its neighbours had invaded its gardens and were destroying the trees while it could do nothing. After this even if they stayed on in Madīnah they would have lived in disgrace and humility. In the second case, they were disgraced when on leaving Madīnah they saw that the lush green gardens which had been in their possession till the previous day were now passing into the possession of the Muslims. Had they the power they would have laid waste the entire gardens by their own hands SO that not a single whole tree passed into the hands of the Muslims. But in their helplessness they left the city, despaired and grief-stricken, leaving everything intact behind.

11. From here to the end of verse 10, Allah explains how the lands and properties that were restored bto the Islamic State after the exile of the Ban; an-

Nadir, are to be managed and administered. As it was the first occasion that a land was conquered and included in the Islamic territory, and many more lands were destined to be conquered in the future, the law governing the conquered lands was enunciated at the outset. Here, a note-worthy point is that Allah at this place has used the words: *Mā afā'-Allāhu 'alā Rasūli-hi min-hum:* "whatever Allah restored to His Messenger from them." These words clearly imply that the rebels of Allah Almighty are not entitled to own the earth and things existing on it. If they have become their owners and are appropriating them, their ownership and appropriation of these things is, in fact, in the nature of usurpation of a master's property by a dishonest servant. The real right of these properties is that these should be spent and used in the service and obedience of their real Master, Allah, Lord of the worlds, according to His will, and their this use is possible only through the agency of the righteous believers. Therefore, the true position of the properties which pass from the ownership of the disbelievers into the hands of the Muslims as the result of a lawful war, is that their real Owner has withdrawn them from His disobedient and disloyal servants, and restored them to His obedient and loyal servants. That is why, in the terminology of the Islamic Law such properties have been described as *Fai* (restored properties).

12. That is, "The restoration of these properties to the Muslims is not the result of the effort of the actual fighting army so that the army on that basis may have the right that the properties may be distributed among the soldiers, but its real nature is that Allah by His bounty has given dominance to His Messengers and the system that they represent over them. In other words, the passing of these properties into the Muslims' hands is not the direct result of the effort and struggle of the fighting army, but the result of the total strength that Allah has bestowed on His Messenger and his community and the system established by him. Therefore, these properties are quite different in nature from the spoils of war and so cannot be distributed among the soldiers as such.

Thus, the *Shari'ah* has made a distinction between *ghanīmah* (spoils of war) and *fai* (restored properties). The injunction in respect of the *ghanīmah* has been given in Sūrah Al-Anfāl: 41, and it is this: "It should be divided in five parts, four parts of which be distributed among the fighting army and the fifth deposited in the Public Treasury *(Bait al-Māl)*, and expended on the items mentioned in the verse." As for the *fai*, the injunction is that it should not be distributed among the army, but it should be reserved for the items of expenditure being stated in the following verse. The distinction between the two has been made plain by the words: "You have not rushed your horses and camels on them," which imply the military operations. Thus, the properties which are taken as a direct result of such operations are the *ghanīmah* and those which are not the result of these operations are the *fai*.

The distinction between *ghanīmah* and *fai* that has been briefly mentioned in this verse, has been explained in greater detail by the jurists of Islam. *Ghanīmah* are only those transferable properties which are taken from the enemy during military action; other things than these, *e.g.* lands, houses and other transferable and nontransferable properties of the enemy, are excluded from the definition of *ghanīmah* and are *fai*. The source of this explanation is the letter that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) had written to Ḥaḍrat Sa'd bin Abī Waqqās after the conquest of 'Iraq. In that letter he wrote: "Distribute the properties and goods which the soldiers of the army collected and brought to your camp among the Muslims who participated in the war, and leave the lands and the canals with those who work on them so that the proceeds thereof are used for the salaries of the Muslims." (Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj, p.* 24; Abū 'Ubaid, *Kitāb al-Amwāl, p.* 59; Yaḥyā bin Adam, *Kitāb al-Kharāj, pp.* 27 28, 48). On this very basis, Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣri says: "Whatever is taken from the enemy camp, is the right of those who won victory over it? and the lands are for the Muslims." (Yaḥyā bin Adam, p. 27). And Imām Abū Yūsuf says: "Whatever the Muslims take from the enemy troops, and whatever goods and arms and cattle they collect and bring to their camp, is *ghanīmah;* from this one-fifth will be deducted and the rest distributed among the soldiers." *(Kitāb al-Kharaj,* p. 18). The same is the opinion of Yaḥyā bin Adam, which he has expressed in his *Kitāb al-Kharaj* (p. 27). Even more than this, what makes the distinction between *ghanīmah* and *fai* clearer is that after the Battle of Nahāwand when the *ghanīmah* had been distributed and the conquered lands had been included in the Islamic State, a man named Sa'ib bin Aqra' found two bags of jewels outside the fort. He was confused whether it was the *ghanīmah* which should be distributed in the army, or the *fai* which should be deposited in the *Bait al-Māl* Consequently, he came to Madīnah and put the matter before Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, who decided that it should be sold and the price deposited in the *Bait-al-Māl*. From this it becomes clear that *ghanīmah* are only those transferable properties which are taken by the soldiers during the war. After the war is over, the transferable properties also, like the non-transferable properties, become *fai*. Imām Abū 'Ubaid relates this event and says: "The properties that are seized from the enemy by the use of force, when the war is still in progress, are *ghanīmah,* and what is taken after the war is over, when the territory has become *Dār al-Islām* (abode of Islam), is *fai*, which should be reserved for the common people of the dār *al-Islām;* the law of the one-fifth *(khums) will* not *be* applicable to it." *(Kitāb al-Amwāl, p. 254).*

After defining *ghanīmah* thus, the rest of the properties, wealth and lands, which pass from the disbelievers' ownership to the Muslims may be divided into two main kinds: first, those which are taken as a result of actual fighting (*anwatan* in *Fiqh* terminology); second, those which are taken by the Muslims as

a result of the peace terms, whether peace is concluded because of the pressure of the military power of the Muslims, or their dread and awe, and in this are also included all those properties which pass into the Muslims' ownership in every other way than as a result of actual fighting. The differences that have arisen among the jurists of Islam have been only concerning the first kind of the properties in order to determine their correct legal position, for they do not come under "those upon which you have not rushed your horses and camels." As regards the second kind of the properties, all agree that they are *fai*, for the Qur'ān has explicitly laid down the injunction about them. Below we shall discuss in detail the legal position of the first kind of the properties.

13. In the preceding verse what was pointed out was why these properties should not be distributed among the fighting army like the spoils, and why the legal injunction concerning them is different from that concerning the spoils. Now in this verse it is being stated as to who are entitled to have a share in these properties.

The first share in these is of Allah and His Messenger. The detail of how the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) acted on this injunction has been related by Mālik bin Aus bin al-Ḥadathān on the authority of Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), thus: The Holy Prophet used to take from it necessary expenses for himself and his family and the rest he used to spend on arranging arms and conveyances for *Jihād*. (*Bukhārī, Muslim, Musnad Ahmad, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī* and others). After the passing away of the Holy Prophet this share was transferred to the Public Treasury of the Muslims so that it is spent in the service of the mission which Allah had entrusted to His Messenger. Imām Shāfe'ī is reported to have expressed the opinion that the share which was specifically meant for the Holy Prophet's person (upon whom be Allah's peace), is for his caliph after him, for the Holy Prophet was entitled to it on the basis of his office of leadership and not on the basis of the office of Apostleship. But the view of the majority of the Shāfe'ī jurists in this matter is the same as of the other jurists, viz. that this share now is reserved for the religious and collective welfare of the Muslims, and not for any particular person.

The second share is of the kinsfolk, and this implies the kinsfolk of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), i.e. the Banī Hāshim and the Banī al-Muṭṭalib. This share was set aside so that, besides meeting his own and his family's requirements, the Holy Prophet could also fulfil his obligations towards those of his relatives who stood in need of his help, or whom he felt like helping. After the death of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) this ceased to be a separate and independent source, because like the rights of the orphans and the wayfarers and the indigent among the Muslims, looking after the rights of the needy among the Banī Hāshim and the Banī al-Muṭṭalib also became the

responsibility of the Public Treasury. However, they were treated as superior to others in so far as they had no share in the *zakāt*. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās has related that in the time of Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr and 'Umar and 'Uthmān (may Allah be pleased with them), the first two shares were dropped and only the remaining three shares *(i.e.* those for the orphans and the indigent and the wayfarers) were kept as of those entitled to *fai*. Then Ḥaḍrat 'Alī (may Allah be pleased with him) also acted on the same in his time, Muḥammad bin Isḥāq has related on the authority of Imām Muḥammad Bāqir that although Ḥaḍrat 'Ali's personal opinion was the same as of the people of his house (that this share should be given to the relatives of the Holy Prophet), he did not think that he should act against the practice of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. Ḥasan bin Muḥammad bin Ḥanafiyah says that after the Holy Prophet a difference of opinion arose about these two shares (i.e. the share of the Holy Prophet and the share of his relatives). Some people said that the first share should go to the Holy Prophet's caliph, some said that the second share should go to the relatives of the Holy Prophet, and still others said that the second share should be given to the relatives of the caliph. At last, a consensus was reached that both the shares be spent on the requirements of *Jihād*. 'Atā' bin Sā'ib says that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Azīz in his time had started sending the share of the Holy Prophet and the share of the relatives to the Banī Hāshim. The opinion of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and of most of the Ḥanafī jurists is that in this matter the same practice is correct as was being followed in the time of the righteous Caliphs. (Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, pp. 19-21). Imām Shāre'ī's opinion is that both the rich and the needy from among the people whose being descended from the Banī Hāshim and the Banī al-Muṭṭalib is confirmed, or is well known, can be given shares from *fai*. *(Mughnī al-Muḥtāj)*. The Hanafīs say that only their needy people can be helped from this; however, their right to this is greater than that of others. *(Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī)*. According to Imām Mālik, there is no restriction on the government in this matter. It can spend on any head that it deems fit and proper, but the better course is that it should give preference to the people of the Holy Prophet's house. *(Ḥāshiyah ad-Dūsuqī 'alā-sh-Sharḥ-al-Kabīr)*.

About the remaining three shares there is no dispute among the jurists. However, the difference between Imām Shāfe'ī and the other Imāms is that according to Imām Shāfe'ī the total properties of *fai* are to be divided into five equal parts one part of which is to be spent on the above-mentioned heads in such a way that one-fifth of it is spent on the common benefits of the Muslims, one-fifth on the Banī Hāshim and the Banī al-Muṭṭalib, one-fifth on the orphans, one-fifth on the indigent and one-fifth on the wayfarers. However, Imām Mālik, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and Imāmu Aḥmad do not concur with this division. Their opinion is that the whole of *fai* is for the welfare and common benefit of the Muslims. *(Mughnī al-Muḥtāj)*.

14. This is one of the most important verses of the Qur'ān, which lays down the basic principle of the economic policy of the Islamic community and government. Wealth should circulate among the whole community and not only among the rich lest the rich should go on becoming richer day by day and the poor poorer. This policy has not merely been enunciated in the Qur'ān, but for the same objective the Qur'ān has forbidden interest, made the *zakāt* obligatory, enjoined that *khums* (one-fifth) be deducted from the booty, exhorted the Muslims to practise voluntary charity, has proposed such forms of different kinds of atonements that the flow of wealth is turned towards the poor classes of society, and has made such a law of inheritance that the wealth left by every deceased person spreads among the largest circle of the people. Apart from this, stinginess has been condemned and generosity commended as a noble moral quality, the well-to-do people have been told that in their wealth there is a definite share of the beggar and the indigent, which they must discharge not as charity but as the right of the concerned people, and the law enjoined in respect of a major source of revenue of the Islamic government (i.e. *fai*) is that its one portion must necessarily be spent on supporting the poor classes of society. In this connection, it should also be borne in mind that there are two main sources of the revenue of the Islamic government: *zakāt* and *fai*. The *zakāt* is charged from the Muslims on their total extra capital, cattle-wealth, trade goods and agricultural produce, which is over and above the minimum exemption limit (*nisāb*), and most of it is reserved for the poor. And *fai* comprises all the revenues including *jizyah* and taxes which are received from the non-Muslims; a major part of these also is set aside for the poor. This gives a clear hint to the effect that an Islamic government should manage its revenues and expenditure and the financial and economic affairs of the country on the whole in such a manner that the wealthy and influential people are not allowed to have their monopoly over the means and resources of wealth, and the flow of wealth is neither turned from the poor to the rich nor it should remain circulating only among the rich.

15. In view of the context the verse means: "Accept without question whatever decision the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) gives about the management of the properties of the Banī an-Naḍīr, and likewise about the distribution of *fai* properties and goods afterwards. One should take whatever the Prophet gives him, and the one whom He does not give anything, should neither protest nor demand it But since the words of the Command are general, its application is not restricted to the distribution of the Jai properties and goods only, but its intention is that in all matters the Muslims should obey the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace). This intention of the Command becomes all the more clear when we consider that as against "whatever the Messenger gives you"

the words used are "whatever he forbids you" and not "whatever he does not give you." If the object of the Command were restricted to call obedience to the distribution offal properties and goods only, then as against "whatever he gives you" the words should have been "whatever he does not give you." The use of the forbidding or restraining words in this context by itself shows that the object of the Command is to enjoin obedience to the Holy Prophet in whatever he commands and forbids. The same thing has been stated by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself. According to Ḥadrat Abū Hurairah he said: "When I command you to do a thing, do it as far as you can; and when I forbid you to do a thing, restrain from it." *(Bukhārī, Muslim)*. About Ḥadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd it has been related that once during a speech he said: "Allah has cursed the woman who practices such and such a fashion." Thereupon a woman approached him and asked, "Wherefrom have you derived this thing? For I have not seen such a thing anywhere in the Book of Allah." Ḥadrat 'Abdullah replied, "Had you studied the Book of Allah, you would certainly have found it therein. Have you not read the verse: *Mā ātā-kum ar-Rasūlu fa-khudū-hu wa mā nahā-kum 'anhu fantahū:* "Take whatever the Messenger gives you, and refrain from whatever he forbids you." When she said that she had read this verse, Ḥadrat 'Abdullah said: "So the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has forbidden this act, and has given the news that Allah has cursed the women who practice it." The woman agreed that she had understood the Command. *(Bukhārī Muslim, Musnad Aḥmad, Musnad Ibn abī Ḥātim,)*.

16. This implies those people who at that time had been expelled from Makkah and other parts of Arabia only because they had embraced Islam. Before the conquest of the territory of the Banī an-Naḍīr these emigrants had no permanent means of sustenance. Therefore, it was commanded that in the properties which were then taken, and in the *fai* properties which are taken in future, there is also a share of these people along with the common poor people and the orphans and the wayfarers. With these properties all such people should be helped, who are forced to emigrate for the cause of Allah and His Messenger to the abode of Islam. Accordingly, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) distributed a part of the properties taken from the Banī an-Naḍīr among the Emigrants and the oases which the Anṣār had set aside for the support and maintenance of their emigrant brothers were returned to them. But it is not correct to think that the Emigrants had this share in the *fai* only at that time. In fact, the intention of the verse is to point out that till Resurrection it is the duty of the Islamic government of the country to settle the people who are exiled and compelled to take refuge in it because of being Muslims and to enable them to

stand on their feet economically; and it should spend on this head also from the *fai* properties besides the *zakāt* funds.

17. This implies the Anṣar. In other words, not only are the Emigrants entitled to faī but those Muslims also are entitled to receive their share from it, who were already living in the abode of Islam (Madīnah).

18. This is in praise of the Anṣār, the Muslims of Madīnah. When the Emigrants came from Makkah and other places to their city, they offered their gardens and oases to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) with the request that he distribute them among their emigrant brethren-in-faith. The Holy Prophet said: "These people do not know gardening: they have come from a region where there are no gardens. Could it not be that you (the Anṣār) continue to work in the gardens and oases and make the Emigrants partners in the produce? The Anṣar submitted: 'We have heard and obeyed'." *(Bukhārī, Ibn Jarīr).* Thereupon the Emigrants said: "We have never seen any people so self-sacrificing as the Anṣar, for they would work and labour and make us partners in the produce. We think they would thus be entitled to all spiritual rewards. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: "Nay, as long as you would praise them and pray for their well-being, you also would get your rewards." *(Musnad Ahmad).* Then, when the territory of the Banī an-Naḍīr was taken, the Holy Prophet made this proposal to the Anṣār: "Now one way of managing it is that your properties and the gardens and the oases left by the Jews be combined together and then the whole distributed among you and the Emigrants," the second way is that you take back your properties, and the lands vacated by the Jews be distributed among the Emigrants." The Anṣār said: "Sir, you may please distribute these evacuee properties among the Emigrants and may give them of our properties also as you please." At this Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr cried out: "May Allah reward you, O assembly of the Ansar, with the best of everything!" (Yahyā bin *Adam*, Balādhurī). Thus, with the willing consent of the Anṣār the properties left by the Jews were distributed only among the Emigrants, and from among the Anṣār only Ḥaḍrat Abū Dujānah, Ḥaḍrat Sahl bin Ḥunaif snd (according to some) Ḥaḍrat Ḥārith bin as-Simmah were given shares, for they were poor people. *(Balādhuri, Ibn Hishām Rūh al-Ma'ānī.* The same self-sacrificing spirit was shown by the Ansār when the territory of Bahrain was annexed to the Islamic State. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) wished that the conquered lands of that territory be given to the Anṣār, but they submitted: "We would not take any share from it unless a simtlar share was given to our emigrant brothers." *(Yahyā bin Ādam).* Allah has praised the Anṣār for this-very spirit of self-sacrifice.

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فِيْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّآ اُوْتُوْا وَيُؤْثِرُوْنَ عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ
خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّوْقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهٖ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ۝٩ وَالَّذِيْنَ
جَآءُوْ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِاِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِيْنَ سَبَقُوْنَا
بِالْاِيْمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِيْ قُلُوْبِنَا غِلًّا لِّلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا رَبَّنَآ اِنَّكَ رَءُوْفٌ
رَّحِيْمٌ ۝١٠ اَلَمْ تَرَ اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ نَافَقُوْا يَقُوْلُوْنَ لِاِخْوَانِهِمُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا
مِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ لَئِنْ اُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنَخْرُجَنَّ مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نُطِيْعُ فِيْكُمْ اَحَدًا اَبَدًا ۙ
وَّاِنْ قُوْتِلْتُمْ لَنَنْصُرَنَّكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يَشْهَدُ اِنَّهُمْ لَكٰذِبُوْنَ ۝١١ لَئِنْ اُخْرِجُوْا لَا
يَخْرُجُوْنَ مَعَهُمْ ۚ وَلَئِنْ قُوْتِلُوْا لَا يَنْصُرُوْنَهُمْ ۚ وَلَئِنْ نَّصَرُوْهُمْ لَيُوَلُّنَّ
الْاَدْبَارَ ۡ ثُمَّ لَا يُنْصَرُوْنَ ۝١٢ لَاَنْتُمْ اَشَدُّ رَهْبَةً فِيْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ۭ ذٰلِكَ
بِاَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ۝١٣ لَا يُقَاتِلُوْنَكُمْ جَمِيْعًا اِلَّا فِيْ قُرًى مُّحَصَّنَةٍ اَوْ مِنْ
وَّرَآءِ جُدُرٍ ۭ بَاْسُهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيْدٌ ۭ تَحْسَبُهُمْ جَمِيْعًا وَّقُلُوْبُهُمْ شَتّٰى ۭ ذٰلِكَ
بِاَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَعْقِلُوْنَ ۝١٤ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيْبًا ذَاقُوْا وَبَالَ
اَمْرِهِمْ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ۝١٥ كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطٰنِ اِذْ قَالَ لِلْاِنْسَانِ اكْفُرْ ۚ فَلَمَّا
كَفَرَ قَالَ اِنِّىْ بَرِيْۗءٌ مِّنْكَ اِنِّىْٓ اَخَافُ اللّٰهَ رَبَّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝١٦ فَكَانَ عَاقِبَتَهُمَآ
اَنَّهُمَا فِي النَّارِ خَالِدَيْنِ فِيْهَا ۭ وَذٰلِكَ جَزٰۗؤُا الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۝١٧ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا
اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝١٨ وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ نَسُوا اللّٰهَ فَاَنْسٰىهُمْ اَنْفُسَهُمْ ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ
الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ۝١٩ لَا يَسْتَوِيْٓ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ وَاَصْحٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ ۭ اَصْحٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمُ
الْفَاۗىِٕزُوْنَ ۝٢٠ لَوْ اَنْزَلْنَا هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ عَلٰي جَبَلٍ لَّرَاَيْتَهٗ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ

(And it is also for those) who come after them,[20] who say, "Our Lord, forgive us and forgive all our brothers who embraced the Faith before us, and do not place in our hearts any malice towards the believers. Our Lord, You are very Kind and Compassionate."[21]

Have[22] you not seen those who have adopted the attitude of hypocrisy? They say to their brothers who have disbelieved from among the people of the Book, "If you are driven out, we shall go forth with you, and we shall never listen to anyone in your respect, and if war is waged against you, we shall help you." But Allah is witness that they are utter liars. If they are driven out, these people will never go forth with them, and if war is waged against them, they will never help them. And even if they help them, they will turn their backs, and then will get no help from anywhere. In their hearts there is greater dread of you than of Allah,[23] because they are a people devoid of understanding.[24] They will never fight you in a body (in the open field); if at all they fight, they will fight in fortified strongholds, or from behind walls. They are very intense in mutual enmity. You think that they are united, whereas their hearts are divided.[25] This is because they are a people devoid of sense. They are even like those who have tasted, a short while before them, the evil consequences of their deeds,[26] and there awaits them a painful torment. They are like Satan who orders man to disbelieve, and when man has disbelieved, he says: "I have nothing to do with you; I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds."[27] The end of both will be that they shall go to Hell for ever, and that is the recompense of the wrongdoers. 11-17

O you[28] who have believed, fear Allah, and let everyone consider well what he has forwarded for the morrow.[29] Fear Allah, for Allah is well aware of all that you do. Do not be like those who forgot Allah, and Allah caused them to forget their own selves.[30] They indeed are the transgressors. The dwellers of Hell and the dwellers of Paradise cannot be alike. The dwellers of Paradise alone are truly successful. 18-20

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19. The word used here means "are saved" and not "were safe", for without Allah's help and succour no one can attain to the wealth of the heart (liberal-mindedness) by his own power and effort. This is a blessing of God, which one can attain only by God's bounty and grace. The word *shuhh is* used for

stinginess and miserliness in Arabic. But when this word is attributed to the self of man it becomes synonymous with narrow mindedness, niggardliness, mean spiritedness and small-heartedness, and not mere stinginess: it is rather the root cause of stinginess itself. Because of this very quality man avoids acknowledging even the good qualities of another, not to speak of recognizing his rights and discharging them. He wants that he alone should gather up everything in the world, and no one else should have anything of it. He never feels content with his own right, but usurps the rights of others, or at least wants to have for himself all that is good in the world and should not leave anything for others. On this very basis one's being saved from this evil has been described in the Qur'ān as a guarantee for success. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has counted it among the most evil qualities of man, which are the root cause of corruption and mischief. Hadrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "Avoid *shuḥḥ* for it was *shuḥḥ* which ruined the people before you. It incited them to shed each other's blood and make the sacred and forbidden things of others lawful for themselves." *(Muslim, Musnad Aḥmad, Baihaqī, Bukhārī* in *Al-Adab).* The tradition of Ḥadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar contains the following words: "It led them to commit wickedness and they committed it; it commanded them to commit sins and they committed sin; it urged them to break off all connections with the kindred and they broke off all connections with them." *(Musnad Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd, Nasā'ī).* Ḥadrat Abū Hurairah has reported that the Holy Prophet said. "Faith and *shuḥḥ* of the self cannot combine in one and the same heart." *(Ibn Abī Shaibah, Nasā'ī, Baihaqī* in *Shu'ab al-Imān, Hākim).* Hadrat Abū Sa'id Khudrī has stated that the Holy Prophet said: "Two of the qualities are such that they cannot combine in a Muslim: stinginess and misbehaviour." *(Abū Da'ūd. Tirmidhī, Bukhārī* in *Al-Adab).* It is as a result of this very teaching of Islam that, apart from individuals, the Muslim people as a nation are still the most generous and liberal. minded people in the world. There are millions and millions of Muslims living side by side with those non-Muslim people from among whom they sprung, who have become proverbial for their narrow-mindedness and miserliness. The clear distinction existing between the two peoples in respect of liberal-mindedness and miserliness cannot be explained in any other way than that it is the moral teaching of Islam that has made the Muslims so large-hearted and liberal-minded.

20. In the injunctions laid down up to here, it has been ruled that; in the *fai* properties there are the rights of Allah and His Messenger and the Messenger's relatives an the orphans and the indigent and the wayfarers and the Emigrants and the Anṣār and of the Muslim generations which will be born till the Day of Resurrection. It is this important legal ruling of the Qur'ān in the light of which Ḥadrat 'Umar(may Allah be pleased with him) introduced the new system in

respect of the lands and properties of the conquered territories of 'Irāq, Syria and Egypt and of the possessions of the previous governments and rulers of those countries. When these countries were conquered, some of the distinguished Companions among whom were included prominent men like Ḥaḍrat Zubair, Ḥaḍrat Bilāl, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf and Ḥaḍrat Salmān Fārsī, insisted that these should be distributed among the armies who had fought and conquered them. They thought that those properties did not come under "those upon which you have not rushed your horses and camels," but the Muslims had conquered them by rushing their horses and camels on them. Therefore, except for those cities and territories, which surrendered without the war, all the rest of the conquered lands came under *ghanīmah* for which the legal command is that one-fifth of the lands and the people be given to the Public Treasury and the remaining four parts be distributed among the soldiers. But this opinion was not correct on the ground that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had not distributed the lands and the people of any territory conquered by fighting in his time after the deduction of one-fifth, like the booty. Two of the most conspicuous precedents of his time were the conquest of Makkah and the conquest of Khaiber. Of these he handed over Makkah intact to its inhabitants. As for Khaiber, according to Ḥaḍrat Bushair bin Yasār, he divided it into 36 parts, of which he set aside 18 parts for collective benefits and requirements of the Muslims and distributed the remaining 18 among the army. *(Abū Da'ūd, Baihaqī,* Abī 'Ubaid: *Kitāb al-Amwāl;* Yahyā bin Ādam: *Kitāb al-Kharāj;* Balādhurī: *Futūh al Buldān;* Ibn Humām: *Fath al-*Qadīr). This action of the Holy Prophet made it clear that the command in respect of the conquered lands, even if they might have been taken by fighting, is not the same as of the *ghanīmah;* otherwise he would never have given the whole of Makkah intact to the people *of* Makkah, and would have set aside exactly one-half of the properties of Khaiber for the common benefits of the Muslims instead of deducting its one-fifth for the Public Treasury. Thus, what was established on the basis of the *Sunnah* was: In respect of the territories conquered by fighting the ruler of the Muslims has the authority that he may take any decision that he deems fit keeping in view the conditions of the time. He can distribute them if he so likes but if a territory has an unusual nature and importance, as Makkah had, he can also treat its inhabitants with favour, as the Holy Prophet treated the people of Makkah.

But as the conquests had not yet become common in the Holy Prophet's time and separate injunctions in respect of the different kinds of conquered territories had not yet become clearly known to the people, so when big countries were annexed to Islam in the time of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, the Companions were faced with the problem whether the territories conquered by force were in the nature of *ghanīmah* or *fai.* After the conquest of Egypt Ḥaḍrat Zubair demanded:

"Distribute this whole land just as the Holy Prophet had distributed Khaiber." (Abū 'Ubaid). About the conquered territories of Syria and 'Iraq, Ḥaḍrat Bilāl insisted: "Distribute all the lands among the fighting forces just as the spoils are distributed. "(Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj).* On the other hand, Ḥaḍrat 'Alī gave this opinion: "Leave these lands in possession of the peasants so that they continue to remain a source of income for the Muslims." *(Abū Yūsuf, Abū 'Ubaid.).* Likewise, the opinion of Ḥaḍrat Mu'ādh bin Jabal was; "If you distributed these lands, evil consequences would occur. Because of this distribution large properties will pass into the hands of those few people, who have conquered them. Then, when these people pass away and their properties pass on to their heirs and there is left only one woman or only one man from among them, nothing might remain for the future generations to meet their needs and even to meet the expenses of safeguarding the frontiers of the Islamic State. Therefore, you should so settle things that the interests both of the present and of the future generations are equally safeguarded." (Abu 'Ubaid, p. 59; *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, vol. vi, p. 138). Ḥaḍrat 'Umar calculated and found that if the territories of 'Irāq were distributed, each individual would receive two or three peasants on the average as his share, *(Abū Yūsuf, Abū 'Ubaid).* Thereupon he arrived at the judicious conclusion that those territories should not be distributed. Thus, the replies that he gave to those who demanded their distribution, were as follows:

"Do you want that for the people who come afterwards there should remain nothing?" (Abū *'Ubaid).*

"What will happen of the Muslims who come afterwards when they find that the land along with its peasants has been distributed and the people have inherited their forefathers? This is not at all just." *(Abū Yūsuf).*

"What will be left for the Muslims who come after you? I am afraid if I distribute it, you would fight among yourselves over water." *(Abū Yūsuf).*

"Had I no thought for those who would come afterwards, I would distribute every territory that I conquered just as the Messenger of Allah had distributed Khaiber." *(Bukhārī, Muwaṭṭa, Abū 'Ubaid),*

"Nay: this is the real estate. I will withhold it so that the needs and requirements of the conquering forces and of the common Muslims continue to be met by it." *(Abū 'Ubaid).*

But the people were not satisfied with these replies, and they started saying that he was being unjust. At last, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar convened a meeting of the consultative body of the Companions and put the matter before it. Here are some of the sentences of the speech that he made on this occasion:

"I have given you this trouble so that you may join me in shouldering the trust that has been put in me for governing your affairs. I am one of you, and you are the people who affirm the truth today. Everyone of you has the option to agree to or differ from what I say. I do not wish that you should follow my desire. You have the Book of Allah, which states the whole truth. By God, if I have said something which I want to enforce, I have no object in view except the truth. You have heard those who think that I am being unjust to them and want to deprive them of their rights, whereas I seek Allah's refuge that I should commit an injustice. It would be vicious on my part if I withheld from them something which actually belonged to them and gave it to another. But I can see that no other land after the land of the Chosroe is going to fall. Allah has given the properties of the Persians and their lands and their peasants in our possession. I have distributed the booty taken by our armies among them after the deduction of the *khums* (one fifth), and am thinking of distributing the rest which yet remains. But as for the lands my opinion is that I should not distribute them and their peasants, but should levy revenue on the lands and *jizyah* on the peasants, which they should always pay, and this should be the *fai* for the common Muslims and their children and the armies of today and for the generations yet to come. Don't you see that we need the troops who should be appointed to protect these our frontiers? Don't you see that in territories like Syria, Al-Jazīrah, Kūfah, Baṣra, Egypt we should station our troops, and they should be regularly for their services? So, if I distribute these lands along with their peasants, how shall we meet these expenses?"

The debate went on for two or three days. Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, Ḥaḍrat Talhah, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and others concurred with Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, but nothing could be decided. At last, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar rose and said: "I have found an argument in the Book of Allah, which is decisive in this matter. Then, he recited these very verses *of* Sūrah Al-Ḥashr from *Mā afā' Allahu to Rabbanā innaka Ra'ūf.ur-Rahīm,* and argued: "The people of this day only are not entitled to receive a share in these properties bestowed by Allah, but Allah has joined with them also those people who will come after them. Then, how can it be that we should distribute the *fai* properties which are meant for all, only among the conquerors and leave nothing for the later generations? Moreover, Allah says: '...so that this wealth does not remain circulating among your rich people only.' But if distribute it among the conquerors, it will remain circulating only among your rich and nothing would be left for others." This argument satisfied everybody and consensus was reached that all the conquered territories should be declared *fai* for the common benefits of the Muslims, which should be left with those who work on those lands and they should be put under revenue and *jizyah*. (Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj,* pp. 23-27, 35; Al-Jaṣṣās, *Ahkām al-Qur'ān).*

Accordingly, the real position of the conquered lands that came to be established was that the Muslim people in their collective capacity are their owners; the people who were already working on them would be recognized as cultivators on behalf of the Muslim people; they would continue to pay the prescribed revenue to the Islamic government on those lands, their rights as cultivators would pass from generation to generation as heritage, and they would even be allowed to sell those rights, but they will not be the real owners of the land, but its real owners will be the Muslim community. Imām Abū 'Ubaid in his *Kitāb al-Amwāl* has stated this legal position, thus:

"Ḥaḍrat 'Umar left the lands of the territory of 'Iraq in the hands of its people; he levied tax on their lands and *jizyah* per head on the people." (p. 57).

"When the head of the Islamic government leaves the lands in the hands of the people of the conquered territories, they would be allowed to pass the lands on as heritage and would also be allowed to sell them." (P. 84).

In the time of 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Azīz, Sha'bī was asked: "Is there a treaty with the people of the territory of 'Iraq." He replied: "There is no treaty, but when the revenue was accepted from them, it amounted to a treaty with them." *(Abū 'Ubaid, p. 49; Abū Yūsuf, p. 28).*

In the time of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, 'Utbah bin Furqad purchased a piece of land by the Euphrates. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar asked him from whom he had purchased the land. He replied that he had purchased it from its owners. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar said: "Its owners are these people, *i.e.* the Emigrants and the Anṣār." Thus, 'Umar held the opinion that the real owners of those lands were the Muslims. *(Abū 'Ubaid, p. 74).*

Accordingly, the properties of the conquered countries which were declared as the collective property of the Muslims were the following:

(1) Those lands and territories which come under the control of the Islamic government in consequence of a peace treaty.

(2) The ransom or revenue or *jizyah* which the people of a territory may have agreed to pay, without fighting, in order to seek refuge from the Muslims,

(3) Those lands and properties which the owners might have abandoned and fled.

(4) The properties the owners of which were slain and no survivor was left to own them.

(5) The lands which were not under any ownership previously.

(6) The lands which were already in the ownership of the people, but were left with their previous owners and they were put under *jizyah* and revenue,

(7) Estates of the previous ruling dynasties.

(8) Properties of the previous governments.

(For details, see *Badā-i' aṣ-Ṣanā'i, vol.- vii, pp.* 116-118; Yaḥyā bin Adam *Kitāb al-Kharāj, pp. 22, 64; Mughni al-Muḥtāj, vol.* iii, *p. 93; Ḥāshiyah ad-Dusūqi 'ala-sh-Sharah al-Kabīr,* vol. ii, p. 190; *Ghāyat al-Muntahā, vol. i,* pp. *467-471).*

Since these properties were declared as *fai* with the consensus of the Companions, the jurists of Islam also have agreed in principle on their being regarded as *fai.* However, they have differed in certain matters, the details of which are briefly as follows:

The Ḥanafīs say that as regards the lands of the conquered territories, the Islamic government (Imām in juristic terminology) has the option that it may distribute them among the forces of conquest after deduction of the *khums* (one-fifth), or may leave them with the former owners and put the owners under jizyah and the lands under revenue. In this case the land will be regarded as a 'legacy for the Muslims. *(Badāi' aṣ-Ṣanā'i;* Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām* al- Qur'ān; *Sharah al-Anāyah 'al al-Hedâyah; Fatḥ al-Qadīr).* The same view has 'Abdullah bin Mubārak cited for Imam Sufyan Thauri. *(Yaḥyā bin Ādam; Abū 'Ubaid, Kitāb al-Amwāl).*

The Mālikis say that as soon as the lands have been conquered they automatically become a legacy for- the Muslims. It does not need the Imām's ruling or the willingness of the Muslim soldiers to declare them a legacy. Besides, the well known view among the Mālikis is that not only the lands but the houses and buildings of the conquered territories also are, as a matter of fact, a legacy for the Muslims. However, the Islamic government will not charge the rent for them. *(Ḥāshiyah ad-Dusūqī).*

The Ḥanbalīs agree with the Ḥanafīs that the Imam has the option to distribute the lands among the soldiers or to declare them as a legacy for the Muslims, and with the Mālikis that although the houses of the conquered territories are included the legacy, no rent will be levied on them. *(Ghāyat al-Muntahā* which is a collection of the legal rulings of the Ḥanbalī School of juristic thought and a source book for legal rulings since the 10th century).

The Shāfe'ī viewpoint is that all the transferable properties of the conquered territory are *ghanīmah,* and all the non-transferable properties (lands, houses, *etc.) fai. (Mughnī al-Muḥtāj).*

Some jurists have expressed the opinion the if the Imām wants to declare the lands of the territory taken by fighting as a legacy for the Muslims, he must first obtain the willingness of the conquering forces. For this they cite this argument: Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, before the conquest of Iraq, had promised Jarīr bin 'Abdullah al-Banalī, the people of whose tribe consitituted one-fourth of the army, which fought the Battle of Qādisiyah, that they would be given one-fourth of the conquered territory. Thus, they retained this territory for two or three years. Then Ḥaḍrat 'Umar said to them: "Had I not been responsible and answerable in the matter of division, I would have left with you whatever has been given to you. But now I see that the people have grown in numbers; therefore, my opinion is that you return it to the common people." Ḥaḍrat Jarīr acceded to this, and Ḥaḍrat 'Umar gave him 80 dīnārs as a prize. (Abu Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj;* Abū 'Ubaid, *Kitāb* al-Amwāl). From this they argue that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar had decided to declare the conquered territories as a legacy for the Muslims only after obtaining the willingness of the conquerors. But the majority of the jurists do not admit this argument, For in respect of all the conquered territories no such willingness of the conquerors ever was taken. Only in the case of Hadrat Jarir bin 'Abdullah this was done because Ḥaḍrat 'Umar had made a promise with him prior to any collective decision about the conquered lands. Therefore, he had to obtain his willingness only in order to be free from the obligation of the promise. This cannot be cited as a general law.

Another section of the jurists says that even after declaring the lands as a legacy the government retains the option that it may redistribute the lands among the conquerors. For this they argue from this tradition: Once Ḥaḍrat 'Alī said to the people in an address: "Had not there been the apprehension that you would fight among yourselves, I would have distributed the suburban lands among you." (Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Kharāj;* Abū 'Ubaid, *Kitāb al-Amwāl).* But the majority of jurists do not admit this argument either. They are unanimous that when the people of the conquered territories have once been allowed to retain their lands and put under *jizyah* and revenue, the decision can never be changed later. As for the tradition attributed to Ḥaḍrat 'Alī Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ has discussed it at length in his *Aḥkam al-Qur'ān* and proved it to be not authentic.

21. In this verse although the real object is only to point out that in *fai* not only the people of the present generation but the Muslims of the later periods and their future generations also have a share, yet, besides, the Muslims have also been taught an important moral lesson that they should never have any malice against other Muslims in their hearts, and they should continue to pray for the forgiveness of the Muslims who have gone before them instead of cursing and abusing them. The bond that binds the Muslims together is that of a common Faith. If a person values his Faith as the most important thing in his heart,

inevitably he would be a well-wisher of all those people who are his brethren-in-faith. He can have ill-will and malice and hatred towards them in his heart only when the value of the Faith decreases in his sight and he starts valuing other things more. Therefore, it is the requirement of Faith that a believer's heart should be free from every trace of malice and hatred against the other believers. In this matter the best lesson is given by a *Hadīth* which Nasā'ī has related from Hadrat Anas. According to him, once it so happened that for three days continuously the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) declared in his assembly that a person was going to appear before them, who belonged to the dwellers of Paradise, and every time it would be a certain person from among the Anṣār. At this Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'Āṣ became curious as to what deeds the person concerned performed on the basis of which the Holy Prophet had repeatedly given the good news of his admission to Paradise. Thus, he made an excuse and spent three consecutive nights in his house to see how he performed his worship, but during the night he did not see any thing unusual. At last, he asked him directly as to what special acts and devotions he performed on the basis of which the Holy Prophet had given the great good news about him. He replied: "You have seen how I perform my worship, but there is one thing which might have earned me this reward: I do not harbour any malice or evil design against any Muslim, nor feel jealous of him on account of any good that Allah might have bestowed on him."

This does not mean that if a Muslim finds an error in another Muslim's word or deed, he should avoid calling it an error. Faith does not demand this. But to describe an error as a mistake on the basis of an argument and to state it to be so in a polite and decent manner is one thing and to harbour malice and hatred and resort to invective and abuse quite another. It is wrong if one resorts to this in respect of one's contemporaries, but worse if one resorted to this in respect of the dead people of the past. For the person indulging in such a thing would be a most filthy person for he is not even inclined to forgive the dead. And the worst would be that a person should resort to invective and abuse in respect of those illustrious people who had done full justice to the Holy Prophet's companionship in a period full of extreme tribulations and hardships and had struggled with their lives to spread the light of Islam in the world and enabled us today to be blessed with the Faith. One can hold and opinion if one thinks that such and such party of them was in the right and such and such in the wrong in its viewpoint in the differences that arose between them, and can even express his opinion in a reasonable and decent way, but to resort to exaggeration in support of one party so that the heart is filled with spite and hatred against the other is an evil which no God-fearing person would commit. Those who indulge in such a thing against the clear teaching of the Qur'ān, generally present the excuse that the Qur'ān forbids to

bear malice towards the believers and the ones towards whom they bear the malice were not believers but hypocrites. But this allegation is even worse than the sin in defence of which the excuse is presented. For these very verses of the Qur'ān in the context of which Allah has taught the Muslims of the later generations not to bear malice towards the Muslims who have gone before them and to pray for their forgiveness, are sufficient to refute this allegation. In these verses three groups have been mentioned, one after the other, who are entitled to receive a share in *fai'*: the Emigrants, the Anṣār and the Muslims coming after them; and the Muslims of the later periods have been enjoined that they should pray for the forgiveness of the Muslims who had embraced the Faith before them. Obviously, in this context those who had embraced the Faith before them could not be any other than the Emigrants and the Anṣār. Then Allah in vv. 11-17 of this Sūrah Al-Hashr itself has also told us who were the hypocrites. This makes it absolutely clear that the hypocrites were the people who had encouraged the Jews on the occasion of the battle of the Banī an-Naḍīr; as against them, the believers were those who were on the side of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in this battle. After this, can a Muslim who has any fear of God in his heart, have the boldness to deny the Faith of the people to whose Faith Allah Himself has borne the testimony?

Imām Mālik and Imām Aḥmad, arguing from this verse, have expressed the opinion that there is no share in *fai'* for the people who malign the Companions of the Holy Prophet. (Ibn al-Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qurān; Ghāyat al-Muntaha).* But the Ḥanafīs and the Shāfe'īs have not concurred with this, the reason being that Allah while declaring the three groups to be entitled to *fai'*, has praised a conspicuous quality of each group but none of these qualities is a condition which may determine whether a group should or should not be given a share in *fai'*. About the Emigrants it has been said: "They seek Allah's bounty and His goodwill, and are ever ready to succour Allah and His Messenger." This does not mean that an Emigrant who lacks this quality, is not entitled to have a share in *fai'*. About the Anṣar it has been said: "They love those who have migrated to them and entertain no desire in their hearts for what is given to them and prefer others above themselves even though they be needy themselves." This also does not mean that a member of the Anṣār who has no love for the Emigrants and who is desirous of getting for himself what is being given to them, has no share in *fai'*. Therefore, the quality of the third group that "they pray for the forgiveness of those who embraced the Faith before them and they pray that they should not have any malice in their hearts towards any other believer", is also no condition to make one entitled to *fai',* but this is in praise of a good quality and an instruction as to what should be the attitude of the believers towards the other believers and especially in respect of those believers who have gone before them.

22. From the style of this whole section (vv. 11-17) it appears that it was revealed at the time when the Holy Prophet (upon who n be Allah's peace) had served a notice on the Banī an-Naḍīr to leave Madīnah within ten days, but had not yet laid siege to their quarters. As has been mentioned above, when the Holy Prophet save the notice to the Banī an-Naḍīr, 'Abdullah bin Ubayy and other leaders of the hypocrites of Madīnah sent them a message to the effect that they would come to their aid with two thousand men, and that the Banī Quraiẓah and the Banī Ghaṭafān also would rise in their support; therefore, they should stand firm and should never surrender to the Muslims. For if the Muslims waged a war against hem, they would fight them from their side; and if they expelled hem, they also would go out with them. Thereupon Allah sent own these verses, Thus, chronologically this section is an earlier revelation and the first section a later revelation, when the Banī an-Naḍīr had actually been driven out of Madīnah. But in the Qur'ān the order of the two passages has been reversed for the reason that the subject matter of the first section is of greater importance

23. That is, "The reason why they dare not face you openly in the field is not that they are Muslims and have fear of God in their hearts and are afraid that despite their claim to the Faith when they come out to help the disbelievers as against the believers, they will be held accountable before God. But what actually restrains them from facing you is that when they see your profound love and spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion for Islam and the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (Upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) and the great unity and concord in your ranks, they become dispirited. They a now full well that although you are few in number, the spirit of martyrdom which has turned each single individual among you into a gallant warrior and the organization which has moulded you into a solid body, will crush them also along with the Jews when they clash with you in the battlefield. Here one should bear in mind the fact that if a person harbours the fear of another than God in his heart, it is in fact a negation of the fear of God. Obviously, the person who considers one of the dangers as lesser and the other greater, pays no heed to the first but does whatever b e can to safeguard himself against the greater danger."

24. A great truth has been expressed in this brief sentence. A person who has sense knows that the real power to be feared is the power of Allah and not the power of men. Therefore, he will avoid every such thing as may call for the punishment of Allah, whether there is any human power to call him to account for it or not, and he will come out to accomplish any duty which Allah has enjoined on him, whether he is opposed and hindered by all the powers of the world. But a man, who has no sense, determines his attitude and conduct in view of the human powers, instead of Allah's power, in all matters of life, because Allah's power for him is imperceptible and human powers are perceptible. If he avoids something,

he will avoid it, not because of the fear of Allah's punishment for it, but because of a human power, which may be there to take him to task. And if he does something, he will do is not because Allah has enjoined it, but because some human power has ordered or approved of it, and will reward hi for it. This very distinction between intelligence and folly, in fact, distinguishes the character and conduct of a believer from that of an unbeliever.

25. This refers to the second weakness of the hypocrites. The first weakness was that they were cowardly: they feared the men instead of fearing God and had no higher aim of life before them like the believers, which might impel them to fight for it even at the cost of life. And their second weakness was that they had no common tie between them except hypocrisy, which might unite them together into a strong band. The only thing that had brought them together was that they were all feeling highly upset at the flourishing leadership and rulership of Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), who was an outsider in their city, and at the warm reception and help which their own compatriots, the Anṣār, were giving the Emigrants. Because of this jealousy they wanted them to join hands together and in conspiracy with the enemies of Islam of the surrounding areas should somehow put an end to this alien power and authority. But apart from this negative objective there was no positive common aim to unify them. Each of their chiefs had his own separate band: each craved for his own leadership; no one was sincere to the other; but each bore such jealousy and malice for the other that they could neither forget their mutual enmities nor desist from harming the other fatally even while facing those whom they regarded as their common enemy.

Thus, at the outset, even before the battle against the Banī an-Naḍīr took place, Allah analysed the internal state of the hypocrites and informed the Muslims that there was no real danger from their side; therefore, they should not feel alarmed- at the rumours that when they lay siege to the Banī an-Naḍīr, the leaders of the hypocrites would attack them from the rear with two thousand men, and also bring the Banī Quraiẓah and the Banī Ghaṭafān along against them. All this was empty boasting which would be exposed at the very beginning of the trial.

26. The allusion is to the disbelievers of the Quraish and the Jewish clan of the Banī Qainuqā', who had been defeated by a handful of ill-equipped Muslims in spite of their larger numbers and superior equipment, due mainly to these weaknesses

27. That is, "These hypocrites are treating the Banī an-Naḍīr in much the same way as Satan treats men. Today they are urging them to stand firm and go forth and clash with the Muslims making them believe that they would come to their aid, but when they actually clash with the Muslims, they would renounce

their pledges and promises and would never even look back to see their fate. The same way does Satan treat every disbeliever, and a similar treatment had he given to the disbelieving Quraish at Badr, as has been mentioned in Sūrah al-Anfāl: 48 above. First, he incited them with false hopes and brought them out to confront the Muslims, saying: "Today no one can overcome you, for I am with you." But when the two forces met in battle, he took to his heels, saying: "I have nothing to do with you. I see that which you cannot see. Indeed, I fear Allah."

28. It is a rule of the Qur'ān that whenever the hypocritical Muslims are taken to task for their hypocrisy, they are given admonition also so that whoever of them has some life left in his conscience, may feel remorse for his conduct and attitude and may make an effort, out of the fear of Allah, to come out of the pit into which his worship of the self has thrown him. This whole section (vv. 18-24) consists of such admonition.

29. "For the morrow": for the Hereafter. That is, this whole worldly life is "today", whose "tomorrow" is the Day of Resurrection, which is going to follow it. Adopting this style Allah has, in a wise manner, made man understand the truth that just as that person is highly foolish, who gambles away his all for the enjoyment of today and does not realize whether tomorrow he would be left with anything to eat and a place of shelter or not, so is that person also only working for his own doom, who is too absorbed in making his world to pay heed to the Hereafter, whereas the Hereafter *is* to follow this world just as today is to be followed by tomorrow, and there he would find nothing if he has sent nothing ahead for the morrow. Besides, the other wise point here is that every person has been appointed his own censor. Unless a person develops in himself the sense of what is good for him and what is evil, he cannot appreciate whether what he is doing will make his future in the Hereafter or mar it. And when this sense becomes active in himself, he will have to calculate and see for himself whether the way in which he is expending his time, his wealth, his energies and capabilities leads to Heaven or Hell. To do so is in his own interest, for if he does not do so he will ruin his own future itself.

30. That is, forgetfulness of God inevitably leads to forgetfulness of one's own self. When man forgets that he is slave to the Almighty, he will inevitably form a wrong view of his position in the world, and his whole life will go wrong because of this basic error. Likewise, when he forgets that he is slave to nobody except Allah, he does not serve the one whose slave actually he is not. This also is a grave and all-pervading misunderstanding, which corrupts his whole life. Man's real position in the world is that of a slave: he is not free and self sufficient; and he is slave of only One God, and is no one else's slave beside Him. The person

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خَشْيَةِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَتِلْكَ الْاَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢١﴾ هُوَ اللّٰهُ
الَّذِيْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ عٰلِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ ۚ هُوَ الرَّحْمٰنُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿٢٢﴾ هُوَ
اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ اَلْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوْسُ السَّلٰمُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيْزُ
الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ؕ سُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾ هُوَ اللّٰهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ
لَهُ الْاَسْمَآءُ الْحُسْنٰى ؕ يُسَبِّحُ لَهٗ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿٢٤﴾

21 Had We sent down this Qur'ān upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbling itself and splitting asunder from the fear of Allah.[31] We present these parables before the people so that they may reflect (on themselves).

22-24 He[32] is Allah besides Whom there is no god.[33] He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen:[34] He is the Compassionate and the Merciful.[35] He is Allah, besides Whom there is no god: He is the Sovereign,[36] the Holy,[37] the Source of safety,[38] the Giver of peace,[39] the Guardian,[40] the All-Mighty,[41] the Enforcer of His decrees,[42] and the ever Supreme.[43] Exalted is Allah alone Who is the Planner of Creation, its Enforcer and its Fashioner.[45] His are the excellent names.[46] Whatever is there in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him,[47] and He is the All-Mighty and the All-Wise.[48]

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who, in not know this truth, does not in fact know himself. And the person who inspite of knowing this, forgets it at any moment, may commit an act at that very moment, which a disbeliever, or a polytheist or a man forgetful of God only would commit. Man's remaining firm and steadfast on the right path entirely depends on his remembering God at all times. For as soon as he becomes heedless of Him, he becomes heedless of himself and this very heedlessness turns him into sinfulness.

31. The parable means that if a huge creation like a mountain had the sense and knowledge that it had been made responsible and accountable, like man.

before Allah Almighty, for its deeds, it would have trembled from the fear of it. But how heedless, senseless and thoughtless is the man, who understands the Qur'ān, and has known the whole truth through it, yet he is neither seized by any fear nor feels worried as to what answer he would make to his God about the responsibilities that have been placed on him. On the contray when he reads the Qur'ān, or hears it read, he remains go un-moved as if he were a lifeless and senseless stone, which is not supposed to hear and see and understand anything. (For further explanation, see E.N. 120 of Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb)

32. These verses explain what kind of God He is, and what are His attributes. Who has sent this Qur'ān to you, Who has placed these responsibilities on you, and before Whom you have to render an account of your deeds in the end. This mention of the Divine attributes immediately after the above theme automatically gives man the feeling that he has not to deal with an ordinary being but with Almighty Allah Who has such and such attributes. Here, one should also understand that although in the Qur'ān the attributes of Allah Almighty have been stated in a unique way, which gives a clear concept of the Divine Bing there are two places where the attributes of Allah have been mentioned in a most comprehensive way, in the Verse of the Throne (Al-Baqarah: 255) and in these verses of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr.

33. That is, He is the One besides Whom none else has the rank, position, attributes and powers of Godhead so that he may be worshipped and served as god.

34. That is, He knows whatever is hidden from the creatures as well as whatever is known and visible to them. Nothing of this universe is unknown to Him. He directly knows whatever has happened in the past, whatever exists at present and whatever will happen in the future : He does not stand in need of any means or medium of knowledge.

35. That is, He alone is the Being Whose mercy is limitless, which covers the whole universe and blesses and benefits everything a it. None else in the world is the bearer of such all-pervading, infinite mercy. The mercy of every other being, characterised by the hality of mercy, is partial and limited, and that quality too is not essentially its own, but bestowed by the Creator for a specific need and purpose. In whatever creature He has created the quality of mercy for some other creature, He has created it in order to make one creature a means of the development and well-being of the other creature. This by itself is a proof that Allah's Mercy is infinite.

36. The word used in the original is al-Mālik, which means at He alone is the real Sovereign. Moreover, the word al-Mālik its general sense also gives the

meaning that He is King of the tire universe and not of a particular region or of a specific country. His Sovereignty and rule comprehends the entire universe.

He is Master of everything. Everything submits itself to His command and power and authority, and there is nothing to delimit His Sovereignty. At different places in the Qur'ān all aspects of Allah's Sovereignty have been presented and explained fully.

"Whoever exist in the heavens and the earth are He servants; all are obedient to Him." (Ar-Rum: 26).

"He administers the affairs of the world from the heavens to the earth." (As-Sajdah: 5)

"To Him belongs the dominion of the earth and the heavens, and all matters are referred to Him for decision." (Al-Ḥadīd: 5).

"He has no partner in His sovereignty." (Al-Furqān: 2).

"In His hand is the absolute control of everything." (Yā Sin: 83).

"Doer of whatever He wills." (Al-Burūj: 16).

"He is accountable to none for what He does,l but all others are accountable (to Him)." (Al-Anbiyā': 23).

"Allah rules and there is none to reverse His decrees." (Ar-Ra'd: 41).

"The Being Who gives protection while none can give protection against Him." (Al-Mu'min: 88).

"Say: O Allah, Sovereign of the Kingdom, Thou bestowest kingdom on whomever Thou wilt, and Thou takest it away from whomever Thou wilt. Thou exaltest whomever Thou wilt and Thou abasest whomever Thou wilt. All that is good is in Thy power; indeed Thou hast full power over all things." (Āl-i-'Imrān: 26).

These explanations make it abundantly clear that Allah is not King in some limited or metaphoric sense but He is real King in the most perfect and complete sense of sovereignty. As a matter of fact, if sovereignty in its true sense is at all found somewhere, it is found only in Allah's Kingship. Apart from this, wherever it is claimed to be, whether in the person of a king or dictator, or in a class or group or family, or in some nation, he or it possesses no sovereignty at all, for sovereignty is not a gift, which may at one time be granted and at another time withdrawn, which may be in danger of being usurped, the establishment and existence of which may be temporary and temporal, and the sphere of power and authority of which may be circumscribed and restricted by many other conflicting powers.

But the Qur'ān does not just say that Allah is King of the universe but in the following sentences it also makes clear that He is the King Who is the Holy, the Source of Safety, the Giver of peace, the Guardian, the All-Mighty, the Enforcer of His decrees, the ever Supreme, the Creator, the Maker and the Fashioner.

37. *Quddus* is a superlative. It means that Allah is far exalted that He should have a fault or defect or demerit: He is the purest Being, no evil can be imagined about Him. Here, one should clearly understand that the attribute of holiness is a foremost accompaniment of sovereignty. Man's intellect and nature refuse to believe that a being who is the bearer of sovereignty may be mischievous, ill behaved, ill-natured, who may be characterised with these base qualities, from whose power and authority his subjects might be in danger of suffering evil instead of being blessed with good. That is why wherever man thinks sovereignty is centred, he assumes holiness also to be there, even if it is not there, for absolute sovereignty is inconceivable without holiness. But, obviously, there is no real Sovereign except Allah, Who is holy, nor can there be. Whether it is monarchy, or sovereignty of the people, or dictatorship *of* the socialist system; or some other form of human rule, in any case holiness for it is inconceivable.

38. The word *as-Salām* as used in the original means peace and Secure, Allah's being called *as-Salām* means that He is peace and safety personified. He is far exalted that some calamity or weakness or defect should befall Him, or His Perfection should suffer a decline or blemish.

39. The word *at-Mu'min is* derived from *amn,* which means to secure from fear, and *Mu'min* is one who provides security to others. Allah has been called *Mu'min* in the sense that He provides security to His creatures. His creatures are secure from the fear that He would ever wrong them, or deprive them of their rights, or allow their rewards to go to waste, or would violate the promises He has made with them. Then, since no object has been mentioned with this subject, but the epithet of *al-Mu'min* has been used absolutely, it automatically gives the meaning that His security comprehends the entire universe and all that it contains.

40. The word *al-Muhaimin* has three meanings: The Guardian and Protector; (2) the Observer who sees what everyone does; and (3) the Being Who has taken up the responsibility to fulfil the needs and requirements of the people. Here also, since the word *al-Muhaimin* has been used absolutely, and no object has been mentioned of this subject, therefore, it by itself gives the implied meaning that He is guarding and protecting all creatures, is watching the acts and deeds of everyone, and has taken up the responsibility of sustaining and providing for every creature in the universe with its needs and requirements.

41. Al-'Aziz: such an Almighty Being against Whom no one may dare raise his head, no one may have the power to resist His decrees, before Whom everyone may be helpless and powerless.

42. The word *al-Jabbār* as used in the original is derived from *jabr* which means setting something right by use of power, reforming something by force. Allah has been called *Jabbār* in the sense that He sets the system of His universe right by the use of power and enforces His will, which is wholly based on wisdom, by force. Moreover, the *word jabbar* also contains the meaning of greatness; and glory. Thus, a palm-tree which is too tall for the people to pluck its fruit is called *jabbār in* Arabic. Likewise, an act which is grand and glorious is called *'amal jabbār.*

43. The word *al-Mutakabbir* has two meanings. (1) The one who is not actually great but poses as great, and (2) the one who is actually great and sets himself up as such. Whether it is man or Satan, or some other creature, since greatness does not, in actual fact, belong to it, its posing itself as great and claiming superiority over others is, a false claim and a vice. Contrary to this, Allah Almighty is truly Great and greatness actually belongs to Him, and everything in the universe is low and insignificant as against Him; therefore, His being Great and setting Himself up as Great is no false claim but an actual reality; it is not an evil quality but a virtue and excellence, which no one else has but Allah.

44. That is, those who regard a creature as an associate in His powers, authority, attributes, or in His Being, in fact, utter a grave falsehood, for Allah is far exalted that anybody or anything should be an associate with Him in any sense.

45. That is, the whole world and everthing in it, from the initial plan of its creation till its coming into existence in its final, finished form, is entirely Allah's work of creation. Nothing has come into existence by itself nor come about accidentally, nor has anyone else the least share in its creation and development. Here, Allah's act of creation has been described in three separate stages, which take place one after the other. First is the stage of *khalq*, which means to ordain, or to plan. It is like an engineer's conceiving the design of a building, which he intends to build for a specific purpose and draws out its detailed diagram and model. The second stage is *bar'*, which actually means to separate, to cut, to split asunder. The Creator has been called *Bāri'* in the sense that He enforces the plan He has conceived and brings out the thing from non-existence into existence. It is analogous to the engineer's putting marks on the ground of the full measurements of the building according to the plan, digging the foundations, raising the walls and completing all the practical preliminaries of the construction work. The third stage is *taṣwīr*, which means to give shape; here it implies giving something its

final complete shape. In all these three stages there is no resemblance whatever between Allah's work and human works. None of human plans is such as may not have been derived from previous models and plans. But each of Allah's plans is unique and His own original creation. Whatever man makes, he makes it by combining the substances created by Allah. He does not bring anything from non-existence into existence, but composes and constructs by different methods whatever is present and available. Contrary to this, Allah has brought everything from non-existence into creation, and the substance itself of which He has made the universe is created by Him. Likewise, in the matter of giving shape also man is not the inventor but an imitator, and only a poor imitator. The real Maker of forms and shapes is Allah, Who has given a unique and matchless shape to every species and individual and has never repeated exactly the same shape or from.

46. Names imply the adjectives, and "His are the excellent names" means that those adjectives which indicate or express some kind of defect are not appropriate for Him. He should be remembered by those names which express His attributes of Perfection. In the Qur'ān these beautiful names of Allah have been mentioned here and there, and in the *Ḥadīth* 99 names of that Exalted and Pure Being have been enumerated, which *Tirmidhī* and *Ibn Mājah* have related on the authority of Ḥadrat Abu Hurairah. If one studies these names as mentioned in the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* carefully, the can easily understand what words would be appropriate ant suitable if one has to remember Allah in another language.

47. That is, "Everything proclaims .with the tongue, or otherwise, that its Creator is free frown every fault and defect, weakness and error."

48. For explanation, see E.N. 2 of Sūrah Al-Ḥadīd.


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AL
MUMTAḤINAH
الممتحنة

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LX

AL-MUMTAḤINAH

الممتحنة

INTRODUCTION

Name

In verse 10 of this Sūrah it has been enjoined that the women who emigrate *to dār al-Islām* (the Islamic State) and claim to be Muslims, should be examined; hence the title *Al-Mumtahinah*. The word is pronounced both as *mumtaḥinah* and as *mumtaḥainah*. the meaning according to the first pronunciation being "the Sūrah Which examines", and according to the second, "the woman who is examined."

Period of Revelation

The Sūrah deals with two incidents, the time of the occurrence of which is well known historically. The first relates to Ḥaḍrat Ḥātib bin Abi Balta'a, who, a little before the conquest of Makkah, had sent a secret letter to the Quraish chiefs informing them of the Holy Prophet's

intention to attack them. The second relates to the Muslim women, who had started emigrating from Makkah to Madīnah, after the conclusion of the Truce of Ḥudaibiyah, and the problem arose whether they also were to be returned to the disbelievers, like the Muslim men, according to the conditions of the Truce. The mention of these two things absolutely determines that this Sūrah came down during the interval between the Truce of Ḥudaibiyah and the Conquest of Makkah. Besides, there is a third thing also that has been mentioned at the end of the Sūrah to the effect: What should the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) make the women to pledge when they come to take the oath of allegiance before him as believers? About this part also the guess is that this too was sent down some time before the conquest of Makkah, for after this conquest a large number of the Quraish women, like their men, were going to enter Islam simultaneously and had to be administered the oath of allegiance collectively.

Theme and Topics

This Sūrah has three parts:

The first part consists of vv. 1-9, and the concluding verse 13 also relates to it. In this strong exception has been taken to the act of Ḥaḍrat Ḥaṭib bin Abi Balta'a in that he had tried to inform the enemy of a very important war secret of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) only for the sake of safe-guarding his family. This would have caused great bloodshed at the conquest of Makkah had it not been made ineffective in time. It would have cost the Muslims many precious lives; many of the Quraish would have been killed, who were to render great services to Islam afterward; the gains which were to accrue from conquering Makkah peacefully would have been 'lost, and all these serious losses would have resulted only because one of the Muslims had wanted to safeguard his family from the dangers of war. Administering a severe warning at this blunder Allah has taught the believers the lesson that no believer should, under any circumstances and for any motive, have relations of love and friendship with the disbelievers, who are actively hostile to Islam, and a believer should refrain from everything which might be helpful to them in the conflict between Islam and disbelief. However,' there is no harm in dealing kindly and justly with

those disbelievers, who may not be practically engaged in hostile activities against Islam and persecution of the Muslims.

The second part consists of vv. 10-11. In this a social problem has been settled, which was agitating the minds at that time. There were many Muslim women in Makkah, whose husbands were pagans, but they were emigrating and reaching Madīnah somehow. Likewise, there were many Muslim men in Nadīnah, whose wives were pagans and had been left behind in Makkah. The question arose whether the marriage bond between them continued to be valid or not. Allah settled this problem for ever, saying that the pagan husband is not lawful for the Muslim women, nor the pagan wife lawful for the Muslim husband. This decision leads to very important legal consequences, which we shall explain in our notes below.

The third section consists of verse 12, in which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has been instructed to ask the women who accept Islam to pledge that they would refrain from the major evils that were prevalent among the womenfolk of the pre-Islamic Arab society, and to promise that they would henceforth follow the ways of goodness which the Messenger of Allah may enjoin.



يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا عَدُوِّيْ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ اَوْلِيَآءَ تُلْقُوْنَ اِلَيْهِمْ
بِالْمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوْا بِمَا جَآءَكُمْ مِّنَ الْحَقِّ ۚ يُخْرِجُوْنَ الرَّسُوْلَ وَاِيَّاكُمْ اَنْ
تُؤْمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ رَبِّكُمْ ؕ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ خَرَجْتُمْ جِهَادًا فِيْ سَبِيْلِيْ وَابْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِيْ ۚ
تُسِرُّوْنَ اِلَيْهِمْ بِالْمَوَدَّةِ ۖ وَاَنَا اَعْلَمُ بِمَآ اَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَآ اَعْلَنْتُمْ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّفْعَلْهُ
مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ السَّبِيْلِ ۝ اِنْ يَّثْقَفُوْكُمْ يَكُوْنُوْا لَكُمْ اَعْدَآءً وَّيَبْسُطُوْٓا
اِلَيْكُمْ اَيْدِيَهُمْ وَاَلْسِنَتَهُمْ بِالسُّوْٓءِ وَوَدُّوْا لَوْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ ۝ لَنْ تَنْفَعَكُمْ اَرْحَامُكُمْ
وَلَآ اَوْلَادُكُمْ ۚ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۚ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ۝
قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِيْٓ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَالَّذِيْنَ مَعَهٗ ۚ اِذْ قَالُوْا لِقَوْمِهِمْ
اِنَّا بُرَءٰٓؤُا مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ۖ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَ
بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَآءُ اَبَدًا حَتّٰى تُؤْمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَحْدَهٗٓ اِلَّا قَوْلَ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ
لِاَبِيْهِ لَاَسْتَغْفِرَنَّ لَكَ وَمَآ اَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ؕ رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ
تَوَكَّلْنَا وَاِلَيْكَ اَنَبْنَا وَاِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيْرُ ۝ رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا

الجزء الثامن والعشرون

LX

AL-MUMTAḤINAH

الممتحنة

Verses: 13 *Revealed at Madinah*

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

O you[1] who have believed, if you have come out (from your homes and emigrated) in order to fight in My way and to seek My goodwill, then do not make friends with My enemies and your enemies. You show them friendship even though they have refused to believe in the Truth that has come to you, while they drive out the Messenger and you away only because you believe in Allah, your Lord. You send them friendly messages secretly, whereas I know full well whatever you do secretly and whatever you do openly. Whoever from among you does so, has indeed gone astray from the right way. If these people overcome you, they will be enemies to you and will use their hands and their tongues to harm you. They wish that you should turn unbelievers somehow.[2] On the Day of Resurrection neither will your relationships avail you anything nor your children.[3] Allah on that Day shall cause separation between you,[4] and He is Seer of whatever you do.[5] 1-3

There is indeed an excellent example for you in Abraham and his Companions when they said to their people plainly: "We have nothing to do with you and your gods, whom you worship instead of Allah; we renounce you[6] and there has arisen between us and you enmity and hatred for ever, until you believe in Allah, the One." But Abraham's saying this to his father (is excepted); "I shall certainly pray for your forgiveness, though I have no power to get anything for you from Allah."[7] (And the prayer of Abraham and his companions was:) "O our Lord, in you alone have we put our trust and to You alone have we turned and to You we shall return finally. O our Lord: make us not a test and trial for those who have disbelieved;[8] and O our Lord, 4-5

pardon us our errors. You indeed are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

1. It would be appropriate to give at the outset the details of the incident concerning which these verses were sent down so that the subject that follows is understood easily. The commentators are agreed, and Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid, Qatadah, 'Urwah bin Zubair and others also have unanimously reported, that these verses were revealed at the time when a letter of Ḥadrat Ḥātib bin Abi Balta'a to the pagans of Makkah was intercepted.

It so happened that, when the Quraish broke the Treaty of Ḥudaibiyah, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) started making preparations for an invasion of Makkah, but he did not tell anyone, except a few close Companions, what was the goal of the expedition. By chance at about the same time a woman arrived from Makkah, who had been a slave-girl of the Banī 'Abdul Muṭṭalib, and then after her freedom had adopted singing as her profession. She complained of poverty to the Holy Prophet and requested for financial help. The Holy Prophet appealed to the Banī 'Abdul Muṭṭalib and the Banī al Muṭṭalib and satisfied her need. When she was about to leave for Makkah, Ḥadrat Ḥātib bin Abi Balta'a met her and quietly gave her a letter addressed to some of the Makkah chiefs and paid her ten dīnārs so that she kept the secret and carried the letter to the addressees secretly. When she had just left Madīnah, Allah informed the Holy Prophet (Upon whom be Allah's peace) of it. So the Holy Prophet immediately sent Ḥadrat 'Ali, Ḥadrat Zubair and Hadrat Miqdād bin Aswad after her with the instruction: "Make haste: At Rauḍah Khāki (12 miles from Madīnah on the road to Makkah) you will meet a woman, who carries a letter from Ḥātib to the pagans of Makkah Seize that letter by any means you like. If she delivers the letter willingly, let her go; if she refuses to deliver it, kill her." When these Companions reached the place, they found the woman there They demanded the letter from her. She replied that she had a letter. They searched her but could find no letter. At last, they told her to deliver the letter, otherwise they would strip her and search her. Whe she saw that there was no way of escape, she took out the letter from her hair-plait and delivered it to them, and they brought it to the Holy Prophet. When the letter was opened and read it was found to contain information to the Quraish that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) was making preparations to attack them. (In different traditions different wordings of the letter have been reported but the purport of all is one and the same). The Holy Prophet asked Ḥadrat Ḥātib what induced him to act thus. He replied: "Sir, do not make haste in this matter of mine. I have not done this because I have become a disbeliever or an apostate, and have started preferring disbelief to Islam. But the truth is that my near and dear ones are still in Makkah. I do not belong to the tribe of the Quraish, but had settled there under the guardianship of some of them. The families of the Emigrants, which are still in Makkah, will be defended and

protected by their tribes and clans, but I have no tribe, which could give protection to my family. Therefore, I sent this letter in order to keep the Quraish under obligation so that they did not harm my children." (According to Ḥaḍrat Ḥaṭib's son 'Abdur Raḥmān, Ḥaḍrat Ḥābit had his children and brother still in Makkah at that time, and according to Ḥaḍrat Ḥāṭib's own report his mother also was there). Hearing what Hātib had to say, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said to the people: "Ḥāṭib has told you the truth." That is, the real motive of his action was this and not any treachery against Islam or any intention to support disbelief. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar rose and said: "Permit me, O Messenger of Allah, that I should cut off this hypocrite's head: he has been treacherous to Allah and His Messenger and the Muslims." The Holy Prophet said: "This man has participated in the Battle of Badr. You may not know, O 'Umar, Allah may have looked favourably at the people of Badr and said: "Do as you please, I have forgiven you." (The words in the last sentence are different in different traditions. In some these are to the effect: "I have granted you forgiveness"; in some other: "I am your Forgiver"; and in still an other: "I will forgive you.") Hearing this Ḥaḍrat 'Umar wept and said: "Allah and His Messenger have the best knowledge." This is a resume of those many traditions which Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī, Ibn Jarīr Tabarī, Ibn Hishām, Ibn Hibbān and Ibn Abi Hātim have related on the authority of several reliable transmitters. The most authentic of these is the tradition which Ḥadrat 'Alī's secretary, 'Ubaidullah bin Abū Rāfi', heard from Hadrat 'Alī himself, and from him Ḥaḍrat 'Alī's grandson, Ḥaṣan bin Muḥammad bin Ḥanafiyah, heard and conveyed to the later reporters. In none of these there is any mention that Ḥaḍrat Ḥāṭib was pardoned when he presented this excuse. But there is no hint either to show that he was awarded some punishment. That is why the Muslim scholars have concluded that Ḥaḍrat Ḥāṭib's excuse was accepted and he was pardoned.

2. Although what has been said up to here, and what follows in this regard, was sent down in connection with the incident relating to Hadrat Hātib, Allah, instead of dwelling on his case only, has given the believers this lesson for ever and ever: "It is contrary to the profession of the Faith that a person should act, out of any motive or reason, in a way detrimental to the interests of Islam and subservient to the interests of disbelief when a conflict is going on between Islam and disbelief and some people have adopted a hostile attitude towards the Muslims only because they are Muslims. Even if a person be wholly free from any ill-will against Islam and acts thus not with an evil intention but *for* the sake of a dire personal need, the act anyhow is unbecoming of a believer, and whoever acts thus strays from the right way."

3. The allusion is to Ḥaḍrat Ḥāṭib. As he had acted thus only in order to ensure that his mother and brother and children remained safe in the event of a

war, it is being said: "The relations for whose sake you have commited this grave error, will not save you on the Day of Resurrection. No one will dare come forward in the Court of Allah and say: 'Our father, or our son, or our brother had committed this sin for our sake; therefore, we may be punished instead of him. At that time everyone will be worried only about himself, and weighed down with the anxiety of somehow saving himself from the consequences of his own acts, not to speak of being ready to take the burden of another's sins on his head." This thing has been expressed in clearer words at several other places in the Qur'ān. At one place it has been said: "To save oneself from the torment of that Day, the culprit will wish to give his children, his wife, his brother, his kinsfolk, who gave him shelter, and all the people of the earth, in ransom that this device might rescue him." (Al-Ma'ārij: 11-14). At another place: "On the Day man shall flee from his brother and his mother and his father and his wife and his children. Each one of them? on that Day, shall have enough to occupy him so as to make him heedless of others." ('Abasa: 34-37).

4. That is, "All worldly relationships and bonds of love and friendship shall be rendered void in the Hereafter. The people will not be judged as groups and parties and families, but every person will have to present himself as an individual and render his own account only. Therefore, no one in the world should commit a wrong for the sake of a relationship or friendship or fraternity, for he will himself have to face all its consequences, and no one else will become a partner in a matter of his peasonal responsibility."

5. The following conclusions are deduced from the details of the case of Ḥaḍrat Ḥātib, as mentioned above, and the verses which were sent down in this connection:

(1) Whatever the motive of the person, it was in itself an act of espionage, and a very dangerous kind of espionage on a critical occasion. The enemy, who was absolutely unaware, had been informed of the imminent attack from Madīnah. Then it was not a case based on suspicion but a letter written by the concerned person himself had been intercepted, after which no other proof of the guilt was required. These were not peace but war time conditions; yet the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) did not place Ḥaḍrat Ḥātib in confinement without giving him a chance of self-defence. This chance also was not given him in camera but publicly before the people. This makes it manifest that there is no room in Islam for such laws and regulations under which the ruler may have the right in any case to imprison a person only on the basis of his own knowledge or suspicion. Islam also does not recognize the method of trying a person secretly in camera.

(2) Hadrat Hātib was not only one of the Emigrants but also a participant in the Battle of Badr, and enjoyed a distinguished place among the Companions. But despite this a serious crime happened to be committed by him and Allah took him to task for this in the Qur'ān as is evident from the above verses. In the *Hadith* too, his case has been narrated in detail and among the commentators also there may be none who has not made a reference to it. These are some of the evidences which prove that the Companions were not innocent. They also could commit errors because of human weaknesses, and errors happened to be committed by them practically. The teaching of regarding them with respect and reverence that Allah and His Messenger have given, does not at all require that if one of them happened to commit an error, it should not be mentioned, for evidently, if this were their demand, neither would Allah have mentioned them in His Book, nor the Companions and their successors and the traditionists and the commentators would have related their details in their traditions and books.

(3) The view that Hadrat 'Umar expressed in the case of Hadrat Hātib concerned the apparent aspect of the act. His reasoning was that the act was clearly in the nature of treachery to Allah and His Messenger and the Muslims; therefore, Hātib was a hypocrite and deserved to be put to death. But the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) rejected his viewpoint and explained the viewpoint of the Islamic *Shari'ah*, saying: "Decision should not be given only on the outward form of the act but it should also be seen what evidence is given by the past life and general character of the person, who happens to commit the act and the circumstances under which he commits it. The act, no doubt, smacked of espionage, but did the attitude of the person concerned towards Islam and the followers of Islam until then indicate that he could do such a thing with the intention of treachery to Allah and His Messenger and the Muslims? He was one of those who had emigrated for the sake of the Faith. Could he have made such a sacrifice without sincerity? He fought in a critical battle like Badr for the sake of his Faith when the Muslims were facing an enemy much better equipped and three times their number, Could the sincerity of such a person be doubted? Or, could it be believed that he had the slightest inclination towards the Quraish? He was telling the plain truth that his family at Makkah did not enjoy the protection of any tribe or clan, which the families of the other Emigrants enjoyed; therefore, he acted thus during war time only in order to safeguard his children from the persecution of the disbelievers. The facts confirmed that he did not really belong to any tribe at Makkah and this too was known that his family members were still back at Makkah. Therefore, there was no reason why his statement should be taken as false and the opinion

formed that his actual motive was not this but the intention of treachery. No doubt, for a sincere Muslim even with a good intention it was not lawful that he should inform the enemy of the military plans of the Muslims only for the sake of his personal interests, yet there is a great difference between the error of a sincere Muslim and the treachery of a hypocrite. Both cannot be awarded the same punishment only on the basis of the similarity between their acts. This was the Holy Prophet's decision in this case, and Allah confirmed it in the verses of Sūrah Al-Mumtaḥinah. A careful study of the above three verses will show that in these Allah has certainly reprimanded Ḥātib, but it is a kind of a reprimand administered to a believer and not the one administered to a hypocrite. Moreover, no penalty, or physical punishment was awarded to him, but he was administered a severe rebuke publicly and let off, which meant that in a Muslim society even a blot on the honour of a guilty believer and his falling into disrepute also was a very severe punishment.

(4) About the great merit of the Companions who fought at Badr, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: You may not know Allah might have looked favourably at the people of Badr and said: 'Do as you please, I have forgiven you'." This does not mean that the Companions of Badr were forgiven each and every sin and they were at liberty to commit whatever sin and crime they pleased, for forgiveness had already been guaranteed to them. This was neither meant by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) nor the Companions ever understood it in this meaning, nor any Companion of Badr after hearing this good news ever thought that he was free to commit any sin, nor ever any rule was made on the basis of this in the Islamic Shari'ah that if a Companion of Badr happened to commit a sin, he should not be given ally punishment for it. As a matter of fact, if one considers the circumstances under which this was said and the words that the Holy Prophet used on this occasion carefully, one can clearly understand the meaning to be this: "It would not be anything impossible if in view of the great and meritorious services that the Companions rendered at Badr out of sincerity and devotion and at the very risk of their lives for the sake of Allah and His Religion, Allah might have forgiven all their former and latter sins mercifully. Therefore, you should not suspect such a Companion of treachery and hypocrisy, and should accept the excuse that he himself is presenting for his crime."

(5) From the Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet's sayings it also becomes evident that a Muslim's being involved in espionage for the disbelievers by itself is not a sufficient basis for the conclusion that he has become an apostate, or is devoid of the Faith, or is a hypocrite. For reaching such a conclusion, if there are some other circumstances and evidences, it would

be a different thing; otherwise by itself this act is only a crime, not a sign of disbelief.

(6) From these verses of the Qur'ān it also becomes evident that for a Muslim it is in no case permissible that he should spy for the disbelievers, no matter how gravely his own life and property, or that of his near and dear ones, might be endangered.

(7) When Ḥaḍrat 'Umar asked for the Holy Prophet's permission to put Ḥaḍrat Ḥāṭib to death for the crime of espionage, the Holy Prophet did not say that the crime was not punishable with death, but declined permission on the ground that Hātib's being a Companion of Badr was an express proof of his being sincere, and the statement given by him was correct that he had acted thus not out of any good wishes for the enemies but for the sake of safeguarding his family from any possible persecution to death. From this one section of the jurists has argued that the general law in respect of a Muslim spy is that he should be put to death, unless there are very weighty reasons for awarding him a lesser punishment or a mere reprimand. But the jurists have disputed this question. Imām Shāfe'ī and some other jurists hold the view that the Muslim spy is punishable, but not with death. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and Imām Auza'ī maintain that he will be subjected to corporal punishment and long imprisonment. Imām-Mālik says that he will be put to death, but the Mālik; jurists hold different views on this question. Ash'hab says that the Muslim ruler has vast powers in this matter. He can exercise his judgement keeping in view the circumstances of the crime and the culprit and award him any punishment. A saying of Imām Mālik and Ibn al-Qāsim also is to the same effect. Ibn al Mājishūn and 'Abdul Mālik bin Ḥabīb say that if the culprit is a habitual spy, he should be put to death. Ibn Wahb says that the punishment of the spy is death, but if he repents of spying, he may be pardoned. Saḥnūn says that one cannot know whether his repentance is genuine or deceptive; therefore, he should be put to death. There is a saying of Ibn al-Qāsim also in support of this. And Aṣbagh says that the belligerent spy is punishable with death, but the Muslim or *dhimmī* spy should be given corporal punishment instead of the death sentence, unless he be helping the enemies openly as against the Muslims. (Ibn al-'Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān; 'Umdat al-Qārī; Fatḥ al-Bārī.)*

(8) The *Ḥadīth* that has been cited above also permits that for the investigation of the crime not only the male but the female accused also can be stripped if so required. Although Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, Ḥaḍrat Zubair and Ḥaḍrat Miqdād had not stripped the woman, yet they had threatened her that if she did not produce the letter, they would strip and search her. Obviously, if it were not lawful, the three illustrious Companions could

not have threatened her thus. And one can understand that they must have reported the story of their expedition on their return to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah s peace). Had he expressed his displeasure, it must have been reported. That is why the jurists have held it as permissible. (*'Umdat al-Qāri'*).

6. That is, "We reject you; we neither consider you to be in the right nor your religion." The inevitable demand of the faith in Allah is denial of *taghūt* (Satan): "Whoever rejects *tāghūt* and believes in Allah has taken a firm support that never gives way." (Al-Baqarah: 256).

7. In other words, it means: "Though there is an excellent example for you in Abraham's conduct in that he expressed disapproval of his pagan people and broke off all connections with them, yet his promise to pray for the forgiveness of his pagan father and then carrying it out practically is not worth following, for the believers should not have even this much relationship of love and sympathy with the disbelievers. In At-Taubah: 113, Allah has clearly warned: "It does not behove the Prophet and those who have believed that they should pray for the forgiveness of the polytheists even though they be near kinsmen." Thus, no Muslim is allowed to pray for the forgiveness of his unbelieving kinsmen on the basis of the argument that the Prophet Abraham had done so. As for the question, why did the Prophet Abraham pray thus, and did he carry out his promise practically? the answer has been provided by the Qur'ān in full detail. When his father expelled him from the house, he had said on his departure: "I bid you farewell: I will pray to my Lord for your forgiveness." (maryam: 47). On the basis of this very promise he prayed for him twice. One prayer is contained in Surah. IbrMhim: 41: "Lord, forgive me and my parents and the believers on the Day when reckoning will be held." And the second prayer is in Sūrah Ash-Shua'rā': 86: "Forgive my father, for indeed he is from among those who have strayed, and do not disgrace me on the Day when the people will be raised back to life." But afterwards when he realized that the father for whose forgiveness he was praying, was an enemy of Allah, he excused himself from it and broke off even this relationship of love and sympathy with him:

"As regards the prayer of Abraham for his father, it was only to fulfil a promise he bad made to him, but when he realized that he was an enemy of Allah, he disowned him. The fact is that Abraham was a tender-hearted, Godfearing and forbearing man." (AT-Taubah: 114).

A study of these verses makes the principle manifest that only that act of the Prophets is worthy of following, which they persistently practised till the end. As regards those acts which they themselves gave up, or which Allah restrained them from practising, or which were forbidden in the Divine *Shari'ah*, they are

not worth following, and no one should follow such acts of theirs on the basis of the argument that that was such and such a Prophet's practice.

Here, another question also arises, which may create confusion in some minds. In the verse under discussion, the saying of the Prophet Abraham which Allah has declared as not worth following, has two parts. The first part is that he said to his father: "I will pray for your forgiveness," and the second: "I have no power to get anything for you from Allah." Of these the first thing's not being a worthy examples to be followed is understandable, but, what is wrong with the second thing that that too has been made an exception from being an example worthily of imitation, whereas it by itself is a truth? The answer is that the saying of the Prophet Abraham has been included in the exception for the reason that when a person after making a promise with another to do something, says that it is not in his power to do anything beyond that for him, it automatically gives the meaning that if it were in his power to do anything further for him, he would have done that too for his sake. This makes his relationship of sympathy with the other person even more manifest. On that very basis this second part of the saying of the Prophet Abraham also deserved to be included in the exception, although its subject was true in so far as it does not lie even in the power of a Prophet to have a person forgiven by Allah. 'Allama Ālūsī also in his *Rūh al-Ma'ānī* has given this same answer to this question.

8. There are several ways in which the believers can become a cause of trial for the disbelievers, for which every believer should seek Allah's refuge. For example, (1) the disbelievers may gain in upper hand over them and consider it a proof of their being in the right and the believers' being in the wrong; otherwise it could not be that in spite of Allah's good pleasure that they claim to enjoy, the disbelievers would have been able to gain an upper hand over them; (2) the persecution of the believers by the disbelievers may become unbearable with the result that they may yield to them and abandon their Faith and moral values this would subject the believers to public ridicule and would provide the disbelievers with an opportunity to humiliate and debase them and their religion: (3) in spite of being the standard-bearers of the true Faith the believers may lose their moral superiority that should accrue to them as believers, and the people may see the same defects and deficiencies in their character as are commonly found in an un-Islamic community: this would give the disbelievers an opportunity to say that the Faith of the believers was in no way superior to their disbelief. (For further details see E.N. 8.3 of Sūrah Yūnus).

وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَا ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٥﴾ لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ
حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ
الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٦﴾ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَجْعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ عَادَيْتُمْ
مِنْهُمْ مَوَدَّةً ۚ وَاللَّهُ قَدِيرٌ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾ لَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ
الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَ
تُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٨﴾ إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ
قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَنْ
تَوَلَّوْهُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا
جَاءَكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ مُهَاجِرَاتٍ فَامْتَحِنُوهُنَّ ۚ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِهِنَّ ۖ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ
مُؤْمِنَاتٍ فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ ۖ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ ۖ
وَآتُوهُمْ مَا أَنْفَقُوا ۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ ۚ
وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا بِعِصَمِ الْكَوَافِرِ وَاسْأَلُوا مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ وَلْيَسْأَلُوا مَا أَنْفَقُوا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ
حُكْمُ اللَّهِ ۖ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾ وَإِنْ فَاتَكُمْ شَيْءٌ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ
إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ فَعَاقَبْتُمْ فَآتُوا الَّذِينَ ذَهَبَتْ أَزْوَاجُهُمْ مِثْلَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ
عَلَىٰ أَنْ لَا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ
وَلَا يَأْتِينَ بِبُهْتَانٍ يَفْتَرِينَهُ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعْصِينَكَ فِي
مَعْرُوفٍ فَبَايِعْهُنَّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ قَدْ يَئِسُوا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ كَمَا
يَئِسَ الْكُفَّارُ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْقُبُورِ ﴿١٣﴾

There is certainly in the conduct of those people an excellent example for you and for every such person who is hopeful of Allah and the last Day.[9] But whoever turns away from this (should know that) Allah is All-Sufficient and Self-Praiseworthy.[10] 6

It may well be that Allah will place love between you and those whose enmity you have now earned,[11] Allah is All-Powerful, and He is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful. 7

Allah does not forbid you to treat kindly and act equitably towards those who have neither fought you in the matter of religion nor driven you out of your homes. Indeed Allah loves the just.[12] He only forbids you to take for friends those who fought you in the matter of religion, and drove you out of your homes, and cooperated with others in your expulsion. Those who take them for friends are indeed the wrongdoers.[13] 8-9

O you who have believed, when the believing women come to you as emigrants, examine and test (their faith), although Allah only knows best the truth of their faith. Then, when you find them to be true believers, do not return them to the disbelievers.[14] Neither are they lawful for the disbelievers nor are the disbelievers lawful for them. Return to their disbelieving husbands the dowers that they had given them; and there is no blame on you if you marry them when you have paid them their dowers.[15] And you also should not hold back unbelieving women in marriage: ask for the dowers that you had given to your unbelieving wives, and let the disbelievers ask for the dowers that they had given to their Muslim wives.[16] This is Allah's command: He judges between you, and He is All-Knowing, All-Wise. And if you do not get back from the disbelievers a part of the dower of your disbelieving wives, and then your turn comes, pay to the people whose wives have been left on the other side an amount equivalent to the dowers given by them.[17] And fear that Allah in Whom you have believed. 10-11

O Prophet, when the believing women come to you to take the oath of allegiance,[18] and pledge that they would neither associate anything with Allah, nor streal[19] nor commit adultery nor child murder,[20] nor bring a calumny forged between their own hands and feet, nor disobey you in what is good,[22] accept their allegiance[23] and 12

pray for their forgiveness. Surely Allah is AllForgiving! AllMerciful.

13 O you who have believed, do not make friends with those whom Allah has condemned, who have despaired of the Hereafter just as the disbelievers, who are lying in the graves, have despaired.[24]

Contd. from p. 463]

9. "Who is hopeful Or Allah and the Last Day": who expects that one Day he will have to present himself before Allah and is hopeful that Allah will treat him benevolently and help him attain to success in the Hereafter.

10. That is, "Allah has be need of such believers, whgo profess to believe in His Religion as well as maintain friendly relations with His enemies. He is Self Sufficient: His Godhead does not require that they should acknowledge Him as God. He is Self-Praiseworthy, i.e. His being praiseworthy is not dependent on the people's praising and glorigying Him., If they affirm the faith, they faith, they do so not for any good of Allah, but for their own good: and they cannot gain anything from their affirmation of the faith until they break off all connections of love and friendship with the enemies of Allah as the Prophet Abraham and his companions did."

11. Although the true believers were following the exhortation to sever their connections with the unbelieving kinsmen patiently, yet Allah know how hard it was to break off one's connections with one's parents, brothers and sisters and near relations. Therefore, Allah consoled them with the hope that a time would soon come when their same relations would become Muslims and their today's enmity would again change into love tomorrow. When this thing was said no one could understand how this would happen. But hardly a few weeks had passed after the revelation of these verses when Makkah fell and the people of Quraish began to enter Islam in large numbers, and the Muslims witnessed with their own eyes how the hope they were given materialized.

12. Here, a doubt may arise in the minds. It is all right to treat the disbelievers, who are not hostile, kindly, but should only they be treated un-justly? And should the disbelievers, who are hostile, be treated un-justly? The answer is that in this context, the word justice, in fact, has been used in a special sense. It means: "Justice demands that you should not be hostile to those who are not hostile to you, for it is not justice to treat the enemy and the non-enemy alike. You have every right to adopt a stern attitude towards those who persecuted you for embracing Islam and compelled you to leave your homes and pursued you even after your expulsion. But as for those who were not partners in persecuting you, you should treat them well and should fulfil the right they have *on you* because *of* blood and other relationships."

13. The instructions to sever relations with the disbelievers given in the preceding verses, could cause the people the misunderstanding that this was because of their being the disbelievers. Therefore, in these verses it has been made clear that its actual cause is not their disbelief but their hostility to Islam and their tyrannical treatment of the followers of Islam. The Muslims, therefore, should distinguish between the hostile disbeliever and the non-hostile disbeliever, and should treat those disbelievers well who have never treated them evilly. Its best explanation is the incident that took place between Ḥaḍrat Asmā', daughter of Abū Bakr, and her disbelieving mother. A wife of Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr's was Qutaylah bint 'Abdul 'Uzzā, who was a disbeliever and had remained behind in Makkah after the migration. Ḥaḍrat Asmā' had been born of her. After the peace treaty of Ḥudaibiyah when the traffic opened between Makkah and Madīnah, she came to Madinah to see her daughter and also brought some gifts. Ḥaḍrat Asmā' herself has related that she went to the Holy Prophet and asked: "Should I see my mother? And can I treat her as a daughter should treat her mother?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes, treat her as your mother." (Musnad Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim). Ḥaḍrat Asmā's son, 'Abdullah bin Zubair, has given further details of this incident. He says that Ḥaḍrat Asmā' in the beginning had refused to see her mother. Then, when she received Allah and His Messenger's permission she met her. (Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abī Ḥātim). This by itself leads to the conclusion that a Muslim's serving his unbelieving parents and his helping his unbelieving brothers and sisters and relatives is permissible when they are not hostile to Islam; Likewise one can spend one s charities also on the indigent among the *dhimmīs*. (Al-Jaṣṣās, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān; Rūh al-Ma'ānī).*

14. The background of this injunction is that after the peace treaty of Ḥudaibiyah, in the beginning, the Muslim men started fleeing Makkah and arriving at Madinah and they were sent back according to the terms of the treaty. Then the Muslim women started arriving and, first of all, Umm Kulthūm Uqbah bin Abī Mu'aiṭ emigrated to Madīnah, The disbelievers invoked the treaty and demanded return, ands two brothers of Umm Kulthūm, Walid bin 'Uqbah and 'Amārah bin 'Uqbah, came to Madinah to take her back. At this the question arose whether the treaty of Ḥudaibiyah applied to the women as well. Allah has answered this very question here, saying: "If they are Mulims, and it is ascertained that they have emigrated only for the sake of the Faith? and for no other motive, they are not to be returned."

Here, a complication has arison on account of the narration of the *Ḥadīth* from the viewpoint of the meaning and content, and it must be resolved. The traditions that are found in the *Aḥadīth* about the conditions of the treaty of Ḥudaibiyah are mostly traditions narrated from the viewpoint of the meaning and purport, About the condition under discussion the words in the different traditions

are different. In some the words are to the effect: "Whoever reaches us from you, we will not return him, but whoever reaches you from us, you shall return." In some others the words are to the effect: "Whoever of his Companions comes to the Messenger of Allah without the permission of his guardian, he will send him back." And in still another the words are: "Whoever from the Quraish goes to Muhammad without the permission of his guardian, he will return him to Quraish." The style of these traditions by itself shows that this condition of the treaty has not been reported in the actual words of the treaty, but the reporters have reported its purport in their own words. But since most of the traditions are of the same nature, the commentators and traditionists generally have understood that the treaty was general, which applied to both men and women, and the women too were to be returned according to it. Later, when this injunction of the Qur'ān that the believing women were not to be returned, came to their knowledge, they interpreted it to mean that Allah in this verse had decided to break the treaty in so far as it related to the believing women But this was not an ordinary thing which should be accepted so easily. If the treaty was general, without any exception in respect of men and women, it could not be lawful for one party to amend it unilaterally or change a part of it by itself. And even if such a thing happened, it is strange that the Quraish did not protest against it, whereas they remained on the lookout for an opportunity to raise objections against everything that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and the Muslims did. Had they found that the Holy Prophet had committed a breach of the treaty conditions, they would have raised a loud clamour. But we do not find any trace of it in any tradition that they took an exception to this ruling of the Qur'ān. Had this question been carefully considered the problem could have been resolved by reference to the actual words of the treaty. But many people paid no attention they it; if some scholars (e.g Qāḍi Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī) did pay any attention, they did not hesitate to say that the reason why the Quraish did not raise any objection was that Allah had miraculously sealed their mouths in this matter. It is strange how these scholars felt satisfied at this explanation.

The fact of the matter is that this condition of the peace treaty had been proposed by the disbelieving Quraish, and not by the Muslims, and the words that Suhail bin 'Amr, their representative, had got included in the treaty were: "And that whichever man *(rajul)* comes to you from us, even if he be on your religion, you will return him to us." These words *of* the treaty have been reproduced in Bukhārī *(Kitāb ash-Shurūṭ: Bāb ash-Shurūṭ fil-Jihād wal-Muṣālahah)* through authentic channels. It may be that Suhail used the word *rajul* in the meaning of a person, but this might be the meaning he had in his mind. The word written in the treaty was *rajul,* which is used for a full-grown man in Arabic. That is why when the brothers of Umm Kulthūm bint 'Uqbah came to the Holy Prophet (upon whom

be Allah's peace) and demanded her return, (according to Imām Zuhrī's tradition) the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) refused return her, saying: "The condition was about the men, not the women." (*Ibn al-'Arabī, Aḥkām al-Qur'ān; Imām Rāzī, Tafsīr Kabīr)* Until then the people of Quraish themselves were under the delusion that the treaty applied to all kinds of emigrants, men or women; But when the Holy Prophet drew their attention to these words of the treaty, they were struck dumb and had to accept this decision.

According to this condition of the treaty the Muslims had the right to decline return of any woman who emigrated from Makkah to Madīnah, for any reason whatever. But Islam was interested only in safeguarding the believing women and not to make the holy city of Madīnah a place of refuge for every kind of female fugitive. Therefore, Allah enjoined: "Ascertain by examination the faith of the women who emigrated to you and profess to have believed; and when it is fully ascertained that they have emigrated with genuine faith, and no other motive, do not return them." Thus, the procedure adopted for carrying out this Command was that the women who emigrated were questioned whether they believed in the Oneness of Allah and the Prophethood of Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) and had emigrated only for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, and not out of any worldly consideration, e.g. hatred of the husband, or love of somebody in Madīnah, or some other worldly motive. Only those women who gave satisfactory answers to these questions were detained, others were sent back. (Ibn Jarīr on the authority of Iba 'Abbās, Qatādah, Mujāhid, 'Ikrimah, Ibn Zaid).

In this verse a basic principle of the Law of Evidence also has been stated and its further clarification has been made by the procedure that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had prescribed for implementing it, The verse enjoins three things: (1) Examine the faith of the emigrating women who present themselves as believers; (2) Allah alone knows the truth about their faith; the Muslims have no means to find out whether they have really believed or not; and (3) when it has been ascertained that they are believers, they are not to be returned. Then, in accordance with this injunction, the method that the Holy Prophet prescribed for examining and ascertaining the faith of the women was that the statement given by them on oath should be relied on and it should be made sure after necessary examination that they had no other motive of emigration than the Faith. First, it gives the principle that for taking decision on different matters it is not necessary for the court to have direct knowledge of the truth; for the court only that knowledge is sufficient which is obtained through evidence. Second, the statement given by a person on oath will be regarded as reliable until it is proved to be false by a clear evidence. Third, whatever declaration a person himself may make about his creed and faith, will be accepted and no search will be made into finding out whether what he states actually constitutes his faith or not, unless there

is a clear indication to the contrary. And fourth, in the personal affairs of a person, which no one else can know, his own statement will be trusted, e.g. in the matters of divorce and the waiting period *('iddat)* the woman's own statement about her menstrual course and state of purity will be regarded as reliable, whether it is true or false. According to these very rules, in the science of the *Ḥadīth* also, those traditions will be accepted, the apparent state of whose reporters testifies to their being righteous, unless, of course, there are other circumstances which forbid the acceptance of a particular tradition.

15. This means that a Muslim who wants to marry any of these women should pay a fresh dower and marry her. The dowers to be repaid to their unbelieving husbands will not be considered their dowers.

16. Four very important injunctions have been laid down in these verses, which relate both to the family law of Islam and to the international law.

First, that the woman who becomes a Muslim is no longer lawful for her unbelieving husband nor her unbelieving husband is lawful for her.

Second, that the marriage of the married woman who becomes a Muslim and emigrates from the abode of disbelief *(dār al-Kufr)* to the abode of Islam *(dār al-Islam)* is automatically annulled, and any Muslim who likes can marry her after paying her dower.

Third, that it is not lawful for a man who becomes a Muslim to retain his wife in wedlock if she likes to remain an infidel.

Fourth, that if there exist relations of peace between the abode of disbelief and the abode of Islam, the Islamic government should try to settle the question of the return of dowers with the non-Muslim government, thus: The dowers of the married women of the disbelievers, who become Muslims and emigrate to the abode of Islam, should be returned by the Muslims, and the dowers of the unbelieving married women of the Muslims, who are left behind in the abode of disbelief, should be got back from the disbelievers.

The historical background of these injunctions is as follows: In the beginning of Islam, there were many such men, who accepted Islam but their wives did not become Muslim, and there were many such women who became Muslim but their husbands did not accept Islam. Abul-'Āṣ, the husband of Zainab, a daughter of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), was a non-Muslim and he remained non-Muslim for several years. In the early period no command had been given to the effect that the pagan husband was unlawful for the Muslim wife and the pagan wife was unlawful for the Muslim husband. Therefore, the marital relations continued to exist between them. Even after the migration for several years, it so happened that many women became Muslim and emigrated to

Madinah while their pagan husbands remained in the abode of disbelief. Likewise, many Muslim men emigrated and their pagan wives were left in the abode of disbelief. But in spite of this their marriage continued. This was creating complications for the women in particular, for the men could marry other women, but this was not possible for the women. Until their marriage with their previous husbands was dissolved, they could not remarry. After the peace treaty of Ḥudaibiyah when these verses came down, they annulled the previous marriages between the Muslims and the pagans, and laid down an absolute and clear law for guidance in future. The jurists of Islam have codified this law under four major heads:

First, the case when both the man and the wife are in the abode of Islam and one of them becomes a Muslim and the of her remains an infidel.

Second, the case when both the man and the wife are in the abode of disbelief, and one of them becomes a Muslim and the other remains an infidel.

Third, the case when one of the spouses becomes a Muslim and emigrates to the abode of Islam and the other remains an infidel in the abode of disbelief.

Fourth, the case when either of the Muslim spouses becomes an apostate.

Below we give the viewpoints of the jurists with regard to a 11 the four cases separately:

(1) In the first case, if the husband has accepted Islam and' his wife is a Christian or a Jewess, and she remains faithful to her religion, their marriage will endure, for it is permissible for a Muslim to have a wife who is a follower of the earlier scriptures. This is agreed upon by all jurists.

And if the .wife of the man, who has accepted Islam, is not a follower of the earlier Books, and she adheres to her Faith, the Ḥanafīs say that Islam will be presented before her; if she accepts it, the marriage will endure; if she refuses to accept it, separation will be effected between them. In this case, if consummation between them had taken place, the woman will be entitled to the dower; if there was no consummation, she will not be entitled to any dower, for separation has been caused because of her refusal. *(Al-Mabsūṭ; Hedāyah; Fatḥ al-Qadīr).* Imām Shāfe`ī and Imām Aḥmad say that if the spouses did not have had consummation, the woman would be outside wedlock as soon as the man accepted Islam, and if consummation had taken place, the woman will remain in wedlock till three menstruations. During this period if she accepts Islam of her own free wills the marriage will continue, otherwise it will become void automatically as soon as she is free from her third menstrual course. Imām Shāfe'ī also adds that it is not right to present Islam before the woman on the basis of the pledge of non-interference

in religion that the *dhimmīs* have been given by the Muslims. But this, in fact, is a weak argument; for interference in the *dhimmī* woman's religion would be if she was compelled to accept Islam. It is no interference to tell her that if she accepted Islam, she would continue to be her husband's wife, otherwise she would be separated from him. In Ḥaḍrat Alī's time there has been a precedent of this nature. An Irāqī landowner who was a Majūsī by religion accepted Islam and his wife remained an unbeliever, Ḥaḍrat 'Alī presented Islam before her, and when she refused to accept it, he effected separation between them. *(Al-Mabsūt). Imām* Mālik says that if consummation has not taken place, the unbelieving wife would forthwith cease to be the wife as soon as the man embraced Islam, and if consummation has taken place. Islam would be presented before the woman, and in case she refuses to accept it, separation will result. (Ibn Qudāmah, *Al-Mughnī).*

And if Islam has been accepted by the woman and the Fan remains an infidel, whether he is a follower of an earlier scripture or a non-follower, the Ḥanafīs say that Islam will be presented before the husband whether consummation between them has taken place or not. If he accepts it, the woman will continue to be his wife; if he rejects it the *qāḍī* will effect separation between them. So long as the man does not refuse to accept Islam, the woman will remain his wife, but he will not have the right to have sexual relations with her. In case the husband refuses, separation will become effective just like an irrevocable divorce. If consummation has not taken place before this, the woman will be entitled to half the dower, and if it has taken place, the woman will be entitled to full dower as well as maintenance during the waiting period *('iddat). (Al-Mabsūt; Hedāyah; Fatḥ al-Qadīr).* According to Imām Shāfe'ī, marriage will dissolve as soon as the woman accepted Islam in case consummation has not taken place, and in case it has taken place, the woman will continue to be the man's wife till the end of the waiting period. If in the mean-time he accepts Islam, marriage will remain valid, otherwise separation will take place as soon as the waiting period comes to an end. But in the case of the man also Imām Shāfe'ī has expressed the same opinion as he has expressed about the woman as cited above. That is, it is not right to present Islam before him. But this is a weak opinion. In the time of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, on several occasions, the woman accepted Islam and the man was invited to Islam; when he refused to accept it, separation was effected between the spouses There is, for examples the case of the wife of a Christian of the Banī Taghlib, which was brought before him. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar said to the man, "Accept islam, otherwise I will effect separation between you two." He declined, and the Caliph enforced the decree. The case of a newly converted lady of Bahz al-Mālik was sent to him. In her case too he ordered that Islam be presented before her husband; if he accepts it, well and good, otherwise separation be effected between them. These incidents had happened in front of the Companions and no dispute or

difference of opinion has been reported. *(Al-Jassās, Aḥkām al-Qur'ān; Al-Mabsūṭ; Fatḥ al-Qadīr).* Imām Mālik's opinion in this connection is that if the woman becomes a Muslim before the consummation of marriage, Islam should be presented before the husband; if he accepts it, well and 'good; otherwise separation should be effected forthwith. And if consummation has taken place, and the woman has accepted Islam afterwards, she will have to wait till the end of the waiting period. If the husband accepts Islam in the meantime, marriage will continue, otherwise separation will take place as soon as the waiting period expires. A saying of Imām Aḥmad is in support of Imām Shāfe'ī. His other saying is to the effect that the event of the difference of religion between the spouses will in any case lead to immediate separation, whether consummation between them has taken place or not. *(Al-Mughnī).*

(2) If in *dār al-kufr* (abode of disbelief) the woman becomes a Muslim and the man remains an infidel, or the man becomes a Muslim and the wife (who neither is Christian nor Jew, but is follower of a non-revealed religion) remains an infidel the Ḥanafī viewpoint is that separation will not take place, whether consummation between them has taken place or not, until the woman completes three menstrual courses, or until she passes three months in case she is non-menstruating. If in the meantime the other spouse is also converted, marriage will remain valid, otherwise separation will take place on the expiry of the term. Imām Shāfe'ī, in this case also, distinguishes between the occurrence of consummation and its non-occurrence. He maintains that if there was no consummation, separation would occur immediately on the event of the difference of religion between the spouses. And if the difference of religion has occurred after the consummation, marriage will continue valid until the end of the waiting period. If in the meantime the other spouse does not accept Islam, marriage will dissolve as soon as the waiting period comes to an *end. (Al-Mabsūṭ; Fatḥ al-Qadīr; Al-Jassās, Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).*

(3) In case where along with the difference of religion between the spouses the separation of abode also takes place, i.e. one of them remains an infidel in *dār al-kufr* (the non-Muslim state) and the other emigrates to *dār al-Islam* (the Islamic state), the Ḥanafī viewpoint is that marriage between them will automatically dissolve. If the emigrant is the woman, she has the right to remarry immediately; she does not have to observe any waiting period. However, her husband will have to abstain from sexual intercourse until after she has discharged the menses once; and if she is pregnant, even then marriage can be contracted, but the husband must abstain from cohabitation until after the delivery. Imām Muḥammad and Imām Abū Yūsuf have differed from Imām Abū Ḥanīfah in this. They say *that* the woman has to observe the waiting period; and if she is pregnant,

she cannot contract marriage before the delivery. (Al-*Mabsūṭ; Hedāyah;* Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).* Imām Shāfe'i, Imām Ahmad and Imām Mālik maintain that the separation of abode has nothing to do with this, for the real thing is only the difference of religion. If this difference takes place between the spouses, the injunctions to govern this are the same as those which govern it in case such a difference takes place between the spouses in the Islamic state *(Al-Mughnī).* Imam Shāfe'ī along with his above-cited opinion has also expressed the view that if the emigrant Muslim woman has emigrated after a quarrel with her infidel husband, with the intention of dissolving his marital right, an immediate separation will take place not on the basis of the separation of abode *(ikhtilāf dār)* but on the basis of her this intention. *(Al-Mabsūṭ; Hedāyah).*

But a careful consideration of the Qur'ānic verse under discussion clearly shows that in this matter the most sound opinion is the one that Imām Abū Ḥanīfah has expressed. Allah has sent down this verse concerning the believing women who emigrated and about them He has said that they are no longer lawful for the pagan *husbands whom* they have left behind in *dār al-k-kufr, and* has allowed the Muslims of the Islamic state to marry them after they have paid them the dowers. On the other hand, the emigrant Muslims have been addressed and enjoined not to keep those of their pagan wives in wedlock, who are left is *dār al-kufr,* and to ask of the disbelievers the dowers that they had given to those women. Obviously, these injunctions do not pertain only to the difference of religion, but it is the difference of abode that has given these injunctions this particular form. If on account of migration the marriages of the Muslim women with their pagan husbands had not become dissolved, how could the Muslims be permitted to marry them, and .that too in a way that the permission does not contain any reference to the observance of the waiting pperiod by them? Likewise, if even after the revelation of the Command, "and you also should not hold back unbelieving women in marriage," the pagan wives of the Muslim emigrants had continued to be their wives, they also would have been commanded to divorce them. But there is no reference here to this either. No doubt, it is correct that after the revelation of this verse, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar and Ḥaḍrat Ṭalḥah and some other Emigrants had divorced their wives, but this is no proof that such a thing was at all necessary, and their severing of the marital relationship with those wives depended on their pronouncing divorce on them, and if they had not pronounced the divorce, the wives would have continued to be their legal wives.

In response to this, three events of the Holy Prophet's time are quoted as precedents, which are regarded as a proof that even after the revelation these verses the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace), in spite of the separation of abode, allowed the marriage relationship to continue between the believing and

the unbelieving spouses. The first event is this. A little before the conquest of Makkah, Abū Sufyān visited the Islamic army at Marr az-Ẓahran (present Wādī Fāṭimah) and accepted Islam, and his wife, Hind, remained a pagan in Makkah. Then Hind accepted Islam after the conquest of Makkah, and the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) ruled that their previous marriage would continue to be valid. The second event is that after the conquest of Makkah, 'Ikrimah bin Abū Jahl and Ḥakīm bin Ḥizām fled Makkah and in their absence the wives of both became Muslims. Then they sought the Holy Prophet's protection for their husbands and went and brought them back. Both the men come before the Holy Prophet and accepted Islam and in their case too he held their previous marriages as vaild. The third event relates to the Holy Prophet's own daughter, Ḥaḍrat Zainab, who emigrated to Madīnah and her husband, Abul-'As, was left an infidel in Makkah. About him Musnad Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah contain a tradition on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, saying that he came to Madīnah in A.H. 8 and became a Muslim, and the Holy Prophet allowed his daughter to continue in marriage with him, without renewal of marriage. But the first two of these events, in fact, do not come under the definition of the difference of abode. For the difference of abode does not mean a person's temporarily leaving one place for another, or his fleeing to another place, but the difference takes place only in case a person emigrates from one place and settles down in another place and the difference of nationality takes place between him and his wife. As for the event relating to Ḥaḍrat Zainab (may Allah bless her), there are two traditions, one related on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, as referred to above, and the other related by Imām Aḥmad, Tirmidhi and Ibn Mājah on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin 'Ās. In this second tradition it has been stated that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) allowed his daughter to continue as the wife of Abul-'Āṣ after renewal of the marriage, and with a fresh dower. Thus, in the first place, this precedent, due to the difference in reporting, no longer remains a definite argument with those who deny the legal effect of the separation of abode. Secondly, if they insist on the authenticity of Ibn 'Abbās's tradition, it contradicts their own viewpoint. For, according to their viewpoint, the marriage of the spouses between whom difference of religion takes place and who have consummated their marriage remains valid only until three menstruations. In the meantime if the other party also accepts Islam the marriage continues to be valid, otherwise it dissolves automatically as soon as the third menstrual course starts. But in the case of Ḥaḍrat Zainab from which they take their argument, the difference of religion between the spouses had taken place several years earlier. Abul-'Āṣ had affirmed the faith six years after Ḥaḍrat Zainab's emigration, and at least two years before his conversion to Islam the injunction had been revealed in the Qur'ān, according to which the Muslim woman had been forbidden for the pagans.

(4) The fourth case is of apostasy. Its one form is that both the husband and the wife should become apostates together, and the other that one of them becomes an apostate and the other remains a Muslim.

If both the husband and the wife become apostates together, the Shāfe'īs and the Ḥanbalīs say that their marriage contracted in Islam will dissolve immediately if this happened before consummation, and after the lapse of the waiting period if it happened after consummation. On the contrary, the Ḥanafīs hold the view that, although according to common sense their marriage should dissolve, yet in the time of Ḥadrat Abū Bakr, when thousands of people became apostates, and then again became Muslims, the Companions did not direct anyone to renew the marriage; therefore, we accept this unanimous decision of the Companions and admit, contrary to common sense, that in case both the husband and the wife become apostates together, their ' marriages do not dissolve." *(Al-Mabsūṭ; Hedāyah; Fatḥ al-Qadīr Al-Fiqh 'alal-Madhāhib al-'Arba'h).*

If the husband becomes an apostate and the wife continues to be Muslim, according to the Ḥanafīs and the Mālikīs, the marriage will dissolve immediately, whether this happens before consummation or after it. But the Shāfe'īs and the Ḥanbalīs in this connection make a distinction between the two states. If it happens before consummation, the marriage will dissolved immediately, and if it happens after consummation, it will endure till the end of the waiting period. In the meantime ii' the person returns to Islam, marriage will continue to hold good, otherwise, on teh expiry of the waiting period, it will be deemed to have dissolved since he became an apostate. That is, the woman will not have to observe another waiting period afresh. All the four jurists are agreed that if this happened before consummation, the woman would be entitled to half the dower, and if after consummation, to full dower.

And if the woman became an apostate, the old ruling of the Ḥanafīs was that in this case too, marriage would dissolve immediately. But later the scholars of Balkh and Samarkand gave the ruling that in case the woman becomes an apostate, seoaration does not take place immediately; and by this their object was to discourage the women from adopting this course in order to get rid of their husbands. The Mālikīs' verdict is somewhat similar. They say that if circumstances testify that the woman adopted this course only as a pretence to win separation from the husband, separation will not take place. The Shāfe'īs and the Ḥanbalīs say that in case of the woman's turning an apostate too, the law is the same as in case of the husband's turning an apostate. That is, if she became an apostate before consummation, marriage would dissolve immediately, and if after consummation, Marriage will endure till the end of the waiting period. If conversion takes place in the meantime, marriage will continue to hold good, otherwise it will be deemed to have dissolved since the time of apostasy. There is

consensus with regard to the dower. If the woman became an apostate, before consummation, she would not be entitled to any dower, and if she adopted apostasy after consummation, she would be entitled to full dower. *(Al-Mabsūṭ; Hedāyah; Fath al-Qadīr; Al'Mughnī; Al-Fiqh 'alal-Madhāhib al-Arb'ah).*

17. This thing had two alternatives and the verse applies to both. First, with the disbelievers with whom the Muslims had treaty relations, they wanted to settle the matter, thus: "We shall return the dowers of the women who have emigrated to us; and you will return the dowers of the pagan wives of our men) who have been left on your side." But the disbelievers did not agree to this. However, according to Imām Zuhrī, the Muslims, in obedience to the Divine Command, became ready to return the dowers of the women who were left behind with the pagans in Makkah, but the pagans refused to return the dowers of the women who had emigrated to the Muslims in Madīnah. Thereupon Allah enjoined that the dowers of the emigrant women, which were to be returned to the pagans, should be collected together in Madīnah instead of sending these to pagans; then from these collections disbursements should be made to those to whom the dowers were due from the pagans according to what was due to them.

The second alternative was that there were several converts to Islam, who had emigrated to the abode of Islam from the territories of the disbelievers with whom the Muslims had no treaty relations, leaving their pagan wives behind. Likewise, some women also had become converts and emigrated, leaving their pagan husbands behind. About them it was decreed that the matter should be settled in the abode of Islam itself on the bargain basis. That is, when the dowers were not being returned by the disbelievers, no dowers should be returned to them. Instead, the dower of the woman who had emigrated to the abode of Islam, should be paid to the person, whose wife had been left with the disbelievers.

But in case the account could not be settled equitably thus, and the amount of the dower due on behalf of the disbelieving wives of Muslims, who were left in the abode *of* disbelief, exceeded the amount of the dowers of the Muslim women who had emigrated, it was en joined that the deficiency be made up from the spoils that the Muslims took in the wars against the disbelievers. Ibn 'Abbās has related that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) would command that the loss of the person who did not receive his share of the dower be made up from the spoils. (Ibn Jarīr). This same view has been adopted by 'Aṭā', Mujāhid, Zuhrī, Masruq, Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī, Qatādah, Muqātil and Ḍaḥḥāk. All these scholars say, that the people whose dowers are left with the disbelievers, should be paid these from the collective spoils taken from the enemy. That is, before the booty is distributed, the dead dowers of the people should be paid and then the distribution made in which these people too should be given their equal shares along with the other soldiers. Some jurists say that the loss of such people can be made up not

only from the spoils but even from the *fai* properties. But a large section of the scholars does not subscribe to this view.

18. As we have explained above, this verse was sent down some time before the conquest of Makkah. After the conquest the Quraish started coming to the Holy Prophet in large numbers to take the oath of allegiance. From the men he took the oath himself on Mount Ṣafā. As for the women he appointed Ḥadrat 'Umar to administer the oath to them on his behalf and to ask them to pledge that they would refrain from the things mentioned in this verse. (Ibn Jarīr, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās; Ibn Abi Ḥātim, on the authority of Qatādah). Then, on his return to Madīnah he ordered the Muslim women of Madīnah to be gathered together in a house and he sent Ḥadrat Umar to take the oath from them. (Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Mardūyah, Bazzār, Ibn Ḥibbān, on the authority of Umm 'Aṭiyyah Anṣāriah). On the 'Id day also, after his address to men, he went to the assembly of women and in his sermon to them he recited this verse and asked them to pledge that they would refrain from the things mentioned in it. (Bukhārī on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās's tradition). Apart from these occasions, at different other times also, the women came before the Holy Prophet individually as well as collectively to take the oath of allegiance, as mentioned in several *Aḥadīth.*

19. In Makkah, when the oath of allegiance was being administered, Hind bint 'Utbah, wife of Abū Sufyān, asked the Holy Prophet its explanation and said: "Messenger of Allah, Abū Sufyān is rather stingy. Will it be sinful if I take out something from his wealth without his permission to meet my own and my children's needs?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Nay, but only justly and lawfully; i.e. take only that much as may actually suffice for your needs." (Ibn al-'Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).*

20. This also includes abortion, whether it is abortion of the legitimate or of the illegitimate foetus.

21. This implies two kinds of calumny: (1) a woman's accusing other women of having illicit relations with other men and her spreading such stories among the people, for the women are generally prone to spreading such things: and (2) a woman's delivering a child by somebody else and making her husband believe that it is his. Abū Da'ūd has related a tradition from Abū Hurairah saying that he heard the Holy Prophet say: "The woman who brings such a child into a family as does not actually belong to it, has no connection with Allah, and Allah will never admit her to Paradise."

22. In this brief sentence two important points of the law have been stated:

First, that obedience even to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has been restricted to "in what is good", although about the Holy Prophet no one could imagine that he would order somebody to do an evil. From this it automatically follows that no one in the world can be obeyed outside the bounds of Divine law. For when obedience to Allah's Messenger himself is conditional upon "in what is good", who else can have a position to demand unconditional obedience and require the people to obey and follow each of his commands, laws, rules or customs, which are opposed to the law of Allah? The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has stated this principle, thus: "There is no obedience in the disobedience of Allah; obedience is only in what is good and right." (Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Nasā'ī). Our great doctors have derived this very theme from this verse. Hadrat 'Abdur Rehmān bin Zaid bin Aslam says:

"Allah has not said that they should not disobey you (the Holy Prophet) but that they should not disobey you in what is good.

Then, when Allah Almighty has made obedience even to the Holy Prophet himself conditional upon this, how can another person have the right that he should be obeyed in anything but what is good?" (Ibn Jarīr).

Imām Abū Bakr al-Jassās writes:

"Allah knew that His Prophet never enjoined anything but what was good. Still He restricted obedience to him only in what is good, so that no one ever may find a provision to obey the kings when they enjoined something outside the obedience of Allah. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has said: 'He who obeys a creature in disobedience to the Creator, Allah appoints the same creature over him in power'." *(Ahkām al-Qur'ān).*

'Allāma Alūsī says:

"This command refutes the view of those ignorant people who think that obedience to the ruler is absolutely necessary. Allah has restricted even obedience to His Messenger only in what is good, whereas the Messenger never enjoins anything but what is good. This is meant to warn the people that obedience to no one is lawful in disobedience to the Creator." *(Rūh al-Ma'ānī).*

Thus, this command, in fact, is the foundation stone of the rule of law in Islam. The rule is that anything which is opposed to the law of Islam is a crime, and no one has the right to enjoin any such thing on any one. Anyone who enjoins anything against the law, is a culprit; and the one who obeys such a command, is also a culprit. No subordinate can escape the punishment on the basis of the excuse that his superior officer had ordered him to do something which was a crime in the law.

The other thing which has great legal import is that in this verse after enjoining five prohibitions only one positive command has been given, namely that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) will be obeyed in all good things. As for the evils, the major evils in which women of the pre-Islamic days were generally involved, have been mentioned and a pledge taken from them to refrain from them. But as for the good works, they have neither been mentioned nor any pledge taken to observe them. The only pledge that has been taken is that they will have to obey the Holy Prophet in every good work that he enjoins. Now obviously, if the good works be only those which Allah Almighty has enjoined in the Qur'ān, the pledge should have been to the effect: "You will not disobey Allah," or "You will not disobey the injunctions of the Qur'ān." But when the pledge taken was to the effect: "You will not disobey any good work that is enjoined by the Messenger of Allah", it automatically leads to the conclusion that the Holy Prophet has been given vast powers for the reformation of society, and it is obligatory to obey all his commands, whether they are found in the Qur'ān or not.

On the basis of this very legal authority the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) asked the women to pledge that they would refrain from all those evils which were prevalent among the women of the Arabian society at that time, and gave several such commands as have not been mentioned in the Qur'ān. One may study the following *Aḥādīth* in this connection

Ibn 'Abbās, Umm Salamah, Umm 'Aṭiyyah Anṣāriah and others have reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) while administering the oath of allegiance to the women asked them to pledge that they would refrain from mourning over the dead. These traditions have been related by Bukhārī, Muslim, Nasā'ī and Ibn Jarīr.

A tradition reported by Ibn 'Abbās contains this detal: "The Holy Prophet appointed Ḥaḍrat 'Umar to administer the oath of allegiance to the women and commanded that he should forbid them to mourn over the dead, for in the days of pre-Islamic ignorance women used to tear their clothes and hair, scratched their faces and bewailed in a loud voice." (Ibn Jarīr).

Zaid bin Aslam has reported that the Holy Prophet white administering the oath of allegiance forbade the women to scratch their faces, tear their garments, bewail and sing verses while mourning over the dead. (Ibn Jarīr). Another tradition bearing on the same subject has been reported by Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Ibn Jarīr from a woman who was among the women taking the oath of allegiance .

Qatādah and Ḥasan Baṣrī (may Allah bless them) say that one of the things that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had made the women to pledge also was that they would refain from talking with the other men freely.

Ibn 'Abbās has explained it in a tradition, thus: "That they would not talk with the other men in private." Qatādah has further explained it thus: hearing this command, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin 'Auf said; 'O Messenger of Allah, sometimes it so happens that we are not present in the house and somebody comes to see us.' The Holy Prophet replied: 'I do not mean this. "That is, the woman is not forbidden to tell the visitor that the master of the house is not present." (These traditions have been cited by Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Abī Ḥātim).

Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'Āṣ has reported another tradition from Umaimah bint-Ruqaiqah, maternal aunt of Ḥaḍrat Fāṭimah (may Allah be pleased with her), saying: "The Holy Prophet made me to pledge that I would neither bewail the dead nor display myself like the women of the pre-Islamic paganism." (Musnad Aḥmad, Ibn Jarīr).

Salmah bint Qais, a maternal aunt of the Holy Prophet, says: "I went before the Holy Prophet with some other women of the Ansār to take the oath of allegiance. He made us to pledge that we would abstain from the things mentioned in this verse, and then said: 'Do not defraud your husbands.' When we were about to leave, a woman said to me: 'Go and ask the Holy Prophet what is meant by defrauding the husbands?' When I went and asked the explanation, he replied: 'This that you should defraud him of his money and expend it on others." (Musnad Aḥmad).

Umm 'Aṭiyyah says: "The Holy Prophet after administering to us the oath commanded us that we would attend the 'Id congregational prayers, but the Friday prayer is not obligatory for us, and he forbade us to follow the bier." (Ibn Jarīr).

The people who think that the constitutional powers and authority that the Holy Prophet possessed emanated from his position as a ruler instead of his position as a Messenger of Allah, and say that since he was also the ruler at the time, whatever commands he gave in that capacity were only meant to be obeyed during his time, say an absurd thing. Consider the Holy Prophet's commands and instructions that we have cited above. If these instructions given by him for the reformation of the women had emanated only from his position as a ruler, how could these reforms then be introduced and enforced among the women of the Muslim society of the entire world for ever? Which ruler has there been in the world, who might have had the position that a command issued by him just once for a reform might have become enforced in the Muslim society everywhere in the world for ever? (For further explanation, see E.N. 15 of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr).

23. Several authentic *Aḥādīth* show that in the Holy Prophet's time the procedure of administering the oath of allegiance to the women was different from that to the men. For the men the procedure was that the ones pledging allegiance would give their hand in the hand *of* the Holy Prophet and take the oath. As for

the women, the Holy Prophet never took any woman's hand in his own hand, but adopted different other methods. In this connection, the following traditions have been reported:

Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah says: "By God, in connection with the oath of allegiance the Holy Prophet's hand never touched any other woman's hand. While administering the oath of allegiance to a woman, he would only say to her: 'I have accepted your allegiance'." (Bukhārī, Ibn Jarīr).

Umaimah bint Ruqaiqah has stated: "I along with some other women went before the Holy Prophet to pledge allegiance, and he made us to pledge according to this verse of the Qur'ān. When we said: 'We will not disobey you in what is good and right', he said: 'As far as it is in your power.' We submitted: 'Allah and His Messenger are more kind to us than we could be to ourselves.' Then we said: 'O Messenger of Allah, stretch your hand so that we may pledge allegiance.' He replied: 'I do not shake hands with women: I only make them take the pledge. So he made us to pledge." In another tradition she has stated: "The Holy Prophet did not take the hand of any of us in his own hand." (Musnad Aḥmad, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abī Ḥātim).

Abū Da'ūd, in *Marasī*, has related this from Sha'bī: "While administering the oath of allegiance to the women, a sheet of cloth was stretched towards the Holy Prophet, which he took in his hand and said: 'I do not take the woman's hand in my hand'." This same subject has been related by Ibn Abī Hātim from Sha'bī, by 'Abdur Razzāq from Ibrāhīm Nakhā'ī and by Sa'īd bin Mansūr from Qais bin Abi Ḥāzim.

Ibn Isḥāq, in *Maghāzī*, has related this from Abān bin Salih.: "The Holy Prophet would put his hand in a vessel full of water and then the woman also would put her hand in the same vessel."

In Bukhārī, a tradition from 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās is to the effect: "After giving the 'Īd congregational sermon, the Holy Prophet went through the rows of the men to the place where the women were sitting. There, in his address, he recited this verse of the Qur'ān, then asked the women: 'Do you promise to act according to it?' A woman from the assembly replied: 'Yes, O Messenger of Allah'."

In a tradition related by Ibn Ḥibbān, Ibn Jarīr, Bazzār and others, Umm 'Aṭiyyah Anṣāriah has stated this: "The Holy Prophet extended his hand from outside the house and we extended our hands from inside the house." But this does not prove that the women might have shaken hands with the Holy Prophet, for Ḥaḍrat Umm 'Aṭiyyah has not made any mention of the shaking of hands. Probably on this occasion for the purpose of taking the pledge the Holy Prophet

might have extended his hand from outside and the women their hands from inside the house towards him without any of their hands touching his.

24. The words in the original can have two meanings: First, that they have despaired of their well-being and rewards in the Hereafter just as the deniers of the life-after-death have despaired of the resurrection of their near and dear ones, who are dead and gone into the graves. This meaning has been given by Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas and Hadrat Hasan Basri, Qatādah and Dahāk (may Allah bless them). The second meaning can be: They have despaired of the mercy and forgiveness of the Hereafter just as the disbelievers, who are lying in the graves, have despaired of every good, for they are certain of their being involved in the punishment. This meaning has been related from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd and from Mujāhid, 'Ikrimah, Ibn Zaid, Kalbī, Muqātil, Mansūr (may Allah bless them all).



LXI

AṢ-ṢAFF

اَلصَّف

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LXI

AṢ-ṢAFF

اَلصَّف

INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah derives its name from the sentence *yuqātilūna fī sabil-i-hī ṣaff-an* of verse 4, thereby implying that it is a Surah in which the word ṣaff has occurred.

Period of Revelation

It could not be known from any reliable tradition, but a study of its subject-matter shows that this Sūrah probably was sent down in the period closely following the Battle of Uhud, for by reading between the

lines one perceives a clear description of the conditions that prevailed in that period.

Theme and Subject-Matter

Its theme is to exhort the Muslims to adopt sincerity in Faith and to struggle with their lives in the cause of Allah. It is addressed to the Muslims with weak faith as well as those who had entered Islam with a false profession of the Faith and also those who were sincere in their profession. Some verses are addressed to the first two groups, some only to the hypocrites, and some only to the sincere Muslims. The style itself shows where one particular group has been addressed and where the other.

At the outset the believers have been warned to the effect: "Allah indeed hates those people who say one thing and do another, and He indeed loves those who fight in the cause of the Truth, standing like a solid structure, against the enemies of Allah."

In w. 5-7 the people of the Holy Prophet's community have been warned that their attitude towards their Messenger and their Religion should not be like the attitude that the Israelites had adopted towards the Prophets Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them). In spite of acknowledging the Prophet Moses as a Messenger of God they continued to malign him as long as he lived, and in spite of witnessing clear signs from the Prophet Jesus they denied him without any hesitation. Consequently, the Israelites became perverse, incapable of benefiting from divine guidance. This is certainly not an enviable state which another nation should imitate.

Then, in vv. 8-9 a proclamation has been made with the challenge: "The Jews and the Christians, and the hypocrites, who are conspiring with them, may try however hard they may to extinguish this Light of Allah, it will shine forth and spread in the world in all its fullness, and the Religion brought by the true Messenger of Allah shall prevail over every other religion however hateful it may be to the pagans and polytheists.

In vv. 10-13, the believers have been told that the way to success both here and in the Hereafter is only one: that they should believe in Allah and His Messenger sincerely and should exert their utmost in

Allah's Way with their selves and their wealth. As a reward for this they will earn immunity from Allah's punishment, forgiveness of their sins and the eternal Paradise in the Hereafter, and will be blessed with Allah's good pleasure, succour and victory in the world.

In conclusion, the believers have been exhorted to the effect that just as the disciples of the Prophet Jesus had helped him in the cause of Allah, so should they also become "helpers of Allah", so that they too are blessed with the same kind of good pleasure and approval of Allah as had been the believers before them against the disbelievers.

سُوْرَةُ الصَّفِّ مَدَنِيَّةٌ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

سَبَّحَ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۝١ يٰٓاَيُّهَا
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لِمَ تَقُوْلُوْنَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ ۝٢ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ اَنْ تَقُوْلُوْا مَا
لَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ ۝٣ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِيْنَ يُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِهٖ صَفًّا كَاَنَّهُمْ
بُنْيَانٌ مَّرْصُوْصٌ ۝٤ وَاِذْ قَالَ مُوْسٰى لِقَوْمِهٖ يٰقَوْمِ لِمَ تُؤْذُوْنَنِيْ وَقَدْ
تَّعْلَمُوْنَ اَنِّيْ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ اِلَيْكُمْ ۭ فَلَمَّا زَاغُوْٓا اَزَاغَ اللّٰهُ قُلُوْبَهُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ لَا
يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ۝٥ وَاِذْ قَالَ عِيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يٰبَنِيْٓ اِسْرَاۗءِيْلَ اِنِّيْ
رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ اِلَيْكُمْ مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرٰىةِ وَمُبَشِّرًۢا بِرَسُوْلٍ
يَّاْتِيْ مِنْۢ بَعْدِي اسْمُهٗٓ اَحْمَدُ ۭ فَلَمَّا جَاۗءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ قَالُوْا هٰذَا سِحْرٌ
مُّبِيْنٌ ۝٦ وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَي اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُوَ يُدْعٰٓى اِلَى الْاِسْلَامِ ۭ
وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۝٧ يُرِيْدُوْنَ لِيُطْفِـــُٔوْا نُوْرَ اللّٰهِ بِاَفْوَاهِهِمْ
وَاللّٰهُ مُتِمُّ نُوْرِهٖ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ۝٨ هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَرْسَلَ رَسُوْلَهٗ بِالْهُدٰى
وَدِيْنِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهٗ عَلَي الدِّيْنِ كُلِّهٖ ۙ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُوْنَ ۝٩ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوْا هَلْ اَدُلُّكُمْ عَلٰي تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيْكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابٍ اَلِيْمٍ ۝١٠ تُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ
وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَتُجَاهِدُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ بِاَمْوَالِكُمْ وَاَنْفُسِكُمْ ۭ ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ
لَّكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝١١ يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلْكُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ وَمَسٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِيْ جَنّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ۭ ذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ۝١٢

LXI

AṢ-ṢAFF

اَلصَّف

Verses: 14 *Revealed at Madinah*

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

Whatever is in the heavens and the earth has glorified Allah, 1
and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.[1]

O you who have believed, why do you say that which you do 2-4
not do? Most hateful it is in the sight of Allah that you should say that which you do not do.[2] Allah indeed loves those who fight in His Way in ranks as though they were a solid wall.[3]

And remember what Moses had said to his people: "O my 5
people, why do you hurt me even though you know full well that I am indeed a messenger sent to you by Allah?"[4] So, when they adopted perverseness, Allah caused their hearts to become perverse: Allah does not guide the transgressors.[5]

And remember[6] what Jesus, son of Mary, had said: "O children 6
of Israel, I am indeed a Messenger sent to you by Allah, confirming the Torah which has come before me,[7] and giving the good news of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name shall be Aḥmad."[8]

Yet when he came to them with clear Signs, they said, "This is 7-9
plain magic."[9] Now, who could be more wicked than he who forges falsehoods against Allah[10] even though he is being invited towards Islam (submission to Allah)?[11] Allah does not guide such wrongdoers. They seek to blow out Allah's Light with their mouths, but Allah has decreed that He shall perfect His Light, much as the disbelievers may dislike it.[12] He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the Guidance and the Religion of truth that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, much as the polytheists may dislike it.[13]

10-13 O you who have believed, shall I tell you of a bargain[14] that will save you from a painful torment? It is that you should believe in Allah and His Messenger,[15] and should exert your utmost in Allah's Way with your wealth and your selves. This would be best for you if you only knew.[16] Allah will forgive you your sins and admit you into Gardens underneath which canals flow, and will give you excellent abodes in Gardens of Eternity. This indeed is the supreme success.[17] And He will give you the other thing too, that you desire: Allah's succour and victory near at hand![18] Give to the believers, O Prophet, the good news of this.

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1. This is a brief introdutcion to this discourse. For its explanation, see E.N.'s 1,2 of Sūrah Al-Ḥadid. The discourse has been opened with this introduction so that before hearing or reading what is going to follow, one may well understand that Allah is free from and far above this that the functioning of His Godhead should depend on someone s faith and another one's help and sacrifices. If He exhorts the believers to adopt sincerity in Faith and urges them to exert their utmost for the success and victory of the Truth, that is for the sake of their own good; otherwise the will of Allah is accomplished by His own power and by His own design, whether somebody makes no effort at all towards its implementation, and whether the whole world joins together to frustrate and resist it stubbornly.

2. One meaning of this passage is general as is apparent from its words. It has a special meaning also, which becomes evident when this verse is read along with the verse that follows. The first meaning is that there should be complete agreement between a true Muslim's word and deed: he should carry into effect whatever he says, and when he has no intention of doing it, or has no power for it, he should not say it. To say one thing and do another is one of the most hideous characteristics of man, in the sight of Allah. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has explained that a person's being charactrerised by this quality is a sign that he is not a believer but a hypocrite. According to a *Ḥadīth* he said;

"The hypocrite has three signs even if he offered the Prayer *and* observed the Fast, and professed to be *a* Muslim: that then he spoke he lied; when he made a promise, he broke it; and when he was entrusted with something, he proved dishonest." (Bukhāri, Muslim) .

In another *Ḥadīth* he said:

"Four characteristics are such that the one who has all the four, is a hypocrite through and through, and the one who has one of these, has one

characteristic of hypocrisy in him until he gives it up: that when he is entrusted with something, he proves dishonest; when he speaks, he lies; when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he quarrels he crosses all limits of morality and decency." (Bukhārī, Muslim).

The jurists of Islam have almost unanimously held the view that if a person makes a pledge to Allah (e.g. vows to do some thing), or enters an agreement with others, or promised somebody to do something, it is obligatory for him to fulfil it, unless the thing he has promised is by itself sinful. If it is sinful, he should not observe or carry out the agreement or promise, but should expiate its violation as mentioned in Sūrah Al-Mā'idah: 89 above. (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ and Ibn al-'Arabi, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).*

This much for the general meaning of these verses. As for their special meaning, it becomes obvious when these are read along with the verse that follows. The object is to reprove those people who talked much and made tall promises to fight and lay down their lives in the cause of Islam, but when the time came of their test and trial, they fled the battlefield. The people of weak faith have been taken to task for this weakness at several places in the Qur'ān. For instance, in Sūrah An-Nisā': 77, it has been said: "Have you also marked those to whom it *was* said, 'Withhold your hands (a while from war) and establish the *ṣalāt* and pay the *zakāt*. Now that they have been commanded to fight, some of them fear the people as they should fear Allah, or even more than that. They say: 'Our Lord, why have You prescribed fighting for us? Why have You not given us further respite?'' And in Sūrah Muḥammad: 20: "Those who have believed, were saying, 'Why is not a Sūrah sent down (to enjoin fighting)?' But when a decisive Sūrah was sent down in which fighting had been mentioned, you saw those in whose hearts was a disease, looking towards you like the one under the shadow of death." On the occasion of the Battle of Uḥud in particular, the weaknesses to which allusions have been made continuously from verse 121 to verse 171 of Sūrah Al-'Imrān became all the more conspicuous and visible.

The commentators while explaining the background of the revelation of these verses have mentioned the different forms of the weaknesses to which exception has been taken here. Ibn 'Abbās says that before the fighting was prescribed, there were some people among the Muslims who said: "Would that we could know the act that is most lovable in the sight of Allah, so that we would perform the same." But when they were told that it was fighting in the cause of Allah, it became most difficult for them to carry out their promise. Muqātil bin Ḥayyān has stated that in the Battle of Uḥud these very people were put to the test, and they abandoned the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and fled Ibn Zaid says that many of the people made the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) believe that they would go out with him to face the enemy whenever it was so

required, but when the time of the test came their promises proved false. Qatādah and Ḍaḥḥāk say that if some people did take part in the battle, they accomplished nothing, but on their return from the battlefield they boasted and bragged, saying, "We put up a brave fight and we achieved such and such a victory." It is such people who have been rebuked by Allah in these verses.

3. First, it shows that only those believers are blessed with Allah's good pleasure and approval, who are prepared to fight in His way, disregarding every kind of danger. Secondly, that Allah likes an army which has three characteristics: (1) It fights in Allah's way with full understanding, and does not fight for a cause disapproved by Allah; (2) it is not indisciplined, but is well-organized and well-arrayed for battle; and (3) it offers stiff resistance to the enemy as though it were "a solid cemented structure". Then, this last quality is by itself highly meaningful. No army can stand in the battle array like a "solid structure" unless it has the following characteristics.

(1) Complete agreement in the faith and the objective, which should unite soldiers and officers in a well-knit body.

(2) Confidence in one another's sincerity, which cannot be created unless everybody is genuinely sincere in his aim and free from impure motives; otherwise the severe test of war will not allow anyone's insincerity to remain hidden, and when confidence is lost, the members of the army start suspecting instead of trusting one another.

(3) A high standard of morality without which neither can the officers and soldiers of the army have love and respect for each other, nor can they *remain immune from* mutual clashes and conflicts.

(4) Love of the common objective and a firm resolve to achieve it, which should inspire the whole army with an invincible spirit of gallantry, devotion and self sacrifice, so that it may actually face the enemy like a solid cemented structure in the battlefield.

Such were the foundations on which a powerful military organization was raised under the leadership of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). Mighty power of the day clashed with it and were annihilated; no power of the world then could dare face it for centuries.

4. At several places in the Qur'ān details have been given of how the Israelites in spite of acknowledging the Prophet Moses as a Prophet of God and their own benefactor maligned him and proved disloyal to him. For this see Al-Baqarah: 51,55,60, 67-71 An-Nisā': 153; Al-Mā'idah: 20-26; Al-A'rāf: 138-141; 148-151; Ṭā Hā: 86-98. In the Bible too, the Jewish history written by hte Jews themselves is replete with such events; for instance, see Exodus, 5: 20-21, 14: 11-

12, 16: 2-3, 17: 3-4; Numbers, 11: 1-15, 14: 1-10, ch.16, 20: 1-5. Here, allusion to these events is meant to warn the Muslims that they should not adopt the same attitude towards their Prophet as the Israelites had adopted towards their Prophet; otherwise they would meet the same fate as was met by the Israelites.

5. That is, it is not Allah's way to force the people to follow the right way of guidance if they are bent upon following the crooked ways of sin and disobedience. From this it automatically follows that the deviation of a person or nation is not initiated by Allah but by the person or the nation itself. But the law of Allah is that He provides means of deviation only for the one who chooses deviation, so that he may go astray into whatever alleys he may like. Allah has granted man the freedom of choice. Now it is for every man and for every group of men to decide whether he or it wants to obey their Lord, or not, and whether he or it chooses the right way for it or one of the crooked ways. There is no compulsion from Allah in this choice. If somebody chooses the way of obedience and guidance, Allah does not push him forcibly towards deviation and disobedience; and if somebody is resolved to follow disobedience instead of the way of righteousness, it is not Allah's way to make him adopt the way of obedience and guidance forcibly. But this also is the truth that the person who chooses a particular way for himself, cannot follow it practically unless Allah provides for him the ways and means and creates for him the conditions which are necessary for following it. This is Allah's "grace and favour" without which no one's efforts can be meaningful and productive. Now, if a person is not at all interested in seeking Allah's grace for righteousness, but seeks His grace for adopting evil, he is given the same. And when he receives the grace for doing evil, he becomes temperamentally perverse accordingly and the course of his action and effort goes on becoming crooked until at last the capability to do and accept good in him is gradually lost and destroyed. This is what is meant by, "when they adopted perverseness, Allah caused their hearts to become perverse." In this state it is against the law of Allah that the one who wants to adopt deviation, and is actively and earnestly engaged in seeking it, and is expending all one's thought and energy to move further and further on towards it, should be forcibly turned towards guidance, for such an action would negate the object of the test and trial, for which man has been granted the freedom of choice in the world. For if a man adopts righteousness through such guidance, there is no reason why he should be entitled to any reward whatever. Rather in such a case, the one who was not guided forcibly and was left in deviation on that account, should not be subjected to any punishment, for the responsibility for his deviation would lie on Allah, and at the time of his accountability in the Hereafter, he could present the argument: "When there existed the rule of granting guidance forcibly in the world, why was I deprived of that favour?" This is the meaning of the

words: "Allah does not guide the transgressors." That is, Allah does not grant the favour of adopting the way of obedience to those, who have chosen the way of sin and disobedience for themselves of their own free will.

6. This relates to the second disobedience of the children of Israel. The first disobedience they committed in the beginning of their great era of power and prosperity, and this second towards the very end of it, after which they came under the wrath and curse of God for ever and ever. The object of relating these two events here is to warn the Muslims of the consequences of adopting the attitude of disobedience towards their Prophet as the Israelites had adopted towards their Prophet.

7. This sentence has three meanings and all three are correct:

(1) "That I have not brought any new religion, but the same religion that the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) had brought. I have not come to repudiate the Torah, but to confirm it just as the Messengers of God have always been confirming the Messengers who came before them. Therefore, there is no reason why you should hesitate to acknowledge my apostleship."

(2) "I answer *to* the good news that is there in the Torah about my advent. Therefore, instead of opposing me you should receive, and welcome me as the one whose coming had been foretold by the former Prophets."

(3) The third meaning becomes obvious when the sentence is read along with the sentence which follows it and it is this: "I confirm the good news given by the Torah about the coming of Allah's Messenger, named Aḥmad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), and give the good news of his coming myself." According to this third meaning, this saying of the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) alludes to the good news which the Prophet Moses (peace be on him) had given to his people about the advent of the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace). In it he says:

"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken- I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words *in* his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." (Deut. 18: 15-19).

This is an express prophecy of the Torah, which applies to none but the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). In it the Prophet Moses is conveying to his people this direction of Allah: "I will raise up for you a Prophet from among your brethren". Obviously, the "brethren" of a nation cannot be a tribe or a family of the nation itself, but another nation to which it is related racially. If it had implied the coming of a Prophet from among the children of Israel themselves, the words would have been to the effect: "I shall raise up a Prophet for you from among yourselves." Hence, the "brethren of the Israelites" can inevitably imply the Ishmaelites, who are their relatives by lineage, being the children of the Prophet Abraham (peace be on him). Moreover, no Israelite Prophet can correspond to this prophecy for the reason also that not one but many Prophets appeared among the Israelites after the prophet Moses and the Bible is replete with their history.

The other thing foretold in the prophecy is that the Prophet to be raised up would be "like into the Prophet Moses". This obviously does not imply that he would resemble the Prophet Moses in physical features or circumstances of life, for in this respect no individual can ever be like another individual; it also does not mean the resemblance in the characteristics of Prophethood, for this characteristic is common to all those Prophets, who came after the Prophet Moses. Therefore, no Prophet can have this quality that he should be like unto him in this characteristic. Thus, resemblance in these two aspects becomes out of the question. The only aspect of resemblance on the basis of which the peculiarity of a Prophet of the future becomes understandable is that that Prophet should be a bearer of Divine Law like the Prophet Moses. And this peculiarity is found in none but the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), for all the Prophets who appeared before him among the Israelites were the followers of the Law of Moses; none of them had brought a permanent Divine Law of his own.

This interpretation is further strengthened by these words of the prophecy. "According to all that thou (i.e. the Israelites) desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord thy God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto them, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth." In this passage Horeb means the mountain on which the Prophet Moses had received the Divine Law first of all, and the prayer that the Israelites made was: "If we are given a Divine Law in the future, it should not be given us under the dreadful conditions like those which were created at the foot of Mt. Horeb while giving us the Law." These conditions have been mentioned both in the Qur'ān and in the Bible. (See Al-Baqarah: 55, 56, 63; Al-A'rāf: 155, 171.

Bible: Exodus, 19: 17"18). In answer to it, the Prophet Moses tells the Israelites; "Allah has granted your prayer. Ho says that He will raise up a Prophet for you, in whose mouth He will put His own words." That is, at the time of bestowing the Dew Divine Law, He will not create the dreadful conditions which were created at the foot of Mt. Horeb. Insstead of that, Divine Words will be put in the mouth *of* the Prophet who would be appointed to that office, ant he will recite those Words before the people. A study of this explanation leaves no room for the doubt that the prophecy applies to another than the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). Only he after the Prophet Moses has been granted an enduring and permanent Divine Law. At its bestowal no assembly of the people was called as was called of the Israelites at the foot of Mt. Horeb, and no such conditions were created during the time it was bestowed as were created in their case there.

8. This is a very important verse of the Qur'ān, which has been subjected to severe adverse criticism as well as treated with the worst kind of criminal dishonesty by the opponents of Islam, for it says that the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) had given the good news of the coming of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) by name. Therefore, it is necessary that we study and discuss it in some detail.

(1) In this Verse the name mentioned of the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) is Aḥmad. Aḥmad has two meanings: the one who gives the highest praise to Allah, and the one who is most highly praised by others, or the one who is most worthy of praise among men. Authentic traditions confirm that this too was a well known name of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). Muslim and Abū Da'ūd Tayālisi have related on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Abū Musā al-Ash'arī that the Holy Prophet said: "I am Muḥammad, I am Aḥmad, and I am the Assembler..." Other traditions on the subject have been related by Imam Mālik, Bukhārī, Muslim, Dārimī, Tirmidhī, and Nasā'ī from Ḥaḍrat Jubair bin Mut'im. This name of the Holy Prophet was well known among the Companions as is borne out by the poetry of Hadrat Hassan bin Thābit. (Verse cited is omitted).

It is also confirmed by history that the sacred name of the Holy Prophet was not only Muḥammad but also Aḥmad. Arabic literature bears evidence that nobody in Arabia had been named Aḥmad before the Holy Prophet, and after him innumerable people have been named Aḥmad and Ghulām Ahmad (slave of Aḥmad) in the world. This is the greatest proof that since his Prophethood this name has been most well known among the people of his community. Had it not been a name of the Holy Prophet, to which Aḥmad's slavery did the parents, who named their children "Ghulām Aḥmad", assign them?

(2) The Gospel of St. John bears evidence that at the advent of the Prophet Jesus Christ, the Israelites were awaiting the appearance of three persons: of the Christ, of Elias (i.e. the second coming of the Prophet Elias) and of "that prophet". In the words of the Gospel:

"And this is the record of John (the Prophet John: Yahyā) when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness! Make straight the way of the Lord as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?" (John, 1: 19-25)

These words expressly show that the Israelites were awaiting another Prophet besides the Prophet Christ and the Prophet Elias, and he was not the Prophet John. The belief about the coming of that Prophet was so well known and well established among the Israelites that a mere reference to him as "that prophet" was enough to call attention to him without any need to add: "The one who has been foretold in the Torah." Furthermore, it also shows that the advent of the prophet to whom they were referring was absolutely confirmed, for when these questions were asked of the Prophet John, he did not say that no other prophet was to come and therefore the questions were irrelevant.

(3) Consider now the predictions that have been cited in the Gospel of St. John from chapter 14 to chapter 16 continuously:

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (14: 16-17)

"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (14: 25-26)

"Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." (14: 30)

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." (15: 26)

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." (16: 7)

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." (16: 12-15)

(4) In order to determine the exact meaning of these passages one should first know that the language spoken by the Prophet Jesus and his contemporary Palestinians was a dialect of the Aramaic language, called Syriac. More than 200 years before the birth of Jesus when the Seleucides came to power Hebrew had become extinct in this territory and been replaced by Syriac. Although under the influence of the Seleucide and then the Roman empires, Greek also had reached this area, it remained confined only to that class of the people, who after having access to the higher government circles, or in order to seek access to them, had become deeply Hellenized. The Common Palestinians used *a* particular dialect of Syriac, the accents and pronunciations and idioms of which were different from the Syriac spoken in and around Damascus. The common people of the country were wholly unaware of Greek. So much so that when in A.D. 70 the Roman General Titus, after taking Jerusalem, addressed the citizens in Greek, he had to be translated into Syriac, This makes it evident that whatever the Prophet Jesus spoke to his disciples must necessarily be only in Syriac.

Secondly, one should know that all the four Gospels contained in the Bible were written by the Greek-speaking Christians, who had entered Christianity after the Prophet Jesus. The traditions of the sayings and acts of the Prophet Jesus reached them through the Syriac speaking Christians not in the written form but as oral traditions, and they translated these Syriac traditions into their own language and incorporated them in their books. None of the extant Gospels *was* written before 70; the Gospel of St. John was compiled n century after the Prophet Jesus probably in Ephesus, a city in Asia Minor. Moreover, no original copy even of these Gospels in Greek, in which these were originally written, exists. None of the Greek manuscripts that have been discovered and collected from here and there and which all belong to the period before the inventione of printing dates before the 4th century. Therefore, it is diffcult to say what changes might have taken place in these during the first three centuries. What makes it particularly doubtful is that the Christians have been regarding it as quite lawful to temper with their

Gospels intentionally as and when they liked. The author of the article "Bible" in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Ed. 19731 writes:

"The main source of the evidence and of the variations are the manuscripts *of* the N.T., dating from the and to the 10th century or even later. In the process of copying, these manuscripts underwent the revisions that necessitate textual criticism. Some of these revisions were unintentional, as the scribe skipped a word or a line or as he mistook one character for another. Other revisions came from the desire of the scribe to harmonize the text of one Gospel with another or of one Testament with the other; or from his pious wish to "correct" or clarify the text at another point. But now that variations in the text exist, collection of the manuscripts is a difficult task." (See "Bible" in *Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1973).*

Under such conditions as these, it is very difficult to say with absolute certainty that the sayings of the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) found in the Gospels, have been preserved, reproduced and cited faithfully and accurately, and that no change has taken place anywhere.

The third and a very vital point is that even after the conquest by the Muslims, for about three centuries, the Palestine Christians retained Syriac, which was not replaced by Arabic until the 9th century A.D. The information that the Muslim scholars of the first three centuries obtained through the Syriac speaking Christians about the Christian traditions, should be more authentic and reliable than the information of those people whom it reached through translation after translation from Syriac into Greek and then from Greek into Latin. For there were greater chances of the original Syriac words spoken by the Prophet Jesus remaining preserved with the Palestinian Christians than with others.

(5) Keeping these un-deniable historical facts in mind let us consider the fact that in the passages cited from St. John's Gospel above, the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) is giving the news about one coming after him, about whom he says: "He will be 'the prince of this world' *(Sarwar 'Ālam),* "he shall abide with you for ever," "he will guide you into all truth." and "he shall testify of me" (i.e. of Jesus himself). By interpolating words like "the Holy Ghost" and "the Spirit of truth", 'in the passages of St. *John,* every effort hag been made to corrupt the real meaning, but despite that if these passages are read carefully, one can clearly see that the one whose coming has been foretold, will not be a spirit but a man, and an extraordinary man, whose teaching will be universal, all pervasive and enduring till the Last Day. For this particular person the word *"Madadgār"* (helper) has been used in the Urdū translation, and the Greek word used in St John's original Gospel, according to the Christians, was Peracletus. But the Christian scholars themselves have been faced with great difficulties in determining its meaning. In the original Greek

Paraclete has several meanings: to call to a particular place, to call for help, to warn, to tempt and incite, to implore and pray. Moreover, in Hellenic sense, it gives these meanings: to console, to give satisfaction, to encourage. Wherever this word has been used in the Bible, it does not fit in well with the context anywhere. Origen has translated it Consolateor at some places and Deprecator at others. But the other commentators have rejected both these translations, for in the first place these are not correct according to Greek grammar; second, these meanings do not go well with context wherever this word has occurred in the passages. Some other translators have translated it Teacher, but this meaning too, cannot be derived from the Greek usage. Tertullian and Augustine have preferred the word Advocate, and some other scholars have adopted words like Assistant, Comforter, Cosoler, etc. (See *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature,* under "Paracletus").

(6) Now, it is interesting to note that in Greek itself there is another word periclytos, which means "the Praised One". This word is exactly synonymous with "Muḥammad". In pronunciation it closely resembles Paracletus. It cannot be a remote possibility that the Christians who have been used to making alterations in their religious books as and when they liked, might have effected a little variation in the spelling of this word in the prophecy related by St. John when they saw that it went against their set belief and creed. The original Greek Gospel composed by St. John does not exist either; therefore it is not possible to check which of the two words had actually been used in it.

(7) But the decision is not solely dependent on this as to which word had St. John actually used in Greek, for in any case that too was, a translation and the Prophet Jesus' language, as we have explained above, was Palestinian Syriac. Therefore, the word that he might have used in his good news must necessarily be a Syriac word. Fortunately, we find that original Syriac word in the *Life of Muḥammad* by Ibn Hishām. Along with that we also come to know its synonymous Greek word from the same book. Ibn Hishām, on the authority of Ibn Isḥāq, has reproduced the complete translation of 15: 23-27 and of 16: 1 of the Gospel according to Yuhannus (Yuhanna: John), and has used the Syriac word *Munhamanna* instead of the Greek Paraclete. Then, Ibn Isḥāq or Ibn Hishām has explained it thus: The *Munhamanna* in Syriac means Muhammad and in Greek the Paracletus. (Ibn Hishām, vol. 1, p. 248).

Now, historically, the Historical of the common Palestinian Christians until the 9th century A.D. was Syriac. This land was included in the Islamic territories in the first half of the 7th century. Ibn Isḥāq died in 768 A.D. and Ibn Hishām in 828 A.D. This means that in the time of both the Palestinian Christians

spoke Syriac, and for neither it was difficult to have contacts with the Christian subjects of their country. Moreover, in those days there also lived lacs of Greek speaking Christians in the Islamic territories. Therefore, It was also not difficult for them to find out which particular word of Greek was synonymous with a certain word of Syriac. Now, if in the translation reproduced by Ibn Isḥāq the Syriac word *Munḥamanna* has been used, and Ibn Ishāq or Ibn Hishām has explained that its Arabic equivalent is Muḥammad and Greek Paracletus, there remains no room for the doubt that the Prophet Jesus had given the good news of the coming of the Holy Prophet himself by name. Along with that it also becomes known that in the Greek Gospel of *John* the word actually used was Periclytos, which the Christian scholars changed into Paracletus at some later time.

(8) Even an older historical evidence in this connection is the following tradition from Ḥadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd:

"When the Negus summoned the Emigrants from Makkah to his court and heard the teachings of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) from Ḥadrat Ja'far bin Abī Ṭālib, he said; 'God bless you and him from whom you have come! I bear witness that he is Messenger of Allah, and he is the same one whose mention we find in the Gospel, and the same one good news about whom had been given by Jesus son of Mary.'" (Musnad Aḥmad). This has been related in *Ḥadīth* from Ḥadrat Ja'far himself and also from Ḥadrat Umm Salamah. This not only proves that in the beginning of the 7th century the Negus knew that the Prophet Jesus had foretold the coming of a Prophet, but also that a clear pointer to "that prophet" existed in the Gospel on the basis of which the Negus did not take long to form the opinion that the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) was that prophet. However, from this tradition one cannot know whether the source of information with the Negus about the good news given by the Prophet Jesus was this same Gospel of St. John, or whether there existed some other means also at that time for this information.

(9) The truth is that the four Gospels which the Christian Church has recognized as Canonical are neither an authentic means of knowing the Prophet Jesus' Prophecies about the Holy Prophet nor are they a reliable source for knowing the correct biography and the original teachings of the Prophet Jesus himself, but by far the more trust-worthy means for this is the Gospel of Barnabas which the Church has declared as heretical and apocryphal. The Christians have done whatever they could to conceal it, and it remained lost to the world for centuries. In the 16th century only one copy of its Italian translation existed in the library of Pope Sixtus V, and no one was allowed to read it. In the beginning of the 18th century it came into the hands of one John Toland. Then, changing different hands it found its way in 1738 into the Imperial Library of Vienna, In 1907 an

English translation of this Italian manuscript was printed at the Clarendon Press, Oxford, but probably soon after its printing the Christian world realized that the book cut at the very root of the Faith which was attributed to the Prophet Jesus. Therefore, its printed copies were destroyed somehow, and then it never went into print any more. Another copy of it, a Spanish translation from the Italian manuscript, existed in the 18th century, which has been mentioned by George Sale in his Preface and Preliminary Discourse to the English translation of the Qur'ân. This too was made to disappear, and no trace of it exists anywhere today. I had a chance to see a photostat of the English translation published from Oxford and I have read it word by word. I feel that it is indeed a great blessing of which the Christians have kept themselves deprived only out of prejudice and stubbornness;

Wherever this Gospel is mentioned in Christian literature, it ill condemned as a forged Gospel, which perhaps some Muslim has composed and ascribed to Barnabas. But this is a great falsehood which has been uttered only for the reason that it contains at several places clear prophecies about the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). In the first place, a perusal of this Gospel shows that it could not have been written by a Muslim. Secondly, had it been written by a Muslim, it would have spread extensively among the Muslims and the writings of the Islamic scholars would have contained plentiful references to it. On the contrary, the Muslims had no knowledge of its existence before George Sale wrote his Preliminary Discourse to his translation of the Qur'ân. No mention of any kind is found of the Gospel of Barnabas in the books of the Muslim writers like Ṭabarī, Yaqūbī, Mas'ūdī, Al-Beruni, Ibn Hazm and others, who were fully conversant with Christion literature, when they discuss Christianity. The best catalogues of the books found in the libraries of the Islamic world were *Al-Fihrist* of Ibn an-Nadīm and *Kashf aṣ-Ẓunnūn* of Ḥājī-Khalīfah, and these too are without any mention of it. No Muslim scholar before the 19th century has ever mentioned the name of the Gospel of Barnabas, The third and most important argument to refute the claim that the Gospel has been written by a Muslim is that about 75 years before the birth of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), in the time of Pope Gelasius I, the list prepared of unanonical books, which were banned for reading by a Papal decree also included the Gospel of Barnabas (Evangelium Barnabe). The question is: Who was the Muslim at that time, who forged this Gospel? The Christian scholars themselves have admitted that the Gospel of Barnabas remained prevalent in Syria, Spain, Egypt, etc. during the early days of Christianity for a long time and that it was banned as heretical in the 6th century.

(10) Before we reproduce the good news given by the Prophet Jesus about the advent of the Holy Prophet from this Gospel, it would be useful to

introduce it briefly, so that the reader may know its importance and also understand why the Christians are so angry with it.

None of the writers of the four Gospels which have been included in the Bible as authentic and canonical, was a companion of the Prophet Jesus, and none of them has either made the claim that the information recorded by him in his Gospel was obtained from the companions of the Prophet Jesus, They have, in fact, made no mention of the sources from which they obtained their information, which could show whether the reporter himself witnessed the events and heard the sayings that he was describing or whether they reached him through one or more than one transmitters. On the contrary, the author of the Gospel of Barnabas states that he is one of the original twelve disciples of Jesus, that he followed Jesus from the beginning till the end, and that he is recording the events that be witnessed with his own eyes and the sayings that he heard with his own ears. Not only this. In the end of the Book he says that on his departure from the world the Prophet Jesus had made him responsible for removing the prevalent misunderstandings about himself and for informing the world of the correct events.

Who was this Barnabas? In the Acts of the Apostles a person so named is very frequently mentioned. He came of a Jewish family of Cyprus. He has been praised for his services in connection with the preaching of Christianity and rendering help and assistance to the followers of the Christ. But nowhere has it been told as to when ho embraced Christianity; his name does not either appear in the list of the twelve original disciples, which has been given in the three Gospels. Therefore, one cannot say that the author of this Gospel is the same Barnabas or some other person. The list of the disciples given by Barnabas differs from the one given by Matthew and Mark only in two names: Thomas instead of whom Barnabas has given his own name and Simon the Canaanite instead of whom he has named Judas son of Jacob. In the Gospel of Luke this second name is also there. Therefore, it would be correct to assume that some time later only in order to exclude Barnabas from the disciples the name of Thomas was included so as to be rid of his Gospel. To effect such changes in their scriptures has never been anything unlawful with the Christian scholars.

If one goes through the Gospel with an unbiased mind and compares it with the four Gospels of the New Testament, one cannot help feeling that it is far superior to them. In it the events of the life of the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) have been described in much greater detail, in a manner as though somebody vas actually witnessing what was happening and was himself a partner in those events. As against the incoherent stories of the four Gospels this historical account is more coherent. From it one can fully well understand the series of events unfolding themselves. In it the teachings of the Prophet Jesus have been given in a clearer, more effective and expanded form than in the other Gospels. The themes of the

Unity of God, refutation of polytheism, attributes of God, essence of worship and morality have been presented in a most forceful, rational and exhaustive way. In the other Gospels one does not find even a fraction of the instructive parables which clothe the themes. This Gospel also shows in much greater detail what wise methods the Prophet Jesus used for the teaching and training of his disciples. Anyone who has any acquaintance with the language, style and temperament of the Prophet Jesus will be compelled to admit after a perusal of this Gospel that it is not a fictitious document, which might have been forged in a later period. But the truth is that in it the Prophet Jesus appears before us in his true grandeur and glory much more conspicuously than anywhere in the four canonical Gospels. In it there is no trace of those contradictions which abound in the four Gospels in respect of his different sayings.

In the Gospel of Barnabas the life of the Prophet Jesus and his teachings are found precisely according to the life and teachings of a Prophet of God. He presents himself as a Prophet, and confirms all the former Prophets and Books. He clearly states that there is no other means of knowing the truth except through the teachings of the Prophets, and the one who abandons the Prophets, in fact, abandons God. He presents the doctrines of the Unity of God, Apostleeship, and the Hereafter precisely as taught by all the Prophets. He exhorts the people to perform the Prayer, observe the Fast and pay the *Zakāt*. The description that Barnabas has given of his Prayers at a number of places shows that the times he observed for his Prayers were the same times of Fajr (Dawn), Ẓuhr (Early afternoon), 'Aṣr (Late afternoon), Maghrib, 'Ishā (Late Evening) and Tahajjud (Before Dawn), and he always performed his ablutions before the Prayer. He acknowledged David and Solomon as the Prophets, although the Jews and Christians have excluded them from the list of the Prophets. He regarded the Prophet Ishmael as the intended victim of the sacrifice, and he makes a Jewish rabbi admit that the intended victim was indeed the Prophet Ishmael, and not the Prophet Isaac, as the Israelites have made the people believe. His teachings about the Hereafter, Resurrection, Hell and Heaven are about the same as given in the Qur'an.

(11) The reason why the Christians have become opponents of the Gospel of Barnabas is not that it contains clear and definite good news about the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) at several places, for they had rejected this Gospel even before his birth To understand the real cause of their anger a little further discussion is needed.

The earliest followers of the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) believed him only as a Prophet, followed the Mosaic Law, did not detach themselves from the other Israelites in the matter of beliefs, religious injunctions and rites of worship,

and differed from the Jews only in that they had affirmed faith in the Prophet Jesus as the Messiah (the Christ) whereas the Jews had refused to acknowledge him as the Messiah. Later, when St. Paul entered this community, he started preaching and proclaiming this religion also to the Romans and the Greeks as well as other non-Jewish and non Israelite communities. For this purpose he invented an altogether new religion, the beliefs, doctrines and injunctions of which were entirely different from those taught by the Prophet Jesus. This man had never met the Prophet Jesus but was a bitter enemy of him during his lifetime, and even remained an enemy of his followers for several years after him. Then, when he entered his community and started inventing a new religion, he did not cite any saying of Jesus as his authority but based everything on his own inspiration. The only object before him while framing the new religion was to make it acceptable to the gentile world. He declared .that a Christian was free from all restrictions of the Jewish Law. He abolished all restrictions of the lawful and the unlawful in food. He repudiated the circumcision, which was particularly disagreeable to the non-Jewish world. So much so that he innovated the doctrine of the divinity of Christ and his being son of God and the Atonement for the original sin of mankind by dying on the Cross, for it immensely suited the polytheistic taste of the common man. The early followers of Christ resisted these innovations, but the flood gate opened by St. Paul caused a huge multitude of the non-Jewish Christians to enter this religion against whom the handful of true Christians could not stand for long. However, .until about the end of the 3rd century A D. there were still many people who denied the divinity of Christ. But in the beginning of the 4th century (in 325 A.D.) the Nicaea Council recognized the Pauline doctrines and admitted them as the basis of Christianity. Then the Roman Empire itself turned Christian and in the reign of Emperor Theodosius Christianity became the state religion. Consequently, all the books that clashed with this doctrine were declared as heretical, and only those books were held as canonical which agreed with it. In 367 A.D. for the first time a collection of reliable and accepted books was issued by an epistle of Athanasius, which was ratified in 382 A.D. in a meeting under the presidentship of Pope Damasius. Towards the end of the 5th century Pope Gelasius confirming this collection as authentic also issued a list of the books which were "spurious", whereas no Christian scholar has ever made the claim that any of the Pauline doctrines which were made the criterion for declaring certain religious books as authentic and others as not authentic, had been taught by the Prophet Jesus himself. More than that, even in the Gospels which are admitted to the canonical collection no saying of the Prophet Jesus himself is recorded, which may confirm these doctrines.

The Gospel of Barnabas was included among the rejected books because it clashed with this official creed. Its author at the outset states that the object of his Gospel is:

"To reform the ideas of those who, being deceived of Satan, under pretence of piety, are preaching most impious doctrine, calling Jesus son of God, repudiating the circumcision ordained of God for ever, and permitting every unclean meat; among whom also Paul hath been deceived."

He says that during the lifetime of Jesus, first of all the polytheistic Roman soldiers witnessing his miracles started calling him God and *son* of God. Then this epidemic infected the common Israelites also. At this Jesus was much grieved and upset. He repudiated this false belief about himself repeatedly and cursed those who spoke thus of him. Then he sent his disciples throughout Judaea to refute it and blessed them also with the ability to work the sate miracles which issued from himself, so that the people be made to give up the false idea that the one who performed those miracles was God or son of God. In this connection he reproduces the full discourses of the Prophet Jesus in which he repudiated this false belief and tells how upset he was at the circulation of this mischief. Moreover, he strongly refutes the Pauline doctrine that Christ died on the Cross. He narrates as an eye-witness that when Judas Iscariot took money from the high priest and brought soldiers to have Jesus arrested, four angels at Allah Almighty's command carried him away and Judas was so changed in speech and in face as to be like Jesus. Thus, it vas he who was put on the cross and not Jesus. Thus, this Gospel cuts at the root of Pauline Christianity and ratifies what the Qur'ān says in this regard, whereas 115 years before the revelation of the Qur'ān, the Christian priests had rejected it on account of these very assertion.

(12) The above discussion makes it abundantly clear that the Gospel of Barnabas is, in fact, a more reliable Gospel than the so-called canonical Gospels. It represents the Prophet Jesus' teachings and the events and deeds of his life and his sayings correctly; it s the Christian people's own misfortune that they have lody only because of their stubbornness the opportunity they were given to correct their beliefs and to know the real teachings of the Prophet Jesus. Now we can quote with full satisfaction the glad tidings about the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), which Barnabas has reported from the Prophet Jesus. In these glad tidings at some places the Prophet Jesus mentions the Holy Prophet by name, at some he calls him *Rasūl-Allah (Messenger* of Allah), at some he uses the word "Messiah" for him, at some "Admirable", and at other places employs sentences which give the same meaning as: *Lā ilāha Ill-Allah, Muhammad ar-Rasūl-Allāh*. It is difficult for us to reproduce all pieces of the good news here, for they are

scattered throughout the book in different wordings and in different contexts. We reproduce below only a few of them *as* specimen:

"For all the prophets, that are one hundred and forty-four thousand, whom God hath sent into the world have spoken darkly. But after me shall come the Splendour of all the prophets and holy ones, and shall shed light upon the darkness of all that the Prophets have said, because he is the messenger of God." (Ch. 17)

"The Levites and the scribes said: 'If thou be not the Messiah nor Elijah, or any prophet, wherefore dost thou preach new doctrine, and make thyself of more account than the Messiah?' Jesus answered: 'The miracles which God worketh by my hands show that I speak that which God willeth; nor indeed do I make myself to be accounted as him of whom ye speak. For I am not worthy to unloose the ties of the hosen or the latchets of the shoes of the messenger of God whom ye call "Messiah", who was made before me; and shall come after me, and shall bring the word of truth, so that this faith shall have no end." (Ch. 42)

"Verily I say unto you, that every prophet when he is come hath borne to one nation only the mark of the mercy of God. And so their words were not extended save to that people to which they were sent. But the messenger of God, when he shall come, God shall give to him as it were the seal of his hand, insomuch that he shall carry salvation and mercy to all the nations of the world that shall receive his doctrine. He shall come with power upon the ungodly, and shall destroy idolatry, insomuch that he shall make Satan confounded." Continuing his speech with the disciples, the Prophet Jesus makes it clear that he will be born of the Ishmaelites, (Ch.43)

"I therefore say unto you that the messenger of God is a splendour that shall give gladness to nearly all that God hath made, for he is adorned with the spirit of understanding and of counsel, the spirit of wisdom and might, the spirit of fear and love, the spirit of prudence and temperance; he is adorned with the spirit of charity and mercy, the spirit of justice and piety, the spirit of gentleness and patience, which he hath received from God three times more than he hath given to all his creatures. O blessed time, when he shall come to the world! Believe me that I have seen him and have done him reverence, even as every prophet hath seen him: seeing that of his spirit God giveth to them prophecy. And when I saw him my soul was filled with consolation, saying: 'O Muhammad, God be with thee, and may he make me worthy to untie thy shoelatchet, for obtaining this I shall be a great prophet and holy one of God." (44)

"Jesus answered: 'Let not your heart be troubled, neither be ye fearful: for I have not created you, but God our creator who hath created you will protect you. As for me, I am now come to the world to prepare the way for the messenger

of God, who shall bring salvation to the world. But beware that ye be not deceived, for many false prophets shall come, who shall take my words and contaminate my gospel.' Then said Andrew: 'Master, tell us some sign, that we may know him.' Jesus answered: 'He will not come in your time, but will come some years after you, when my gospel shall be annulled, insomuch that there shall be scarcely thirty faithful. At that time God will have mercy on the world, and so he will send his messenger, over whose head will rest a white cloud, whereby he shall be known of one elect of God, and shall be by him manifested to the world. He shall come with great power against the ungodly, and shall destroy idolatry upon the earth. And it rejoiceth me because that through him our God shall be known and glorified, and I shall be known to be true; and he will execute vengeance against those who shall say that I am more than man.... He shall come with truth more clear than that of all the prophets." (Ch. 72)

"For the promise of God was made in Jerusalem, in the temple of Solomon, and not elsewhere. But believe me, a time will come that God will give his mercy in another city, and in every place it will be possible to worship him in truth. And God in every place will have accepted true prayer with mercy ... I am indeed sent to the house of Israel as a prophet of salvation; but after me shall come the Messiah, sent of God to all the world; for whom God hath made the world. And then through all the world will God be worshipped, and mercy received." (Ch. 82)

"Jesus answered: 'As God liveth, in whose presence my soul standeth, I am not the Messiah whom all the tribes of the earth expect, even as God promised to our father Abraham, saying: 'In thy seed will I bless all the tirbes of the earth.' (Gen. 22; 18) But when God shall take me away from the world, Satan will raise again this accursed sedition, by making the impious believe that I am God and son of God, whence my words and my doctrine shall be contaminated, insomuch that scarcely shall there remain thirty faithful ones: whereupon God will have mercy upon the world, and will send his messenger for whom he hath made all things; who shall come from the south with power, and shall destroy the idols with the idolaters; who shall take away the dominion from Satan which he hath over men. He shall bring with him the mercy of God for salvation of them that shall believe in him, and blessed is he who shall believe his words." (Ch. 96)

"The priest asked: 'After the coming of the messenger of God, shall other prophets come?' Jesus answered: 'There shall not come after him true prophets sent by God, but there shall come a great number of false prophets, whereat I sorrow. For Satan shall raise them up by the just judgement of God, and they shall hide themselves under the pretext of my gospel." (Ch. 97)

anointing him with oil, but somebody's being appointed by God had become synonymous with being a messiah. For instance, in I Kings, it has been said that God commanded "the Prophet Elijah to anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphet of Abelmehola shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room." (19: 15 16). None of these was anointed with oil. Their being commissioned by God amounted to their being anointed. Thus, according to the Israelite concept the word messiah was, in fact, synonymous with being "commissioned by God", and in this very meaning had the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) used this word for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). For an explanation of the Israelite meaning of the word "messiah", see "Messiah" in *Cyclopaedia of Biblical* Literature).

9. The word *sehr* here does not mean magic but deception and fraud, which is also a well known meaning of this word in Arabic. Thus, the verse means: "When the Prophet whose coming had been foretold by the Prophet Jesus came with the clear signs of his prophethood, the Israelites and the followers of Jesus declared his claim to Prophethood to be a deception and fraud."

10. "... forges ... against Allah": declares the Prophet sent by Allah to be a false prophet and regards the Revelations of Allah to His Prophet as forged by the Prophet himself.

11. That is, there could be no greater injustice than that besides calling a true Prophet a false prophet, one should start hurling abuses on him and employing all sorts of lies and false allegations and slanders to defeat his mission although the Prophet is calling him to Allah's worship and His obedience.

12. One should bear in mind that these verses were sent down in A.H. 3 after the Battle of Uhud, when Islam was confined only to the city of Madinah, the Muslims were only a few thousands in number, and entire Arabia was bent upon wiping out this religion. The defeat that the Muslims had suffered at Uhud, had sullied their image of power and the tribes of the surrounding areas had been emboldened. Under such conditions it was said: "No one will succeed in blowing out this Light of Allah, but it will shine forth in all fullness and spread throughout the world." This was a clear prediction which literally came true. Who could know apart from Allah at that time what was the future of Islam? Human eyes could only see that it was a flickering candle and violent winds were blowing to put it out for ever.

13. "The *mushriks*": those who combine the service of others with the service of Allah and mix other religions in the Religion of Allah; who are not prepared to see that the entire system of life is established on the obedience and gidance of One God; who insist that they will worship any deity they like and base

"Then said the priest: 'How shall the Messiah be called, and what sign shall reveal his coming?' "Jesus answered: 'The name of the Messiah is admirable, for God himself gave him the name when he had created his soul, and placed it in a celestial splendour. God said: 'Wait Mohammad; for thy sake I will to create paradise, the world, and a great multitude of creatures whereof I make thee a present, insomuch that whoso shall bless thee shall be blessed, and whose shall curse thee shall be accursed. When I shall send thee into the world, I shall send thee as my messenger of salvation, and thy word shall be true, insomuch that heaven and earth shall fail, but thy faith shall never fail. Mohammad is his blessed name.' (Ch. 97)

Barnabas writes that on one occasion Jesus spoke to his disciples and said that one of them (who was to be Judas Iscariot) would sell him to the enemies for 30 pieces of gold. Then said:

"Whereupon I am sure that who shall sell me, be slain in my name, for that God shall take me up from the earth; and shall change the appearance of the traitor so that every one shall believe him to be me; nevertheless when he dieth an evil death, I shall abide in that dishonour for a long time in the world But when Mohammad shall come, the sacred messenger of God, that infamy shall be taken away. And this shall God do because I have confessed the truth of the Messiah, who shall give me this reward, that I shall be known to be alive and to be a stranger to that death of infamy.' (Ch.112)

(To the disciples *Jesus* said:) "Verily I say unto you that if the truth had not been erased from the book of Moses, God would not have given to David our father the second. And if the book of David had not been contaminated, God would not have committed the Gospel to me; seeing that the Lord our God is unchangeable, and hath spoken but one message to all men. Wherefore, when the messenger of God shall come, he shall come to cleanse away all where with the ungodly have contaminated my book.' (Ch.124)

In these clear and comprehensive prophecies there are only three things which at first sight appear to be doubtful. First, that in these and in several other passages of the Gospel of Barnabas the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) has denied his own self being the Messiah. Second, that not only in these but at many other places also in this Gospel the Holy Messenger's actual name "Muhammad" has been mentioned, whereas this is not the way the Prophets make prophecies: they do not mention the actual name of the one coming in the future. Third, that in these the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has been called the Messiah.

The answer to the first objection is that not only in the Gospel of Barnabas but in the Gospel according to Luke also it is mentioned that the Prophet Jesus had

forbidden his disciples to call him the Christ (the Messiah). The words in Luke are: "He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God. And he strictly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing." (9: 20-21) Probably the reason was that about the Messiah whom the Israelites were awaiting, they thought he would subdue the enemies of truth by the sword. Therefore, the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) said that he was not that Messiah, but he would come rafter him.

The answer to the second objection is that no doubt in the extant Italian translation of Barnabas the Holy Prophet's name has been written as "Mohammad", but no one knows through how many different languages has this book reached the Italian. Obviously, the original Gospel of Barnabas must be in Syriac, because that was the language of Jesus and his companions. If the original book were extant, it could be seen what name of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was written in it. Now what one can assume is that originally the Prophet Jesus must have used the word *Munhamanna*, as we have explained above by citing Ibn Isḥāq's reference to St. John's Gospel. Then different translators may have translated it in their own languages. Later, probably some translator seeing that the name given in the prophecy was exactly synonymous with the word "Mohammad" may have written this very sacred name of the Holy Prophet. Therefore, the mere appearance of this name only is not enough to give rise to the doubt that the entire Gospel of Barnabas has been forged by a Muslim.

The answer to the third objection is that the word "Messiah" is an Israelite technical term, which has been used in the Qur'ān particularly for the Prophet Jesus for the reason that the Jews had denied his being the Messiah; otherwise it is neither a Qur'ānic term nor has it been used anywhere in the Qur'ān in the meaning of the Israelite term, Therefore, if the Prophet Jesus used the word Messiah for the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), and the Qur'ān has not used this word for him, it is not right to conclude that the Gospel of Barnabas ascribes something to him which the Qur'ān denies. In fact, it was customary with the Israelites that when somebody or something was set aside for a sacred cause, the person or thing was anointed with the holy oil on the head and consecrated. This anointing with the oil was called *mash* in Hebrew, and the one thus anointed *"mcssiah"*. Utensils were likewise anointed and set aside for use in the house of worship. The priests also were anointed when they were appointed to priesthood. The kings and the prophets too were anointed when they were designated to kingship or prophethood by God. Thus, according to the Bible, there have been many messiahs in the history of the Israelites. The Prophet Aaron was a messiah as a priest, Moses as a priest and a prophet, Saul as a king, David as a king and a prophet, Melchizedek as a king and a priest, and Al-Yas'a (Elisha) was a messiah as a prophet. Later, it was no longer regarded as necessary to appoint a person by

their beliefs and morals and civilization on any philosophy and doctrine they please. As against the ways of such people, it is being said that the Messenger of Allah has not been sent to make a compromise with them, but with the object that he should cause the Guidance and Religion of Truth which he has brought from Allah to prevail ove all religion, i.e. every aspect of the way of life. This mission he has to accomplish in any case whether the disbelievers and polytheists like it or not, and whether they support it or resist it. This declaration has been made in the Qur'an at two other places above, in Sūrah At Taubah: 33 and Sūrah Al-Fath: 28. Here it has been re-iterated for the third time. (For further explanation, see E.N. 32 of At-Taubah and E.N. 51 of Al-Fath).

14. A bargain is something in which a person employs his wealth, time, labour and talent in order to earn a profit. In the same sense the Faith and *Jihād* in the cause of Allah have been called a bargain, as if to say: If you exert all your powers and expend all your resources in the way of Allah, you will get the profits that are being mentioned in the following verses. This same theme has been expressed in At-Taubah: III in another way. (See E.N. 106 of At-Taubah).

15. When the believers are asked to believe, it automatically gives the meaning that they should become sincere Muslims: they should not rest content with oral profession of the Faith but should be ready and willing to make every sacrifice in the cause of their Faith

16. That is, this bargain is far superior for them to every worldly bargain.

17. The actual profits of the bargain that they will attain in the eternal life of the Hereafter are: (1) Immunity from the punishment of Allah; (2) forgiveness of sins; and (3) entry into the Paradise the blessings of which are eternal and everlasting.

18. Although victory and success in the world is a great blessing of Allah, yet for the believer the thing of real importance is not this but the success of the Hereafter. That is why the gain of the worldly life has been mentioned as second and the result accruing in the Hereafter first.

وَ اُخْرٰى تُحِبُّوْنَهَا ؕ نَصْرٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ فَتْحٌ قَرِيْبٌ ؕ وَ بَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٣﴾ يٰۤاَيُّهَا
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُوْنُوْۤا اَنْصَارَ اللّٰهِ كَمَا قَالَ عِيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لِلْحَوَارِيّٖنَ مَنْ
اَنْصَارِيْۤ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّوْنَ نَحْنُ اَنْصَارُ اللّٰهِ فَاٰمَنَتْ طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْ
بَنِيْۤ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ وَ كَفَرَتْ طَّآئِفَةٌ ۚ فَاَيَّدْنَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلٰى عَدُوِّهِمْ
فَاَصْبَحُوْا ظٰهِرِيْنَ ﴿١٤﴾

O you who have believed! Be helpers of Allah even as Jesus, son of Mary, had said to the disciples,[19] "Who will be my helpers (in calling) towards Allah?" and the disciples had answered, "We are helpers of Allah."[20] Then, some of the children of Israel believed and others disbelieved. So We aided the believers against their enemies, and they alone became triumphant.[21] 14

19. For the companions of the Prophet Jesus (peace be on him) the word "Disciples" generally has been used in the Bible, but later the term "apostle" became prevalent for them among the Christians, and in the sense that they were God's apostles, but in the sense that the Prophet Jesus used to send them to different parts of Palestine as his preachers. Among the Jews this word was already in use for those who were sent to collect subscriptions for the Temple. However, the Qur'ānic term "ḥawārī" is better than both the Christian terms. The essence of this word is *ḥūr*, which means whiteness. The washerman is called ḥawārī because he whitens clothes by washing them. A pure and un-adulterated thing is also called ḥawārī. The flour from which bran has been sifted is known as *ḥuwwārā*. In this very meaning this word is used for a sincere friend and an unselfish supporter. Ibn Sayyidah says: "Anyone who exaggerates in helping another is his ḥawārī." (*Lisān al-'Arab*).

20. This is the last place in the Holy Qur'ān where those who exert themselves in calling the people to Allah's Religion and to cause it to become dominant over disbelief, have been called helpers of Allah. Before this, this very theme has been expressed in Āl-'Imrān: 52, Al-Ḥajj: 40, Muḥammad: 7, Al-Ḥadīd: 25 and Al-Ḥashr: 8 above, *and* we have exptained these verses in E.N. 50 of Āli Imrān, E.N. 84 of Al-Ḥajj, E.N. 12 of Muḥammad, E.N. 47 of Al-Ḥadīd.

Moreover, in E.N. 9 of Sūrah Muhammad also light has been thrown on an aspect of this question. In spite of this some people seem to have the confusion that when Allah Almighty is All-Powerful, Self-Sufficient, and Independent of the help of all His creatures, how then can a man be a helper of Allah? To remove this confusion we shall further explain this point here.

In fact, these people have not been called helpers of Allah for the reason that Allah, Lord of the worlds, (God forbid) stood in need of any help from some of His creatures, but because in the sphere of life in which Allah Himself has granted man freedom of belief and disbelief, obedience and disobedience, He does not will to make the people His believers and obedient servants by means of His power and might. Instead, He adopts the method of admonition and instruction to show them the right way through His Prophets and Books. The one who accepts this admonition and instruction willingly is a *Mu'min*, the one who submits practically to His Commands, is a *Muslim* and devout God-worshipper, the one who adopts an attitude of God-consciousness is a *Muttaqī*, the one who vies with others for good works is a *Muḥsin*, and over and above this, the one who starts working for the reformation of the people by means of the same method of admonition and instruction and for establishing the system of Allah's obedience instead of disbelief and wickedness, is declared by Allah as His own helper, as has been mentioned in clear words at several places in the verses cited above. If the object were to designate such people as helpers of Allah's Religion and not of Allah, the words would have been *anṣār-u dīn Allah* and not *ansār-Allah*, *yanṣurūna dīn-Allah* and not *yanṣurūn-Allah*, *intanṣurūna dīn-Allah* and not *in-tanṣurūn-Allah*. When in order to convey and express a theme; Allah has adopted one and the same style at several places, successively, it proves conclusively that the actual object is to designate these people as helpers of Allah. But this "helpfulness", God forbid, is not in the sense that these people fulfil some need of Allah for which He requires their help, but it is in the sense that these people participate in the cause which Allah wills to accomplish through His Prophets and His Books instead of His great power and might.

21. Those who disbelieved in Jesus Christ are the Jews, and those who believed in him are the Christians as well as the Muslims, and Allah granted both these domination over the disbelievers of Christ. This is meant to requires the Muslims that just as the believers of Christ have dominated over his disbelievers in the past, so will the believers of the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace) prevail over his disbelivers.


LXII
AL-JUMU'AH
الجُمُعَة

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LXII

AL-JUMU'AH

الجُمُعَة

INTRODUCTION

Name

It is derived from the sentence *idhā nūdiya-lis-salāt-i min-yaum-il-Jumu'ati* of verse 9. Although in this Sūrah injunctions about the Friday congregational Prayer also have been given, yet *"Jumu'ah is* not the title of its subject-matter as a whole, but this name too, like the names of other Sūrahs, is only a symbolic title

Period of Revelation

The period of the revelation of the first section (vv. 1-8) is A.H. 7, and probably it was sent down on the occasion of the conquest of Khaiber or soon after it. Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī and Ibn Jarir have related on the authority of Hadrat Abū Hurairah that he and other Companions were sitting in the Holy Prophet's assembly when

these verses were revealed. About Abū Hurairah it is confirmed historically that he entered Islam after the truce of Hudaibiyah and before the conquest of Khaiber, and Khaiber was conquered, according to Ibn Hishām, in Muharram, and, according to Ibn Sa'd, in Jamādī al-Awwal, A.H. 7. Thus presumably Allah might have sent down these verses, addressing the Jews, when their last stronghold had fallen to the Muslims, or these might have been revealed when, seeing the fate of Khaiber, all the Jewish settlements of northern Hijāz surrendered to the Islamic government.

The second section (vv. 9-11) was sent down shortly after the emigration, for the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had established the Friday congregational prayer on the 5th day after his arrival at Madīnah. The incident that has been referred to in the last verse of this section must have occurred at a time when the people had not yet received full training in the etiquette of religious congregations.

Theme and Subject-Matter

As we have explained above, the two sections of this Sūrah were sent down in two different periods. That is why their themes as well as their audiences are different. Although there is a kind of harmony between them on account of which they have been put together in one Sūrah, yet we should understand their themes separately before we consider the question of their harmony.

The first section was sent down at a time when all Jewish efforts to obstruct the message of Islam during the past six years had failed. First, in Madinah as many as three of their powerful tribes had done whatever they could to frustrate the mission of the Holy Prophet, with the result that one of the tribes was completely exterminated and the other two were exiled. Then by intrigue and conspiracy they brought many of the Arab tribes together to advance on Madinah, but in the Battle of the Trench they were all repulsed. After this, Khaiber had become their stronghold, where a large number of the Jews expelled from Madīnah also had taken refuge. At the time these verses were revealed, that too was taken without any extraordinary effort, and the Jews at their own request agreed to live there as tenants of the Muslims. After this final defeat the Jewish power in Arabia came to an end. Then, Wād-il-Qurā, Fadak, Taimā', Tabūk, all surrendered one after the other,

so much so that all Arabian Jews became subdued to the same Islam which they were not prepared to tolerate before. This was the occasion when Allah Almighty once again addressed them in this Sūrah, and probably this was the last and final address that was directed to them in the Qur'ān In this they have been reminded of three things:

(1) "You refused to believe in this Messenger only because he was born among a people whom you contemptuously call the "gentiles". You were under the false delusion that the Messenger must necessarily belong to your own community You seemed to have been convinced that anyone s claimed to be a prophet from outside your community, must be an impostor, for this office had been reserved for your race, and a Messenger could never be raised among the "gentiles". But among the same gentiles Allah has raised a Messenger who is reciting His Book in front of your very eyes, is purifying souls, and showing the Right Way to the people whose misdeeds are well known to you. This is Allah's bounty, which He may bestow on anyone He may please. You have no monopoly over it so that He may bestow it over whomever you may please and may withhold it from whomever you may withhold it to be withheld".

(2) "You had been made bearers of the Torah, but -you did not understand your responsibility for it nor discharged it as you should have. You are like the donkey which is loaded with books, and which does not know what burden it is bearing. Rather you are worse than the donkey, for the donkey is devoid of sense, but you are intelligent. You not only shirk your responsibility of being bearers of Allah's book, but you do not even hesitate to deny Allah's revelations deliberately. Yet, you are under the delusion that you are Allah's favourites and the blessing of apostleship has been reserved for you alone. More than that, you seem to entertain the notion that whether you fulfil the demands of Allah's message or not, Allah in any case is bound not to make any other than you the bearer of His message."

(3) "If you really were Allah's favourites and you were sure of having a place of honour and high rank reserved with Him, you

would not have feared death se much as to prefer a life of disgrace to death. It is only because of this fear of death that you have suffered humiliation after humiliation during the past few years. Your this condition is by itself a proof that you are fully conscious of your misdeeds, and your conscience is aware that if you die with these misdeeds, you will meet with a greater disgrace before Allah in the Hereafter than in this world."

This is the subject-matter of the first section. The second that was sent down many years later, was appended to this Sūrah because in it Allah has bestowed Friday on the Muslims as against the Sabbath of the Jews, and Allah wanted to warn the Muslims not to treat their Friday as the Jews had treated their Sabbath. This section was sent down on an occasion when a trade caravan arrived in Madīnah right at the time of the Friday congregational service and hearing its din and drum the audience, except for 12 men, left the Prophet's Mosque and rushed out to the caravan, although the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) at that time was delivering the Sermon. Thereupon it was enjoined that after the call is sounded for the Friday Prayer all trade and business and other occupations become forbidden. The believers should then suspend every kind of transaction and hasten to the remembrance of Allah. However, when the Prayer is over, they hate the right to disperse in the land to resume their nor occupations. This section could be made an independent Sūrah in view of the commandments that it contains about the congregational service on Friday, and could also be included in some other Sūrah, but, instead, it has been included here particularly in the verses in which the Jews have been warned of the causes of their evil end. Its wisdom in our opinion is the same as we have explained above.

سُوْرَةُ الْجُمُعَةِ ١١ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ١٠ رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٢

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

١ يُسَبِّحُ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوْسِ الْعَزِيْزِ الْحَكِيْمِ ١
٢ هُوَ الَّذِيْ بَعَثَ فِي الْاُمِّيّٖنَ رَسُوْلًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ وَ
يُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ ۗ وَاِنْ كَانُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ٢ وَّ
٣ اٰخَرِيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوْا بِهِمْ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ٣ ذٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ
يُؤْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ ٤ مَثَلُ الَّذِيْنَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرٰىةَ
٥ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوْهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ اَسْفَارًا ۗ بِئْسَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِيْنَ
كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ٥ قُلْ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْٓا
٦ اِنْ زَعَمْتُمْ اَنَّكُمْ اَوْلِيَآءُ لِلّٰهِ مِنْ دُوْنِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوُا الْمَوْتَ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ
٧ صٰدِقِيْنَ ٦ وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَهٗٓ اَبَدًا ۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ اَيْدِيْهِمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِالظّٰلِمِيْنَ ٧
٨ قُلْ اِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِيْ تَفِرُّوْنَ مِنْهُ فَاِنَّهٗ مُلٰقِيْكُمْ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّوْنَ اِلٰى عٰلِمِ
الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ٨ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا
١١ ع ١ ٩ نُوْدِيَ لِلصَّلٰوةِ مِنْ يَّوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا اِلٰى ذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ۗ ذٰلِكُمْ
خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ٩ فَاِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلٰوةُ فَانْتَشِرُوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَ
١٠ ابْتَغُوْا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللّٰهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ١٠ وَاِذَا رَاَوْا
١٢ ع ٢ ١١ تِجَارَةً اَوْ لَهْوًا ۨ انْفَضُّوْٓا اِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوْكَ قَآئِمًا ۗ قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ خَيْرٌ مِّنَ
اللَّهْوِ وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ خَيْرُ الرّٰزِقِيْنَ ١١

LXII

AL-JUMU'AH

الجمعة

Verses: 11 *Revealed at Madînah*

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

Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies 1
Allah—the Sovereign, the Holy, the All-Mighty and the All-Wise![1]

He it is Who has raised a Messenger among the gentiles[2] from 2-4
among themselves, who recites to them His Revelations, purifies them and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom,[3] whereas before this they were indeed lost in manifest error.[4] And (the advent or the Messenger) is also for those others who have not yet joined them.[5] Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.[6] This is Allah's bounty; He bestows it on whomever He wills, and Allah is the Owner of supreme bounty.

The example of those who were entrusted with the burden of the 5
Torah, and yet they failed to bear its burden,[7] is of a donkey[8] laden with books. Even worse is the example of those who have treated Allah s Revelations as false[9] .Allah does not guide such wrongdoers.

Say to them, "O you who have become Jews:[10] If you claim that 6-8
you alone are Allah's favourites,[11] apart from all other people, then you should Song for death if you be truthful."[12] But they will never wish for it because of the misdeeds they have committed,[13] and Allah knows full well these wrongdoers. Say to them, "The death from which you flee will certainly overtake you. Then you will be presented before Him, Who is the Knower of the hidden and the open, and He will tell you what you had been doing."

O you who have believed, when the call is made to the Prayer 9-10
on Friday,[14] hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave off your trading.[15] This is better for you only if you knew. Then, when the

Prayer is over, disperse in the land and seek Allah's bounty,[16] and remember Allah much;[17] perhaps you may achieve success[18]

11 And when they saw some merchandise and sport they broke off to it and left you standing.[19] Say to them, "That which is with Allah is far better than sport and business,[20] and Allah is the best of all providers."[21]

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1. For explanation, see E.N.'s 1, 2 of Sūrah Al-Hadīd, and E.N.'s 36, 37, 41 of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr above. This introduction bears a deep relevance to the theme that follows. In spite of the fact that the Jews of Arabia were witnessing clear signs of Apostleship in the person of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his high character and works and in spite of the clear good news given by the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) in the Torah, which only applied to him, they were denying him only because they did not want to acknowledge the prophethood of a person who did not belong to their own community and race. They openly proclaimed that they would believe only in that which had come to them, and would not accept any teaching, which came through a non-Israelite prophet, even if it was from God. For this attitude, in the following verses they have been reproved. Hence the reason for beginning the discourse with the introductory sentence. First, it says that everything in the universe is glorifying Allah; that is, the entire universe testifies that Allah is free from all those faults and weaknesses because of which the Jews have formed the concept of their racial superiority. He is not related to anyone: He has nothing to do with favouritism: He treats all His creatures with equal justice, mercy and care. No particular race and nation is His favourite so that He may be bound to bless it whatever it may do; and He is not prejudiced against any race or nation so that He may deprive it of His bounties even if it possesses all the good qualities. Then, it says that He is the Sovereign; that is, no worldly power can restrict His authority and powers, as if to say: "You, O Jews, are His servants and subjects. It is not for you to decide whom He should appoint His Messenger, and whom He should not, for your guidance." Then it says that He is Holy; that is, HE is far exalted and glorified that His judgements may be mistaken. Human judgements may have mistakes but His decrees are perfect. In the end, two more attributes of Allah have been mentioned: that He is All-Mighty, i.e. none can fight Him and win and that He is All-Wise, i.e. whatever He does, it is always the very demand *of* wisdom, and His plans and designs are so well-planned that none in the world can hinder and frustate them.

2. Here the word *ummī* (gentile) has been used as a Jewish term and there is a subtle sabtle in it. The verse means: "The All-Mighty and All-Wise Allah has raised a Messenger among the Arabs whom the Jews contemptuously consider the

gentiles and much below themselves. The Messenger has not risen of his own wish and will, but has been raised by Him Who is the Sovereign of the universe, Who is All-Mighty and All-Wise, Whose power can be resisted and opposed only to one's own loss and peril.

One should know that the word *ummī* has occurred in the Qur'ān at several places but in different meanings at different places. At one place it has been used for the people who do not possess any revealed scripture, which they may be following, as Al-'Imrān: 20, where it has been said: "Ask those who possess the Book and those who do not possess (*ummīs*): 'Have you accepted Islam?'" Here, the *ummīs* imply the Arab polytheists, and they have been regarded as a separate class from the followers of the Book, i.e. the Jews and the Christians. At another place, it has been used for the illiterate people among the Jews and Christians, who are ignorant of the Book of Allah, as in Al-Baqarah: 78: "Among the Jews there are some illiterate people *(ummīs)*, who have no knowledge of the Book but are guided by mere conjecture and guess-work." At still another place, this word has been used purely as a Jewish term, which implies all the non-Jewish people, as in Al-'Imrān: 75: "(The actual cause of this dishonesty of theirs is that they say:) We are not to be called to account for out behaviour towards the non-Jews (*ummīs*)." This third meaning of *ummī* is implied in the verse under discussion. It is a synonym of the Hebrew word *goyim*, which has been translated gentiles in the English Bible and implies all the non-Jewish or the non-Israelite people of the world.

But the real significance of this Jewish term cannot be understood only by this explanation of it. The Hebrew word *goyim* originally was used only in the meaning of a nation, but gradually the Jews reserved it first for the nation other then themselves, then they gave it the special meaning that all the nations other than the Jews were un-civilized, irreligious, unclean and contemptible; so much so that in its connotations of hatred and contempt this word even surpassed the Greek term 'barbarian' which they used for all the non-Greeks. In rabbinical literature, *goyim* are such contemptible people, who cannot be considered human, who cannot be made companions in a journey, who cannot be saved even if one of them is drowning. The Jews beleivd that the Messiah of the future would destroy all the *gayim* and burn them to annihilation. (For further explanation, see E.N. 64 of Āl-'Imrān).

3. These characteristics of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) have been mentioned at four places in the Qur'ān and everywhere with a different object. These have been mentioned in Al-Baqarah: 129 to tell the Arabs that the mission of the Prophet, which they were regading as a calamity and affliction for themselves, was indeed a great blessing for which the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael (peace be upon them) had been praying for their children. In Al-Baqarah:

151 these have been mentioned to exhort the Muslims to recognize the true worth of the Holy Prophet and to derive full benefit from the blessing which they had been granted in the form of his Apostleship. These have been re-iteated in Āl 'Imrān: 164 to make the hypocrites and the people of weak faith realize what great favour Allah had done them by raising His Messenger among them, and how foolish they were in not appreciating this. Now, here in this Sūrah these have been repeated for the fourth time with the object to tell the Jews: "The mission that Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessing) is performing in front of you, is evidently the mission of a Messenger. He is reciting the Revelations of Allah, the language, themes and style of which testify that these are indeed Divine Revelations. He is purifying and reforming the lives of the people, cleansing their morals and habits and dealings of every evil element, and adorning them with the finest moral qualities. This is the same task which all the Prophets before him have been performing. Then he does not rest content only with the recitation of the Revelations, but he is making the people understand the real aim of the Divine Book by word and deed and by the practical model of his life and imparting to them the wisdom and knowledge which none but the Prophets have imparted so far. This very character and way of life and practical model is the conspicuous characteristic of the Prophets by which they are recognized. Then how stubborn you are that you refuse to recognize and believe in the Messenger whose truth is manifestly proved by his wonderful works only because Allah has not raised him among you but among the people whom you call the *ummīs* (gentiles).

4. This is another proof of the Holy Prophet's Apostleship, which has been presented to open eyes of the Jews. These people had been living in Arabia for centuries and no aspect of the religious, moral, social and cultural life of the Arabs was hidden from them. Referring to the state of their previous life it is being said: "You are an eye-witness of the revolution that has taken place in the life of this nation within a few years under the guidance and leadership of Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). You are fully aware of the condition in which these people were involved before embracing Islam: you are also aware of their transformation afterwards, and you are also witnessing the condition of those people of this very nation, who have not yet embraced Islam. Is the clear and manifest difference which even a blind man can perceive not enough to convince you that this revolution can be brought about by none but a Prophet"?.

5. That is, the Apostleship of Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) is not restricted only to the Arabs but is meant for other nations and races as well, who have not yet joined the believers, but are going to be born till the Last Day. The word *minhum* (of them) in the original can have two meanings: (1) "That those other people will be of the *ummīs*, i.e. the non Israelite nations of the world:" and (2) "that they will be believers in Muḥammad (upon whom be

Allah's peace and blessings), though they have not yet joined the believers, but will join them later on." Thus, this verse is one of those verses which explicitly state that the Message of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) is meant for all mankind for ever. The other places where this theme has o occurred in the Qur'ān are: 'Āl-'Imrān: 19, Al-A'rāf: 158, Al-Anbiyā': 107, Al-Furqān: 1, Sabā 28. (For further explanation, see EN 47 of Sūrah Sabā).

6. That is, it is a manifestation of Allah's own power and wisdom that among an un-civilized, un-lettered people He has raised a great Prophet, whose teachings are so revolutionary and contain such eternal and universal principles as can provide a sound basis for the whole of mankind to be a single unified community, which can obtain guidance from those principles for ever. An impostor, however hard he may have tried, could not have attained this position and rank. Not to speak of a backward people like the Arabs; even the most intelligent and talented man of the most advanced nation of the world cannot have the power that he may revolutionise a nation so completely, and then give such comprehensive principles to the world that all mankind may follow it as one community and be able to run a universal and all-pervasive system *of* one way of life and one civilization for ever. This is a miracle which has taken place only by Allah's power, and only Allah on the basis of His wisdom has chosen the person, the country and the nation for it.

7. This sentence has two meanings, a general meaning and a special meaning. The general meaning is that the people who were entrusted with the knowledge and practice of the Torah and with the responsibility of guiding the world according to it, neither understood this responsibility nor discharged it as they should have. The special meaning is: Being the bearers of the Torah these people should have been fore-most to join hands with the Messenger, good news about whose advent had been already given in the Torah, but, instead, they have been in the forefront to oppose him and have thus failed to fulfil the demand of the teaching of the Torah.

8. That is, just as a donkey loaded with books does not know what it is loaded with, so are these people loaded with the Torah and they do not know what this Book was sent for and what are its demands.

9. That is, they are even worse than a donkey, who is without sense and therefore excusable. But these people have intelligence they read and teach the Torah and are fully aware of its meaning. Yet they are turning away from its guidance and refusing wilfully to acknowledge and believe in the Prophet who even according to the Torah teaches the truth. They are guilty not because of ignorance but because of denying Allah's Revelation deliberately.

10. This point is noteworthy. It has not been said: "O *Jews*", but "O you who have become Jews, or who have adopted Judaism", the reason being that the way of life brought by the Prophet Moses (peace be on him) and the Prophets after and before him, was Islam itself. None of those Prophets was a Jew, nor had Judaism been born in their time, but Judaism as such came into being much later. It is ascribed to the tribe which descended from Judah, the fourth son of the Prophet Jacob (peace be upon him). When after the Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him) his kingdom broke into two parts, this tribe became ruler over the state which came to be known as Judaea. The other tribes of the Israelites established their separate state which became famous as Samaria. then Assyria not only destroyed Samaria but also wiped out those Israelite tribes which had founded that state. After that only the decendents of Judah besides those of Benjamin remained. who because of the predominance of the descendents of Judah, began to be called the "Jews". Judaism is the name of the framework of the doctrines, customs, and religious rules and regulations which the priests, rabbis and learned men of this race prepared according to their own ideas, theories and trends for many centuries. This framework started being shaped in the 4th century B.C. and continued to develop till the 5th century A.D. It contains a very small element of the Divine guidance brought by the Messengers of Allah, and even that element has been corrupted. That is why at many places in the Qur'ān they have been addressed as *alladhīna hādū*: "O *you* who have become Jews". All of these were not the Israelites but there were among them also converts who had embraced Judaism. Whenever in the Qur'ān the children of Israel have been addressed, the words used are: "O children of Israel", and where the followers of Judaism have been addressed, the words are; *alladhīna hādū:* "O you who have become Jews".

11. At several places in the Qur'ān their claim has been described in detail. as in Al Baqarah: 111: "They say: none shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew", in Al-Baqarah: 80: "The fire of Hell is not going to touch us, and even if it does at all, it will be only for a few days", and in Al-Mā'idah: 18: "We are the sons of Allah and His beloved ones." Some such claims are also found in the books of the Jews themselves The world at least knows that they regard themselves as the chosen people of God, and cherish the false notion that God has a special relationship with them, which is not shared by any other human group or class.

12. This has been stated for the second time in the Qur'ān, addressing the Jews First, in Al-Baqarah: 94-96, it was said: "Say to them: If the abode of the Hereafter with Allah is exclusively reserved for you and not for the rest of mankind, then you should long for death, if you are sincere in your claim. Believe it that they will never wish for it, for (they are fully aware of) what they have sent before them for the Hereafter. And Allah knows well the mentality of the

transgressors. You will find that of all mankind, they are the greediest for life; any they are even greedier than the idolators. Each one of them longs to have a life of a thousand years, but a long life can by no means remove them away from the Doom, for Allah is watching whatever they are doing." Now the same thing has been repeated here. But this is not a mere repetition. In the verses of Al-Baqarah, it was said when no war had yet take place between the Muslims and the Jews. In this Sūrah it was reiterated at the time when after several battles their power in Arabia had been finally and absolutely, crushed. These battles and their results proved by experience and observation that what had been said in Al-Baqarah was correct. In Madinah and Khaiber the Jewish strength was much superior to that of the Muslims both in numbers and in resources. Then they had the pagans of Arabia and the hypocrites of Madinah also as their allies who were bent upon wiping out the Muslims. But in spite of this great disparity in numbers the Muslims overwhelmed the Jews mainly because they were least afraid of dying for the cause of Allah; they were rather fond of it, and would enter the battlefield fully prepared to embrace death. For they believed that they were fighting in the way of God and had complete faith that the one who fell martyr in His way would be blessed with Paradise. Contrary to this, the Jews were not prepared to fight and lay down their life for any cause, neither the cause of God, nor the cause of their nation, nor for their own self, properties and honour. They only loved to live, in whatever way or fashion it be. This had made them cowardly.

13. In other words, their Right from death is not without a reason. Whatever they may say, their consciences are fully aware of how they are behaving towards Allah and His Religion and what consequences can be expected of the misdeeds they are committing in the world. That is why they were afraid to appear at the Court of God.

14. Three things in this sentence are particularly noteworthy: (1) That it contains mention of the call to the Prayer; (2) that the mention is of the call to such a Prayer as has to be performed particularly only on Fridays; and (3) that these things have not been mentioned so as to suggest that the call is to be made for the Prayer and a particular Prayer is to be performed on Friday, but the style and context clearly show that the call to the Prayer and the particular Prayer were both already being performed and practiced on Friday. The people, however were being negligent in that on hearing the call to the Prayer they would not hasten to it but would remain occupied in their worldly activities and trade and business transactions. Therefore, Allah sent down this verse to make the people realize and appreciate the importance of the call and the Prayer and to exhort them to hasten to perform it as a duty. If these three things are considered deeply, they prove this truth absolutely that Allah conjoined on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) certain Commands which were not revealed in the Qur'an, and these

Commands too were as obligatory as those revealed in the Qur'ān itself. The call to the Prayer is the same *adhān* which is being called the world over five times daily in every mosque. But neither its words have been stated anywhere in the Qur'ān nor the method of calling the people to the Prayer has been taught. Its method was prescribed by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace). The Qur'an has only confirmed it twice, here and in Al-Mā'idah: 58. Likewise, this particular Prayer of Friday, which the Muslims of the whole world are performing today has neither been enjoined in the Qur'ān nor its time and method of performance described anywhere. This method too was prescribed by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), and this verse of the Qur'ān was sent down only to stress its importance and obligatory nature. In spite of this express argument anyone who claims that the *Shari'ah* commandments are only those which have been stated in the Qur'ān, is not in fact a denier of the *Sunnah* but of the Qur'ān itself.

Before proceeding further, let us understand a few other things also about *Jumu'ah* (the Friday congregational Prayer):

(1) *Jumu'ah is* an Islamic term. In the pre-Islamic days of ignorance the Arabs called it the 'Arūbah Day. In Islam when it was declared as a congregational day of the Muslims, it was re-named *Jumu'ah*. Although according to the historians, Ka'b bin Lu'ayy, or Qusayy bin Kilab, also had used this name for this day, for he used to hold an assembly of Quraish on this day *(Fath-al-Bāri)*, yet by this practice the ancient name did not change, and the common Arabs continued to call it the 'Arūbah Day. The real change took place when Islam gave it this new name.

(2) Before Islam, setting aside of a day in the week for worship and regarding it as an emblem of the community was prevalent among the followers of the earlier scriptures. Among the Jews the Sabbath (Saturday) had been fixed for this purpose, because on this day Allah had delivered the children of Israel from the bondage of the Pharaoh. In order to distinguish themselves from the Jews the Christians took Sunday as their distinctive emblem. Although it had neither been enjoined by the Prophet Jesus nor mentioned anywhere in the Gospel, yet the Christians believe that after his death on the Cross the Prophet Jesus had risen from the grave *on* this day and ascended to heaven. On this very basis the later Christians ordained it as the day of worship, and then in 321 A.D. the Roman Empire instituted it as a holiday by decree. In order to distinguish its community from both these communities, Islam adopted Friday as the day of collective worship as against Saturday and Sunday.

(3) It is known from the tradition reported by Ḥadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd and Ḥadrat Abū Mas'ūd Anṣārī that the Friday congregational Prayer had been enjoined on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) some time

before the *Hijrah* in Makkah itself. But at that time he could not act on it, for in Makkah it was not possible to perform any worship collectively. Therefore, he sent a written instruction to the people who had emigrated to Madīnah before him that they should establish the Friday congregational Prayer there. Thus, Ḥaḍrat Mus'ab bin 'Umair, the leader of the earliest emigrants, offered the first Friday Prayer at Madīnah with 12 followers. (Ṭabarānī, Dāraqutnī). Ḥaḍrat Ka'b bin Mālik and Ibn Sirin have reported that even before this the Muslims of Madīnah had decided mutually, on their own initiative, that they would hold a collective service on one day in the week. For this purpose they had selected Friday as against the Sabbath of the Jews and Sunday of the Christians, and the first Friday Prayer was led by Ḥaḍrat As'ad bin Zurārah at the place of Banī Bayāḍah and 40 Muslims participated in it. (Musnad Aḥmad, Abu Da'ūd, Ibn Mājah, Ibn Ḥibban, 'Abd bin Ḥumaid, 'Abdur Razzāq, Baihaqi). This shows that the Islamic taste and trend at that time was itself demanding that there should be a day on which maximum number of Muslims should gather together and worship collectively. And this also was a demand of the Islam itself that it should be a day other than Saturday and Sunday so that the symbol of the Muslim community should be distinctive from the emblems of the Jewish and the Christian communities. This was a wonderful manifestation of the Islamic trends and tastes of the Holy Prophet's Companions that many a time it so happened that even before a thing was enjoined their taste proclaimed that the spirit of Islam demanded its introduction.

(4) The establishment of the Friday congregational Prayer was one of the earliest things that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) did after his emigration to Madīnah. After leaving Makkah he reached Qubā' on Monday and stayed there for four days. On the fifth day, which was a Friday, he proceeded to Madīnah. On the way at the place of Banī Sālim bin 'Auf tim came for the Friday Prayer and he performed the first Friday congregational Prayer at this very place. (Ibn Hisham).

(5) The time appointed by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) for this Prayer was after the declining of the sun, the same time which is for the Ẓuhr Prayer. The written instruction that he had sent to Ḥaḍrat Muṣ'ab bin 'Umair before the *hijrah* was: "Seek nearness to Allah by means of two *rak'ahs* of the Prayer when the sun declines after midday on Friday." (Dāraquṭnī). This same instruction he gave orally after *hijrah* as well as practically led the Friday Prayer at the same time. Traditions on this subject have been related on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Anas, Ḥaḍrat Salamah bin Akwa', Ḥaḍrat Zubair bin al-'Awwām, Ḥaḍrat Sahl bin Sa'd, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, Ḥaḍrat 'Ammār bin Yāsr and Ḥaḍrat

Bilāl in the collections of *Ḥadīth,* saying that the Holy Prophet used to perform the Friday Prayer after the declining of the sun. (Musnad Aḥmad, Bukharī, Muslim, Abu Da'ūd, Nasā'ī, Tirmidhī).

(6) This also is confirmed by his practice that on this day the Holy Prophet led the Friday congregational Prayer instead of the Ẓuhr Prayer, and this Prayer consisted of two *rak'ahs* and he gave the Sermon before it. This was the only difference between the Friday Prayer and the Ẓuhr Prayer on other days. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar says: "According to the command enjoined by the tongue of your Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) the traveller's Prayer consists of two *rak'ahs,* the Fajr Prayer consists of two *rak'ahs,* and the Friday Prayer consists of two *rak'ahs.* This is the complete, not the shortened, Prayer, and the Friday Prayer has been shortened only because of the Sermon."

(7) The call to the Prayer that has been mentioned here, implies the call that is made just before the Sermon, and not the call that is made much before the Sermon to announce that the prayer time has begun. There is a tradition in the *Ḥadīth from* Ḥaḍrat Sā'ib bin Yazīd to the effect that in the time of the Holy Prophet there used to be only one call that was made after the Imām (leader in Prayer) had taken his seat on the pulpit. The same practice also continued in the time of Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr and Ḥaḍrat 'Umar. When population increased in the time of Hadrat 'Uthmān, he ordered another call to be made in the bazaar of Madīnah at his house, Az-Zaurā'. (Bukhāri, Abū Da'ud, Nasā'ī, Ṭabarānī).

15. In this Command "remembrance" implies the Friday Sermon, for the first thing that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) used to do after the call was to deliver the Sermon, and the Prayer he led always after delivering the Sermon. Ḥaḍrat Abū Huraīrah has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "The angels on Friday go on writing down the names of the people as they arrive. Then, when the Imām comes out to deliver the Sermon, they stop writing the names and turn their attention to the remembrance (i.e. the Sermon)," (Musnad Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī). This *Ḥadīth* also shows that the remembrance implies the Sermon. The exhortation of the Qur'ān itself points to the same thing. First, it says: "Hasten to the remembrance of Allah"; then a little below it says: "Then, when the Prayer is over, disperse in the land." This shows that on Friday the order of the service is that first there is the remembrance of Allah and then the Prayer. The commentators are also agreed that remembrance either implies the Sermon, or the Sermon and the Prayer both.

Using the word *"dhikr-Allah"* for the Sermon by itself gives the meaning that it should contain themes relevant to the remembrance of Allah; for instance, praising and glorifying Allah, imploring Him to bless His Messenger, exhorting

and instructing the audience to obey His Commands and follow His *Shari'ah*, commending His pious and righteous servants, etc. On this very basis, Zamakhshari writes in *al Kashshāf:* "Praising the wicked and tyrannical rulers in the Friday Sermon, or mentioning their names and praying for them, has nothing to do with the remembrance of Allah; this would be the remembrance of Satan.

"Hasten to the remembrance of Allah" does not mean that one should come to the mosque running, but it means that one should make haste for it. The commentators are also agreed on this very meaning. "Hastening" according to them means that on hearing the call one should immediately start making preparations to attend the mosque. The *Hadith* even forbids coming to the mosque for the Prayer running. Hadrat Abū Hurairah has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: "When the Prayer has begun, one should come walking to it with calm and dignity, and not running. Then, one should join in whatever remains of the Prayer, and should make up whatever one has missed independently later." *(Sihāh; Sittah).* Hadrat Abū Qatādah Ansārī says: "Once we were offering the Prayer under the leadership of the Holy Prophet when suddenly we heard some people coming to join the Prayer running. When the Prayer was concluded, the Holy Prophet asked: What was the noise about? They replied; We came running for the Prayer. The Holy Prophet said; Don't do that: whenever you come for the Prayer, come with calm and dignity. Join behind the Imām in whatever remains of the Prayer, and make up whatever you have missed independently." (Bukhārī, Muslim).

"Leave off your trading" also includes every other worldly activity and business which prevent one from getting ready for the Prayer with full attention and care. "Buying and selling" has been particularly forbidden, for commerce flourished on Fridays. People from the surrounding areas gathered together at a central place, the merchants also arrived with their merchandise, and the people became occupied in buying the necessities of daily use The prohibition however is not restricted only to buying and selling, but it applies to all other occupations as well. And since Allah has forbidden these, jurists of Islam are agreed that after the call has been sounded for the Friday Prayer all forms of trade, business and worldly occupation become forbidden.

This Command absolutely confirms the obligatory nature of the Friday Prayer. In the first place, the exhortation to hasten for it after one has heard the call, is by itself a proof of its being obligatory. Then, the prohibition of a lawful thing like trade and business at the time of the Prayer also shows that it is obligatory in nature. Moreover, the elimination of the obligatory Zuhr Prayer on Friday and its being replaced by the Friday Prayer, is a clear proof that it is obligatory in nature. For an obligatory duty becomes eliminated only when the duty replacing it is more important. This very thing has been supported in many

Ḥadīths, *in* which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) exhorted the Muslims in most emphatic words to attend the Friday Prayer and has declared it in clear words to be obligatory. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "I feel I should ask somebody to stand in my place to lead the Prayer, and I myself should go and set fire to the houses of the people who do not come for the Prayer." (Musnad Aḥmad, Bukhārī). Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās and Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar say: "We heard the Holy Prophet say this in the Friday Sermon, The people should refrain from giving up the Friday Prayer: otherwise Allah will seal up hearts and they will become totally heedless." (Musnad Aḥmad, Muslim, Nasā'ī). From the traditions reported by Ḥaḍrat Abū al-Ja'd Damrī, Ḥaḍrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah and Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Abī Aufā from the Holy Prophet one comes to know that Allah seals up the heart of the person who abandons three Friday Prayers, one after the other, without a genuine reason and lawful excuse. Rather in one tradition the words are to the effect: "Allah rims the heart of such a one into the heart of a hypocrite." (Musnad Aḥmad, Abū Da'ud, Nasa'ī, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah, Dārimī, Ḥākim, Ibn Ḥibbān, Bazzār, Tabarānī in *al-Kabīr*). Ḥaḍrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah says that the Holy Prophet said: "From today till Resurrection the Friday Prayer is obligatory on you. Allah will neither bless nor set right the condition of the one who abandons it disregarding it or considering it an ordinary thing. Note it well: the Prayer of such a one will be no prayer at all, his *zakāt* will be no *zakāt* at all, his Ḥajj no Ḥajj, his fasting no fasting, and no good done by him will be good, until he repents. Then, for the one who repents, Allah is Most Forgiving." (Ibn Mājah, Bazzār). Another tradition, which is very close in meaning to this, has been cited by Ṭabarānī in *Ausat* from Ibn 'Umar. Furthemore, there are many traditions in which the Holy Prophet has declared the Friday Prayer as obligatory in clear words. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'Ās has related that the Holy Prophet said: "The Friday Prayer is obligatory on every person who hears the call to it." (Abū Da'ūd, Dāraqutnī). Jābir bin 'Abdullah and Abū Sa'īd Khudrī say that he said in a Sermon: "Know that Allah has enjoined the Friday Prayer as a duty on you." (Baihaqī). However, He has exempted the women, children, slaves, the sick and the travellers from this duty. Ḥaḍrat Ḥafsah has reported that the Holy Prophet said: "Attendance at the Friday Prayer is obligatory on every adult male." (Nasā'ī). Ḥaḍrat Ṭāriq bin Shihāb's tradition contains this saying of the Holy Prophet: "The Friday congregational Prayer is obligatory on every Muslim except the slave, women, children and the sick." (Abū Da'ūd, Ḥākim). In the tradition of Ḥaḍrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah, his words are to the effect: "Friday Prayer is obligatory on the person who believes in Allah and the Last Day unless it is a woman, or a traveller, or a slave, or a sick man." (Dāraqutnī, Baihaqī). On account of these very exhortations of the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*, the entire *Ummah* is agreed that the Friday congregational Prayer is of obligatory nature.

16. This does not mean that after the Friday is over, it is obligatory to go in search of livelihood, but it only implies permission. As it was ordered to stop all worldly business as soon as the call was made for the Prayer, so it is allowed that after the Prayer is over, the people may disperse and resume or pursue whatever occupation or business they may like. It is just like the prohibition of hunting in the state of *iḥrām*, but after *iḥrām* is put off, one is told to hunt. (Al-Mā'idah: 2). That does not mean that one must hunt, but that one may hunt if one so likes. Or, for instance, in Sūrah An-Nisā', permission to marry more than one wife has been given, saying: "Marry two or three or four women whom you choose." Here, although the verb is in the imperative mood, no one has taken it in the meaning of a command. This gives the principle that the imperative form of the verb does not always imply an obligation or command: it sometimes implies the permission and sometimes exercise of choice or preference. The context determines where it implies the command, where the permission and where Allah's approval of the act, and not that the act is obligatory. Immediately after this very sentence itself, it has been said: "And remember Allah much." Here also the verb is in the imperative mood, but obviously it implies exercise of one's choice and not that it is a duty or compulsion.

Here, another thing worthy of mention is that although in the Qur'ān Friday has not been declared a public holiday like the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Sunday, yet no one can deny that Friday is a symbol of the Muslim community precisely in the same way as Saturday is a Jewish and Sunday a Christian symbol. And if declaring a day in the week a public holiday be a cultural necessity, then just as the Jews naturally select Saturday for it and the Christians Sunday, so a Muslim (if he has any Islamic feeling) will necessarily select only Friday for this purpose. The Christians did not even hesitate to impose their Sunday on some other countries, where Christian population was negligible. When the Jews established their state in Palestine, the first thing they did was to announce Saturday as the weekly holiday instead of Sunday. In prepartitioned India one conspicuous distinction between British India and the Muslim states was that in one part of the country Sunday was observed as a closed holiday and in the other Friday. However, where the Muslims lack Islamic values, they hold to Sunday even after attaining to sovereign power as we see in Pakistan. In case of excessive westernization Friday is replaced by Sunday as the weekly holiday as was done by Muṣṭafa Kamāl in Turkey.

17. "Remember Allah much": "Do not forget Allah even when you are otherwise occupied; but remember Him under all circumstances and remain conscious of Him at all times." (For explanation, see E.N. 63 of Sūrah Al-Aḥzab).

18. At several places in the Qur'ān, after giving an instruction, or an admonition, or a command, words to the effect: "perhaps, you achieve success" or "perhaps you may be shown mercy" have been used. The use of "perhaps" on such occasions does not mean that Allah, God forbid, is entertaining a doubt, but it is in fact a royal style of address. It is just like a kindly master's giving out hope to his servants to continue doing their best so that they may achieve and win the desired goal and reward, It contains a subtle promise which fills the servant with hope and he carries out his duties and obligations with enthusiasm.

As the Commands pertaining to the Friday congergational prayer come to an end here, it would be useful to give a resume of the injunctions that the four schools of juristic thought have derived from the Qur'ān, the *Ḥadīth*, traditions of the Companions of the Holy Prophet and the general principles of Islam.

According to the Ḥanafī school of thought, the time for the Friday Prayer is the same as for Ẓuhr Prayer. The Friday Prayer can neither be held before it nor after it. Business and trade become forbidden with the first call to the Prayer and not with the second call which is made after the Imām has taken his place on the pulpit, for the words of the Qur'ān in this regard are explicit and definite. Therefore, whichever call is made for the Friday Prayer after the declining of the sun when the Prayer time begins, the people should stop conducting business on hearing it. However, if a person has made a bargain at that time, it will not be void, but will only be a sin. The Friday Prayer cannot be held in every settlement but only in the miṣr *jāmi'*, which has been defined as a large town or city, where there are market places, adequate security arrangements, and which has large enough population so that if all the people upon whom attendance at the Friday Prayer is obligatory, gather together, they should be too many for the principal mosque to hold. The people who live outside the city will have to offer the Prayer in the city only in case the call to the Prayer reaches them, or if they live within six miles of the city. The Prayer may not necessarily be held in the mosque; it may also be held in the open field and also on a ground which is outside the city but a part of it. The Friday Prayer can be validly held only in a place where any and every person may come to attend it without any hindrance. It will not be valid if it is held in a restricted place where every person is not allowed to join in no matter how many people may gather together. For the Prayer to be valid there should at least be three men (according to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah) beside the Imām, or two men including the Imām (according to Imāms Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad), upon whom it is obligatory to attend the Friday Prayer. A person will be exempt from the Prayer if he is on a journey, or is so ill that he cannot walk to attend it, or is disabled of both the legs, or is blind (but according to Imām Abū Yūsuf and Imām Muḥammad, a blind person will be exempt from the Prayer duty only in case he does not find a man who can take him along for the Prayer), or he

apprehends a danger to he life and honour, or an unbearable financial loss from a tyrant, or It is raining heavily and there is slush and rainwater on the way, or he is a prisoner. For the prisoner and the disabled, it is undesirable that they should perform the Ẓuhr Prayer on Friday In congregation. For those also who have missed the Friday Prayer it is undesirable to perform the Ẓuhr Prayer collectively. The sermon is one of the pre-requisites of the Friday Prayer to be valid, for the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) never performed the Friday Prayer without the Sermon; the Sermon must necessarily precede the prayer, and there should be two Sermons. From the time the Imām steps towards the pulpit for the sermon, every kind of speech becomes forbidden till he brings it to an end; no prayer may be performed during it, whether one can hear the Imām at the place where one is sitting or not. *(Hedāyah, Al-Fatḥ ul-Qadīr;* al-Jaṣṣās: *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān; Al-Fiqh 'alal-Madhāhib al-Arb'ah; 'Umdat al-Qāri).*

According to the Shāfe'is the time of the Friday Prayer is the same as of the Ẓuhr Prayer. Trade and business become forbidden and hastening to the remembrance of Allah becomes obligatory from the time the second call is sounded, i.e. the call which is sounded after the Imām has taken his place on the pulpit. However, if A person carries out a transaction at this time, it does not become void. The Friday Prayer can be held in every such settlement among the permanent residents of which there are 40 such men upon whom it is incumbent to perform the Prayer. Attendance at the Friday Prayer is obligatory for those people of the suburbs whom the call may reach. The Friday service must be held within the bounds of the settlement, but it may not necessarily be held in the mosque. Thus, it is not obligatory for nomadic peoples who live in tents, in the desert. For the Prayer to be valid there should at least be 40 such men including the Imām in the congregation upon whom the Prayer is incumbent. A person would be exempt from the Prayer if he is on a journey, or intends to stay at a place for four or less than four days provided that the journey is lawful, or he is old or sick and cannot go to attend the Prayer even by a conveyance, *or is* blind and does not find a man who can take him along for the Prayer, or apprehends danger to life or property or honour, or is a prisoner provided that this imprisonment has not been caused by his own crime. There should be two sermons before the Prayer. Although it is according to the *Sunnah* to sit quiet during the sermon, yet speech is not forbidden. For the person who is sitting close to the Imām so that he can hear the sermon, speech is disapproved, but he can respond to a greeting, and can recite prayer on the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) aloud when he hears his name being mentioned. *(Mughnī al-Muḥtāj Al-Fiqh 'alal-Madhāhib al-Arb'ah).*

According to the Mālikis, the Friday Prayer time begins from the declining of the sun and lasts till such time in the evening that the Sermon and the Prayer can be concluded before sunset. Business transactions become forbidden

and hastening becomes obligatory with the second call. If a transaction takes place after it, it would be void and sinful. The Friday Prayer can be held in the settlements, residents of which live in permanent houses and do not migrate in the summer or the winter, and whose needs and requirements are met in the same settlements, and who can defend themselves on the basis of their strength. In temporary dwelling places the Friday Prayer cannot be established even though many people may be staying there and staying for long periods. Attendance at the Prayer is obligatory for the people who live within three miles of the settlement where the Prayer is held. The Prayer can be held only in the mosque, which is inside the settlement or adjoining it, and the building of which is not inferior to the houses of the common residents of the place. Some Mālikīs have also imposed the condition that the mosque should be roofed, and arrangements for offering collective Prayer five times daily should also exist in it. However, the better known view of the Mālikīs is that for the Prayer to be valid the mosque's being roofed is no pre-requisite. The Friday Prayer can also be held in a mosque which has been built only for the Friday Prayer and no arrangements exist in it for the five daily Prayers. For the Prayer to be valid there must at least be 12 other men, apart from the Imām, in the congregation upon whom the Friday Prayer is incumbent. A person would be exempt from it if he is on a journey, or intends to stay for less than four days at a place during the journey, or is so ill that he cannot come to the mosque, or has an ailing mother or father, or wife, or child, or he is nursing a stranger who has nobody else to nurse him, or has a close relative who is seriously ill, or at the point of death, or apprehends an unbearable loss to property, or a danger to his life or honour, or is hiding from fear of imprisonment, or punishment, provided that he is a wronged and oppressed person, or it is raining heavily and there is slush and rainwater on the way, or the weather is oppressive due to excessive heat or cold. The Prayer has to be preceded by two Sermons; so much so that if the Sermon is given after the Prayer, the Prayer has to be repeated, and the Sermons must necessarily be delivered inside the mosque. It is forbidden to offer a voluntary Prayer after the Imām has stepped towards the pulpit, and to talk when the Sermon has begun, even if one is not hearing it. However, if the Imām indulges in meaningless and absurd things in the Sermon, or uses abusive language for a person who does not deserve it, or starts praising a person for whom praise is unlawful, or starts reciting something irrelevant to the Sermon, the people have the right to protest. Furthermore, it is reprehensible that a prayer be made in the Sermon for the temporal ruler, unless the Imām apprehends danger to his life. The Imām must necessarily be the same person who leads the Prayer; if another person than the one who gave the Sermon led the Prayer it would be void. *(Hāshiyah ad-Dusūqī 'ala-sh-Sharḥ al-Kabīr;* Ibn 'Arabī, *Ahkām al-Qur'ān; Al-Fiqh 'alal-Madhāhib al-'Arb'ah).*

According to the Ḥanbalīs, the Friday Prayer time begins when the sun has risen about a spear's length high and lasts till the beginning of the 'Aṣr Prayer time in the afternoon, but performing the Prayer before the declining of the sun is just permissible but after it obligatory and meritorious. Business transactions become forbiddon and hastening to the Prayer becomes obligatory with the second call. A transaction contracted after it has no effect in the law. The Prayer can be held only at a place where 40 men on whom the Friday Prayer is incumbent have permanently settled in houses (and not in tents) and are not nomadic tribesmen. For this purpose, it will not make any difference if the houses of the settlement or its different parts are scattered or compact; if their combination is called by one name, it will be one settlement even if its different parts are miles apart. Attendance at the Prayer will be obligatory for the people who live within three miles of the settlement. The congregation should consist of 40 men including the Imām. The Prayer may not necessarily be performed in the mosque; it may be performed in the open as well. A person will be exempt from it if he is on a journey and intends to stay in the settlement for four or less than four days, or is so ill that he cannot come to the mosque even by a conveyance, or is blind unless he can grope his way to the mosque; (it is not obligatory for the blind man to come for the Prayer with another man's help), or he is prevented by extreme weather or heavy rain or slush and rainwater, or he is hiding to escape persecution or apprehends danger to life or honour, or fears an unbearable financial loss, The Prayer should be preceded by two Sermons. The person who is sitting so close to the Imām that he can hear him, is forbidden speech; however, the one sitting far away, who cannot hear the Sermon, can speak. The people have to sit quiet during the Sermon whether the person delivering the Sermon is a just man or an unjust man. If 'Id falls on a Friday, the people who have performed the 'Id Prayer will be exempt from the Friday Prayer. In this matter, the viewpoint of the Ḥanbalīs is different from that of the other three Imāms. *(Ghāyat al-Muntahā; Al-Fiqh 'alal-Madhāhib al-Arb'ah),*

All jurists are agreed that if the person upon whom the Friday Prayer is not incumbent, joins in the Prayer, his Prayer would be valid, and he would be absolved from the Ẓuhr Prayer.

19. This is the incident because of which the commandments pertaining to the Friday congregational Prayer have been enjoined in the preceding verses. Its narrative as related in the collections of *Ḥadīth*, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah, Ḥaḍrat Abū Mālik, and Ḥasan Baṣrī, Ibn Zaid, Qatādah and Muqātil bin Hayyān is as follows: A trade caravan from Syria arrived in Madīnah right at the time of the Friday Prayer and its people started playing their drums to announce their arrival. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) at that time was delivering the

Sermon. Hearing the drum the people in the congregation became impatient and rushed out towards Baqi' where the caravan had halted, except for 12 men. The most authentic tradition in this narrative is of Ḥaḍrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah, which has been related by Imām Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Abū 'Uwānah, 'Abd bin Ḥumaid, Abū Ya'lā and others through reliable channels. The only diversity is that in some traditions it is stated that the incident took place when the Prayer was in progress; in others that it happened when the Holy Prophet was delivering the Sermon. However, what appears to be correct when the tradition of Ḥaḍrat Jābir and those of others are read together is that it happened during the Sermon. Where Ḥaḍrat Jābir says that it happened during the Friday Prayer, he in fact has used the word Friday Prayer for the combination of the Sermon and the Prayer. According to the tradition of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, seven women had remained behind with 12 men. (Ibn Mardūyah). Qatādah says that one woman remained with 12 men, (Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abi Hātim). According to the tradition of Dāraquṭnī 40 individuals remmained, of 'Abd bin Ḥumaid 7 individuals and of Farrā' 8 individuals. But all these are weak traditions. The tradition of Qatādah that such a thing happened thrice is also weak. (Ibn Jarīr) The authentic tradition in this regard is of Hadrat Jābir, according to which the number of those who remained behind is stated to be 12. Apart from one tradition of Qatādah, all traditions of the other Companions and their followers agree that this happened only once. When read together different traditions about those who remained behind show that they included Hadrat Abū Bakr, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān, Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, Ḥaḍrat 'Ammār bin Yāsir, Ḥaḍrat Sālim (slave of Ḥudhaifah) and Ḥaḍrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah. The tradition related by Ḥāfiz Abū Ya'lā from Ḥaḍrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah says that when the people rushed out like that and only 12 Companions were left behind, the Holy Prophet addressed them, saying: "By Him in Whose hand is my life, if all of you had left, and none had remained behind, this valley would have overflowed with fire." A theme resembling this has been cited by Ibn Mardūyah from Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās and by Ibn Jarīr from Qatādah.

The Shi'ite scholars have used this incident also for taunting and finding fault with the Companions. They say that abandoning the Sermon and the Prayer by such a large number of the Companions for the sake of worldly gain and amusement is a proof that they preferred the world to the Hereafter. But this is a misplaced objection that can be raised only if one keeps ones eyes closed to realities. As a matter of fact, this incident took place just after the migration. At that time, on the one hand, the collective training of the Copanions was in the initial stages, and on the other, the disbelievers of Makkah had subjected the people of Madīnah to a strict economic blockade because of which necessities of life had become scarce in the city. Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣrī says that the people at time

were starving and the prices had risen abnormally high. (Ibn Jarir). Under such conditions when a trade caravan arrived, the people rushed out to buy things of daily need lest these were sold out before the Prayer was concluded. This was a weakness and error which became suddenly manifest due to insufficient training and severity of the conditions. But whoever sees the sacrifices made by the Companions for the cause of Islam afterwards and sees what piety and righteousness they displayed in the matter of worship and dedication and dealings can never dare bring against them the allegation that they preferred the world to the Hereafter unless he himself bears malice against the Companions.

However, just as this incident does not support the critics of the Companions of the Holy Prophet, so it also does not support the ideas of those people who cherish exaggerated notions about them and claim that they never committed any error, or if they committed some, it should not be mentioned, for making mention of their error and calling it an error is derogatory and it reduces one's reverence and respect for them, and its mention goes against the verses of the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*, which state that the Companions are Allah's favourite people and have already been forgiven all their errors and mistakes. All this is exaggeration for which there is no basis in the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*. Here, everyone can see for himself that Allah Himself has mentioned the error that happened to have been committed by a large number of the Companions, in the Book that will be read by the entire *Ummah* till Resurrection, and in the same Book which speaks of their having been forgiven and being chosen people of Allah. Then in the books of the *Ḥadīth* and Commentary also details of this error have been described by all scholars, from the Companions to the major scholars among the followers of the *Sunnah*. Does it mean that Allah has made this mention in order to destroy the reverence for the same Companions whose reverence and esteem He wants to instil in all our hearts? And does it mean that the Companions and their followers and the traditionists and commenatators have mentioned these details of this incident because they were unaware of the religious aspect of the matter which these zealots show and describe? And have the people who read Sūrah Al-Jumu'ah and study its commentary really lost reverence and esteem for the Companions from their hearts? If the answer to each of these questions is in the negative, and it is surely in the negative, then all those exaggerated ideas and notions, which some people express and show in regard to the reverence of the Holy Prophet's Companions, are erroneous.

The truth is that the Companions of the Holy Prophet were not supernatural beings; they were only human born in this very world. Whatever they attained, they attained through the persistent training imparted by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) over many years. The method of this training as we learn from the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth* was: Whenever a weakness appeared in

them. Allah and His Messenger turned immediate attention to it, and a programme of education and training was established to overcome and eradicate it. In the matter of this very Friday Prayer we see that when the incident of the trade caravan occurred, Allah sent down this section of the verses of Sūrah Al-Jumu'ah to administer warning and teach the etiquette of the Friday Service. Along with this the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) impressed on the people the importance of the obligatory nature of the Service continuously in his Sermons as explained in E.N. 15 above. All these instructions are found in the *Hadīth* in clear words. Ḥaḍrat Abū Sa'īd Khudrī says that the Holy Prophet said: "Every Muslim must have full bath on Friday, should clean his teeth, put on the best available clothes, and use perfume if possible." (Musnad Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Nasā'ī). Ḥaḍrat Salmān Fārsī says that the Holy Prophet said: "The Muslim who has bath on Friday, cleans and purifies himself as far as possible, applies oil to his hair, or uses perfume if available, and comes to the mosque and takes his place without disturbing others, then offers the (voluntary) Prayer that Allah has destined for him, then listens quietly when the Imām speaks, he will have his sins and errors committed since the previous Friday forgiven." (Bukhārī, Musnad Aḥmad). Traditions containing almost the same theme have been reported by Ḥaḍrat Abū Ayūb An'ārī, Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah and Ḥaḍrat Nubaishat al-Hudhalī also from the Holy Prophet. (Musnad Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī, Ṭabarānī). Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās says that the Holy Prophet said: "The person who speaks when the Imām is delivering the sermon, is like the donkey loaded with books, and the person who tells him to keep quiet has also rendered his own Prayer void." (Musnad Aḥmad). Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah says that the Holy Prophet said: "If on Friday during the sermon you said to a person, 'keep quiet,' you too behaved wrong." (Bukhārī, Muslim, Naṣā'ī, Tirmidhī, Abū Da'ūd). Traditions closely resembling this have been related by Imām Aḥmad, Abu Da'ud and Tabarānī from Ḥaḍrat 'Alī and Ḥaḍrat Abū ad-Dardā'. To the person delivering the sermon also the Holy Prophet instructed that he should not deliver a lengthy sermon to try the people's patience. His own practice on Friday was that he gave brief Sermons and led short Prayers. Hadrat Jābir bin Samurah says that the Holy Prophet would never give a lengthy Sermon: he was always very brief." (Abū Da'ūd). Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Abī Aufā says: "The Holy Prophet's sermon used to be shorter than the Prayer, and the Prayer a little longer than the sermon." (Naṣā'ī). According to Ḥaḍrat Ammār bin Yāsir, the Holy Prophet said: "The prolongation of the Prayer and the brevity of the sermon are a sign that the Imām has deep insight in religion" (Musnad Aḥmad, Muslim). Almost the same theme has Bazzār related from Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd. All this shows how the Holy Prophet taught the people the etiquette of the Friday congregational Service till it began to be performed in the unique manner unknown in the congregational worship of any other people in the world.

20. This sentence by itself shows what was the nature of the error committed by the Companions. God forbid, if it had been due to any weakness of the faith, or due to giving the world preference over the Hereafter, Allah's wrath and displeasure and reprimand would have been much severer. But since there was no such weakness, and whatever happened was only due to insufficient training, Allah first taught the people the etiquette of the Friday Service, then, after pointing out the error, promised them that the reward they would get with Allah for listening to the Sermon and performing the Prayer would be much greater than worldly gains and amusements.

21. That is, "Allah is by far the best of all those providers who become a means of providing sustenance in the world, though only metaphorically." Sentences such as this have occurred at several places in the Qur'ān. At some places Allah has been called "the best of Creators," at others "the best of Forgivers", "the best of Rulers", "the best of those who show mercy", or "the best of Helpers". At all these places the reference of providing, creating, forgiving, showing mercy and offering help to the creatures is metaphorical, and to Allah real. It means that Allah is the best Provider, Creator, Forgiver, Helper and Bestower of Mercy of all those who appear to be giving you wages and means of sustenance, or who appear to be making things by their skill and workmanship, or who seem to be pardoning the errors of others, or showing mercy and helping others in this world.



LXIII
AL
MUNĀFIQŪN
المنافقون

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LXIII

AL-MUNĀFIQŪN

المنافقون

INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah takes its name from the sentence *Idhā jāā'kal-munāfiqūna* of verse 1. This is the name of the Sūrah as well as the title of its subject-matter, for in it a review has been made of the conduct and attitude of the hypocrites themselves.

Period of Revelation

As we shall explain below, this Sūrah was sent down either during the Holy Prophet's return journey from his campaign against Banī al-Mustaliq, or immediately after his arrival back at Madīnah, and

we have established by argument and research in the Introduction to Sūrah An-Nūr that the campaign against Banī al-Muṣṭaliq had taken place in Sha'bān A.H. 6. Thus, the date of the revelation of this Sūrah is determined precisely.

Historical Background

Before we mention the particular incident about which this Sūrah was sent down, it is necessary to have a look at the history of the hypocrites of Madīnah, for the incident that occurred on this occasion was not a chance happening but had a whole series of events behind it, which ultimately led up to it.

Before the Holy Prophet's emigration to Madīnah the tribes of the Aus and the Khazraj, fed up with their mutual rivalries and civil wars, had almost agreed on the leadership of one man and were making preparations to crown him their king. This was 'Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salūl, the chief of the Khazraj. Muḥammad bin Isḥāq has stated that among the people of Khazraj his authority was never contested and never had the Aus and the Khazraj rallied to one man before this. (Ibn Hishām, vol. II, p. 234).

Such were the conditions when the voice of Islam reached Madīnah and the influential people of both the tribes started becoming Muslims. When before the Emigration, invitation was being extended to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) to come to Madīnah, Ḥaḍrat 'Abbās bin 'Ubādah bin Naḍlah Anṣārī wanted to defer this invitation for the reason that 'Abdullah bin Ubayy also might join in the declaration of allegiance and invitation to the Holy Prophet, so that Madīnah might become the centre of Islam by common consent. But the delegation that arrived in Makkah to declare their allegiance did not give any importance to the proposal of 'Abbās bin 'Ubādah, and all its members, who included 75 men from both the tribes, became ready to invite the Holy Prophet in the face of every danger. (Ibn Hishām, vol. II, p. 89). We have given the details of this event in the introduction to Sūrah Al-Anfāl.

Then, when the Holy Prophet arrived in Madīnah, Islam had so deeply penetrated every house of the Anṣār that 'Abdullah bin Ubayy became helpless and did not see any other way to save his leadership than to become a Muslim himself. So, he entered Islam along with many

of his followers from among the chiefs and leaders of both the tribes although their hearts were burning with rage from within. Ibn Ubayy in particular was filled with grief, for the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) had deprived him of his kingship. For several years his hypocritical faith and grief of being deprived of his kingdom manifested itself in different ways. On the one hand, when on Fridays the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) took his seat to deliver the Sermon, 'Abdullah bin Ubayy would stand up and say: "O people, the Messenger of Allah is present among you, by whom Allah has honoured you; therefore, you should support him and listen to what he says and obey him." (Ibn Hishām, vol. III, pp. 111). On the other, his hypocricy was being exposed day by day and the true Muslims were realizing that he and his followers bore great malice against Islam, the Holy Prophet and the Muslims.

Once when the Holy Prophet was passing on the way 'Abdullah bin Ubayy spoke to him in harsh words. When the Holy Prophet complained of it to Ḥadrat Sa'd bin 'Ubādah, he said: "O Messenger of Allah, don't be hard on him, for when Allah sent you to us we were making a diadem to crown him, and, by God, he thinks that you have robbed him of his kingdom." (Ibn Hishām, vol. II, pp 237-238).

After the Battle of Badr when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) invaded the Jewish tribe of Banī Qainuqā' on their breaking the agreement and unprovoked revolt, this man stood up in support of them, and holding the Holy Prophet by his armour, said: "These 700 fighters have been helping and protecting me against every enemy; would you cut them down in one morning? By God, I will not leave you until you pardon my clients." (Ibn Hishām, vol. III, pp. 51-52).

On the occasion of the Battle of Uḥud this man committed open treachery and withdrew from the battlefield with 300 of his companions. One should note that at this critical moment when he so acted, the Quraish had marched upon Madīnah with 3,000 troops and the Holy Prophet had marched out with only 1,000 men to resist them. Of these 1,000 this hypocrite broke away with 300 men and the Holy Prophet was left with only 700 men to meet 3,000 troops of the enemy in the field.

After this incident the common Muslims of Madinah came to realize fully that he was certainly a hypocrite and his those Companions also were found who were his associates in hypocrisy. That is why when on the very first Friday, after the Battle of Uḥud, this man stood up as usual to make a speech before the Holy Prophet's Sermon, the people pulled at his garment, saying; "Sit down: you are not worthy to say such things." That was the first occasion in Madīnah when this man was publicly disgraced. Thereupon he was so filled with rage that he left the mosque jumping over the heads of the people. At the door of the Mosque some of the Ansār said to him, "What are you doing? Go back and ask the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) to pray for your forgiveness." He retorted "I do not want him to pray for my forgiveness," (Ibn Hishām, vol. III, p. 111)

Then in A.H 4 the Battle of Banī an-Nadīr took place. On this occasion he and his companions supported the enemies of Islam even more openly. On the one side, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and his devoted Companions were preparing for war against their enemy, the Jews, and on the other, these hypocrites were secretly sending messages to the Jews to the effect: "Stand firm: we are with you: if you are attacked, we will help you, and if you are driven out, we too will go out with you." The secret of this intrigue was exposed by Allah Himself, as has been explained in Sūrah Al-Ḥashr: 11-17 above.

But in spite of being so exposed the reason why the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) was still treating him kindly was that he had a large band of the hypocrites behind him. Many of the chiefs of both the Aus and the Khazraj were his supporters. At least a third of the population of Madīnah consisted of his companions, as became manifest on the occasion of the Battle of Uḥud. Under such conditions it was not prudent to wage a war with these internal enemies combined with the external enemies. On this very account, in spite of being fully aware of their hypocrisy the Holy Prophet continued to deal with them according to their apparent profession of faith for a long time. On the other hand, these people too neither possessed the power nor the courage to fight the believers openly as disbelievers, or to join hands with an invader and face them in the battlefield. Apparently they were a strong band but inwardly they had the weakness which Allah has vividly portrayed in Sūrah Al-Hashr: 12-14. Therefore, they thought their well being lay

only in posing as Muslims. They came to the mosque, offered the prayers, gave away the *zakāt*, and would make tall oral claims to the faith, which the true Muslims never felt the need to do. They would offer a thousand justifications for each of their hypocritical acts by which they would try to deceive their compatriots, the Anṣār, into believing that they were with them. By these designs they were not only saving themselves from the disadvantages which could naturally accrue if they separated themselves from the Anṣār brotherhood, but also taking advantage of the opportunities to make mischief which were available to them as members of the Muslim brotherhood.

These were the causes which enabled 'Abdullah bin Ubayy and like-minded hypocrites to get an opportunity to accompany the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in his campaign against the Banī al-Muṣṭaliq, and they simultaneously engineered two great mischiefs which could shatter the Muslim unity to pieces. However, by virtue of the wonderful training in discipline that the Muslims had received through the pure teaching of the Qur'ān and the companionship of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) both mischiefs were stopped in time, and the hypocrites themselves were disgraced instead. One of these was the mischief that has been mentioned in Sūrah An-Nūr above, and the other which has been mentioned in this Sūrah.

This incident has been related by Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, Nasā'ī, Tirmidhi, Baihaqi, Ṭabarānī, Ibn Marduyah, 'Abdur Razzaq, Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Ibn Sa'd and Muḥammad bin Isḥāq through many reliable channels. In some traditions the expedition in which it took place has not been named, and in others it has been connected with the Battle of Tabūk. But the authorities on the battles fought by the Holy Prophet and history are agreed that this incident took place on the occasion of the campaign against the Banī al-Muṣṭaliq. The following seems to be the real story when all the traditions are read together:

When after crushing down the power of Banī al-Muṣṭaliq the Islamic army had made a halt in the settlement at the well of al-Muraisī, suddenly a dispute arose between two men on taking water from the well. One of them was Jehjāh bin Mas'ūd Ghifārī a servant of Ḥadrat 'Umar appointed to lead his horse. The other was Sinān bin Wabār al-

Juhani,[1] whose tribe was an ally of a clan of the Khazraj. Harsh words between them led to fighting and Jehjāh kicked Sinān, which the Anṣār, on account of their ancient Yamanite tradition, took as a great insult and disgrace. At this Sinān called out the men of Anṣar and Jehjāh the Emigrants for help. Hearing about the quarrel Ibn Ubayy started inciting and calling the men of the Aus and the Khazraj to come out and help their ally. From the other side some Emigrants also came out. The dispute might have led to a fight between the Ansar and the Muhājirīn themselves at the very place where they had just fought an enemy tribe jointly and crushing it had halted in its own territory. But hearing the noise the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) emerged and said: "What is this call of paganism? What have you to do with such a call? Leave it: it is a dirty thing."[2] Thereupon the leading men of the two sides met and settled the dispute; Sinān pardoned Jehjāh and peace was restored.

After this every person whose heart was disaffected came to 'Abdullah bin Ubayy and they all said to him, "Until now we had our hopes attached to you and you were protecting us, but now it seems you

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1. Different names of the two men have been mentioned in different traditions. We have taken these names from the tradition related by Ibn Hishām.

2. This is an important thing that the Holy Prophet said on this occasion. One should understand it well in order to grasp the true spirit of Islam. The method taught by Islam is that if two men want to call the people to help solve their dispute, they should say: "O Muslims, come and help us; or O people, come to our help." But if each of them calls out to the people in the name of his own separate tribe, brotherhood, race, colour or region, this would be the call of pre-Islamic paganism, and if those who respond to this call do not realize who is the oppressor and who is the persecuted, and enter the conflict in support of the man of their own group instead of supporting the oppressed on the basis of justice and truth, this would be an act of paganism, which would cause great mischief. That is why the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be peace) called it a dirty, abhorrent thing and said to the Muslims: "You have nothing to do with this call of paganism. You became a community on the basis of Islam; how are you then being called in the name of the Anṣār and the Muhājirin and where are you rushing out in response to this call?" 'Allāma Suhaili has written in *Raud at-Unuf*: "The jurists of Islam regard giving out the call of paganism in a quarrel or dispute as a criminal offence. One section of them has proposed fifty lashes as punishment for it, another ten lashes and another says that the offence should be punished according to the circumstances. In some cases, only a reprimand would be enough, and in others the offender should be put in the prison, and if it is likely to cause more mischief, the offender should be whipped."

have become a helper of these paupers[1] against us." Ibn Ubayy was already enraged. These words made him burst out, thus: "This is what you have done to yourselves. You have given these people shelter in your country, and have divided your property among them. So much so that they have now become our rivals. Nothing so fits us and the paupers of Quraish (or the Companions of Muḥammad) as the ancient saying: 'Feed your dog to fatten it and it will devour you.' If you hold back your property from them, they would go elsewhere. By God, when we return to Madīnah, the honourable ones will drive out from it the mean ones."

Zaid bin Arqam, a young boy, also happened to be present in the assembly at that time. He heard this and mentioned it before his uncle, and his uncle who was one of the Anṣār chiefs went to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and told him the whole story. The Holy Prophet called Zaid and asked him what had happened and he repeated every word of what he had heard.[2] The Holy Prophet said, "Zaid, you are perhaps displeased with Ibn Ubayy; you might have been mistaken in hearing; you might have imagined Ibn Ubayy said this." But Zaid was sure and firm. He said, "No, I swear by God I have heard him say this and that." Thereupon the Holy Prophet called Ibn Ubayy, and he came and swore that he had not said any such thing. The people of the Anṣār also said: "Sir, a boy says this: he might have been mistaken in what he heard Ibn Ubayy is a venerable old man and our chief. Do not believe what a boy says against him." The elderly people of the tribe reproved Zaid also, who became depressed and held his peace. But the Holy Prophet knew Zaid as well as 'Abdullah bin Ubayy. Therefore, he fully understood what had actually happened.

When Ḥadrat 'Umar came to know of this, he came to the Holy Prophet and said: "Please allow me to put this hypocrite to the sword.

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1. The hypocrites of Madīnah dubbed all those people who were embracing Islam and emigrating to Madīnah "Jalābīb", which literally means those who wear coarse clothes; but actually they used this word in the sense of paupers for the Emigrants in order to humiliate them.

2. The jurists have deduced this injunction from it: If the evil of a person is conveyed to another person for the sake of a religious, moral or national cause, it is not backbiting. The backbiting which has been forbidden in the *Sharī'ah* is that which is meant to sow seeds of discord between two persons or groups.

Or, if you do not think it is fit to give me the permission you may tell[1] Mu'ādh bin Jabal, or 'Abbās bin Bishr, or Sa'īd bin Mu'ādh, or Muḥammad bin Maslamah from among the Anṣār, to go and kill him." But the Holy Prophet said: "No, the people will say Muḥammad kills his own Companions." After this he ordered the people to set off immediately, although it was at a time then the Holy Prophet was not accustomed to travel. The forced march continued for 30 hours at a stretch so that the people became exhausted. Then he halted, and as soon as they touched the ground they fell asleep. This he did to distract their minds from what had happened at the well of al-Muraisi'. On the way Ḥaḍrat Usaid bin Hudair, an Ansār chief, met the Holy Prophet, and said: "O Messenger of Allah, today you ordered the people to set off at a time which was disagreeable for travelling, a thing you have never done before." The Holy Prophet replied: "Have you not heard of what your friend said?" When he asked who he meant, the Holy Prophet replied:" 'Abdullah bin Ubayy." He asked what he had said. The Holy Prophet answered: "He has asserted that when he returns to Madīnah the honourable ones will drive out from it the mean ones." He answered: "By God, O Messenger of Allah, you are the honourable one and he is the mean one; you will drive him out whenever you want to."

By and by the news spread among the Ansār soldiers and it enraged them against Ibn Ubayy. The people advised him to go to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and request for his forgiveness, but he retorted: "You asked me to believe in him, and I believed in him; you asked me to pay the *zakāt* on my property, and I paid the *zakāt* too; now the only thing left is that I should bow down to Muḥammad." This further enraged the believing Ansār and everyone started reproaching and cursing him roughly. When the caravan was about to enter Madīnah, 'Abullah, the son of 'Abdullah bin Ubayy, stood before his father with a drawn out sword, and said: "You had said that when you reached Madīnah, the honourable ones would drive out the mean ones. Now, you will know who is honourable . you or Allah and His Messenger. By God, you cannot enter Madīnah until the

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1. Different names of the Anṣār elders have been mentioned in the traditions about whom Ḥaḍrat 'Umar had said that any of them might be asked to do the job if he himself could not be permitted to do it, being an Emigrant, for that could cause a greater mischief.

Messenger of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace) permits you to enter." At this Ibn Ubayy cried out: "O people of Khazraj, look, my own son is preventing me from entering Madīnah." The people conveyed this news to the Holy Prophet, and he said: "Tell 'Abdullah to let his father come home." Abdullah said, "If this is the Holy Prophet's order, then you may enter." Thereupon the Holy Prophet said to Ḥadrat 'Umar; "Now what do you think, 'Umar? Had you killed him on the day when you asked my permission to kill him, many people would have trembled with rage. Today if I order them to kill him, they will kill him immediately." Ḥadrat 'Umar replied; "By God, I realize there was greater wisdom behind what the Apostle of Allah said than when I said."[1]

These were the circumstances under which this Sūrah was sent down most probably after the Holy Prophet's return to Madīnah.

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1. This throws light on two important questions of legal import. First, that if a person being a member of the Muslim community, adopts an attitude like Ibn Ubayy, he deserves to be put to death. Second, that if a person deserves to be put to death under the law, it does not mean that he must necessarily be put to death. Before taking such a decision it should be seen that his execution might not lead to greater mischief and trouble. Blind application of the law, regardless of the circumstances, sometimes produces results contrary to the object for which the law was enforced. If a hypo critical and mischievous person has a significant political following his punishment may be deferred if it is likely to lead to further mischief. It would rather be better to destroy the actual political power which causes him to commit mischief. This was the reason why the Holy Prophet did not punish 'Abdullah bin Ubayy even at the time when he had full power of the hypocrites in Madīnah was completely broken within the next two or three years.



إِذَا جَآءَكَ الْمُنٰفِقُوْنَ قَالُوْا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ۘ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ
لَرَسُوْلُهٗ ۘ وَاللّٰهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ لَكٰذِبُوْنَ ۝١ اِتَّخَذُوْٓا اَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً
فَصَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ سَآءَ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝٢ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ اٰمَنُوْا
ثُمَّ كَفَرُوْا فَطُبِعَ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ۝٣ وَإِذَا رَاَيْتَهُمْ تُعْجِبُكَ
اَجْسَامُهُمْ ۘ وَإِنْ يَّقُوْلُوْا تَسْمَعْ لِقَوْلِهِمْ ۘ كَاَنَّهُمْ خُشُبٌ مُّسَنَّدَةٌ ۘ يَحْسَبُوْنَ
كُلَّ صَيْحَةٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۘ هُمُ الْعَدُوُّ فَاحْذَرْهُمْ ۘ قٰتَلَهُمُ اللّٰهُ ۘ اَنّٰى يُؤْفَكُوْنَ ۝٤ وَ
إِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا يَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ لَوَّوْا رُءُوْسَهُمْ وَرَاَيْتَهُمْ يَصُدُّوْنَ
وَهُمْ مُّسْتَكْبِرُوْنَ ۝٥ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ اَسْتَغْفَرْتَ لَهُمْ اَمْ لَمْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ ۘ لَنْ
يَّغْفِرَ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ ۘ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِى الْقَوْمَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ۝٦ هُمُ الَّذِيْنَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ
لَا تُنْفِقُوْا عَلٰى مَنْ عِنْدَ رَسُوْلِ اللّٰهِ حَتّٰى يَنْفَضُّوْا ۘ وَلِلّٰهِ خَزَآئِنُ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضِ وَلٰكِنَّ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ لَا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ۝٧ يَقُوْلُوْنَ لَئِنْ رَّجَعْنَآ إِلَى الْمَدِيْنَةِ
لَيُخْرِجَنَّ الْاَعَزُّ مِنْهَا الْاَذَلَّ ۘ وَلِلّٰهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُوْلِهٖ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَلٰكِنَّ
الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝٨ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ اَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَآ اَوْلَادُكُمْ
عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّفْعَلْ ذٰلِكَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ۝٩ وَاَنْفِقُوْا مِنْ
مَّا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّاْتِىَ اَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُوْلَ رَبِّ لَوْلَآ اَخَّرْتَنِىْٓ
إِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ قَرِيْبٍ ۙ فَاَصَّدَّقَ وَاَكُنْ مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ۝١٠ وَلَنْ يُّؤَخِّرَ اللّٰهُ
نَفْسًا إِذَا جَآءَ اَجَلُهَا ۘ وَاللّٰهُ خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝١١

LXIII

AL-MUNĀFIQŪN

المنافقون

Verses: II *Revealed at Madinah*

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

O Prophet, when the hypocrites come to you, they say, "We bear witness that you are indeed Allah's Messenger." Yes, Allah knows that you are indeed His Messenger, but Allah bears witness that these hypocrites are utter liars.[1] They have made their oaths as a shield[2] and so they hinder themselves and others from the Way of Allah.[3] Evil indeed are the deeds that they do. This is because they believed and then they disbelieved. Therefore, a seal has been set on their hearts, and so they do not understand anything.[4] 1-3

And when you see them, their figures would look marvellous; when they speak you would love to listen to what they say.[5] But in reality they are like blocks of timber propped up against a wall.[6] They deem every shout to be directed against them.[7] They are the real enemies,[8] so beware of them.[9] May Allah destroy them[10]! How are they being perverted?[11] 4

And when it is said to them, "Come, the Messenger of Allah will pray for your forgiveness," they shake their heads and you see them turning away with arrogance.[12] O Prophet, whether you pray for their forgiveness, or not, it is the same for them. Allah shall never forgive them,[13] for Allah does not guide the transgressors.[14] 5-6

They are the same people who say, "Do not spend anything on the Companions of the Prophet so that they disperse," though Allah is the Owner of the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites do not understand . They say, "When we return to Madinah, the honourable ones shall drive out from it the mean ones",[15] although honour belongs to Allah and His Messenger and the believers,[16] but the 7-8

hypocrites do not know.

911 O you[17] who have believed, let not your possessions and your children distract you from the remembrance of Allah.[18] Those who do so shall indeed be the losers. Spend from the provisions that We have given you before death should come to any of you and then he should say, "O my Lord, why did You not reprieve me awhile that I should have given in charity and become of the righteous?" But Allah does not at all reprieve a person when his term comes to an end, and Allah is well aware of what you do.

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1. That is, "Although the thing they are uttering with the tongue is true by itself, it does not reflect their belief. Therefore they lie when they say that they bear witness that you are a Messenge of Allah." Here, one should clearly understand that an evidence or witness is composed of two things: first, the actual thing to which one bears the witness; second, the concerned person's own belief about the thing to which he bears the witness. Now, if the thing by itself is true, and the belief of the bearer of witness also correspons to what he says, he will be truthful in every respect. And if *the* thing in itself is false, but the bearer of the witness believes it to be right and true, he will be regarded as truthful in one way, for he is truthful in expressing his belief, and liar in another way, for the thing he is bearing witness to is by itself false. Contrary to this, if the thing by itself is true, but the belief of the bearer of the witness is opposed to it, he will be regarded as truthful because he is testifying to the right thing, and a liar because his own belief is contrary to what he is saying with the tongue. For instance, if a Believer states that Islam is a true religion, he is truthful in every respect, but if a Jew, while he is steadfast in his Judaism, states the same thing, he would be stating the right thing but his evidence would be regarded as false, for he is testifying against his faith and belief. And if he calls it a false religion, he would be uttering a false thing but he would be bearing a true witness according to his belief.

2. That is, they use the oaths that they swear to convince others *of* their Islam and faith as a shield to save themselves from the wrath of the Muslims so that they do not treat them as they treat their open enemies.

These oaths may imply the oaths which they usually swear to convince others of their faith as well as those which they swore when they were caught committing some hypocritical act, and also those oaths which 'Abdullah bin Ubayy had sworn to contradict the report given by Ḥaḍrat Zaid bin Arqam. Besides these, there is another probability that Allah might have regarded this statement of theirs as an oath: "We bear witness that you are Allah's Messenger." This last probability has given rise to a dispute among the jurists, namely: If a person states

something with the words: "I bear witness," will it be regarded as an oath or not? Imām Abū Hanīfah and his companions (except Imām Zufar), Imām Sufyān Thauri and Imām Auzā'ī regard it as an oath (*Yamīn* in the *Shari'ah* terminology). Imam Zufar says that it is not an oath. Two sayings from Imām Mālik have been reported in this connection: first,, that it is an oath absolutely, and second, that if while saying: "I bear witness," his intention was to say: y God, I bear witness," or "I bear witness before God," it would he a statement on oath, otherwise not. Imām Shāfe'ī says: "Even if the person says the words: "I bear witness before God," it would not be a statement made on oath, unless he uttered these words with the intention of swearing an oath," (Al-Jaṣṣās, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān;* Ibn al-'Arabi, *Ahkām al-Qur'ān).*

3. The verb *sadd* in Arabic is transitive as well as intransitive. Therefore, *saddū 'an sabīl-Allah* means; "They turn away from the Way of Allah," as well as: "they turn others away from the Way of Allah." According to the first meaning the verse would mean: "By means of these oaths they first plant themselves firmly among the Muslims and then invent ways to escape fulfilling demands of the faith and to avoid obedience to Allah and His Messenger." According to the second meaning it would mean: "They use their false oaths as a cover for committing evil deeds. Posing as Muslims they weaken the Muslim community from within: find out the secrets of the Muslims and convey these to their enemies, create doubts about Islam among the non-Muslims and use such devices for inspiring the simple Muslims with evil suggestions which a hypocrite in the guise of a Muslim only could do, for an open enemy of Islam cannot use them

4. In this verse "believing" means professing the faith in order to be counted among Muslims, and 'disbelieving" means not to believe sincerely and to persist in disbelief as usual. The verse means to say that when they, after due thought, decided to adopt this hypocritical attitude instead of adopting either belief or disbelief plainly, Allah caused a seal to be set on their hearts and deprived them of the grace to adopt the attitude and conduct of a true, sincere and noble person. Now, their power of understanding has been lost, their moral sense has become dead, and while following this way they never even feel that their habit of always telling lies, their deceitful behaviour and the ever present contradictions between their word and deed is a wretched state in which they have involved themselves.

This is one of those verses in which the meaning of ';causing a seal to be set on the heart of somebody by Allah" has been made clear. These people did not become hypocrites because Allah had set a seal on their hearts; so faith did not enter them, and they became hypocrites under compulsion. But, in fact, Allah set a seal on their hearts only when they decided to persist in disbelief in spite of professing the faith outwardly. Then, they were deprived of the capacity to believe

sincerely and of the grace of the moral attitude resulting from it, and were helped to persist in the hypocrisy and hypocritical morals, which they had chosen to adopt for themselves.

5. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās has stated that 'Abdullah bin Ubayy was a strongly built, healthy, handsome and smooth-tongued person, and the same was the case will most of his companions. They were all the nobles of Madīnah. When they came to sit in the Holy Prophet's assembly, they would sit reclining on cushions against the walls and would talk agreeably and convincingly. From their outward appearance and manner of speech no one could imagine that those honourable people of the city would be so wretched and degraded in their character.

6. That is, "Those who sit reclining on cushions against the walls, are not men but pieces of timber. Comparing them to timber is meant to imply that they are devoid of the moral sense which is the essence of humanity. Then« by comparing them to blocks of timber propped up against the wall, it has also been pointed out that they are absolutely worthless, for the timber would be useful only when it has been utilized in making of a ceiling, or a doorframe, or a piece of furniture. A block of timber that has just been placed against a wall serves no useful purpose at all."

7. This brief sentence portrays the state of their guilty conscience. Since they fully well knew what game of hypocrisy they were playing under the screen of their superficial faith, they always remained in a state of alarm, thinking as to when the secret of their treason might be exposed, or the believers might feel disgusted with their evil deeds and machinations and take them to task for them. If ever a cry was raised anywhere in the city, or a noise was heard; they immediately grew alarmed and thought it was directed against themselves.

8. In other words, these hidden enemies are more dangerous than the open enemies.

9. That is, "Do not be deceived by their outward appearances. Beware of them, for they can deceive you any moment."

10. This is not a curse but a declaration of the verdict about them by Allah that they have become worthy of His punishment and He will certainly inflict His punishment on them. It is also possible that Allah may not have used these words in their literal sense but in the meaning of a curse and condemnation according to Arabic idiom.

11. It has not been pointed out as to who perverts them from belief to hypocrisy. This by itself makes it clear that there is not one but many factors responsible for their perversion. There is Satan, there are their evil friends, and

there are their own selfish motives. Someone's wife or children become his motive, and someone is driven to perversion by the evil ones in his society, or by jealousy, spite and pride.

12. That is, they not only refuse to come to the Messenger to seek forgiveness, but also on hearing the invitation they shake their heads with arrogance and pride, and remain adamant, thinking that it would be disgraceful for them to approach the Messenger to seek forgiveness. This is a clear sign that they are not believers.

13. This thing was reiterated in Sūrah At-Taubah, which was sent down three years after Sūrah Al-Munāfiqūn, even in stronger words. In that Sūrah Allah, while addressing the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said this about the hypocrites: "O Prophet (it will be all the same) whether you beg forgiveness for them or not, for Allah will not forgive them even if you beg forgiveness for them seventy times. This is because they have disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and Allah does not show guidance to the wrongdoers." (At-Taubah: 80). A little further on in that Sūrah it was again said: "And never perform the funeral prayer for anyone of them W;10 dies nor stand at his grave, for they have denied Allah and His Messenger and died while they were transgressors." (At-Taubah: 84)

14. Two things have been stated *in* this verse. First, that the prayer of forgiveness can be beneficial only for those who are guided aright. Let alone a common man, even if Allah's Messenger himself prays for the forgiveness of the person, who has turned away from guidance and adopted the way of sin and transgression, instead of obedience, he cannot be forgiven. Second, that it is not Allah's way to bless with guidance those who do not seek His guidance. If a person himself turns away from Allah's guidance, rather shakes his head with arrogance and rejects the invitation when he is called towards guidance, Allah has no need that He should go after him with His guidance and implore him to come to the right path.

15. Ḥaḍrat Zaid bin Arqam says: "When I reported these words of 'Abdullah bin Ubayy to the Holy Prophet, and 'Abdullah bin Ubayy came and disowned them on oath, the elderly people of the Anṣār, and even my own uncle, reproved me for this; so much so that I felt that the Holy Prophet also had mistaken me for a liar and 'Abdullah bin Ubayy for a truthful person. This caused me great anguish and grief. Then, when these verses were revealed, the Holy Prophet call-d me, and taking hold of my ear, said: "The boy's ear was truthful: Allah has himself testified to what it had heard." (Ibn Jarīr. In Tirmidhī also there is a tradition on the same subject).

16. That is, "All honour belongs to Allah in virtue of His essence, to the Apostle in virtue of his Apostleship, and to the Believers in virtue of their faith. As for the disbelievers and the wicked people and the hypocrites, they have no share whatever in the real, true honour."

17. Now a word of admonition is being addressed to all those people, who have entered Islam, whether they are true and sincere believers, or those who profess the faith merely verbally. As we have explained at several places above, the words *allaḍhīna āmanū* in the Qur'ān are sometimes used to address the true believers and sometimes to address the hypocrites, for they profess the faith only with the tongue, and sometimes to address the Muslims of all kinds in general. The context itself shows which group is the audience at a particular place.

18. The mention of the possessions and the children, in particular, has been made, for man mostly turns away from the demands of the faith for the sake of their well-being and interests and becomes involved in hypocrisy, weakness of faith, or wickedness and disobedience; otherwise it implies everything *of* the world that allures and absorbs man so completely that he becomes heedless of the remembrance of God. This heedlessness in respect of the remembrance of God is indeed the root cause of all evil. If man only remembers that he is not free but the servant of One God, and that God is fully aware of all his actions and deeds, and he will by held accountable one day before Him for all his actions and deeds, he would never be involved in any deviation and wickedness, and if ever he commits an error due to a human weakness, he will immediately rectify it as soon as he comes to realize his wrongdoing and repent.



LXIV

AT-TAGHĀBUN

التَّغَابُن

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

LXIV

AT-TAGHĀBUN

التغابن

INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah takes its name from the sentence *Dhālika yaum-ut-taghabun* of verse 9, thereby implying that it is the Sūrah in which the word *at-taghābun has* occurred.

Period of Revelation

Muqātil and Kalbī say that it was partly revealed at Makkah and partly at Madinah. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās and 'Aṭā' bin Yasār say that vv. 1-13 were revealed at Makkah and vv. 14-18 at Madinah. But the majority of commentators regard the whole of the Sūrah as a Madinah Revelation. Although there is no internal evidence to help determine its exact period of revelation, yet a study of its subject-matter shows that it might probably have been sent down at an early stage at

Madinah. That is why it partly resembles the Makkan Sūrahs and partly the Madinah Sūrahs.

Theme and Subject-Matter

The theme of this Sūrah is invitation to the Faith and obedience (to Allah) and the teaching of good morals. The sequence followed is that the first four verses are addressed to all men; verses 5-10 to those men, who do not believe in the invitation of the Qur'ān; and verses 11-18 to those who accept and believe in this invitation.

In the verses addressed to all men, they have been made aware in a few brief sentences of the four fundamental truths:

First, that the universe in which they live is not Godless, but its Creator, Master and Ruler is an all-Powerful God, and everything in it testifies to His being most Perfect and absolutely faultless.

Second, that the universe is not without purpose and wisdom, but its Creator has created it with truth: no one should be under the delusion that it is a mockshow, which began without a purpose and will come to an end without a purpose.

Third, that the excellent form that God has created you with and the choice that He has given you to choose between belief and unbelief is not a useless and meaningless activity so that it may be of no consequence whether you choose belief or unbelief. In fact, God is watching as to how you exercise your choice.

Fourth, that you have not been created irresponsible and unanswerable. You have to return ultimately to your Creator, and have to meet the Being \who is aware of everything in the universe, from Whom nothing is hidden, to Whom even the innermost thoughts of the minds are known.

After stating these four fundamental truths about the Universe and Man, the address turns to the people who adopted the way of unbelief, and their attention is drawn to a phenomenon which has persisted throughout human history, namely that nation after nation has arisen and ultimately gone to its doom. Man by his intellect and reason has been explaining this phenomenon in a thousand ways, but Allah tells the real truth and declares that the fundamental causes of the destruction of the nations were only two:

First, that they refused to believe in the Messengers whom He sent for their guidance, with the result that Allah too left them to themselves, and they invented their own philosophies of life and went on groping their way from one error to another.

Second, that they also rejected the doctrine of Hereafter, and thought this worldly life to be an end in itself, and that there was no life hereafter when they would have to render an account of their deeds before God. This corrupted their whole attitude towards life, and their impure morals and characte so polluted the world that eventually the scourge of God itself had to descend and eliminate them from the scene.

After stating these two instructive truths of human history, the deniers of the message of Truth have been admonished to wake up and believe in Allah, His Messenger and the Light of Guidance that Allah has sent in the form of the Qur'ān if they want to avoid the fate met by the former peoples. Besides, they have been warned that the Day shall eventually come when all the former and the latter generations will be collected at one place and the fraud and embezzlement committed by each will be exposed before all mankind. Then the fate of each man will be decided finally on the basis as to who had adopted the path of the Faith and righteousness and who had followed the way of disbelief and denial of the Truth. The first group shall deserve eternal Paradise and the second shall he doomed to everlasting Hell.

Then, addressing those who adopt the way of the Faith, a few important instructions have been given:

First, that whatever affliction befalls a person in the world, it befalls him by Allah's leave. Whoever in this state of affliction remains steadfast to the Faith, Allah blesses his heart with guidance; otherwise although the affliction of the one who in confusion or bewilderment turns away from the path of the Faith, cannot be averted except by Allah's leave, yet he becomes involved in another, the greatest affliction of all, namely that his heart is deprived of the guidance of Allah.

Secondly, that the believer is not required to affirm the faith with the tongue only, but after the affirmation of the Faith he should practically obey Allah and His Messenger. If he turns away from obedience he would himself be responsible for his loss, for the Holy

Messenger of Allah (upon whom be His peace) has become absolved from the responsibility after having delivered the message of Truth.

Thirdly, that the believer should place his trust in Allah alone and not in his own power or some other power of the world.

Fourthly, that the worldly goods and children are a great trial and temptation for the believer, for it is their love which generally distracts man from the path of Faith and obedience. Therefore, the believers have to beware some of their children and wives lest they become robbers for them on the Way of God directly or indirectly; and they should spend their wealth for the sake of God so that their self remains safe against the temptations of Satan.

Fifthly, that every man is responsible only to the extent of Hs power and ability. Allah does not demand that man should exert himself beyond his power and ability. However, the believer should try his best to live in fear of God as far as possible, and should see that he does not transgress the bounds set by Allah in his speech, conduct and dealings through his own negligece.



يُسَبِّحُ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۚ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ ۖ وَهُوَ
عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝١ هُوَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَكُمْ فَمِنْكُمْ كَافِرٌ وَّمِنْكُمْ مُّؤْمِنٌ ۭ وَ
اللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ۝٢ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَاَحْسَنَ
صُوَرَكُمْ ۚ وَاِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيْرُ ۝٣ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُسِرُّوْنَ
وَمَا تُعْلِنُوْنَ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ۝٤ اَلَمْ يَاْتِكُمْ نَبَؤُا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا
مِنْ قَبْلُ ۡ فَذَاقُوْا وَبَالَ اَمْرِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ۝٥ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهٗ كَانَتْ
تَّاْتِيْهِمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ فَقَالُوْٓا اَبَشَرٌ يَّهْدُوْنَنَا ۡ فَكَفَرُوْا وَتَوَلَّوْا وَّاسْتَغْنَى
اللّٰهُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيْدٌ ۝٦ زَعَمَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اَنْ لَّنْ يُّبْعَثُوْا ۭ قُلْ بَلٰى وَرَبِّيْ
لَتُبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُنَبَّؤُنَّ بِمَا عَمِلْتُمْ ۭ وَذٰلِكَ عَلَي اللّٰهِ يَسِيْرٌ ۝٧ فَاٰمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَ
رَسُوْلِهٖ وَالنُّوْرِ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلْنَا ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ۝٨ يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُكُمْ
لِيَوْمِ الْجَمْعِ ذٰلِكَ يَوْمُ التَّغَابُنِ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّؤْمِنْۢ بِاللّٰهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا يُّكَفِّرْ
عَنْهُ سَيِّاٰتِهٖ وَيُدْخِلْهُ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ اَبَدًا ۭ
ذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ۝٩ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَكَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَآ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ

LXIV

AT-TAGHĀBUN

التَّغَابُن

Verses: 18 *Revealed at Madīnah*

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

Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is glorifying Allah.[1] His is the Sovereignty[2] and His the Praise[3] and He has power over all.[4] He it is Who created you; yet some of you are disbelievers and some are believers,[5] and Allah sees whatever you do.[6] He has created the heavens and the earth with the truth and has shaped you, and shaped you well, and to Him you have to return in the end.[7] He has the knowledge of everything in the heavens and the earth: He knows whatever you hide and whatever you reveal,[8] and He knows the very secrets of the hearts[9] 1-4

Has not the news reached you of those who had disbelieved before this, and then tasted the evil results of their deeds? And in the Hereafter there awaits them a painful torment.[10] They deserved this fate because their Messengers came to them with clear Signs,[11] but they said, "Shall mere human beings show us guidance?"[12] So, they refused to believe and turned away; then Allah also became indifferent to them, and Allah is indeed Independent and worthy of all praise.[13] 5-6

The disbelievers assert that they shall never be raised up from death.[14] Say to them, "Nay, by my Lord! You shall certainly be raised up;[15] then certainly you shall be told what you have done (in the world),[16] and this is an easy thing for Allah to do."[17] 7

Therefore, believe in Allah and His Messenger and in the Light that We have sent down.[18] Allah is aware of whatever you do. (You shall know this) when He will gather you together on the Day of Gathering.[19] That wil be a Day of mutual Loss and Gain[20] among the people. Whoever believes in Allah and does good works,[21] Allah shall 8-10

shake off his sins and will admit him into Gardens, underneath which canals will be flowing, to dwell therein for ever. This is the supreme success! And those who disbelieve and treat Our Revelations as false,[22] shall be the inhabitants of Hell to dwell therein for ever, and that is a most evil abode!

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1. For explanation, see E.N. I of the commentary on Sūrah Al-Ḥadīd. A study of the following theme by itself shows why the discourse has been begun with this sentence. What has been stated below about the Universe and Man is that Allah alone is their Creator, Master, Ruler, and He has not made this universe without purpose and wisdom, that Man has not been created and left irresponsible, so that he may act as he may please, and there should be nobody to call him to account, and that the Ruler of this universe is not a care-free and ignorant king so that he may have no knowledge of what is happening in his kingdom. The best introduction to this theme could be the same as has been couched in this brief sentence. In view of the context, the introduction means: In whichever direction you may turn your gaze, from the earth to the limitless vastnesses of the heavens, you will clearly see that everything from a particle to the great galaxies not only testifies to the existence of God but also bears evidence that its God is free from every defect, every weakness and error. Had there been the least probability of a defect or fault, weakness or deficiency, in His essence and attributes, in His acts and decrees, this perfect and wise system could not have come into being at all, nor continue to function so consistently and immutably from eternity to eternity.

2. That is, "The Kingdom of the universe solely belongs to Him. He has not just created it and left it alone after giving it the initial push, but He alone is actually ruling over it every moment. No one else has any role or share whatever in this rule and sovereignty. If others possess temporarily and on a limited scale some powers of ownership or rule somewhere in the universe, these are not their personal powers, which they might have acquired by virtue of their own power, but these have been granted to them by Allah. They possess these powers as long as Allah wills, and they can be withdrawn as and when He so desires."

3. In other words; He alone is worthy of all praise. Whatever other being has any praiseworthy quality, it has been granted by Allah. And if *ḥamd* (praise) be taken in the sense of *shukr* (thankfulness), the meaning would be: In reality Allah alone is worthy of being thanked, for all good things in the world have been created by Him, and He alone is the real Benefactor of all kinds of creation. When we thank another being for favour, we thank it for the reason that Allah conveyed His blessing thought it or him to us, otherwise neither the being itself is the creator of the blessing nor could it convey the blessing to us without Allah's permission and help.

4. That is, "He is the possessor of absolute power: He can do whatever He wills, there is no power to restrain or limit His Omnipotence."

5. It has four meanings and all are correct in their respective places:

First, that "He alone is your Creator, yet some of you deny His being the Creator and others acknowledge this truth." This meaning becomes obvious when the first and the second sentences are read together.

Second, that "He Himself has created you with the nature that if you choose to adopt unbelief, you may do so, and if you choose to affirm belief, you may do so. He has not compelled you to either accept or reject the Faith therefore, you yourselves are responsible for your adopting belief or unbelief." This meaning is confirmed by the following sentence: "Allah sees whatever you do." That is, By giving you this choice He has put you to the test, and He is watching how you exercise this choice."

The third meaning is. "He had created you with a sound, wholesome nature, which demanded that you should all adopt the way of the Faith, yet some of you adopted unbelief, which was opposed to the nature and purpose of their creation, and some of you adopted the way of the Faith, which was in conformity with their nature. "This theme becomes obvious when this verse is read along with verse 30 of Sūrah Ar-Rūm, which says: "Set your face sincerely and truly towards Faith, and be steadfast on the Nature whereupon Allah has created mankind. There can be no alteration in the Nature made by Allah. This is the right and true Faith.' And this very theme is explained by several *Ahadith* in which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has repeatedly stated that every man has been created on true human nature; then polytheism and deviation befall him from outside." (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 42 to 47 of the commentary of Sūrah Ar-Rūm). Here, it may he pointed out that no Divine Book has ever presented the concept of man's being a sinner by birth, which Christianity has embraced as its fundamental doctrine for 1,500 years. Recently even Catholic scholars themselves have started expressing the view that there is no basis for this doctrine in the Bible. The famous German biblical scholar Rev. Herbert Haag, writes in his book, Is *Original Sin in Scripture:* "Among the earliest Christians, at least till the 3rd century A.D., there existed no such creed that man was a sinner by birth, and when this idea started spreading among the people, the Christian scholars continued to contradict it for two centuries. At last in the 5th century A.D. St Augustine by the power of his logic made this idea a part of the fundamental beliefs of Christianity: 'Mankind is heir to the original sin committed by Adam, and there is no way to salvation for man except through the Atonement made by Christ'."

The fourth meaning is: "Only Allah brought you into existence from non-existence: you were not, then you became. This was such a simple thing that if you had thought over it seriously and seen that life is the actual blessing through which you are benefiting by the other blessings in the world, none of you would have adopted the attitude of disbelief and rebellion against your Creator. But some of you did not give it due thought, or thought wrongly, and adopted the way of disbelief, and some others adopted the same way of belief and faith which was the very demand of correct thinking.

6. In this sentence "seeing" does not merely mean to see, but it automatically gives the meaning that man will be rewarded or punished according to his actions and deeds. It is just like a master's taking a person into service and then telling him: "I shall see how you perform your duties," which implies: "If you perform your duties well, I shall reward you fully; otherwise I shall call you to account for your negligence."

7. In this verse three things have been stated in their sequence, which are well connected logically:

First, it has been said that Allah has created this universe with the truth. When the word "with the truth" is spoken for a news, it means a true news; when it is spoken for a command, it means a command based on justice; when it is spoken for a statement, it means a correct statement; and when it is used for an act, it implies an act which is wise, reasonable and useful. Now, *khalq* (to create) is an act; therefore, to say that the universe has been created with the truth, would inevitably mean that the universe has not been created for fun, but it is a serious work of a Wise Creator: everything in it has a rational object and purpose, and the element of its being purposeful is so evident that if a sensible person understands the nature of a thing well, it cannot be difficult for him to know the rational and wise purpose for which it has been created. All of modern science testifies that whenever man has succeeded in understanding the true nature of a thing by careful thought, research and investigation, he has also come to know eventually the purpose and object of its creation, and this understanding of its purpose has led him to countless inventions which are now being used in civilized human life. This could not be possible, had this universe been the plaything of a carefree person, devoid of any wisdom and purpose. (For further explanation, see E.N. 46 of Al-An-am, E.N. 11 of Yūnus, E.N. 26 of Ibrāhīm, E.N. 46 of An-Nahl, E.N.'s 15, 16 of Al-Anbiyā, E.N. 102 of Al-Mu'minūn, E.N. 75 of Al-'Ankabūt, E.N. 6 of Ar-Rūm, E.N. 34 of Ad-Dukhān, B.N. 28 of Al-Jāthiyah).

Secondly, it has been said that in this universee Allah has created man in the best shape. Shape here does not imply only man's face but his whole bodily structure; it also inclusions all those powers and abilities which man has been

granted to function in this world. In both these aspects man has been given the best shape and form among the creatures of the earth, and on the same basis he has become worthy to rule over all the universe. He has been given an erect stature; he has been given most appropriate feet to walk on; he has given most suitable hands to work with; he has been given such senses and organs to acquire knowledge by which he obtains every kind of information; he has been given a powerful mind to think and understand and deduce results from the body of acquired information; he has been given a moral sense and a power of discrimination by which he distinguishes between good and evil, right and wrong; he has been given the power of decision by using which he selects his own course of action, and decides as to where he should employ his efforts and where he should not. He has even been given the freedom that he may acknowledge his Creator and serve Him if he so likes and reject Him if he pleases, or may make whomever he likes his gods, or rebel even against Him Whom he regards as his God. Along with all these capabilities and powers Allah has granted him the authority to appropriate everything created by Him, and he is practically using this authority in the world. (For further explanation, see E.N. 91 of Al-Mu'min).

The third thing which logically follows from the first two, as explained above, has been stated in the third sentence of the verse: "To Him you have to return in the end." Obviously, when a creature endowed with power and authority has been created in a wise and purposeful system of the universe, wisdom does not require that he should be left to live irresponsibly in the world, but it necessarily requires that that creature should be accountable to the Being Who has granted it this position and rank and blessed it with these powers; "Returning" in this verse does not merely mean to return but to return for accountability. In the following verses it has been explained that this return will not be in this life but into the second life after death, and its right time will be when all mankind will be resurrected and gathered together simultaneously for accountability, and in consequence of the accountability man will be rewarded or punished on the ground whether he had used the powers given him by God in the right way or the wrong way. As for the question, why cannot this accountability be held in the present life of the world? and why is its right time only the second life after death? and why is it necessary that this accountability be held only when all mankind has passed away from this world, and all the former and the latter generations have been resurrected and gathered together simultaneously? If man only uses his common sense a little, he can understand that all this is perfectly rational as well as the very demand of wisdom and reason that accountability should be held in the second life and of all mankind together. The first reason is that man is accountable for his whole life-work. Therefore, the right time of his accountability should necessarily be when his life-work has come to an end. The second reason is that man is

responsible for all those effects and influences which he produces by his acts on the lives of others, and those influences and effects do not come to an end with his death but continue to influence others till ages after him Therefore, true accountability call he held only when the life-work of entire mankind has come to an end and all the former and the latter generations are gathered together simultaneously for accountability. (For further explanation, see E.N. 30 of Al-A'râf. E.N.'s 10, 11 of Yûnus, E.N. 105 of Hûd E.N. 35 of An-Nahl, E.N. 9 of Al-Ḥajj, E.N. 27 of An.Naml. E.N.'s 5,6 of Ar-Rûm, E.N.'s 29, 30 of Suâd, E.N. 80 of Al-Mu'min, E.N.'s 27 to 29 of Al-Jâthiyah)

8. Another translation can be: "Whatever you do secretly and whatever openly."

9. That is, "He is aware not only of those *acts* of man, which come to the notice of the people but He knows also those acts which remain hidden from them. Moreover, He does not only see the superficial form of the acts, but also knows what intention and purpose underlay each act of man and with what motive and aim he did whatever he did- This is such a truth that if man ponders over it seriously, he can fully well understand that justice can be done only in the Hereafter, and only in God's Court can real justice be possibly done. Man's own intellect itself demands that man must be punished for each of his crimes. But everyone knows that in the world most of the crimes remain hidden, or the culprit escapes punishment because of insufficient evidence, or even if the crime becomes revealed, the culprit is so influential and powerful that he cannot be punished. Then the intellect of man also requires that man should not be punished only because his behaviour resembles a criminal act, but it should be ascertained that he has committed the act intentionally and deliberately and at the time he committed it, he was acting as a responsible agent, his intention in actual fact was to commit the crime, and he knew that what he was doing was a crime. That is why the worldly courts inquire into these things when they decide the cases, and regard such an inquiry as a demand of the rule of justice. But is there any means available in the world by which these things may be precisely ascertained beyond every shadow of doubt? Considered from this viewpoint, this verse also bears a deep logical relevance to Allah Almighty's saying: c has created the earth and the heavens with Truth." The necessary demand *of* creating them with Truth is that perfect justice should prevail in this universe. Such justice can be established only when every act of a responsible man may not only remain concealed from the eyes of the one administering justice but the intention with which a person performed and act also should not remain hidden from him. And obviously, there cannot be any being, apart from the Creator of the universe, who can administer such justice, Now, if a person denies Allah and the Hereafter, he in fact, asserts that we humans live in a universe which is devoid of justice, which is rather a place

where justice cannot possibly be done. The person whose intellect, mind and conscience feel satisfied at such an assumption would be a shameless creature if he thought he was bing progressive and rationalistic and those people antiquated and retrogressive who accept a highly rational concept about the universe, which the Qur'ān presents.

10. That is, "The evil that they tasted in the world in consequence of their misdeeds was neither the real punishment of their crimes nor the full punishment. The real and full punishment they have yet to suffer in the Hereafter. However, the people can learn a lesson from the torment that visited them. They can see how the nations which adopted an attitude of unbelief against their Lord, went on degenerating and consequently met with an evil and disgraceful end." (For further explanation, see E.N.'s 5, 6 of Al-A'rāf, E.N. 105 of Hūd).

11. The word *bayyināt* as used in the original has a vast *meaning. Bayyin* (sing. of *bayyināt)* in Arabic is something which is very clear and manifest. Saying about the Prophets that they came with *bayyināt* gives the meaning that firstly, they brought such manifest signs as bore clear testimony to their having been appointed by Allah; secondly, they presented whatever they presented with rational and clear arguments; thirdly, there was no ambiguity in their teaching; they clearly explained what was the truth and what was falsehood, what was lawful and what was unlawful, what path man should follow and what he should avoid.

12. This was then the foremost and basic cause of their degeneration and ruin. Mankind could not have known the right course of action in the world unless their Creator gave them the correct knowledge, and there could be no practical means of bestowing such knowledge by the Creator unless He blessed some of the human beings with the knowledge and entrusted them with the duty to convey it to other human beings. For this purpose He sent the Prophets with the manifest Signs *(bayyināt)* so that there was no reasonable ground for the people to doubt their being on the truth. But the people refused to believe that a human being could be a Messenger of God. Then, obviously there could be no other way for them to receive guidance. (For further explanation, see E.N. 11 of Sūrah Yā Sīn). In this connection, however, a strange manifestation of the ignorance and folly of human beings is seen. They have in fact, never shown any hesitation in accepting the guidance of men, so much so that they have carved out gods of wood and stone according to their guidance, they have made human beings themselves God, the incarnation of God, even son of God, and they have adopted such strange viewpoints by following the guidance of their mis-leaders blindly, which ruined human civilization and morals altogether. But when the Messengers of God came to them with the truth, and they presented the pure Truth before them without any selfish motive, they said, "Shall mere human beings show us guidance?" This

amounted to saying that if a human begin misled them, they would follow his guidance willingly. but if he showed the right path to them, his guidance was not acceprable.

13. That is, when they treated the guidance sent down by Allah with indifference, then Allah also became indifferent to them and did not care what pit they fell in. Allah did not stand in need *of* their aknowledging Him God to sustain and support His Godhead. Nor was He in need of their worship, nor of their praise and adoration. He, in fact, willed to show them the right path only for their own good and well-being. But when they turned away from it, Allah also became heedless of them. Then, neither He gave them guidance, nor remained responsible for their protection, nor saved them from being afflicted with calamities, nor prevented them from bringing about their own ruin, for they themselves were not keen for His guidance and help.

14. That is, "This was the second basic error in which the deniers of the Truth have been involved in every age, and which has ultimately brought about their ruin. Although no denier of the Hereafter ever had any means of knowing, nor has he today, nor will he have in the future, that there is no life after death, yet these ignorant people have always asserted the same thing, whereas there neither exists any intellectual basis for denying the Hereafter with absolute certainty nor any scientific basis for it.

15. This is the third place where Allah Almighty has instructed His Prophet to tell the people by swearing an oath by his Lord that such a thing shall certainly happen. First, in Sūrah Yūnus, it was said: "They ask: Is what you say really true? Tell them: Yes, by my Lord, it is absolutely true, and you have no power to avert it.;(v. 53). Then, in Sūrah Sabā, it was said: "The disbelievers say: How is it that Resurrection is not overtaking us? Say, by my Lord, it will surely overtake you." (v. 3)

Here, the question arises: What difference does it make for a disbeliever in the Hereafter whether you give him the news of its coming by swearing an oath or without swearing an oath? when he does not believe in it at all, will he believe in it only because you are asserting this on oath? The answer is: In the first place, the addressees of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah s peace) were the people, who knew from their personal knowledge and experience that he had never uttered a lie in his life. Therefore, even if they might have forged the most shameless slander against him with their tongue, yet in their hearts they could never conceive that *a* truthful man like him could say a thing on oath by Allah of which he himself was not convinced by knowledge and experience. Secondly, the Holy Prophet did not only present the doctrine of the Hereafter but also gave highly rational Arguments for it. What distinguishes *a* Prophet from others is that

the arguments, however strong and cogent, that others may give for the Hereafter, can at the most make the listener admit that the occurrence of the Hereafter is more reasonable and probable than its absence. On the contrary, a Prophet stands at A much higher level than a philosospher. His real position is not that he has arrived at the conclusion of the necessity of the Hereafter by the exercise of reason. But his real position is that he has the knowledge that the Hereafter shall occur and says with conviction that it shall surely occur. Therefore, only a Prophet can swear an oath to declare this but not a philosopher. Then, faith in the Hereafter can be generated only by a Prophet's statement; the reasoning of a philosopher does not have the power to induce even himseelf to adopt it as his religious creed on the basis of his own argument, not to speak of another person. If the philosopher is really correct, he cannot go beyond 'should be or ought to be;' only a Prophet can assert with conviction that a thing "is and certainly is."

16. This is the purpose for which the children of Adam will be resurrected; this also contains the answer to the question: what is the special need for it? If one keeps in view what has been discussed con cerning vv. 1-4 above, one can easily understand that in this universe, which has been created with the truth, it would be highly unreasonable to imagine about man who has been given freedom to choose either belief or unbelief, who has been granted authority to appropriate many of the things in this universe, and who after choosing the way of belief or unbelief has accomplished much good or done evil on his own responsibility by making the right or the wrong use of his authority during his life, that when he has done all this , the good done by the virtuous and the evil committed by the criminal one should neither bear any fruit, nor should there be any time when his deeds and actions should be subjected to scrutiny. The person who asserts such an irrational thing inevitably commits one of the two absurdities: either he thinks that although this universe is based on wisdom, yet a creature like man, who has been endowed with authority, has been created and left irresponsible here; or he thinks that this universe is a random creation devoid of the wisdom of a Wise Creator. In the first place, he makes a contradictory statement, for the existence of an irresponsible creature, endowed with authority, in a universe based on wisdom, is clearly against justice and wisdom. In the second case, he cannot give any rational being like man should come into being in a haphazardly created, foolish universe, and how he conceived the idea of justice. Only a stubborn person could uphold the belief that folly could generate wisdom and injustice justice, or the one who has become a mental patient because of his obsession for hair splitting.

17. This is the second argument for the Hereafter. The first argument was for its necessity and this second is for its possibility. Obviously, when God could create such a grand and wonderful system of the universe without any difficulty

and when He could create human beings in the world in the first instance, it cannot be difficult for Him to resurrect the same human beings and summon them before Himself for the purpose of accountability

18. That is, "When this is the truth and the whole human history testifies that the real cause of the destruction of the nations has been their disbelieving the Messengers and their denial of the Hereafter, then they should not insist on meeting the same doom by following their example, but should believe in the guidance presented by Allah and His Messenger and the Qur'ān." Here, as the context itself shows, by "the Light that We have sent down", is meant the Qur'ān Just as light itself is clearly seen and reveals everthing that was hidden in darkness around it, so is the Qur'ān a Light whose being based on the truth is self-evident ; in its Light man can solve and understand every problem that he cannot solve and understand exclusively by means of his own knowledge and in tellect. Anyone who has the Light can clearly see the straight path of Truth out of the countless, crooked paths of thought and action, and can follow the Straight Path throughout life in such a way that at every step he can know where the crooked by-paths are misleading and where the pitfalls of destruction are situated on the way, and what is the path of safety and security among them.

19. "The Day of Gathering": the Resurrection, when all human beings born in the world from the beginning of creation till the Last Day will be gathered together simultaneously. This theme has been fully explained in the Qur'ān at several places; e.g. in Sūrah Hūd it has been said: "That will b: the Day when all the people shall gather together and will witness everything that will happen there." (v 103) And in Sūrah Al-Wāqi'ah: "Say to them; Surely, the former and the latter, all shall be gathered together one day, the hour of which has already been appointed." (v. 50).

20. The word *yaum-ut-taghābun* as used in the original is too vast in meaning to be explained in a word, or even a sentence, of any other language. Of all the names of the Resurrection that occur in the Qur'ān, this name probably is the most meaningful. Therefore, a little explanation is necessary to understand its meaning.

Taghābun is from *ghabn*, which can be pronounced both as *ghabn* and as *ghaban*. *Ghabn* is mostly used concerning commercial and business transactions and *ghaban* concerning opinion. Lexically, it has other meanings also, e.g. heedlessness, forgetfulness, a person's being deprived of his share, a man's harming another inadvertently in business or mutual dealing, etc.

The derivative *taghābun* implies the occurrence of *ghabn* between two or more persons. Thus, *taghābun al-qaum* means some people's treating others fraudulently, or a person's harming another person and the other's being harmed

and damaged by him, or one's taking away the share of another and the other's being deprived of his share, or a person's incurring loss in business and another's gaining a profit, or some people's proving heedless or weak-minded in comparison to others.

Now consider that in this verse it has been said about the Resurrection: "That will be a Day of *taghābun* (mutual loss and gain) among the people." These words automatically give the meaning that in the world *taghabun* is a common thing, but this *taghabun* is superficial and deceptive, not the real and factual *taghābun;* the real *taghābun* will take place on the Day of Resurrection. There it will become manifest as to who actually incurred the loss and who actually earned the profits, who actually was deceived and who proved to be prudent and sensible, who actually had invested all his life capital in a wrong bargain and become bankrupt and who had invested all his energies and abilities, wealth and time, in a good bargain and earned all the benefits and gains, which the former also could have earned had he not been deceived in understanding the truth about the world.

The commentators while explaining the meaning of *Yaum-ut-taghābun* have given several meanings of it, which are all correct, and throw light on different aspects of its meaning. Some commentators have explained that on that Day the dwellers of Paradise will take away that share of the dwellers of Hell, which they would have had in Paradise had they done good deeds in the world as did the dwellers of Paradise and the dwellers of Hell will take away that share of the people of Paradise, which they would have had in Hell had they done evil deeds in the world. This is supported by a *Hadīth*, which Bukhārī has related in *Kitāb ar-Riqāq*, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah, saying that the Holy Prophet said: "Whoever goes to Paradise will be shown the place which he would have had in Hell had he done evil deeds in the world so that he may give more and more thanks to God; and whoever goes to Hell will be shown the place which he would have had in Paradise had he done good deeds in the world so that he may feel more and more remorseful."

Some other commentators say that on that Day the wronged one will take away so many of the good deeds done by the wrongdoer as may be a suitable compensation for the wrong suffered, or the wrongdoer will be equal in weight with his usurped rights. For on the Day of Resurrection man will not possess any wealth which he may give to make up for the wrong done, there the only commodity worth exchange will be one's conduct. Therefore, whoever had wronged another in the world, will have to make up for the wrong done by surrendering some of his own good deeds in his favour, or by taking some of his sins on himself and suffering the punishment for them. This theme also has been reported from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in *Aḥadīth*. In Bukhārī (Kitāb ar-Riqāq) a tradition has been related from Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah,

saying that the Holy Prophet said: "Whoever bears a burden of a wrong done to his brothel, should compensate him for it here, for in the Hereafter no one will have any wealth or money for compensation. There, some of his good deeds will be taken from him and given away to the wronged person, or if he did not have enough good deeds, some of the sins of the wronged person will be transferred to him." Likewise, in Musnad Aḥmad there is a tradition from Ḥadrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah bin Unais, sag that the Holy Prophet said: "No dweller of Paradise will enter Paradise and no dweller of Hell will enter Hell until he will have compensated the other person for the wrong done to him so much so that one will have to compensate even for a slap given to another person. We asked; How will this compensation be made when on Resurrection we shall be naked and penniless? The Holy Prophet replied: Compensation will he made by means of the good deeds and the evil deeds." In Muslim and Musnad Ahmad there is a tradition from Ḥadrat Abū Huraīrah, saying that the Holy Prophet upon whom by Allah's peace) once asked the people sitting in his assembly: "Do you know who is poor? The people replied: He who has nothing to possess The Holy Prophet said: In my *Ummah* the poor is he who appeared before his God on the Day of Resurrection with his acts of the Prayer and the Fast and the payment of the *zakāt* the while he had abused some one, usurped the property of another, and shed blood or hit still another. Then his good deeds were taken away and given over to each of the wronged and when nothing was left of his good deeds to make compensation, some of the sins of each wronged one were transferred to him and he was east into Hell." In another *Ḥadīth* which Muslim and Abū Da'ūd have related on the authority of Ḥadrat Buraidah, the Holy Prophet said: "If in the absence from home of a soldier for the cause of Allah, a person treats his wife and the people of his house treacherously, the person would be made to stand before the soldier on the Day of Resurrection, and the latter would be asked to take away whatever he liked from his good deeds. Saying this the Holy Prophet turned to us and said Then what do you say? That is, what do you think he would leave with him?"

Some other commentators say that tlie word *taghābun* is mostly used concerning commerce and business, and in the Holy Qur'ān at several places the attitude that the believer and the unbeliever adopt in their worldly lives has been compared to trade and commerce. If the believer giving up disobedience adopts obedience and invests his life and wealth and effort for the cause of God, he is giving up a bad bargain and investing his capital in a business which will fetch him much gain and profit in the end. On the contrary, if an unbeliever abandons the way of obedience and invests his entire capital in the way of disobedience to God, he in fact, is a trader who has purchased deviation for guidance, and will incur loss in the end. The gain and the loss of to both will become manifest on the Day of Resurrection. It may well so h happen in the world that the believer appears to

be the loser and the disbeliever the gainer But in the Hereafter they will see who actually had made the right bargain and who the wrong bargain This theme has occurred at many places in the Qur'ān,e.g. in Al-Baqarah 16, 175, 207 Al- Imrān 77,177 An-Nisā' 74; At-Taubah 111 An-Naḥl 95, Fāṭir 29, Aṣ-Ṣaff 10.

Yet another from of *taghābun* is that in the world the people go on cooperating with one another in unbelief and sin, injustice and wickedness, with full peace of mind with the confidence that they are enjoying full mutual love and friendship. The mutual intrigues and comradeship of the members of wicked Families immoral guides and their followers, gangs of thieves and robbers alliances of corrupt and unjust officers and officials, groups of dishonest traders, industrialists and land owners, paroups established for spread deviation, error and mischief, and nations and governments which support and uphold injustice and wickedness in the world, is based on the same onfidence. The individuals belonging to each of these groups harbour the impression that they are good companions of one another and their mutual cooperation is proving very successful But when these people reach the Hereafter, they will suddenly wake up to the realization that they had been grievously mistaken and deceived. Each one of them would feel that the one whom he considered his best father brother wife husband child, friend, companion, leader, guide disciple or supporter and helper, had been, in fact, his worst enemy. Every kind of relationship and friendship and bond of love and reverence will change into enmity. They will all abuse and curse each other and each one will desire that maximum responsibility of his crimes be laid on the other and will strive to get him severely punished. This theme also has occurred at many places in the Qur'ân, e.g. in Al-Baqrah: 167, Al-A'râf: 37 to 39. Ibrāhīm 21-22; Al-Mu'minūm: 101, Al-'Ankabūt: 12,13. 25; Luqmān: 33, Al-Aḥzāb: 67,68; Sabā: 31 to 33; Fāṭir: 18; Aṣ-Ṣāffāt: 27 to 3; Suād: 59 to 61: Ḥā Mīm: As-Sajdah: 29; Az-Zukhruf; 67; Ad-Dukhān; 41; Al-Ma'ārij: 10 to 14: 'Abasa: 34 to3.

21. Believing in Allah does not merely imply believing that Allah exists but believing in Him in the way Allah Himself has taught through His Messenger and His Book. This belief by itself includes belief in Apostleship and belief in the Book. Likewise a good act also does not imply every such act as man may himself have adopted considering it a good act. or following a man-made criterion of morality, but it implies the righteous act that is in accordance with the Law sent down by God. Therefore no one should have the misunderstanding that believing in Allah and doing good deeds, without the medium of the Messenger and the Book will lead to the results being mentioned below. Whoever studies the Qur'ān carefully cannot remain unaware that according to it no such belief is genuine belief in Allah and no such act is righteous at all.

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خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ؕ وَ بِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿10﴾ مَآ اَصَابَ مِنْ مُّصِيْبَةٍ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَ مَنْ
يُّؤْمِنْ بِاللّٰهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهٗ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿11﴾ وَ اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَ اَطِيْعُوا
الرَّسُوْلَ ۚ فَاِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَاِنَّمَا عَلٰى رَسُوْلِنَا الْبَلٰغُ الْمُبِيْنُ ﴿12﴾ اَللّٰهُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ؕ
وَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿13﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنَّ مِنْ اَزْوَاجِكُمْ وَ اَوْلَادِكُمْ
عَدُوًّا لَّكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوْهُمْ ۚ وَ اِنْ تَعْفُوْا وَ تَصْفَحُوْا وَ تَغْفِرُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ
رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿14﴾ اِنَّمَآ اَمْوَالُكُمْ وَ اَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ عِنْدَهٗٓ اَجْرٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿15﴾ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ
مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَ اسْمَعُوْا وَ اَطِيْعُوْا وَ اَنْفِقُوْا خَيْرًا لِّاَنْفُسِكُمْ ؕ وَ مَنْ يُّوْقَ شُحَّ
نَفْسِهٖ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿16﴾ اِنْ تُقْرِضُوا اللّٰهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُّضٰعِفْهُ لَكُمْ وَ يَغْفِرْ
لَكُمْ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ شَكُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ ﴿17﴾ عٰلِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَ الشَّهَادَةِ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿18﴾

11-13 No affliction[23] can ever befall except by Allah's permission[24] Whoever believes in Allah, Allah guides his heart,[25] and Allah has knowledge of everything.[26] Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, but if you turn away from obedience (you should know that the only responsibility of Our Messenger is to convey the Truth clearly and plainly.[27] Allah is He beside Whom there is no god. Therefore, in Allah alone should the believers place their trust.[28]

14-18 O you who have believed, some among your wives and your children are your enemies: beware of them. And if you pardon and overlook and forgive, Allah is surely All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.[29] Your worldly possessions and your children are but a trial, and it is Allah with Whom there are rich rewards.[30] Therefore, fear Allah as far as you can,[31] and listen and obey and spend your wealth : this is for your own good. And those who are saved from the greed of their own hearts, are truly successful-[32] If you lend to Allah a goodly loan, He will pay you back manifold[33] and will forgive you your faults. Allah is Appreciative and Forbearing.[34] He knows the open and the hidden: He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

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22. These words by themselves make manifest the meaning of unbelief(Kufr). Unbelief is nothing but denying the verse of Allah's Book to be Divine Revelation rejecting the truths expressed therein and refusing to follow and obey the commandments given in them; its results are those being mentioned below

23. The discourse now turns to the believers. While reading this passage one should keep in mind the fact that at the time when these verses were revealed, Muslims were passing through great hardships After years of persecution at Makkah they had left their home and emigrated to Madinah, where the sincere Muslims who had given them refuge had been doubly burdened. On the one hand, they had to support and sustain hundreds of the emigrants who were coming to them from different parts of Arabia; on the other they had become the target of the persecution and enmity of the enemies of Islam of entire Arabia.

24. This same theme has also occurred in Al-Ḥadid: 22-23 above and we have explained it in E.N.'s 39 to 42 of the commentary of the Sūrah 'The same circumstances under which this thing was said there and the same object for which it was said underlie the verses here as well. This means that afflictions and hardships do not descend of themselves, nor has anyone in the world the power to cause an affliction to descend on anyone he may like by his own authority. All calamities wholly depend on Allah's leave: He may allow an affliction to descend upon someone or may disallow it. And Allah's leave in any case is based on one or other wisdom, directed to some ultimate good, which man neither knows, nor can understand.

25. That is, "It is only belief in Allah which keeps man on the right path even in the face of an onslaught of afflictions and does not let him waver under the most trying circumstances. The one whose heart is devoid of belief either looks upon afflictions as a result of mere chance, or thinks they are brought or prevented by worldly powers, or considers them to be the work of such imaginary powers which human superstition regards as potent in bringing good and causing evil, or believes that God is the real Doer of everything but does not believe so truly and sincerely. In all these different cases man degenerates. He endures the affliction, but then yields and bows to every false god, accepts, every humiliation, is ready to do any mean thing and commit any wrong act he does not hesitate to abuse God, even commit suicide. On the contrary, the heart of the person who knows and believes sincerely that everything is in the hand of Allah, that He alone in the Master and Ruler of the universe, that only by His permission can an affliction befall and only by His command can it be averted, is blessed by Allah with the grace of patience and submission and of acquiescing in Divine will, and is granted the power to face every circumstance with determination and courage. Even under

the most straitened circumstances the candle of the hope of Allah's bounty lights up his way and no affliction, however severe and trying, can so dishearten him as to cause him to swerve from the right path, or how to falsehood, or invoke others than Allah for the redress of his grievances. Thus, every affliction opens up for him a new door to well-being and happiness and no affliction remains an affliction for him in actual fact but becomes in final result and analysis a blessing in disguise, for whether he falls a victim to it, or passes through it safely, in each case he emerges successful from the trial set him by his Lord. This same thing has been stated by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in a *Hadith* which has been reported unanimously by all the reporters, saying: "Strange is the affair of the believer! Whatever Allah decrees for him is good for him: when an affliction befalls him, he endures it patiently, and this proves good for him; when he is blessed with prosperity, he thanks his Lord, and this too proves good for him. Such a good fortune only falls to the lot of a believer."

26. In this context this has two meanings: first, that Allah knows who really believes and what is the measure of his belief. So, on the basis of His knowledge He grants guidance only to that heart, which has belief in it, and grants it guidance precisely in accordance with the measure of belief. Another meaning also can be: that Allah is not unaware of the condition of His believing servants. He has not left them alone after having invited them to faith and subjected them at the same time to severe trials and temptations of the world. He knows exactly what hardships a believer is passing through in the world, and under what circumstances he is fulfilling the demands of his faith. Therefore, "O believers, you should rest assured that whatever affliction descends upon you by Allah's leave, in Allah's knowledge it must be directed to some ultimate good, which must be for your own well-being, for Allah is well-wisher of His believing servants: He does not will to subject them to afflictions and hardships without good reason."

27. In view of the context, it means: "Whatever the circumstances, good or bad, you should remain steadfast to obedience to Allah and His Messenger. But if under the pressure of hardships you turned away from obedience, you would only harm your own selves. The only responsibility of Our Messenger was to guide you to the right path, which the Messenger has fulfilled in the best way possible."

28. That is, "All Divine powers belong to Allah alone. No one else has any power to make or mar your destiny. He alone cat bring about a good time and He alone can avert a bad time. Therefore, whoever believes sincerely that Allah is One, has absolutely no other choice than to place his full trust in Him and to continue doing his duty as a believer with the conviction that goodness and well-

being only lie in the way that Allah has shown him. If he attains to success in this way, it will only he by Allah's help and leave; there is no other helper. And if he encounters difficulties, hardships, dangers and disasters in this way, Allah alone will rescue him; for there is no other rescuer beside Him."

29. This verse has two meanings. According to the first meaning, it applies to most of those difficulties, which are encountered by many believing men from their wives and the women from their husbands and the parents from their children in following the way of God. It seldom so happens in the world that a man has a wife and a wife a husband, who are full companions and helpers of each other in the matter of faith and righteousness, and that both may also have such children as may be the comfort of their eyes as regards faith and deeds, morals and conduct. But generally it so happens that if the hasband is righteous and honest, the wife and children look upon his honesty and piety and righteousness as a misfortune for themselves, and want that the husband and the father should earn Hell for their sake, and giving up the distinction between the lawful and the unlawful should provide means of luxury and enjoyment, sin and vice, for them in every passible way. On the contrary, many a time a pious believing woman happens to have a husband, Who does not at all approve her obedience to the Laws of God, and the childern too, following in the footsteps of the father, make the wife of the mother miserable by their daviation and evil deeds. Then, particularly, when during the conflict between Islam and unbelief a man's faith demands that he should suffer losses for the sake of Allah and this Religion, run risks, emigrate from the counmty, or even endanger his life by joining the war against unbelief, the greatest hindrance in his way are the people of his own household.

The second meaning relates to those special circumstances wheih most of the Muslims were facing at the time these verses were sent down, and today also they are faced by every person who embraces Islam in a non-Muslim society. At that time in Makkah and in other partsof Arabia a situation that was commonly being experienced was that a man would embrace Islam, but his wife and children would not only be disinclined to accept it hut would try their best to press him to give up Islam Arid similar were the situations encountered by the women, the alone embraced Islam in their families.

Addressing the believers who may be confronted with either situatin, three things have been impressed:

First, they have been warned as if to say: "Although from the worldly point of view, these are the dearest relations of man yet from the religious point of view, they are "your enemies." Thts enmity may he for the reason that they hinder you from good and induce you to do evil, or that they restrain you from belief and pull you towards unbelief, or that their sympathies are with the

unbelievers. and through you if they ever come to know any of the war secrets of the Muslims, they convey it to the enemies of Islam. Owing to these the nature and quality of enmity may vary, but in any case it is enmity; and if you hold your faith dearer to your heart, you should regard them as your enemies. In their love you should never forget that between you and them there stands the barrier of belief and unbelief, or of obedience and disobedience."

Then, it is said: "Beware of them." That is, "You should not ruin your eternal life for the sake of their worldly life. Let not their love so overwhelm you that they become a hindrance for you in your relationship with Allah and His Messenger and your loyalty to Islam. Do not place such reliance on them that the secrets of the Muslim community should come to their notice and through them reach your enemies only by your negligence and carelessness. This Is the Fame thing of which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has warned the Muslims in a *Ḥadīth:* "A person will be brought up on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be proclaimed: 'His wife and children ate up all his good deeds'."

In the *end,* it is said: "If you pardon and overlook and forgive, Allah is surely All-Forgiving, All-Merciful." It means: "You are being made aware of their enmity so that you may beware of them and do your best to save your faith from them, This warning does not, however, mean that you should treat your wife and children harshly, or strain your relations with them so as to make your own *and* their domestic life miserable and wretched. For if you did so, two of the disadvantages would obviously result: first, it may close down every avenue to the reformation of the wife and children for ever; second, it may give rise to suspicions and misgivings against Islam in the society and the people around may form the impression that a Muslim turns unduly rigid and ill-tempered for his own childern in his own house as soon as he has embraced Islam.

In this connection, one should also keep in mind that in the beginning when the people became Muslims, they encountered a special difficulty if their parents were unbelievers. They would press their children to give up the new Faith. They would face another difficulty when their wives and children (or in case of women, their husbands and children) persisted unbelief and would force them to abandon the Faith of Truth. About the first difficulty, instruction was given in Al-'Ankabūt; 8 and Luqmān; 14-15, saying: "Treat your parents well but if they press you to join with Me another about whom you have no knowledge, do not obey them at all." About the second difficulty the Instruction has been given here, saying: "You must try to save your faith from your children and family members hut do not treat them harshly, but rather politely and leniently." (For further explanation, see At-Taubah: 23-24; E N. 37 of Al-Mujādalah, E.N.'s 1 to 3 of Al-Mumtaḥanah; E.N. 18 of Munāfiqūn).

30. For explanation, see E.N. 23 of Sūrah Al-Anfāl. Here one should also

keep in view the Holy Prophet's saying which Ṭabarānī has related on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Abū Mālik al-Ash'arī, saying: "Your real enemy is not he whom if you kill there is success for you, and if he kills you, there is Paradise for you; but your real enemy may b your own child who is born of your own loins, or the wealth *of* which you are the owner." That is why here us well as in Al-Anfāl: 28, Allah says: If you save yourselves from the temptation and allurements of worldly possessions and children and succeed in keeping love *of* them subject to the love of Allah, there are rich rewards for you with Allah.

31. At another place in the Qur'ān it has been said: "Fear Allah as He should actually be feared." (Al-'Imrān: 102). At still another place: "Allah does not burden any one with a responsibility heavier than he can bear." (Al-Baqarah: 286) And here: "Fear Allah as far as you can." When these three verses are read together it appears that the first verse sets an ideal which every believer should try to attain. The second verse lays down the principle that no one has been required to exert himself beyond his power and ability, for in Allah's Religion one has been made responsible only for what is within one's power and ability. This verse enjoins every believer to try to attain piety and consciousness of God as far as he can. He should carry out His Commands and avoid His disobedience as best as he possibly can. For if he shows laxity in this regard, he will not be able to escape punishment. However, one will not be held accountable for what was beyond one's power (and Allah alone can decide best what was really beyond a person's power and ability).

32. For explanation, see E.N. 19 of Al-Ḥashr.

33. For explanation, see E.N. 267 of Al-Baqarah, E.N. 33 of Al-Mā'idah, E.N. 16 of Al-Ḥadīd.

34. For explanation, see E.N.'s 52, 59 of Fāṭir; E.N.42 of Ash-Shūrā.



LXV

AṬ-ṬALĀQ

الطَّلَاق

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

LXV

AṬ-ṬALĀQ

الطَّلَاق

INTRODUCTION

Name

Aṭ-Ṭalāq is not only the name of this Sūrah but also the title of its subject-matter, for it contains commandments about *Ṭalāq* (divorce) itself. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd has described it as Sūrah an-Nisā' al-quṣrā also, i.e. the shorter Sūrah an- Nisā'.

Period of Revelation

Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd has pointed out, and the internal evidence of the subject-matter of the Sūrah confirms the same, that it must have been sent down after those verses of Sūrah Al-Baqarah in which commandments concerning divorce were given for the first time. Although it is difficult to determine precisely what is its exact date of revelation, yet the traditions in any case indicate that when the people

started making errors in understanding the commandments of Sūrah Al-Baqarah, and practically also they began to commit mistakes. Allah sent down these instructions for their correction.

Theme and Subject Matter

In order to understand the commandments of this Sūrah, it would be useful to refresh one's memory about the instructions which have been given in the Qur'ān' concerning divorce and the waiting-period (*'iddat)* above.

"Divorce may be pronounced twice; then the wife may either be kept back in fairness or allowed to separate in fairness." (Al-Baqarah: 229)

"And the divorced women (after the pronouncement of the divorce) must wait for three monthly courses ... and their husbands are fully entitled to take them back (as their wives) during this waiting-periodd, if they desire reconciliation." (Al-Baqarah, 228)

"Then, if the husband divorces his wife (for the third time), she shall not remain lawful for him after this divorce, unless she marries another husband . .." (Al-Baqarah: 230)

"When you marry the believing women, and then divorce them before you have touched them, they do not have to fulfil a waiting-period, the completion of which you may demand of them." (Al-Aḥzāb: 49)

"And if those of you who die, leave wives behind, the women should abstain (from marriage) for four months and ten days." (Al-Baqarah: *234)*

The rules prescribed in these verses were as follows:

(1) A man can pronounce at the most three divorces on his wife.

(2) In case the husband has pronounced one or two divorces, he is entitled to keep the woman back as wife within the wiating-period and if after the expiry of the waiting-period the two desire to re-marry, they can remarry; there is no condition of legalisation *(taḥlīl).* But if the husband has pronounced three divorces, he forfeits his right to keep her as his wife within the

waiting-period, and they cannot remarry unless the woman remarries another husband and he subsequently divorces her of his own free will.

(3) The waiting-period of the woman, who menstruates and marriage with whom has been consummated, is that she should pass three monthly courses. The waiting-period in case of one or two divorces is that the woman is still the legal wife of the husband and he can keep her back as his wife within the waiting-period. But if the husband has pronounced three divorces, this waiting-period cannot be taken advantage of for the purpose of reconciliation, but it is only meant to restrain the woman from re-marrying another person before it comes to an end.

(4) There is no waiting-period for the woman, marriage with whom has not been consummated, and who is divorced even before she is touched. She can re-marry, if she likes, immediately after the divorce.

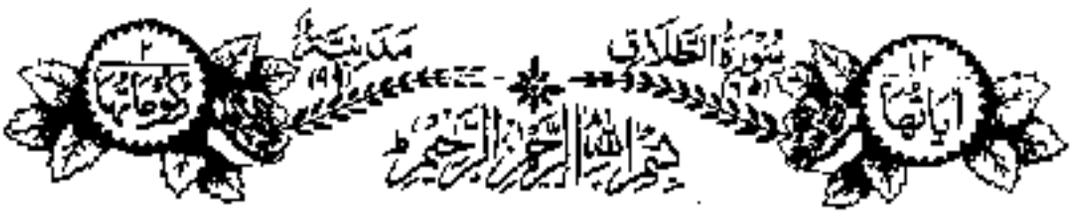
(5) The waiting-period of the woman whose husband dies, is four months and ten days.

Here, one should understand well that Sūrah At-Ṭalāq was not sent down to annul any of these rules or amend it? but it was sent down for two purposes:

First, that the man who has been given the right to pronounce divorce should be taught such judicious methods of using this right as do not lead to separation, as far as possible; however, if separation does take place, it should only the in case all possibilities of mutual reconciliation have been exhausted. For in the Divine Law provision for divorce has been made only as an unavoidable necessity; otherwise Allah does not approve that the marriage relationship that has been established between a man and a woman should ever break. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) has said, "Allah has not made lawful anything more hateful in His sight than divorce." (Abū Da'ūd). And: "Of all the things permitted by the Law, the most hateful in the sight of Allah is the divorce." (Abu Da'ūd).

The second object was to complement this section of the family law of Islam by supplying answers to the questions that had remained

after the revelation of the commandments in Sūrah Al-Baqarah. So, answers have been supplied to the following questions: What would be the waiting-period of the women, marriage with whom has been consummated and who no longer menstruate, or those who have not yet menstruated, in case they are divorced? What would be the waiting-period of the woman, who is pregnant, or the woman whose husband dies, if she is divorced? And what arrangements would be made for the maintenance and lodging of the different categories of divorced women, and for the fosterage of the child whose parents have separated on account of a divorce?



يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَآءَ فَطَلِّقُوْهُنَّ لِعِدَّتِهِنَّ وَاَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا
اللّٰهَ رَبَّكُمْ ۚ لَا تُخْرِجُوْهُنَّ مِنْۢ بُيُوْتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّاْتِيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ
مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَتِلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّتَعَدَّ حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهٗ ۚ لَا
تَدْرِيْ لَعَلَّ اللّٰهَ يُحْدِثُ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ اَمْرًا ۝١ فَاِذَا بَلَغْنَ اَجَلَهُنَّ فَاَمْسِكُوْهُنَّ
بِمَعْرُوْفٍ اَوْ فَارِقُوْهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوْفٍ وَّاَشْهِدُوْا ذَوَيْ عَدْلٍ مِّنْكُمْ وَاَقِيْمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ
لِلّٰهِ ۚ ذٰلِكُمْ يُوْعَظُ بِهٖ مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّتَّقِ اللّٰهَ يَجْعَلْ
لَّهٗ مَخْرَجًا ۝٢ وَّيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ فَهُوَ
حَسْبُهٗ ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بَالِغُ اَمْرِهٖ ۚ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا ۝٣ وَالّٰٓـِٔيْ يَئِسْنَ

LXV

AṬ-ṬALĀQ

الطلاق

Verses: 12 *Revealed at Madinah*

In the name Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

O Prophet, when you (and the believers) divorce women, divoce them for their prescribed waiting-periods,[1] and count the waiting-period accurately,[2] and fear Allah, you Lord. And do not turn them out of their houses (during the waiting-period), not should they themselves leave them,[3] except in case they commit an open indecency.[4] These are the bounds prescribed by Allah and whoever transgresses Allah's bounds will wrong his own self. You do not know: Allah may after this bring about a situation (of reconciliation).[5] Then when they have reached the end of their (waiting) periods either retain them (in wedlock) in a fair manner or part with them in a fair manner,[6] and call to witness two just men from among yourselves,[7] and (O witnesses) 1-2

bear witness equitably for the sake of Allah.

23 With this you are admonished, (and) whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day.[8] Whosoever fears Allah in whatever he does, Allah will open for him away out of the difficulties[9] and will provide for him from whence he could little imagine.[10] And whoever trusts in Allah, He is enough for him. Allah brings His decrees to fulfilment.[11] Allah has appointed a destiny for everything.

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1. That is, "O believers, you should not make undue haste in the Matter of pronouncing divorce: your minor family quarrels should not so incite you that you should pronounce the final divorce in a fit of anger and there teremains no chance for reconciliation. However When you have to divorce your wives, you should divorce them for their prescribed waiting-period." Pronouncing divorce for the waiting period has two meanings and both are implied here:

First, that "you should divorce them at a them when their waiting-period can begin." This thing has already been prescribed in Al Baqarah: 228 above. The waiting-period of the married woman who menstruates is three monthly courses after the pronouncement of divorce. If this commandment is kept in view the only appropriate time of pronouncing divorce 50 that the waiting period may duly begin is when she is not in her courses, for he waiting-period cannot begin from the course during which she ma have been divorced, and divorcing her in that state would mean that, contrary to the Divine Command, her waiting-period should extend to four courses instead of three courses. Furthermore, this commandment also demands that the woman should not he divorced in the period-of purity during which the husband may have had sexual intercourse with her. For in this case, at the time divorce is pronounced neither the husband nor the wife can know whether he has conceived in consequence of the intercourse or not. Because of this neither the waiting-period can begin on the hypothesis that this would be reckoned in view of the succeeding monthly courses, nor on the hypothesis that this would be the waiting-period of a pregnant woman. So, this commandment lays down two rules simultaneously: first, that divorce should not be poonounced during menstruation; second, that divorce may be pronounced either in the period of purity during which there was no sexual intercourse with the woman, or in the state when the woman's being pregnant was known. A little consideration of the matter will show that the restrictions imposed on the pronouncement of divorce are for good reasons. The reason for imposing the restriction on the pronounce ment of divorce during menstruation is that in this state the husband and the wife are somewhat estranged from each other because of the prohibition of sexual intercourse in this state; and from the medical viewpoint also it is confirmed that the woman is not temperamentally normal during the courses. Therefoe, if a quarrel starts between

them in this state, both the husband and the wife would be helpless to an extent to put an end to it, and if the matter is deferred till the woman is free from her courses, there is the possibility that the woman also may return to her normal temperamental state and the mutual attraction that nature has placed between them also may work and reunite them. Likewise, the reason for prohibiting the pronouncement of divorce during the purity period in which sexual intercourse may have taken place, is that if in consequence of it conception takes place, it can neither be known to the husband nor to the wife. Therefore, it cannot be a suitable time for pronouncing the divorce. If the man comes to know that conception has taken place, he would think a hundred times before deciding finally whether he should pronounce divorce or not on the woman who carries his child in her womb. The woman also in view of the future of her child would try her best to remove the causes of her husband's displeasure. But if a decision is taken blindly, in undue haste, and then it is known that conception had taken place, both will regret it later.

This is the first meaning "divorcing for the prescribed waiting-period", which applies only to those women marriage with whom has been consummated, who menstruate and may possibly conceive. As for its second meaning it is this: "If you have to divorce your wives, you should divorce them till the expiry of their waiting-period". That is "Do not pronounce three divorces all at once leading to permanent separation, but pronounce one, or at the most two divorces, and wait till the end of the waiting-period, so that there remains some chance for reconciliation for you at any time during this period." According to this meaning, this commandment is also useful in respect of those woman marriage with whom has been consummated and who menstruate as well as of those who no longer menstruate, or those who have not yet menstruated, or those whose pregnancy at the time of the pronouncement of divorce is known. If this Divine Command is rightly followed, no one will regret after having pronounced divorce, for if divorce is pronounced in this way, there remains room for reconciliation within the waiting period, and even after the expiry of the waiting-period the possibility remains that the separated husband and wife may remarry if they wish reconciliation.

This same meaning of *ṭalliqū-hunna li-'iddat-i hinna* ("divorce them for their prescribed waiting-period") has been given by the earliest commentators. Ibn 'Abbās has given this commentary of it: "One should not pronounce divore during menstruation, nor in the period of purity *(ṭuhr)* during which the husband may have had sexual intercourse, but one should leave the wife alone till she attains purity after the course; then one may pronounce a single divorce on her. In this case even if there is no reconciliation and the waiting-period expires, she would be separated by the single divorce." (Ibn Jarīr) Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd says:

"Divorce for the waiting period means that one should pronounce the divorce in the woman's state of purity without having had an intercourse with her." The same commentary has been reported from Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, 'Atā', Mujahid, Maimun bin Mahrān, Muqātil bin Ḥayyān, and Ḍaḥḥāk (may Allah bless them all) (Ibn Kathīr). 'Ikrimah has explained it thus: "One may pronounce the divorce in the state when the woman's being pregnant is known, and not when one has had sexual intercourse with her and it is not known whether she has conceived or not." (Ibn Kathīr) Both Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣrī and Ibn Sīrīn say: "Divorce should be pronounced during the state of purity without having had sexual intercourse, or when the woman's being pregnant becomes known." (Ibn Jarīr)

The intention of this verse was best explained by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself on the occasion when Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar had divorced his wife while she was discharging the menses .. The, details of this incident have been reported in almost all collections of *Ḥadīth* and the same, in fact, are the source of the law in this connection. It so happened that when Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah divorced his wife while she was menstruating, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar came before the Holy Prophet and mentioned it to him. The Holy Prophet expressed great displeasure and said: "Command him to take her back and keep her as his wife till she is purified, then she again menstruates and is again purified; then if he so desires he may divorce her in her state of purity without having any sexual intercourse with her. This is the waiting-period which Allah Almighty has prescribed for the divorce of women." In a tradition the words are to the effect: "Either one may pronounce the divorce in the woman's state of purity without having a sexual intercourse, or in the state when her being pregnant becomes fully known."

The intention of this verse is further explained by a few other *Aḥadīth* which have been reported from the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and some of the major Companions. Nasā'ī has related that the Holy Prophet was informed that a person had pronounced three divorces on his wife in one sitting. He stood up in anger and said: "Are the people playing with the Book of Allah, although I am present among you?" Seeing the Holy Prophet's extreme anger on this occasion, a person asked: "Should I not go and kill the man?" 'Abdur Razzāq has reported about Ḥaḍrat 'Ubādah bin aṣ-Ṣāmit that his father pronounced one thousand divorces on his wife. He went before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and asked his ruling on it. The Holy Prophet said: "By the three divorces the woman stood separated from him along with Allah's disobedience, and 997 pronouncements remained as acts of injustice and sin, for which Allah might punish him if He so willed and forgive him if He so willed." In the details of the incident concerning Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, which have been related in Dāraqutnī and Ibn Abī Shaibah, another thing also is that when the Holy Prophet

commanded Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar to take his wife back, he asked: Had I pronounced three divorces on her, could I have taken her back even then? The Holy Prophet replied: No, she would have stood separated from you, and this would have been an act of sin." In another tradition the Holy Prophet's words are to the effect: "Had you done this, you would have committed disobedience of your Lord while your wife would have been separated from you."

The legal rulings reported from the Companions in this regard are also in complete conformity with the Holy Prophet's injunctions. According to a tradition in Mu'waṭṭā, a person came to Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud and said: "I have pronounced eight divorces on my wife. Ibn Mas'ūd asked: What legal opinion have you been given in this regard? He said: I have been told that the woman stands separated from me. Ibn Mas'ūd said: The people have said the right thing: the legal position is the same as they have told you." 'Abdur Razzāq has related from 'Alqamah that a person said to Ibn Mus'ūd: "I have pronounced 99 divorces on my cife. He said: Three divorces separate her from you; the rest are (acts of sin) excesses." Wakī' bin al-Jarrāḥ in his *sunan* has reported this very viewpoint of both Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān and Ḥaḍrat 'Ali. A person came to Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān and said: "I have pronounced a thousand divorces on my wife-". He replied: "She stood separated from you by three divorces." When a similar problem was presented before Ḥaḍrat 'Ali he replied; "By three divorces she stood separated from you. You may distribute the rest of your pronouncements on the rest of your wives if you so like." Abū Da'ūd and Ibn Jarīr have related, with a little variation in wording, a tradition from Mujāhid, saying: "While I was sitting with Ibn Abbās, a person came and said: 'I have pronounced three divorces on my wife.' Ibn 'Abbās heard it but kept silent for so long that I thought he was perhaps going to return his wife to him. Then he said: 'One of you first commits the folly of pronouncing the divorces; then he comes and says: O Ibn 'Abbās, O Ibn 'Abbās! whereas Allah has said that whoever fears Him in whatever he does, He will open a way for him out of the difficulties. You did not fear Allah; now I do not find any way for you: you have disobeyed your Lord, and your wife stands separated from you." Another tradition, which also has been reported from Mujāhid, and related with a little variation in wording in *mu'waṭṭā* and *Tafsīr* by Ibn Jarīr, says: "A person pronounced a hundred divorces on his wife; then he asked Ibn 'Abbās for his opinion. He replied: 'By three divorces she stood separated from you. With the other 97 you made a Jest of the Revelations of Allah!" This is according to Mu'waṭṭā. According to Ibn Jarīr the words of Ibn 'Abbās were to the effect: "You disobeyed your Lord, and your wife stood separated from you, and you did not fear Allah that He might open a way for you out of the difficulty." Imām Ṭaḥāvī has related that a man came to Ibn 'Abbās and said: "My uncle has pronounced three divorces on his wife. He replied: Your uncle has disobeyed

Allah and committed a sin and followed Satan. Now, Allah has left no way open for him out of the difficulty." According to a tradition in Mu'waṭṭa and Abū Da'ud, a man pronounced three divorces on his wife before the consummation of marriage; then desired to remarry her, and came out to know the legal aspect of the matter. The reporter of the *Ḥadīth*, Muḥammad bin Iyās bin Bukair, says: "I accompanied him to Ibn 'Abbās and Abū Hurairah. The reply each one gave was: 'You have let slip from your hand whatever opportunity was there for you'." Zamakhsharī has stated in *al-Kashshaf* that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar used to beat the man who would pronounce three divorces on his wife (at one and the same time) and then would enforce his divorces. Sa'īd bin Manṣūr has related this very thing from Ḥaḍrat Anas on sound authority. In this connection, the general opinion of the Companions, which Ibn Abī Shaibah and Imām Muḥammad have related from Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī (may Allah bless them) was: "The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) approved of this method that one may pronounce a single divorve on the wife and leave her alone till she completes three monthly courses." These are the words of Ibn Abī Shaibah. The words of Imām Muḥammad are to the effect: "The approved method with them was that in the matter of divorce one should not exceed one divorce till the waiting-period is completed."

The detailed *law* that the jurists of Islam have compiled with the help of these *Aḥadīth* and traditions in the light of the abovementioned Qur'ānic verse, is as follows:

(1) The *Ḥanafīs* regard divorce as of three kinds: *Aḥsan, ḥasan,* and *bid'ī*. The *aḥsan* form of divorce is that one may pronounce only one divorce on one's wife during a *ṭuhr* (purity) period in which one must refrain from sexual intercourse and leave the wife to complete her waiting-period. The *ḥasan* form of divorce is that one may pronounce one divorce in each period of purity: in this case pronouncement of three divorces, one each in three periods of purity, is also not against the Sharī'ah, although the best approved method is to pronounce only one divorce and leave the wife to complete her waiting-period. The *bid'ī* form of divorce is that one must pronounce three divorces in a single sitting, or pronounce three divorces at different times during the same period of purity, or pronounce divorce during menstruation, or pronounce it in the period of purity during which one has had a sexual inintercourse. Of these whichever course one may adopt one will be guilty a sin, This is the law in respect of the woman Marriage with whom has been consummated and who has regular courses. As for the woman marriage with whom has not been consummated, she can be divorced both in the state of purity and during menstruation, and this is according to the *Sunnah*. And if the woman is such a one marriage with whom has been consummated, who no longer menstruates, or the one who has not yet menstruated, she can be divorced even after the

sexual intercourse, for there is no chance of her being pregnant. And if the woman is pregnant, she also can be divorced after the sexual intercourse, for her pregnancy is already established. But the method of pronouncing divorce on these women according to the *Sunnah*, is that the divorce may be pronounced at the interval of one month in each case. However, the *aḥsan* method is that only one divorce may be pronounced and the woman left to complete her waiting-period. *(Hedāyah, fath al-Qadir, Aḥkam al-Qur'ān* (Al-Jaṣṣāṣ), *'Umdat al-Qarī).*

According to Imām Mālik also divorce is of three kinds , *Sunnī, bid'ī makrūh* and *bid'ī ḥarām*. The divorce according to the *Sunnah* is that a single divorce be pronounced on the woman marriage with whom has been consummate(l and who menstruates, during her state of purity without having had sexual intercourse, and the woman be left to complete her waiting-period. The *bid'ī makrūh* form is that divorce be pronounced in the period of purity during which one may have had sexual intercourse, or more divorces than one be pronounced in the period of purity while there was no sexual intercourse, or three divorces be pronounced, one each in separate periods of purity within the waiting-period, or three divorces be pronounced all at once. And *bid'ī ḥarām* is that divorce be pronounced during menstruation. *(Ḥāshiyah ad-Dusūqī 'alal-Sharḥ-al-Kabīr; Ibn al-'Arabī, Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).*

The authentic viewpoint of Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal which is generally agreed upon by the Ḥanbalīs is: The approved method (i.e. the one according to the *Sunnah)* of divorcing a wife marriage with whom has been consummated and who menstruates, is that a single divorce be pronounced on her in her period of purity without having had sexual intercourse with her, and then she be left to complete her waiting-period. But if she is giver three divorces, one each in three separate periods of purity or three divorces in one and the same period of purity, or divorced thrice at once, or divorced during the courses, or divorced in the period of purity during which the husband has had sexual intercourse and her being pregnant is not known, all these would be disapproved and forbidden forms of divorce. But if the woman is such that marriage with her has been consummated but who no longer menstruates, or such who has not yet menstruated, or is pregnant, in her case there is neither any difference of approved and disapproved with regard to time nor with regard to the number of divorces pronounced. (Al-Inṣāf fī Ma'rifat-ar-Rājiḥ min al-Khilāf 'alā Madhhab Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal).

According to Imām Shāfe'ī, in the matter of divorce the difference between the approved (i.e. according to the *Sunnah*) and the reprehensible (i.e. against the *Sunnah)* forms of divorce is only with regard to time and not with regard to number. That is, to pronounce divorce on a woman marriage with whom

has been consummated and who menstruates, during menstruation or to pronounce divorce on a woman, who can conceive, during such a period of purity in which the husband has had sexual intercourse with her and the woman's pregnancy is unknown, is disapproved and forbidden. As for the number, whether three divorces are pronounced at one time, or pronounced in the same period of purity, or pronounced in separate periods of purity, they are not against the *Sunnah* in any case. In case the woman is such that marriage with her has not been consummated, or the one who no longer menstruates, or the one who has not yet menstruated, or the one whose being pregnant is known, there is no difference between the approved and the disapproved forms of divorce. *(Mughnī al-Muhtāj)*

(2) A divorce's being irregular, reprehensible, forbidden, or sinful with the four Imāms does not mean that it does not have effect. According to all the four Sunnī Schools, whether a divorce is pronounced during menstruation, or thrice at once, or pronounced in the period of purity during which the husband has had sexual intercourse and the woman's being pregnant is unknown, or pronounced in a manner disapproved by an Imām, in any case it does become effective, although the pronounce commits an act of sin. But some other scholars differ in this regard from the four Imāms.

Sa'īd bin al-Musayyab and some other immediate followers of the Companions say that the divorce of the person who pronounces it during menstruation, or pronounces it thrice at one time, does not take place at all. The same is the opinion of the Imāmiah sect of the Shī'as. The basis of this opinion is that since this form of divorce is forbidden and utterly irregular, it is ineffective, whereas the *Aḥadīth* that we have cited above, clearly show that when Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar divorced his wife during menstruation, the Holy Prophet commanded him to take her back; had the divorce not taken effect at all, the command to take the wife back would have been meaningless. And this also is confirmed by many *Aḥadīth* that the Holy Prophet and the major Companions considered the pronounce of more divorces than one at one time sinful but did not regard his divorce as ineffective.

Ṭā'ūs and 'Ikrimah say that only one divorce takes place if divorce is pronounced thrice at once, and this very view has been adopted by Imām Ibn Taimiyyah. The source of his this opinion is that Abū aṣ-Ṣahbā' asked Ibn 'Abbās: "Don't you know that in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and Ḥadrat Abū Bakr and in the early period of Ḥadrat 'Umar a triple divorce was considered a single divorce? He replied: Yes." (Bukhārī, Muslim). And in Muslim, Abū Da'ūd and Musnad Aḥmad, Ibn Abbās's this statement has been cited: "In the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and Ḥadrat Abū Bakr and during the first two years of the caliphate of Ḥadrat 'Umar a triple

divorce was considered a single divorce. Then Hadrat 'Umar expressed the view: As the people have started acting hastily in a matter in which they had been advised to act judiciously and prudently, why should we not enforce this practice? So, he enforced it."

But this view is not acceptable for several reasons. In the first place, according to several traditions Ibn 'Abbās's own ruling was against it, as we have explained above. Secondly, it is contrary to those *Aḥadīth* also, which have been reported from the Holy Prophet upon whom be peace) and the major Companions, in which the ruling given about the pronounce of a threefold divorce at one time is that all his three dovorces become effective. These *Ahadīth* also have been cited above. Thirdly, from Ibn 'Abbās's own tradition itself it becomes evident that Ḥadrat 'Umar had publicly enforced the triple divorce in the assembly of the Companions, but neither then nor after it the Companions ever expressed any difference of opinion. Now, can it be conceived that Hadrat 'Umar could decide an issue against the *Sunnah?* And could the Companions also accept his decision without protest? Furthermore, in the story concerning Rukānah bin 'Abd-i Yazīb, a tradition has been related by Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah, Imām Shāfe'ī, Dārimī and Ḥākim, saying that when Rukānah pronounced three divorces on his wife in one and the same sitting, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) asked him to state on oath whether his intention was to pronounce one divorce only, (That is, the two subsequent divorces were pronounced only to lay emphasis on the first divorce; the triple divorce was not intended to create separation permanently). And when he stated this on oath, the Holy Prophet gave him the right to take his wife back. 'This brings out the truth of the matter as to what kind of divorces were considered a single divorce in the earliest period of Islam. On this very basis, the interpreters of the *Hadīth* have explained the tradition of Ibn 'Abbās thus: As in the early period of Islam deceit and fraud in religious matters was almost unknown among the people, the statement of the pronouncer of a triple divorce was admitted that his real intention was to pronounce only a single divorce, and the two subsequent divorces had been pronounced only for the sake of emphasis. But when Ḥadrat 'Umar saw that the people first pronounced three divorces in haste and then presented the excuse of pronouncing them only for the sake of emphasis, he refused to accept this excuse. Imām Nawawī and Imām Subkī regard this as the best interpretation of the tradition from Ibn 'Abbās, Finally, there is disagreement in the traditions of Abū as-Sahbā' himself, which he has related concerning the saying of Ibn 'Abbās. Muslim, Abū Da'ūd and Nasā'ī have related from this same Abu as-Sahbā' another tradition, saying that on an enquiry by him, Ibn 'Abbās said: ' When a person pronounced a threefold divorce on his wife before consummation of marriage, it was considered a single divorce in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and Ḥadrat Abū Bakr

and in the early period of Hadrat 'Umar." Thus, one and the same reporter has reported from Ibn 'Abbās traditions containing two divergent themes and this diversity weakens both the traditions.

(3) As the Holy Prophet had commanded the pronouncer of the divorce during menstruation to take his wife back, the dispute has arisen among the jurists as to what is the exact sense of this command Imāmu Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām Shāfe'ī, Imām Aḥmad, Imām Auzā'ī, Ibn Abī Laila, Isḥāq bin Rāhawaih and Abū Thaur say that such a peson would be commanded to take his wife back, but would not be compelled to do so. (*'Umdat* al-Qārī). The Ḥanafī viewpoint as stated in *Hedāyah* is that in this case taking the wife back is not only preferable but also obligatory. In *Mughnī al-Muhtāj'* the Shāfe'ī viewpoint has been stated to be that the approved (i.e. One according to *Sunnah)* method for the one who has pronounced divorces during menstruation, but has not pronounced a triple divorce, is that he should take his wife back, and should refrain from pronouncing divorce in the following period of purity, but should pronounce it, if he so likes, in the period of purity when the wife has become free from her next menstrual course and attained purity, so that his revocation of the divorce pronounced during menstruation is not taken in jest. The Ḥanbalī viewpoint as presented in *Al-Insāf* is that in this state it is preferable for the pronounce of divorce to take his wife back. But Imām Mālik and his companions say that pronouncement of divorce during menstruation is a cognizable offence. Whether the woman makes a demand or not, it is in any case the duty of the ruler that if such an act of some one is brought to his notice, he must compel the person to take his wife back and should continue to press him till the end of the waiting-period; and if he refuses to take her back, he should imprison him; if he still refuses, he should beat him; and if he still does not accede, the ruler should give his own decision, saying: "I return your wife to you." And the ruler's this decision would be effective after which it would be lawful for the man to have sexual intercourse with the woman, whether he intends to take her back or not, for the ruler's intention represents his intention. *(Ḥāshīyah ad-Dusūqī).* The Mālikīs also say that if the person, who has taken his wife back willingly or unwillingly, after divorcing her during menstruation, has made up his mind to repudiate her, the preferable method for him is that he should refrain from divorcing her in the period of purity following the menstruation during which he divorced her, but should divorce her in the period of purity following the next menstruation. The prohibition to pronounce divorce in the period of purity following the menstruation in which divorce was pronounced, has been enjoined so that the return of the pronouncer during menstruation does not remain merely oral, but he should have sexual intercourse with the woman during the

period of purity. Then, since the pronouncement of divorce in the period of purity in which sexual intercourse has taken place is prohibited, the right time for pronouncing it is the following period of purity only. *(Ḥāshiyah ad-Dusūqī).*

(4) As to the question: Till when has the pronouncer of one revocable divorce the power to take his wife back? difference of opinion has arisen among the jurists, and this difference has occurred on the question: What do the words *thalāthata qurū'-in* or Al-Baqarah: 228 imply: three menstruation or three periods of purity? According to Imām Shāfe'ī and Mālik, *qurū'* implies a period of purity, and this view is held on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, Ibn 'Umar and Zaid bin Thābit (may Allah be pleased with them). The Ḥanafī viewpoint is that *qurū'* implies menstruation and the same is the authentic viewpoint of Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal too. This view is based on the authority of all the four rightly-guided Caliphs, Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās, Ubayy bin Ka'b, Mu'ādh bin Jabal, Abū ad-Dardā', 'Ubādah bin aṣ-Ṣāmit and Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (may Allah be pleased with them). Imām Muḥammad in his Mu'waṭṭā has cited a saying of Sha'bī, saying that he met thirteen of the Holy Prophet's Companions and they all held this same opinion, and this very view was adopted by many of the immediate followers of the Companions also.

On account of this difference of opinion, according to the Shāfe'īs and the Mālikis, the waiting-period of the woman comes to an end as soon as she enters the third menstruation, and the man's power to take her back is terminated. And if the divorce has been pronounced during menstruation, this menstruation will not be counted towards the waiting-period but the waiting-period will come to an end as soon as the woman enters the fourth menstruation. *(Mughnī al-Muḥtāj; Ḥāshiyah ad-Dusūqī).* The Ḥanafī viewpoint is that if the menstrual discharge in the third menstruation stops after ten days, the waiting-period of the woman will come to an end with it whether she takes purification bath or not; and if the discharge ceases within less than ten days, the waiting-period will not come to an end until the woman has taken her purification bath, or until a Prayer time has passed. In case water is not available, according to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and Imām Abū Yūsuf, the man's right to return to her will be terminated, when she has performed her Prayer with *tayammum* (purification with dust), and, according to Imām Muḥammad, as soon as she has performed *tayammum* itself. *(Hedāyah).* Imām Aḥmad's authentic viewpoint which is held by the majority of the Ḥanbalīs is that as long as the woman does not have her purification bath after the third menstruation, the man's right to return to her will remain. *(Al-Inṣāf).*

(5) As for the question that is the method of taking the wife back? the jurists are agreed that the person, who has pronounced a revocable divorce on

his wife, can return to her whenever he likes before the expiration of the waiting-period, whether the woman is desirous of this or not, for the Qur'ān says: "Their husbands are best entitled to take them back as their wives during this waiting-period." (Al-Baqarah: 228). From this it can automatically be concluded that until the expiry of the waiting-period, the marriage tie remains intact and the husbands can take them back before they are separated absolutely and finally. In other words, taking the wife back does not mean renewal of marriage for which the woman's consent may be necessary. After being unanimous so far, the jurists about different opinions about the method of taking the wife back.

According to the Shāfe'īs, return can take place only by the oral word, not by conduct. If the husband does not say with the tongue that he has taken the wife back, no act of intercourse or intimacy even if performed with the intention of resuming marital relationship, will be considered resumption of the relationship. Rather in this case seeking of every kind of enjoyment from the woman is unlawful even if it is without lust. But there is no bar on having sexual intercourse with the woman, who has been divorced revocably, for the scholars are not agreed on its being unlawful. However, the one who believes in its being unlawful will be punishable. Furthermore, according to the Shāfe'ī viewpoint, it is in any case incumbent to pay a proper or customary dower *(mahr Mithal)* in case the husband has intercourse with the wife whom he had divorced revocable, whether after it he takes her back orally or not. *(Mughnī al Muḥtāj).*

The Mālikis say that return can be effected both orally and by conduct. If for the purpose of resumption by word of mouth the husband uses express words, the resumption will take place whether he intended it or not; even if he uttered express words of resumption in jest, these words would amount to return and resumption. But if the words are not express, they would be considered resumption of relationship only in case they were pronounced with the intention of resumption. As for resumption by conduct, no act whether it is an act of intimacy or sexual intercourse, can be considered resumption as long as it has not been performed with the intention of the resumption of marital relation. *(Ḥāshiyah ad-Dusūqī;* Ibn 'Arabi, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān).*

As for resumption of relationship by the word of mouth, the Hanafī and the Ḥanbali viewpoint is the same as the Mālikī. As for resumption by conduct, the ruling of both the Schools, contrary to the Mālikīs, is that if the husband performs sexual intercourse with the woman whom he has divorced revocable within the waiting-period, it would by itself amount to resumption whether there was the intention of resumption or not. However, the difference between the viewpoints of the two Schools is that according to the Ḥanafīs every act of intimacy amounts to resumption even if it is of a lesser degree than sexual

intercourse; whereas the Ḥanbalīs do not regard a mere act of intimacy as resumption of marital relationship. *(Hedāyah, Fatḥ al-Qadīr, 'Umdat al-Qārī, Al-Inṣāf).*

(6) As for the consequences of *ṭalāq as-Sunnah* (regular form of divorce according to the *Sunnah)* and *ṭalāq al-bid'i* (irregular form of divorce) the difference is this: In case one or two divorces have been pronounced, the divorced woman and her former husband can re-marry by mutual consent even if the waiting-period has expired. But if a man has pronounced three divorces, resumption of marital relation is neither possible within the waiting-period, nor after the expiry of the waiting period, unless, however, the woman marries another person, the marriage is duly contracted and consummated, and then either the second husband divorces her or dies; then if the woman and her former husband wish to re-marry by mutual consent, they can do so. In most collections of the *Aḥadīth* a tradition has been reported on sound authority, saying that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) was asked: "A man pronounced three divorces on his wife, then the woman married another man and the two had privacy but there was no intercourse; then he divorced her. Now, can this woman re-marry her former husband? The Holy Prophet replied: "No, unless her second husband has enjoyed her just as her first husband had enjoyed her." As for the pre-arranged marriage *(taḥlīl)* which is meant to legalise the woman for her former husband, so that she would marry another man, who would divorce her after having had sexual intercourse with her, this is invalid according to Imām Abū Yūsuf, and according to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, the woman would become lawful for her former husband by this ceremony, but such a thing is reprehensible to the extent of being unlawful. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd has reported that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) said: "Allah has cursed both the legaliser *(MuḥalliI)* and the one for whom legalisation is performed *(muḥalliI lahū)."* (Tirmidhī, Nasā'ī) Ḥaḍrat 'Uqbah bin 'Āmir says that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) asked his Companions: "Should I not tell you as to who is a hired bull?" The Companions said that he should. He said: "It is he who performs *tahlil* (legalisation of marriage). Allah's curse falls both on the *muḥalliI* (legaliser) and on the *muhallal lahū (*the one for whose sake marriage is legalised)." (Ibn Mājah, Dāraquṭnī).

2. This Command is addressed to the men as well as the women and the people of their families. It means: "Do not treat divorce lightly; it is a grave matter, which gives birth to many legal questions for the man, the woman, their children and the people of their house Therefore, when divorce is pronounced, its time and date should be remembered and also the state in which divorce was

pronounced on the woman; one should keep an accurate account of when the waiting-period started, and when it would expire. On this reckoning will depend the determination of the following questions: Till when has the husband the power to take the wife back? Till when has he to keep her in the house? Till when is he bound to maintain her? Till when will he inherit the woman ant the woman him? When will the woman be separated from him finally and obtain the right to re-marry? And if this matter takes the shape of a law-suit, the court also in order to arrive at the correct decision, will need to know the correct date and time of pronouncing the divorce and the woman's state at the time, for without this information, it cannot give the right decision on the questions arising from the divorce in respect of the women who have been enjoyed, or not, pregnant, or not, who menstruate, or no longer menstruate, and who have been divorced revocably or irrevocably.

3. That is, " Neither should the man turn out the woman *in* anger, nor the woman herself should leave the house in anger and haste. The house is hers during the waiting-period, and both the man and the wife should live together so that advantage may be taken if there is any chance of reconciliation. If the divorce is revocable, the husband may at any time be inclined towards the wife, and the wife also may try to win the husband's pleasure by removing the causes of dispute and difference. If both stay together in the same house, there may appear many an occasion for reconciliation during the three months,, or the three menstrual periods, or till child-birth in case of pregnancy. But if the man turns her out in angry haste, or the woman returns to her parents imprudently, chances of reconcilment diminish, and the divorce generally leads to permanent separation. That is why the jurists have even suggested that in case of a revocable divorce the woman should during her waiting-period adorn herself so as to attract the husband. *(Hedāyah; Al-Insāf).*

The jurists are agreed that the revocably divorced woman has a right to lodging and maintenance during the waiting-period, and it is not lawful for the woman to leave the house without the husband's permission, nor is it lawful for the husband to turn her out of the house. If the husband turns her out he will be guilty of an act of sin and if the woman leaves of her own accord, she will not only commit a sin but will also forfeit her right to lodging and maintenance.

4. Several meanings of this have been given by different jurists. Ḥadrat Ḥasan Baṣrī, 'Āmir Sha'bī, Zaid bin Aslam, Dahhāk, Mujāhid, 'Ikrimah, Ibn Zaid, Ḥammād and Laith say that it implies adultery. Ibn 'Abbās says that it implies abusive language that the woman may continue to use against the husband and the people of his house even after the divorce, during the waiting-period. Qatādah says that it implies the woman's disobedient to her husband; that is, if the wife has been divorced because of her disobedience she may continue to be

disobedience to her husband even during the waiting-period. 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, Suddī, Ibn as-Sā'ib and Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī say that this implies the woman's leaving the house of herself. That is, in their opinion the woman's leaving the house in the waiting-period by itself amounts to committing an open indecency, and the command: "Nor should they themselves leave the house except in case they commit an open indecency," is an admonition of this nature: "Do not abuse others except in case you wish to be known as a discourteous person." According to the first three of these four viewpoints, "except in case" is related with "Do not turn them out of their houses," and the sentence means that if they are guilty of immorality or of using invectives or of disobedience, it would be lawful to turn them out of the houses, and according to the fourth view, it is related with "nor should they themselves leave their houses," and it means that if they leave their houses they would be guilty of open indecency.

5. Both these sentences refute the viewpoint of those who hold that divorce does not take place at all if it is pronounced during menstruation or thrice at once, and also the view of those who think that a triple divorce amounts to a single divorce. The question arises, If an irregular *(bid'ī)* divorce does not take place, or a triple divorce amounts to a single revocable divorce, what then is the need of saying: "Whoever transgresses the bounds set by Allah (i.e. the method taught by the *Sunnah)*, would wrong his own self; and you do not know Allah may after this bring about a situation of reconciliation?" These two things would be meaningful only in case pronouncement of divorce against the method taught by the *Sunnah* should be harmful for which one may have to regret later, and the pronouncement of a triple divorce at once may not leave any room for reconciliation; otherwise, obviously by pronouncing a divorce which does not take effect at all one does not transgress the bounds set by Allah, which may be regarded as wronging one's own self, and after a divorce which is in any case only revocable there does remain room for reconciliation; thus, there would be no need to say: "Allah may after this bring about a situation of re-conciliation."

Here, one should again understand well the mutual relationship between vv. 228-230 of Al-Baqarah and these verses of Sūrah At-Ṭalāq. In Sūrah Al-Baqarah the number of divorces laid down is three of which after pronouncing the first two one retains the right to take one's wife back and the right to re-marry her in case the waiting-period has expired, without resort to legalisation *(tahlīl)*, and if divorce is pronounced for the third time, the husband forfeits both these rights. These verses of Sūrah At-Ṭalāq were not sent down to amend or cancel this rule but to teach the people how to use wisely the powers that they have been given to divorce their wives, which if used rightly could save homes from ruin, could protect the husband from remorse if he had pronounced a divorce, could provide him maximum opportunities for reconciliation, and even if separation had taken

place, could show him a way to reunite in marriage as a last resort if the couple so desired. But if a person happens to use these powers unwisely, in a wrong way, he could only be wronging his own self and wasting all opportunities for making amends. It is just like a father's giving three hundred rupees in his son's possession and telling him to spend the amount as he may like; then advising him to the effect; "Spend the money given to you carefully, at the right place, and piece meal, so that you may benefit by it fully; otherwise if you expend it unwisely and carelessly in wrong places, or expend the whole of it at once, you will incur losses, and then I would not give you any more." This advice would be meaningless if the father did not give the amount in the son's possession at all, so that if he had wanted to spend it in a wrong place, he should be powerless to spend it, or if he had wanted to spend the whole amount, he could only take out a part of it while the rest lay safe with him in any case. If the condition be such, there could obviously be no need for this kind of advice.

6. That is, "In case you have pronounced one or two revocable divorces, you should take a decision before the expiry of the waiting-period whether you would keep the wife in wedlock or send her away. If you decide to keep her, then you should keep her with honour and dignity and not with a view to tormenting and harassing her and getting another opportunity to prolong her waiting-period by divorcing her once again; and if you decide to part with her, then you should part with her gracefully, without indulging in any quarrel or vilification; if you still owe her the dower, or a part of it, pay it off, and give her something in addition also at her departure according to your means, as has been enjoined in Al-Baqarah: 241. (For further explanation, see E.N. 86 of Al-Aḥzāb).

7. Ibn 'Abbās says that this implies calling to witness two men both at divorce and at reconciliation. (Ibn Jarīr). Ḥaḍrat 'Imrān bin Ḥuṣain was asked: "A man divorced his wife and then took her back, but he neither called anybody to witness pronouncement of the divorce nor resumption of the relation." He replied: "You pronounced the divorce against the *Sunnah* and you took your wife back against the *Sunnah*. You should call to witness men both at divorce and at resumption *of* relation, and you should not commit this mistake again." (Abū Da'ud, Ibn Mājah). But the four Sunnī Imāms are agreed that to call men to witness the divorce and the resumption and separation is no condition for these acts to be valid, so that if there was no witness, neither divorce should take place nor resumption should be valid nor separation. But this condition has been enjoined so that the parties may not deny any of the facts later and in case there was a dispute the matter might be settled easily and any suspicions and doubts might also be removed. This Command is just like the Command: "Have witnesses in case of commercial transactions." (Al-Baqarah: 282). This does not mean that it is obligatory to have witnesses at business transations, and if there

was no witness, the transaction would be invalid; but this is a wise instruction which has been given to prevent disputes and it is good to follow it. Likewise, in the case of divorce and resumption also although a person's act and conduct would be legally valid even without the witnesses, yet caution demands that whatever is done, it should be witnessed, simultaneously or later, by two just men.

8. These words clearly show that the instructions given above are in the nature of advice and not law. If a man pronounces divorce against the approved method as explained above, or fails to reckon the waiting-period accurately, or expels the wife from the house without a good reason, or returns to her at the end of the waiting-period only to harass her, or sends her away after a quarrel, or fails to call the men to witness the divorce, reconciliation, or separation, it will not affect the legal effects of divorce or reconciliation or separation at all. However, his acting against Allah's advice would be a proof that his heart was devoid of the true faith in Allah and the Last Day. That is why he adopted a course which a true believer would never adopt.

9. The context itself shows that here "fearing Allah in whatever one does" means to pronounce divorce in accordance with the approved method taught by the *Sunnah*, to reckon the waiting-period accurately, to avoid turning the wife out of the house, to take the wife back if one decides to keep her, at the expiry of the waiting-period with the intention of keeping her equitably and to send her away in a fair manner if one decides to part with her, and to call two just men to witness the divorce, reconciliation or separation, as the case be. In respect of this, Allah says that whoever acts in fear of Him, He will open for him a way out of the difficulties. This automatically gives the meaning that whoever does not fear Allah in these matters, will create for himself such complications and difficulties from which he will find no way out.

A study of these words clearly shows that the view of those who hold that the irregular *(bid'i)* form of divorce does not take place at all, and of those who regard a triple divorce pronounced at once or during the same period of purity as a single divorce, is not correct. For if an irregular form of divorce does not take place at all, it does not create any complication from which one may have to find a way out; and if only a single divorce takes place when one has pronounced three divorces at once, then also there arises no need for a person to seek a way out of a difficulty or complication.

10. It means: "Keeping the divorced wife in the house during the waiting-period, to maintain her and to pay her the dower, or something in addition, at departure certainly burdens a man financially. To spend on a woman whom one

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مِنَ الْمَحِيْضِ مِنْ نِّسَآئِكُمْ اِنِ ارْتَبْتُمْ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلٰثَةُ اَشْهُرٍ ۙ وَّالّٰٓئِيْ لَمْ
يَحِضْنَ ۭ وَاُولَاتُ الْاَحْمَالِ اَجَلُهُنَّ اَنْ يَّضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ ۭ وَمَنْ يَّتَّقِ اللّٰهَ
يَجْعَلْ لَّهٗ مِنْ اَمْرِهٖ يُسْرًا ۝ ذٰلِكَ اَمْرُ اللّٰهِ اَنْزَلَهٗٓ اِلَيْكُمْ ۭ وَمَنْ يَّتَّقِ اللّٰهَ
يُكَفِّرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّاٰتِهٖ وَيُعْظِمْ لَهٗٓ اَجْرًا ۝ اَسْكِنُوْهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنْتُمْ مِّنْ
وُّجْدِكُمْ وَلَا تُضَاۗرُّوْهُنَّ لِتُضَيِّقُوْا عَلَيْهِنَّ ۭ وَاِنْ كُنَّ اُولَاتِ حَمْلٍ فَاَنْفِقُوْا
عَلَيْهِنَّ حَتّٰى يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ ۚ فَاِنْ اَرْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ فَاٰتُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ ۚ وَاْتَمِرُوْا
بَيْنَكُمْ بِمَعْرُوْفٍ ۚ وَاِنْ تَعَاسَرْتُمْ فَسَتُرْضِعُ لَهٗٓ اُخْرٰى ۝ لِيُنْفِقْ ذُوْ سَعَةٍ مِّنْ
سَعَتِهٖ ۭ وَمَنْ قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهٗ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّآ اٰتٰىهُ اللّٰهُ ۭ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا
اِلَّا مَآ اٰتٰىهَا ۭ سَيَجْعَلُ اللّٰهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُّسْرًا ۝ وَكَاَيِّنْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ عَتَتْ
عَنْ اَمْرِ رَبِّهَا وَرُسُلِهٖ فَحَاسَبْنٰهَا حِسَابًا شَدِيْدًا ۙ وَّعَذَّبْنٰهَا عَذَابًا نُّكْرًا ۝ فَذَاقَتْ
وَبَالَ اَمْرِهَا وَكَانَ عَاقِبَةُ اَمْرِهَا خُسْرًا ۝ اَعَدَّ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيْدًا ۙ فَاتَّقُوا
اللّٰهَ يٰٓاُولِي الْاَلْبَابِ ۚ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۚ قَدْ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْكُمْ ذِكْرًا ۝ رَّسُوْلًا يَّتْلُوْا
عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ مُبَيِّنٰتٍ لِّيُخْرِجَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ مِنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ
اِلَى النُّوْرِ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّؤْمِنْۢ بِاللّٰهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا يُّدْخِلْهُ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ اَبَدًا ۭ قَدْ اَحْسَنَ اللّٰهُ لَهٗ رِزْقًا ۝ اَللّٰهُ الَّذِيْ
خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمٰوٰتٍ وَّمِنَ الْاَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ ۭ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْاَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوْٓا
اَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۙ وَّاَنَّ اللّٰهَ قَدْ اَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ۝

And if you are in doubt about those of your women who have despaired of menstruation, (you should know that) their waiting-period is three months,[12] and the same applies to those who have not menstruated as yet.[13] As for the pregnant women, their period ends when they deliver their burden.[14] Whoever fears Allah, He makes his course easy for him. This is Allah's Command which He has sent down to you. Whoever fears Allah, Allah will remove his evils from him and will enhance his reward.[15] 4-5

Lodge them (in the waiting-period) where you yourselves live, according to your means, and do not harass, them so as to straiten them.[16] 6

And if they are pregnant, spend on them until they deliver their burden.[17] Then if they suckle (the child) for you, give them their wages, and settle the question of wages) fairly by mutual consultation.[18] But if you created difficulties for each other (concerning the question of wages). then another woman would suckle the child.[19] Let the rich man spend according to his means and let the one whose means are restricted, spend out of what Allah has given him. Allah does not burden anyone with more than what He has given him. It may u-ell be that Allah brings about ease after hardship. 6-7

Many a settlement[20] has rebelled against the commandments of its Lord and His Messengers, and We called it to stern account and punished it severely. They tasted the evil results of their misdeeds and consequently they have nothing but loss in store for them. Allah has prepared from them a severe torment (in the Hereafter). So fear Allah. O you men of understanding, who have believed. Allah has sent down to you an Admonition, a Messenger [21] who recites to you Allah's Revelations containing clear guidance, so that he may bring those who have believed and done good deeds out of darknesses into light.[22] Whoever believes in Allah and does good deeds, Allah shall admit him into Gardens underneath which conals will be flowing. They shall live therein for ever. Allah has prepared for such a one an excellent provision. 8-11

Allah is He Who created seven heavens and of the earth also their like.[23] His Command descends among them. (This you are being told) so that you may know that Allah has power over everything, and 12

that Allah's knowledge encompasses all.

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has already decided to send away because of strained relations will surely be irksome, and if the man is also poor, this expenditure will further pinch him. But a man who fears Allah, should endure all this gracefully. Allah is not niggardly as the people are. If a person spends his wealth *in* accordance with His law, He will provide for him in a manner beyond all expectations."

11. That is, there is no power that can prevent Allah's decree from enforcement.

12. This is in respect of the women who no longer menstruate and have reached menopause because of age. Their waiting-period will be reckoned from the day divorce was pronounced on them and three months imply three lunar months. If divorce was pronounced at the commencement of the lunar month, it is agreed that the waiting-period will be reckoned with regard to the sighting of the new moon; and if it was pronounced somewhere in the middle of the month, according to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, three months will have to be completed reckoning each month of 30 days. *(Badā'i' aṣ-Ṣanā'i').*

As for the women whose courses are irregular due to some reason, the jurists have held different opinions:

Ḥaḍrat Sa'id bin al-Musayyab says that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar ruled: "If the woman who has been divorced stops having menses after having them once or twice after the divorce, she will wait for 9 months. If signs of pregnancy appear, well and good, otherwise after the passage of 9 months, she should observe the waiting-period of three additional months. Then she would be lawful for marriage to another person.

Ibn 'Abbās, Qatādah and 'Ikrimah say that the waiting period of the woman who has not menstruated for a year, is three months.

Ṭā'ūs says that the waiting-period of the woman who menstruates once in a year, is three mensturations. This very opinion has been reported from Ḥaḍrat 'Uthman, Ḥaḍrat 'Alī and Ḥaḍrat Zaid bin Thābit.

Imām Mālik relates that a person Ḥabbān by name divorced his wife during the period when she was suckling her child. A year passed on it, but she did not have the menses. Then the man died. The divorced wife laid claim to inheritance. The case came before Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān. He consulted with Ḥaḍrat 'Alī and Ḥaḍrat Zaid bin Thābit, and gave the decision that the woman was an heiress. The argument given was that the woman was neither of those women a who might have despaired of menstruation, nor of those girls who may not have

menstruated yet: therefore, up till the husband's death she was on the menses she had discharged last, and had still to pass her waiting-period.

The Ḥanafīs say that the waiting-period of the woman, who no longer menstruates, which may not be on account of menopause so that there may be no hope of her having it later will either be reckoned from the menstruation if she has it in the future, or in accordance with the age at which women generally reach menopause, and after attaining that age she will pass three months of the waiting-period in order to be released from the marriage bond. The same opinion is held by Imām Shāfe'ī. Imām Thauri and Imām Laith, and the same also is the view of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān and Ḥaḍrat Zaid bin Thābit.

Imām Mālik has adopted the view of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar and Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās and it is this: The woman will first pass nine months. If she does not have her menses during thin period, she will pass three months of the waiting-period like like the woman who has despaired of menstruation. Ibn al-Qāsim explaining the viewpoint of Imām Mālik says: The period of nine months will be reckoned from the day she became free from the previous menstrual discharge and not from the day divorce *was* pronounced on her. (All these have been taken from al-Jaṣṣās, Aḥkām al-Qur'ān and al-Kasānī, Badā'i as-Sanā'i).

Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal says that if the woman whose waiting-period started from menstruation despairs of menstruation during the waiting-period, she will be required to pass the waiting-period of the menopausal woman and not of the women who menstruate regularly. And if she stops menstruating and the cause of the cessation is unknown, she will first pass nine months in the doubt of pregnancy, and then will have to complete three months of the waiting-period. And if the cause of the cessation of the menses becomes known, e.g. a disease, or suckling, or some other cause, she will lie in the waiting-period till the time that either she starts having the menses again so that the waiting-period may be reckoned in accordance with the courses, or she reaches menopause and may pass the waiting-period of the menopausal woman. (Al-Inṣāf).

13. They may not have menstruated as yet either because of young age, or delayed menstrual discharge as it happens in the case of some women, or because of no discharge at all throughout life which, though rare, may also be the case. In any case, the waiting-period of such a woman is the same as of the woman, who has stopped menstruation, that is three months from the time divorce was pronounced.

Here, one should bear in mind the fact that according to the explanations given in the Qur'ān the question of the waiting period arises in respect of the women with whom marriage may have been consummated, for there is no waiting-period in case divorce is pronounced before the consummation of

marriage. (Al-Aḥzāb: 49). Therefore, making mention of the waiting-period for the girls who have not yet menstruated, clearly proves that it is not only permissible to give away the girl in marriage at this age but it is also permissible for the husband to consummate marriage with her. Now, obviously no Muslim has the right to forbid a thing which the Qur'ān has held as permissible.

The girl who is divorced in the state when she has not yet menstruated and then she starts having the menses during the waiting-period, will reckon her waiting-period from the same menstruation, and her waiting-period will be reckoned just like the woman who menstruates regularly

14. The consensus of scholarly opinion is that the waiting-period of the pregnant divorced woman is till child birth. But a difference of opinion has occurred about whether the same also applies to the woman whose husband may die during her pregnancy. The dispute has arisen because in Al-Baqarah: 234 the waiting-period of the woman whose husband dies has been laid down as four months and ten days, and there is no mention whatever whether this injunction applies to all widows generally or only to those who are not pregnant,

Ḥaḍrat 'Alī and Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, reading both these verses together, have drawn the rule that the waiting-period of the pregnant divorced woman is till child-birth, but that of the pregnant widow is the longer of the two periods, whether it be of the divorced woman or of the pregnant woman. For example, if delivery takes place before four months and ten days, she will have to observe a waiting period of four months and ten days, and if it does not take place till then, her waiting period will come to an end at delivery. The same is the viewpoint of the Imāmiah sect of the Shī'as.

Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd says that this verse of Sūrah At-Talāq was sent down after the verse of Sūrah Al-Baqarah; therefore, the later injunction has made the earlier injunction particularly applicable to the non pregnant widow, and has laid down the waiting-period of every pregnant woman as till child birth, whether she is divorced or widowed, Accordingly, whether delivery takes place immediately after the husband's death, or takes longer than four months and ten days, the woman's waiting-period in any case will come to an end at the birth of the child. This view is supported by this tradition of Ḥaḍrat Ubayy bin Ka'b. He says, "When this verse of Sūrah At Ṭalāq came down, I asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah 's peace): Is it both for the divorced woman and for the widow?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes." In another tradition the Holy Prophet further explained it thus: "The waiting-period of every pregnant woman is till child-birth." (Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abū Ḥātim. Ibn Ḥajar says that although its reliability is questionable, yet as it has been related through several chains of transmitters, one has to admit that it has some basis). More than that, it is further confirmed by

the incident concerning Subai'ah-i'Aslamiyyah, which occurred in the sacred time of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself. She became a widow during her pregnancy and a few days after her husband's death (according to some traditions 20 days, according to others 23 days, 25 days, 40 days or 35 days) she delivered her burden. The Holy Prophet was asked for his ruling concerning her and he permitted her to re-marry. This incident has been related by Bukhārī and Muslim in different ways on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Umm Salamah. This same incident has been related by Bukhārī Muslim, Imām Aḥmad, Abū Da'ūd, Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah with different chains of transmitters on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Miswar bin Makhramah also. Muslim has cited this statement of Subai'ah-i Aslamiyyah herself: "I was the wife of Hadrat Sa'd bin Khawalah. He died during the Farewell Pilgrimage when I was pregnant. A few days after his death I gave birth to a child. A man told me that I could not remarry before the expiry of four months and ten days. I went and asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) and he gave the verdict: 'You have become lawful as soon as you gave birth to the child: you can re-marry if you so like'." This tradition has been related briefly by Bukhārī also.

This same viewpoint has been reported from a large number of the Companions. Imām Mālik, Imām Shāfe'ī, 'Abdur Razzāq, Ibn Abī Shaibah and Ibn al-Mundhir have related that when Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar was asked concerning the pregnant widow, he replied that her waiting-period is till child-birth. At this a man from among the Anṣār confirmed, saying: "Ḥaḍrat 'Umar had said that even if the deceased husband had not yet been buried, and his body still lay on bed in the house and his wife gave birth to a child, she would become pure and lawful for remarriage." The same opinion was held by Hadrat Abū Hurairah, Ḥadrat Abū Manṣūr Badrī and Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, and the same has been adopted by the four Sunnī Imāms and the other early jurists.

The Shāfe'īs say that if the pregnant woman has more children than one in her womb, her waiting-period will come to an end at the birth of the last child; even if it is still born, the waiting-period will expire at its birth. In case of abortion, if the mid-wives, on the basis of their knowledge and experience, state that it was not merely a piece of flesh but had human form, or that it was not a tumour but a human embryo, their statement will be admitted and the waiting period will expire. *(Mughnī, al-Muḥtāj).* The viewpoint of the Ḥanbalīs and the Ḥanafis is also very close to it. But in case of abortion, their viewpoint is that unless the human form is clearly visible, the mid-wives' statement that it is human embryo, will not be admitted and this will not bring the waiting-period to an end. *(Badā'iṣ-Ṣanā'i; Al-Inṣāf).* But in the modern times by means of medical investigation it can be easily ascertained whether what has been expelled from the womb was actually something of the nature of human foetus or a kind of tumour

or congealed blood. Therefore, whenever it is possible to obtain expert medical opinion, it can be easily decided whether what is described as abortion, was really abortion or not, and whether it has brought the waiting-period to an end or not. However, in cases where such medical investigation is not possinble, the viewpoint of the Ḥanbalīs and the Ḥanafīs itself is preferable and it is not fit to rely on the ignorant mid-wives.

15. Although this is a general exhortation which applies to all matters and conditions of human life, yet in this particular context the object is to warn the Muslims to follow the Commands mentioned above in fear of God, no matter what responsibilities they may have to shoulder in consequence thereof, for as a reward for this Allah will remove their ills and will forgive their sins and will enhance their rewards in the Hereafter. Obviously, the waiting-period of the divorced woman whose term has been prescribed as three months, will be longer than that of the woman whose term has been appointed as three menstruations, and the term of the pregnant woman may be several months longer. To shoulder the responsibility of the maintenance and lodging of the woman whom a man may have decided to give up, during this whole period, will be an unbearable burden for the people, but Allah's promise is that He will lighten the burden that is borne in fear of Him and in following His Command, by His special bounty and grace, and will reward the person much more generously and richly in comparison to the small burden borne by him in the world.

16. The jurists are agreed that if the woman has been divorced revocable, the husband is responsible for her lodging and maintenance; they are also agreed that if the woman is pregnant, the husband will bear the responsibility of her lodging and maintenance till child-birth whether she has been divorced revocable or irrevocably. However, the difference of opinion has arisen about whether the non-pregnant woman who has been divorced irrevocably is entitled to both lodging and maintenance, or only to lodging, or to neither.

One group says that she is entitled to both lodging and maintenance. This is the opinion of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, Ḥaḍrat 'Ali bin Husain (Imām Zain al-'Ābidīn), Qādī Shuraih and Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī. The same has been adopted by the Ḥanafīs, and the same also is the viewpoint of Imām Sufyān Thaurī and Ḥasan bin Sāleh. This is supported by the *Ḥadīth* of Dāraqutnī in which Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Jābir reports that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "The woman who has been divorced thrice has a right to lodging and maintenance during the waiting-period." This is further supported by those traditions in which it has been reported that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar had rejected the *Ḥadīth* of Fāṭimah bint-Qais, saying: We cannot abandon the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of our Prophet on the word of a woman." This shows that the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) in the knowledge of Ḥaḍrat

'Umar must be that such a woman is entitled to both maintenance and lodging. Furthermore, in a tradition from Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī there is the explanation that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar rejecting the *Ḥadīth* of Fātimah bint-Qais, had said: "I have heard the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) say that such a woman has a right to lodging as well as to maintenance." The first argument that Imām Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ has given in his discussion of this question in his *Aḥkāmu al-Qur'ān* is that Allah has explicitly said: "Divorce them for their prescribed waiting periods." This Divine Command also applies to that person who might have taken his wife back after divorcing her twice in the first instance, and no v he is left with only one divorce to pronounce." His second argument is: "When the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) taught this method of pronouncing divorce that one should either pronounce divorce in such a period of purity in which one may not have had sexual intercourse, or in a state when the signs of a woman's being pregnant might have appeared. In this he did not make any distinction between the first, second, or final divorce. Therefore, the Divine (Command, "Lodge them (in the waiting-period) where you yourselves live," will be regarded as relevant to every form of divorce." His third argument is; "The maintenance and lodging of the pregnant woman, whether divorced revocable or irrevocably, is binding on the husband, and in respective the non-pregnant revocably divorced woman also both these rights are binding." This shows that the maintenance and lodging have not been made incumbent on the basis of pregnancy but because both are legally bound to stay in the husband's house. Now, if the same injunction be applicable to the irrevocably divorced non-pregnant woman also, there can be no reason why her lodging and maintenance should not be incumbent on the man divorcing her.

The second group says that the irrevocably divorce woman has a right to lodging but not to maintenance. This is the viewpoint of Sa'īd bin al-Musayyab, Sulemān bin Yasār, 'Aṭā', Sha'bī, Auzā'ī, Laith and Abū 'Ubaid (may Allh bless them), and Imām Shāfe'ī and Imām Mālik also have adopted the same. But in *Mughnī al-Muḥtāj* a different viewpoint of Imām Shāfe'ī has been stated as will be explained below.

The third group say that the irrevocably divorced woman is neither entitled to lodging nor to maintenance. This is the viewpoint of Ḥasan Baṣrī, Ḥammād, Ibn Lailā, 'Amr bin Dīnār, Ṭā'ūs, Isḥāq bin Rāhawaih and Abū Thaur. Ibn Jarīr has cited this very viewpoint as of Ḥaḍrat Ibn, Abbās. Imām Aḥmad bin Hanbal and the Imāmiah sect of the Shī'as also have adopted the same, and in *Mughnī al-Muḥtāj* the viewpoint of the Shāfe'is also has been stated to be this: "The woman who is passing her waiting-period on the basis of divorce has an obligatory right to lodging, whether she is pregnant or not, but for the woman who has been irrevocably divorced, it is not obligatory. And for the non-pregnant irrevocably divorced woman there is neither maintenance nor clothing." This

viewpoint in the first place is based on this verse of the Qur'ān: "You do not know: Allah may after this bring about a situation (of reconciliation)." From this they conclude that this could be correct only about a revocably divorced woman, and not about an irrevocably divorced one. Therefore, the Command of lodging the divorced woman in the house is specifically applicable only to the revocably divorced woman. Their second reasoning is from the *Hadīth* of Fāṭimah bint-Qais, which has been reported in the collections of *Ḥadīth* through many authentic channels.

This Fāṭimah bint-Qais al-Fihriyyah was one of the earliest Emigrants. She was esteemed for her wisdom and sagacity, and the consultative body of the Companions on the occasion of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar's martyrdom had met together at her house. She was first married to Abū 'Amr bin Ḥafṣ bin al-Mughīrah al-Makhzūmī; after she was separated by him by three divorces, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) married her to Ḥaḍrat Usāmah bin Zaid. According to reports, her husband, Abū 'Amr had pronounced two divorces on her. Then, when he was sent to Yaman along with Hadrat 'Alī, he also sent from there the third and final divorce, According to lodge her in the house during the waiting-period and maintain her, according to others, she herself had laid claim to maintenance and lodging. Whatever be the case, the husband's relatives refused to concede her claim. Thereupon she took her case to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), and he gave the decision that she was neither entitled to maintenance nor to lodging. According to a tradition, the Holy Prophet said: "The husband is under obligation to provide maintenance and lodging to the woman only in case he had a right to return to her, but when he had no such right, she was neither entitled to maintenance nor to lodging." (Musnad Aḥmad), Ṭabarānī and Nasa'ī also have related almost the same tradition, the concluding words of which are to the effect: "But when she is not lawful for him until she marries another man than him, there is neither maintenance for her nor lodging." After giving this decision the Holy Prophet first commanded her to pass her waiting period in the house of Umm Sharīk and then told her to stay in the house of Ibn Umm Maktūm.

However, the agruments of those who have not accepted this *Ḥadīth* are as follows:

In the first place, she had been commanded to leave the house of her husband's relatives because she was rude of tongue and they were fed up with her ill-temper Sa'īd bin al-Musayyab says: "This lady by reporting her *Ḥadīth* has misguided the people. The truth is that she was rude and impudent; that is why she was lodged in the house of Ibn Umm Maktūm." (Abū Da'ūd) In another tradition Sa'id bin al Musayyab is reported to have said: "She had been impudent and rude to her husband s relatives; that is why she was commanded to shift from that

house." (Al-Jaṣṣās). Sulemān bin Yasār says: "Her expulsion from the house was because of her ill-temper." (Abū Da'ūd).

Secondly, her tradition was repudiated by Hadrat 'Umar at a time when many of the Companions were still living, and the matter could be fully investigated. Ibrahīm Nakha'ī says: "When this *Ḥadīth* of Fātimah reached Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, he said: 'We cannot adandon a verse of the Book of Allah and a saying of the Messenger of Allah (upon whom be His peace) because of the saying of a woman, who seems to be conjecturing. I have myself heard the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) say that the woman who has been divorced irrevocably is entitled to both lodging and maintenance." (Al-Jaṣṣās). Abū Ishāq says: "I was sitting with Aswad bin Yazīd in the mosque of Kūfah, when Sha'bī made mention of the *Ḥadīth* of Fātimah bint-Qais. Ḥaḍrat Aswad thereupon threw pebbles at Sha'bi and said: "When in the time of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar this tradition of Fāṭimah was brought to his notice, he said: 'We cannot cast off the Book of our Lord and the *Sunnah* of our Prophet on the strength of the tradition of a woman. Maybe she has forgotten. The woman has a right to maintenance as well as to lodging, for Allah says: 'Do not turn them out of their houses'." This tradition has been reported in Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Tirmidhī and Nasā'ī with some variation in wording.

Thirdly, during the reign of Marwān when a dispute arose in respect of the irrevocably divorced woman, Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah had subjected the tradition of Fātimah bint-Qais to severe criticism. Qāsim bin Muḥammad says: "I asked Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah: 'Don't you know the incident concerning Fātimah?' She replied: 'Better not mention the *Ḥadīth* of Fāṭimah'." (Bukhārī). The words of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah in the other tradition related by Bukhārī are to the effect: "What has happened to Fātimah? Is she not afraid of God?" In the third tradition Hadrat 'Urwah bin Zubair says that Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah said: "There is no good for Fāṭimah in reporting this *ḥadīth*." In still another tradition Ḥaḍrat 'Urwah says that Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah expressed great indignation against Fāṭimah and said: "She in fact was in an empty house, where she had no sympathizer; therefore, for the sake of her convenience the Holy Prophet instructed her to change her house."

Fourthly, this lady was later married to Usāmah bin Zaid, and Muḥammad bin Usāmah says: "Whenever Fāṭimah made mention of this *Ḥadīth*, my father would throw at her whatever fell in his hand." (Al-Jaṣṣās). Obviously, had not Ḥaḍrat Usāmah known that the *Sunnah* was contrary to what Fāṭimah said, he could not have felt so annoyed at the mention of this *Ḥadīth*."

17. There is complete consensus that whether the woman *has* been divorced revocably or irrevocably, her husband is responsible for her lodging and maintenance till child-birth if she is pregnant. However, a difference of opinion has arisen in case the husband of the pregnant woman may have died, irrespective

of whether he may have died alter pronouncing the divorce, or May not have pronounced any divorce and the woman may have been widowed during pregnancy this regard, the jurists have expressed the following views:

(1) Ḥaḍrat 'Alī and Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd hold that she has an obligatory right to maintenance in the husband's un-divided legacy. The same also has been cited as the view of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, Qādī Shuraih, Abul 'Āliyah, Sha'bī and Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī, and a saying of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās also supports the same. (Ālūsī, Al-Jassās).

(2) Ibn Jarīr has cited another view of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās to the effect: "If the deceased person has left some inheritance, expenditure should be made on her from the share of the child of her womb; and if he has left no inheritance, the heirs of the deceased should spend on her, for Allah says: 'And the same responsibility for the maintenance of the mother devolves upon the heir'." (Al-Baqarah: 233).

(3) Ḥaḍrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Zubair, Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣrī, Ḥaḍrat Sa'īd bin al-Musayyab and Ḥaḍrat 'Atā' bin Abī Abī Rabāh say that there is no maintenance for her in the inheritance of the deceased husband. A third saying from Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās also has been cited to be the same. (Al-Jaṣṣās) This means that she can meet her expenses from the share of inheritance that she may receive from the husband's legacy, but she has no right of inheritance on the husband's combined legacy, which may burden the other heirs.

(4) Ibn Abī Laila says: "Her maintenance in the deceased husband's legacy is as obligatory as is somebody's debt obligatory In his legacy." (Al-Jaṣṣās). That ii, just as a debt has to be paid out of a combined legacy, so also should her maintenance be paid out of it.

(5) Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām Abū Yūsuf, Imām Muḥammad and Imām Zufar say: "She has neither any right to lodging in the deceased husband's legacy nor to maintenance, for nothing belongs to the deceased after death: whatever remains after him belongs to the heirs. The widowed pregnant woman, therefore, cannot have any maintenance in their property." *(Hedāyah;* Al-Jaṣṣās). The same is the viewpoint of Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal *(Al-Inṣāf).*

(6) Imām Shāfe'i says: "There is no maintenance for her; but she has a right to lodging *(Mughnī al-Muhtāj)"* His reasoning is based on the incident concerning Furai'ah bint-Mālik, sister of Ḥaḍrat Abū Sa'īd Khudrī: when her husband was put to death, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) commanded her to pass her waiting-period in the house of her husband. (Abū Da'ūd, Nasā'ī, Tirmidhī). Furthermore, they deduce their

view from the tradition of Dāraquṭnī: "The Holy Prophet said: there is no maintenance for the widowed pregnant woman." The same is the view of Imām Mālik also. *(Ḥāshiyah ad-Dusūqi)*

18. This Divine Command teaches several important things:

(1) That the woman is the owner *of* her milk; otherwise, obviously she could not be authorised to receive wages for it, (2) that as soon as she becomes free from the marriage bond with her previous husband at child-birth, she is not legally bound to nurse her child; but if the father desires that she nurse it, and she also is willing for it, she would suckle it and would be entitled to receive the wages; (3) that the father also is not legally bound to have the child suckled only by its mother; (4) that the maintenance of the child is the responsibility of the father; (5) that the mother is best entitled to suckle the child, and the other woman can be employed for suckling only in case the mother herself is not willing for it, or demands too high a wage for the father to pay. The sixth rule that automatically follows is that if the other woman also demands the same wages as the mother, then the mother's right is superior.

The following are the opinions of the jurists in this regard:

Ḍaḥḥāk says: "The child's mother is best entitled to suckle it, but she has the option to suckle it or not. However, if the child does not take to the new nurse-maid, the mother will be compelled to suckle it." A similar opinion is held by Qatādah, Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī and Sufyān Thaurī. Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī adds: "In case another woman is not available for nursing the child, the mother will be compelled to nurse it. (Ibn Jarīr).

According to *Hedāyah:* "If at the separation of the parents the child has not yet been weaned, it is not obligatory that the mother alone should suckle it. However, if another woman is not available, the mother would be compelled to suckle the child. And if the father says: I shall employ another woman to suckle the child on wages instead of having it suckled by the mother on wages, and if the mother demands the same wages as the other woman, or is willing to perform the service gratis, the mother's right will be regarded as superior. And if the child's mother demands higher Wages, the father will not be compelled to accede to her demand."

19. This contains a severe rebuke both for the father and tor the mother. The style clearly shows that if the two do not settle the question of the child's suckling amicably, overlooking the previous bitterness that led to divorce, it is not approved by Allah. The woman has been warned to the effect: "If you demand too high a wage only in order to embarrass the man, the fosterage of the child is not dependent on you alone: some other woman will nurse it." And the man also has

been warned as if to say: "It would be unfair if you pressed the mother unjustly only because she was the mother." In this connection, please also see Al-Baqarah: 233 for details.

20. Now, the Muslims are being warned of the fate the would meet I this world and in the Hereafter is they disobeyed the Commands they have been given through the Messenger of Allah and His Book and the rewards they would receive if they adopted obedience.

21. Some of the commentators opine that "Admonition here implies the Qur'an, and "Messenger" the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings); some others say that "Admonition" implies the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) himself, because he was admonition for the people through and through. We are of the opinion that this second interpretation is more correct, for according to the first commentary the sentence would read "We have sent down to you an Admonition and sent such a Messenger." obviously, there is no need for such an interpolation in the Qur'ānic passage when it is perfectly meaningful, even more so, without it.

22. "Out of darknesses Into light": out of the darknesses of ignorance into the light of knowledge The full significance of this Divine Saying becomes obvious only when one studies the other ancient and modern family laws of the world pertaining to divorce, waiting-period and provision of maintenance. This comparative study will show that in spite of the un-ending alterations, modifications and continual legislation no nation has been able so far to build for itself such a rational, natural and socially useful law as had been given by this Book and the Messenger who brought it 1500 wears ago. It has never stood in need of revision nor it ever will. I here is no occasion here for a detailed comparative study of it; we have, however, given a brief specimen of it in the concluding portion of our book *Ḥuqūq az-Zaujain;* the scholars who are interested in the subject can for themselves conpare the world's religious and secular laws with this law of the Qur'ān and *Sunnah.*

23. "Also their like-- does not mean that He created as many earths as the heavens, but it means that He has also created several earths as He has created several heavens. "Of the earth"- mean that just as this earth, which is inhabited by man, is serving as bed and cradle for the creatures living on it, so has Allah made and set other earths also in the universe, which serve as beds and cradles for the creatures living on them. Moreover, there are clear pointers in the Qur'ān to the effect that living creatures are not found only on the earth but also in the heavens. (For instance, see Ash-Shūrā: 29 and E.N. 50 on it). In other words! the countless *stars* and planets seen in the sky are not all lying desolate, but like the earth there are many among them which are inhabited.

From among the earliest commentators Ibn 'Abbās is the one, who had expressed this truth in the period when man was not even prepared to imagine that in the universe there are other habitats also, apart from the earth, where rational creatures live. Even the scientists of today are yet in doubt about this being a reality, nothing to say of the people living 1500 years ago. That is why Ibn 'Abbās felt hesitant about whether he should say such a thing before the common people or not, because he feared it might affect their faith. Mujāhid says that when he was asked the meaning of this verse, he said: "If I give you the commentary of this verse, you will turn disbelievers, and your disbelief will be that you will deny it." Almost the same thing has been related from Sa'īd bin Jubair, saying: "Ibn 'Abbās said: what can be the guarantee that if I tell you its meaning, you would not turn disbelievers?" (Ibn Jarīr, 'Abd bin Ḥumaid). However, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Ḥākim and Baihaqī in *Shu'ab al-Imān* and *Kitāb al-Asmā' was-Sifāt* have cited, on the authority of Abud-Duhā, this commentary from Ibn 'Abbās in different words: "In each of those earths there is a Prophet like your Prophet, an Adam like your Adam, a Noah like your Noah, an Abraham like your Abraham, and a Jesus like your Jesus." This tradition has been related by Ibn Hajar in *Fath al-Bārī* and by Ibn Kathīr in his Commentary, and Imām Dhahbi says: "It has been reported authentically, but in my knowledge none apart from Abud-Ḍuhā has related it; therefore, it is an uncommon and rare tradition." Some other scholars regard it as a falsehood and Mullā 'Alī Qārī, in his *Mauḍu'āt Kabīr (p. 19)*, has described it as a fabrication, and written: "Even if it is a tradition from Ibn 'Abbās, it is based on Israelite traditions." But the truth is that the actual reason why the people have rejected it is their regarding it as remote from reason and beyond under-standing; otherwise there is nothing in it which may by itself be opposed to reason. Thus, 'Allāma Ālūsī in his discussion of it in his Commentary writes: "There is neither any intellectual barrier to taking it as correct nor religious. It only means that in every earth there is a creation which turns to its origin just as mankind in our earth turns to Adam (peace be upon him), and in every earth there are individuals, who are distinguished among others just as the Prophets Noah and Abraham (peace be upon them) are distinguished among us." A little below the 'Allāma writes: "The earths may be more than seven, and likewise the heavens also may not be only seven. To rest content with the number seven, which is an indivisible integer, does not necessarily negate the higher numbers." Then, about the distances between one heaven and another, which have been stated as five hundred years or so in some *Aḥadīth*, the 'Allāma says: "This is not meant to give the exact measurement of the distances, but to express the truth in a manner easily comprehensible to the people."

It would be interesting to note that lately the Rand Corporation of America have estimated on the basis of their astronomical observations that only in the

Galaxy to which our earth belongs there are about 600,000,000 (six hundred million) planets physical conditions on which closely resemble those on the earth, and there is a possibility that they may also be inhabited just as is the earth by living creatures. (*Economist*, London 26 July, 1969).



LXVI

AT-TAḤRĪM

التحريم

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

LXVI

AT-TAḤRĪM

التَّحْرِيم

INTRODUCTION

Name

The Sūrah derives its name from the words *lima tuḥarrimu* of the very first verse. This too is not a title of its subject-matter, but the name implies that it is the Sūrah in which the incident of *taḥrīm* (prohibition, forbiddance) has been mentioned.

Period of Revelation

In connection with the incident of taḥrīm referred to in this Sūrah, the traditions of the Ḥadīth mention two ladies who were among the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) at that time Ḥaḍrat Ṣafiyyah and Ḥaḍrat Māriyah Qibtiyyah. The former (i.e. Ḥaḍrat Ṣufiyyah) was taken to wife by the Holy Prophet after the conquest of Khaiber, and Khaiber was conquered, as has been unanimously reported,

in A.H.7. The other lady, Ḥaḍrat Mārīyah, had been presented to the Holy Prophet by Muqawqis, the ruler of Egypt, in A.H. 7 and she had borne him his son, Ibrāhīm, in Khil-Ḥijjah, A.H. 8. These historical events almost precisely determine that this Sūrah was sent down some time during A.H. 7 or A.H. 8.

Theme and Topics

This is a very important Sūrah in which light has been thrown on some questions of grave significance with reference to some incidents concerning the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace).

First? that the powers to prescribe the bounds of the lawful and the unlawful, the permissible and the forbidden, are entirely and absolutely in the hand of Allah; and nothing has been delegated even to the Prophet of Allah himself, not to speak of any other man. The Prophet as such can declare something lawful or unlawful only if he receives an inspiration from Allah to do so whether that inspiration is embodied in the Qur'ān, or imparted to him secretly. However, even the Prophet is not authorised to declare anything made permissible by Allah unlawful by himself, much less to say of another man.

Second, that in any society the position of a Prophet is very delicate. A minor incident experienced by an ordinary man in his life may not be of any consequence, but it assumes the status of law when experienced by a Prophet. That is why the lives of the Prophets have been kept under close supervision by Allah so that none of their acts, not even a most trivial one, may deviate from Divine Will. Whenever such an act has emanated from a Prophet it was rectified and rectified immediately so that the Islamic law and its principles should reach the people in their absolute purity not only through the Divine Book but also through the excellent example of the Prophet, and they should include nothing which may be in disagreement with Divine Will.

Thirdly, and this automatically follows from the abovementioned point, that when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was checked on a minor thing, which was not only corrected but also recorded, it gives us complete satisfaction that whatever actions and commands and instructions we now find in the pure life of the Holy Prophet concerning which there is nothing on record in the nature of criticism or correction

from Allah. they are wholly based on truth, are in complete conformity with Divine Will and we can draw guidance from them with lull confidence and peace of mind.

The fourth thing that we learn from this discourse is that about the Holy Messenger himself, whose reverence and respect Allah Himself has enjoined as a necessary part of the Faith of His .servants, it has been stated in this Sūrah that once during his sacred life he made a thing declared lawful by Allah unlawful for himself only to please his wives. then Allah has severely reproved for their errors those very wives of the Holy Prophet, whom He Himself has declared as mothers of the faithful and worthy of the highest esteem and honour by them. Then, this criticism of the Prophet and the administration of the warning to the wives also has not been made secretly but included in the Book, which the entire *Ummah* has to read and recite for ever. Obviously, neither the intention of making mention of it in the Book of Allah was, nor it could be, that Allah wanted to degrade His Messenger and the mothers of the faithful in the eyes of the believers; and this also is obvious that no Muslim has lost respect for them in his heart after reading this Sūrah of the Qur'ān. Now, there cannot be any other reason of mentioning this thing in the Qur'ān than that Allah wants to acquaint the believers with the correct manner of reverence for their great personalities. The Prophet is a Prophet, not God, that he may commit no error, Respect of the Prophet has not been enjoined because he is infallible, but because he is a perfect representative of Divine Will, and Allah has not permitted any of his errors to pass by unnoticed. This gives us the satisfaction that the noble pattern of life left by the Prophet wholly and fully represents the will of Allah. Likewise, the Companions or the holy wives of the Prophet, were human, not angels or supermen. They could commit mistakes. Whatever ranks they achieved became possible only because the guidance given by Allah and the training imparted by Allah's Messenger had moulded them into the finest models. Whatever esteem and reverence they deserve is on this very basis and not on the presumption that they were infallible. For this reason, whenever ill the sacred lifetime of the Prophet (upon whom be peace) the Companions or holy wives happened to commit an error due to human weakness, they were checked. Some of their errors were corrected by the Holy Prophet? as has been mentioned at many places in the *Ḥadīth;* some other errors

were mentioned in the Qur'ān and Allah Himself corrected them so that the Muslims might not form any exaggerated notion of the respect and reverence of their elders and great men, which might raise them from humanity to the position of gods and Goddesses. If one studies the Qur'ān carefully, one will see instances of this one after the other. In Sūrah Al-'Imran, in connection with the Battle of Uḥud, the Companions have been addressed and told:

"Allah did fulfil His promise (of help) to you: in the initial stage of the battle, it was you who were killing them by Allah's leave until you lost heart and disputed about your duty and disobeyed your leader, when Allah showed you what (the spoils) you covered —for there were among you some who hankered after the life of this world, and others, who cherished the life after death. Then Allah caused your retreat before the disbelieves in order to test you, but the fact is that even then Allah pardoned you, for Allah is very gracious to the believers. ' (v. 152).

In Surah An-Nūr, in connection with the Slander against Ḥadrat 'Ā'isha, the Companions were told

"When you heard of it, why did not the believing men and the believing women have a good opinion *of* themselves, and why did they not say: this is a manifest slander?.....Were it not for Allah's grace and mercy towards you in this world and in the Hereafter, a painful scourge would have visited you because of the slander. (Just consider) when you passed this lie on from one tongue to the other and uttered with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge. You took it as a trifling matter whereas it was a grave offence in the sight of Allah. Why did you not, as soon as you heard of it, say; 'It is not proper for us to utter such a thing? Glory be to Allah ! This is a great slander'." Allah admonishes you that in future you should never repeat anything like this, if you are true believers." (vv. 12-17)

In Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb, the holy wives have been addressed thus: 'O Prophet, say to your wives : If you seek the would and its adornments, come, I shall give you of these and send you off in a good way. But if you seek Allah and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter, you should rest assured that Allah has prepared a great reward for those of you, who do good. (vv. 28-29).

In Sūrah Jumu'ah, about the Companions it was said:

"And when they saw some merchandise and amusement they broke off to it and left you (O Prophet) standing (in the course of the Sermon). Say to them: that which is with Allah is far better than amusement and merchandise, and Allah is the best of all providers." (V. 11).

In Sūrah Al-Mumtaḥina, Ḥaḍrat Ḥātib bin Abī Balta'ah, a Companion who had fought at Badr, was severely taken to task because he had sent secret information to the disbelieving Quraish about the Holy Prophet's invasion before the conquest of Makkah.

All these instances are found in the Qur'ān itself, in the same Qur'ān in which Allah Himself has paid tribute to the Companions and the holy wives for their great merits, and granted them the certificate of His good pleasure, saying: "Allah became well pleased with them and they with Allah." It was this same moderate and balanced teaching of the reverence and esteem of the great men, which saved the Muslims from falling into the pit of man-worship in which the Jews and the Christians fell, and it is a result of the same that in the books that the eminent followers of the *Sunnah* have compiled on the subjects of the *Ḥadīth*, Commentary of the Qur'ān and History, not only have the excellences and great merits of the Companions and holy wives and other illustrious men been mentioned, but also no hesitance has been shown in mentioned, the incidents relating to their weaknesses, errors and mistakes, whereas those scholars were more appreciative of the merits and excellences of the great men and understood the bounds and limits of reverence better than those who claim to be the upholders of reverence for the elders today.

The fifth thing that has been explicitly mentioned in this Sūrah is that Allah's Religion is absolutely fair and just. It has for every person just that of which he becomes worthy on the basis of his faith and works. No relationship or connection even with the most righteous person can be beneficial for him in any way and no relationship or connection with the most evil and wicked person can be harmful for him in any way. In this connection, three kinds of women have been cited as examples before the holy wives in particular. One example is of the

wives of the Prophets Noah and Lot, who, if they had believed and cooperated with their illustrious husbands, would have occupied the same rank and position in the Muslim community, which is enjoyed by the wives of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings). But since they were disbelievers, their being the wives of the Prophets did not help them and they fell into Hell. The second example is of the wife of Pharaoh, who in spite of being the wife of a staunch enemy of God believed and chose a path of action separate from that followed by the Pharaoh's people, and her being the wife of a staunch disbeliever did not cause her any harm, and Allah made her worthy of Paradise. The third example is of Ḥaḍrat Maryam (Mary) (peace be upon her), who attained to the high rank because she submitted to the severe test to which Allah had decided to put her. Apart from Mary, no other chaste and righteous girl in the world ever has been put to such a hard test that in spite of being unmarried she might have been made pregnant miraculously by Allah's command and informed what service her Lord willed to take from her. When Hadrat Maryam accepted this decision, and agreed to bear, like a true believer, everything that she inevitably had to bear in order to fulfil Allah's will, then did Allah exalt her to the noble rank of *Sayyidatu an-nisā' fil-Jannah:* "Leader of the women in Paradise." (Musnad Aḥmad).

Besides, another truth that we learn from this Sūrah is that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) did not receive from Allah only that knowledge which is included and recorded in the Qur'ān, but he was given information about other things also by revelation, which has not been recorded in the Qur'ān. Its clear proof is verse 3 of this Sūrah. In it we are told that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) confided a secret to one of his wives, and she told it to another. Allah informed the Holy Prophet of this secret. Then, when the Holy Prophet warned his particular wife on the mistake of disclosure and she said: "Who has informed you of this mistake of mine?" he replied: "I have been informed of it by Him Who knows everything and is All-Aware." Now, the question is: where in the Qur'ān is the verse in which Allah has said; "O Prophet, the secret that you had confided to one of your wives, has been disclosed by her to another person, or to so and so? If there is no

such verse in the Qur'an, and obviously there is none, this is an express proof of the fact that revelation descended on the Holy Prophet besides the Qur'ān as well. This refutes the claim of the deniers of *Ḥadīth:* who allege that nothing was sent down to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) apart from the Qur'ān.



يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَآ اَحَلَّ اللّٰهُ لَكَ ۚ تَبْتَغِيْ مَرْضَاتَ اَزْوَاجِكَ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ
غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۝١ قَدْ فَرَضَ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ اَيْمَانِكُمْ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ مَوْلٰىكُمْ ۚ وَهُوَ
الْعَلِيْمُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۝٢ وَاِذْ اَسَرَّ النَّبِيُّ اِلٰى بَعْضِ اَزْوَاجِهٖ حَدِيْثًا ۚ فَلَمَّا
نَبَّاَتْ بِهٖ وَاَظْهَرَهُ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَّفَ بَعْضَهٗ وَاَعْرَضَ عَنْۢ بَعْضٍ ۚ فَلَمَّا
نَبَّاَهَا بِهٖ قَالَتْ مَنْ اَنْۢبَاَكَ هٰذَا ۭ قَالَ نَبَّاَنِيَ الْعَلِيْمُ الْخَبِيْرُ ۝٣ اِنْ تَتُوْبَآ
اِلَى اللّٰهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوْبُكُمَا ۚ وَاِنْ تَظٰهَرَا عَلَيْهِ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ مَوْلٰىهُ وَ
جِبْرِيْلُ وَصَالِحُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۚ وَالْمَلٰۗىِٕكَةُ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ ظَهِيْرٌ ۝٤ عَسٰى رَبُّهٗٓ اِنْ
طَلَّقَكُنَّ اَنْ يُّبْدِلَهٗٓ اَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا مِّنْكُنَّ مُسْلِمٰتٍ مُّؤْمِنٰتٍ قٰنِتٰتٍ تٰۗىِٕبٰتٍ
عٰبِدٰتٍ سٰۗىِٕحٰتٍ ثَيِّبٰتٍ وَّاَبْكَارًا ۝٥ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَاَهْلِيْكُمْ
نَارًا وَّقُوْدُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلٰۗىِٕكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَّا يَعْصُوْنَ
اللّٰهَ مَآ اَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُوْنَ مَا يُؤْمَرُوْنَ ۝٦ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا الْيَوْمَ ۭ
اِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝٧ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا تُوْبُوْٓا اِلَى اللّٰهِ تَوْبَةً
نَّصُوْحًا ۭ عَسٰى رَبُّكُمْ اَنْ يُّكَفِّرَ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ ۙ يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِي اللّٰهُ النَّبِيَّ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهٗ ۚ نُوْرُهُمْ يَسْعٰى
بَيْنَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَبِاَيْمَانِهِمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَآ اَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُوْرَنَا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ۚ اِنَّكَ
عَلٰي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝٨ يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۭ
وَمَاْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۭ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ۝٩ ضَرَبَ اللّٰهُ مَثَلًا لِّلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوا امْرَاَتَ

LXVI

AT-TAḤRĪM

التحريم

Verses: 12 *Revealed at Madinah*

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

O Prophet, why do you make unlawful that which Allah has permitted for you?[1] (Is it because) you seek the good-will of your wives?[2]—Allah is All-Forgivings All Merciful.[3] Allah has already appointed a way to absolve you (people) from your oaths.[4] Allah is your Master, and He alone is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise[5]. 1-2

(And this also is note-worthy that) the Prophet had confided a matter to a wife in secret. Then, when she disclosed the secret (to another), and Allah informed the Prophet (of the disclosure of the secret), the Prophet made known (to the wife) part of it and overlooked part of it. So when the Prophet told her (of the disclosure), she asked, "Who informed you of this?" The Prophet said, "I was informed by Him Who knows everything and is All-Aware."[6] 3

If you both (women) repent to Allah, (it is better for you), for your hearts have swerved from the right path,[7] and if you supported each other against the Prophet,[8] you should know that Allah is his Protector, and after Him Gabriel and the righteous believers and the angels are his companions and helpers.[9] It may well be that if the Prophet divorces all of you, Allah will give him in your place better wives,[10] who are true Muslims, who are believing[11] and obedient,[12] penitent,[13] worshipping[14] and given to fasting,[15] be they previously married or virgins. 4-5

O you who have believed, save yourselves and your households from a Fire whose fuel shall be the men and the stones,[16] over which shall be appointed fierce and stern angels, who never disobey Allah's Command and do as they are commanded.[17] (At that time it will be 6-7

said:) "O disbelievers, do not make excuses today. You are being recompensed only for what you were doing."[18]

8 O you who have believed, turn to Allah in sincere repentance.[19] (It may well be that) Allah will remove your evils from you and admit you into Gardens underneath which rivers will be flowing.[20] It will be a Day when Allah will not humiliate His Prophet and those who have believed with him.[21] Their light shall be running on before them and on their right hands, and they will be saying, "O our Lord, perfect our light for us and forgive us: You have power over all."[22]

9 O Prophet, wage *Jihād* against the disbelievers and the hypocrites; and be stern with them.[23] Their abode is Hell, and an evil abode it is!

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1. This is not, in fact, a question but an expression of disapproval. The object is not to ask the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) why he had done so, but to warn him that his act to make unlawful for himself what Allah had made lawful is not approved by Allah. This by itself gives the meaning that nobody has the power to make unlawful what Allah has made lawful; so much so that the Holy Prophet (upon *whom* be peace) himself also did not possess any such power. Although the Holy Prophet did not regard this as unlawful as a matter of faith nor legally but only forbade himself its use, yet since he was not an ordinary man but Allah's Messenger, and his forbidding himself something could have the effect that his followers too would have regarded it as forbidden, or at least reprehensible, or the people of his community might have thought that there was no harm in forbidding oneself something his Allah had made lawful, Allah pointed it out to him and commanded him to refrain from such prohibition.

2. This shows that in this case the Holy Prophet had not made a lawful thing unlawful because of a personal desire but because his wives had wanted him to do so, and he had made it unlawful for himself only in order to please them. Here, the question arises: why has Allah particularly made mention of the cause of making the thing unlawful besides pointing out the act of prohibition? Obviously, if the object had been to make him refrain from making a lawful thing unlawful, this could be fulfilled by the first sentences and there was no need that the motive of the act also should have been stated. Making mention of it in particular clearly shows that the object was not to check the Holy Prophet only for making *a* lawful thing unlawful, but along with that to warn the holy wives also to the effect that in their capacity as the Prophet's wives they had not understood their delicate responsibilities and had made the Holy Prophet do a thing which could lead to making a lawful thing unlawful.

Although it has not been mentioned in the Qur'ān as to what it was that the Holy Prophet had forbidden himself, yet the traditionists and commentators have mentioned in this regard two different incidents, which occasioned the revelation of this verse. One of these relates to Ḥaḍrat Mārīyah Qibtiyyah (Mary, the Copt lady) and the other to his forbidding himself the use of honey.

The incident relating to Ḥaḍrat Māriyah is that after concluding the peace treaty of Ḥudaibiyah one of the letters that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) sent to the rulers of the adjoining countries was addressed to the Roman Patriarch of Alexandria also, whom the Arabs called Muqawqis. When Ḥaḍrat Ḥatib bin Abi Balta'a took this letter to him, he did not embrace Islam but received him well, and in reply wrote: "I know that a Prophet is yet to rise, but I think he will appear in Syria. However, I have treated your messenger with due honour, and am sending two slave-girls to you, who command respect among the Coptics." (Ibn Sa'd). One of those slave-girls was Sīrīn and the other Māriyah (Mary). On his way back from Egypt Ḥaḍrat Ḥātib presented Islam before both and they believed. When they came before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) he gave Sīrīn in the ownership of Ḥaḍrat Ḥassān bin Thābit and admitted Ḥaḍrat Mārīyah into his own household. In Dhil-Ḥijjah, A.H. 8 she gave birth to the Holy Prophet's son, Ibrāhīm. *(Al-Istī'āb; Al-Isābah).* This lady was very beautiful. Ḥafiẓ Ibn Ḥajar in *Al-Iṣābah* has related this saying of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah about her: "No woman's entry into the Holy Prophet's household vexed me so much as of Mārīyah, because she was very beautiful and pleased him much." Concerning her the story that has been narrated in several ways in the *Ḥadīth* is briefly as follows:

One day the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) visited the house of Ḥaḍrat Ḥafsah when she was not at home. At that time Ḥaḍrat Mārīyah came to him there and stayed with him in seclusion. Ḥaḍrat Ḥafṣah took it very ill and complained of it bitterly to him. Thereupon, in order to please her the Holy Prophet vowed that he would have no conjugal relation with Mārīyah in future. According to some traditions, he forbade Mārīyah for himself, and according to others, he also swore an oath on it. These traditions have been mostly reported by the immediate successors of the Companions without mentioning any intermediary link. But some of these have been reported from Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās and Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah also. In view of the plurality of the methods of narration, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar in *Fāṭḥ al-Bāri* has expressed the view that there is some truth in the story. But in none of the six authentic collections of the *Ḥadīth* has this story been narrated. In Nasā'ī only this much has been related from Ḥaḍrat Anas: "The Holy Prophet had a slave-girl with whom he had conjugal relations. Then, Ḥaḍrat Ḥafsah and Ḥaḍrat 'A'ishah began to point out this to him repeatedly until he forbade her for himself. Thereupon, Allah sent down this

verse: 'O Prophet, why do you make unlawful that which Allah has made lawful for you?"

The other incident has been related in Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Nasā'ī and several other books of *Ḥadīth* from Hadrat 'Ā'ishah herself and its purport is as follows:

"The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) usually paid a daily visit to all his wives after the 'Aṣr Prayer Once it so happened that he began to stay in the house of Ḥaḍrat Zainab bint-Jahsh longer than usual, for she had received some honey from somewhere as a gift and the Holy Prophet was very fond of sweet things; therefore, he would have a drink of honey at her house. Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah states that she felt envious of this and spoke to Ḥaḍrat Ḥafsah, Ḥaḍrat Ṣaudah and Ḥaḍrat Safiyyah about it and together they decided that whoever of them was visited by the Holy Prophet, she should say to him: 'Your mouth smells of *maghāfīr*.' *Maghāfīr* is a kind of flower, which gives out an offensive smell, and if the bee obtains honey from it, it is also tainted by the same odour. They all knew that the Holy Prophet was a man of very fine taste and he abhorred that he should emit any kind of unpleasant smell. Therefore, this device was contrived to stop him from staying in the house of Ḥaḍrat Zainab and it worked. When several of his wives told him that his mouth smelt of *Maghāfīr*, he made a promise not to use the honey any longer. In one tradition his words are to the effect: "Now, I will never have a drink from it: I have sworn an oath." In another tradition he only said: "I will never have a drink from it," and there is no mention of the oath. And in the tradition which Ibn al Mundhir, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Ṭabarānī and Ibn Mardūyah have related from Ibn 'Abbās the words are to the effect: "By God, I will not drink it!"

Our eminent scholars regard this second version as correct and the first as unreliable. Imām Nasā'ī says: "About honey the *Ḥadīth* reported from Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah is authentic, and the story of forbidding Ḥadrat Mārīyah for himself by the Holy Prophet has not been narrated in a reliable way." Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ says: "The truth is that this verse was sent down concerning honey and not Mārīyah." Qāḍī Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī also regards the story about honey as correct and the same is the opinion of Imām Nawawī and Ḥāfiẓ Badruddīn 'Aini. Ibn Humām writes in *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*: "The story of the prohibition of honey has been narrated in Bukhārī and Muslim from Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah who was herself a party to it; therefore, it is much more reliable." Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathir says: "The truth is that this verse was sent down about forbidding honey for himself by the Holy Prophet."

3. That is, "Although the act of making a lawful thing unlawful only in order to please your wives was an act unbecoming of your high and responsible office, yet it was no sin, which might have entailed a punishment. Therefore,

Allah has only pointed it out to you and corrected it, and has forgiven you for this error."

4. It means: "Act according to the method Allah has prescribed for absolution from oaths by expiation in Al-Mā'idah :89 and break your promise that you have made to forbid yourself a lawful thing." Here, an important legal question arises and it is this: Is this Command applicable to the case when a person has forbidden himself a lawful thing on oath, or is forbidding oneself a lawful thing by itself tantamount to swearing an oath, whether the words of the oath have been used or not? The jurists in this regard have expressed different opinions:

One section of them says that mere forbidding oneself a lawful thing is not an oath. If a person without swearing an oath has forbidden himself a wife, or some other lawful thing, it is an absurd thing which does not entail any expiation, but he can resume without any expiation the use of the thing that he had forbidden himself. This is the opinion of Masrūq, Sha'bi, Rabī'ah and Abū Salamah, and the same view is held by Ibn Jarīr and all the Ẓāhirīs. According to them forbidding oneself something would be an oath only in case express words of oath are used when forbidding it for oneself. In this regard, their reasoning is that since the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) while forbidding himself a lawful thing had *also* sworn an oath, as has been reported in several traditions, Allah told him to act according to the method that had been appointed for absolving oneself from oaths.

The second group says that to forbid oneself something without using the words of oath is not an oath by itself, but the case of the wife is an exception. If a person has forbidden himself a garment, or an article of food, it is meaningless, and one can use it without expiation. But if concerning a wife or a slave-girl he has said: "I forbid myself an intercourse with her," she would not become unlawful and forbidden, but one would have to expiate the oath before going in to her. This is the opinion of the Shāfe'īs. (Mugnī al-*Muḥtāj*). And a similar opinion on this question is held by the Mālikis. (Ibn al 'Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*).

The third group says that to forbid oneself something is by itself an oath even if the words of oath have not been used. This is the opinion of Hadrat Abū Bakr, Ḥadrat 'Ā'ishah, Ḥadrat 'Umar, Ḥadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, Ḥadrat Zaid bin Thābit and Ḥadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās (may Allah bless them all). Although from Ibn 'Abbās another opinion has been reported in Bukhārī to the effect: "If a man has forbidden himself his wife, it is meaningless," yet it has been interpreted to mean that according to him this is not divorce but an oath which entails an expiation. For in Bukhārī, Muslim and Ibn Mājah, another saying of Ibn 'Abbās has been reported that to forbid oneself one's wife entails an expiation, and in Nasa'ī the tradition is to the effect that when Ibn 'Abbās was asked his opinion on this, he said: "She is not forbidden to you, but you must pay the expiation," and

in Ibn Jarīr's tradition the words of Ibn 'Abbās are to the effect: "If the people forbid themselves what Allah has made lawful for them, they must expiate their oath." This same is the opinion of Ḥasan Baṣri, 'Aṭā, Ṭā'ūs, Sulemān bin Yasār, Ibn Jubair and Qatādah, and the same has been adopted by the Ḥanafīs. Imām Abū Bakr al Jassās says: "The words of the verse *lima tuḥarrimu* do not indicate that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) along with forbidding himself the lawful thing had also sworn an oath, therefore, one will have to admit that *taḥrīm* (to forbid oneself something) itself is an oath; for after it Allah made obligatory the expiation of the oath in connection with the prohibition." Further on he writes again: "Our companions (i.e. the Ḥanafis) regard *taḥrīm* as an oath in case it is not accompanied by the intention of divorce. If a person forbade himself his wife, he in fact said: "By God, I will not come near you," thus, he committed *ilā'* (act of temporary separation!. And if he forbade himself an article of food, etc, he in a way said: "By God, I will not use that article." For Allah first said: "Why do you forbid that which Allah has made lawful?" and then said. "Allah has appointed a way to absolve you from your oaths." Thus, Allah has regarded *taḥrīm* as an oath, and the word *taḥrīm* in its meaning and legal effect becomes synonymous with an oath."

Here, for the benefit of the common man, it would be useful to tell what is the legal command according to the jurists in respect of forbidding oneself one's wife and forbidding oneself other things besides the wife.

The Ḥanafis say that if without the intention *of* divorce somebody forbade himself his wife, or swore an oath that he would not have conjugal relations with her, this would be *īlā'* (temporary separation), and in this case he would have to expiate his oath before having the sexual relation . But if wit h the intention Of divorce he said: "You are unlawful to me," it will have to be ascertained what was his actual intention. If his intention was of three divorces, the three divorces will take place, and if the intention was of a lesser number, of one or two divorces, only one divorce will take place in either case. And if some body says: "I have forbidden myself whatever was lawful for me, this would not apply to the wife unless he said these words with the intention of forbidding himself the wife. Apart from the wife, one cannot use the thing 011e has forbidden oneself until one has expiated the oath. *Badā'i as-Sanā'i; Hedāyah; Fatḥ Al-Qadir; al-Jaṣṣaṣ, Aḥkām al-Qur'an.*

The Shāfe'īs say that if one forbids oneself the wife with the intention of divorce or *ẓihār*, the intended thing would become effective, whether it is a revocable divorce or an irrevocable divorce, or *ẓihār*. And if a person used the words of *taḥrīm* with the intention of both divorce and *ẓihār*, he would be asked to choose one or the other, for both divorce and *ẓihār* cannot be established at one and the same time. Divorce dissolves marriage but in case of *ẓihār* it continues;

and if without any intention the wife is forbidden, she would not become forbidden, but expiation of the oath would become necessary. And if another thing, apart from the wife, is forbidden, it would be meaningless; there is no expiation for it. *(Mughni al-Muhtāj).*

The Mālikis say that if a person forbids himself anything other than the wife, it neither becomes forbidden nor entails an expiation. But if he says to the wife, "You are unlawful, or unlawful for me, or I am unlawful for you," this would amount to a triple divorce in any case whether this was said to a wife with whom marriage has been consummated, or to one with whom it has not yet been consummated, unless his intention was of less than three divorces. Asbagh says: "If a person says: whatever was lawful for me, is unlawful, the wife also becomes forbidden unless he makes an exception of the wife." In *al-Mudawwanah,* distinction has been made between the wife with whom marriage has been consummated and the wife with whom it has not been consummated. If one forbids oneself the former, a threefold divorce will take place irrespective of the intention, but in case of the latter the same number of divorces would take effect as was intended, and if there was no intention of any particular number, it would be considered a triple divorce *(Hāshīyah ad-Dusūqi).* Qādi Ibn al-'Arabi in his *Ahkām al-Qur'ān* has cited three statements of Imām Mālik: (1) That forbidding oneself the wife amounts to an irrevocable divorce; (2) that it amounts to three divorces; and (3) that in case of the wife with whom marriage has been consummated it amounts to three divorces, but in case of the one with whom it has not been consummated, to only one divorce if one was intended Then he says: "The correct thing is that forbidding oneself the wife amounts to one divorce only, for if the man uses the word divorce instead of calling her unlawful without specifying the number, only one divorce will take place."

Three different views in this regard have been reported from Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal: (1) That to forbid oneself the wife, or to make a lawful thing absolutely unlawful for oneself, is *zihār,* whether *zihār* was intended or not; (2) that this is an express allusion to divorce, and it amounts to pronouncing a triple divorce whether only one divorce was intended; and (3) that it is an oath, unless the man had the intention of divorce or *zihār* and in this case the same would take effect as was intended. Of these only the first one is the best known view among the Hanbalīs. *(Al-Insāf)*

5. That is, "Allah is your Master and Guardian of your affairs. He knows best in what lies your own good, and whatever Commands He has given, they are all based on wisdom. "The first thing means: "You are not independent in this world, but you are servant of Allah and He is your Master; therefore, none of you possesses any power to alter or change the ways and methods prescribed by Him; the best thing for you is to entrust your affairs to Him and continue to obey Him."

The second thing means that all the methods and laws that Allah has enjoined, are based on knowledge and wisdom, Whatever He has made lawful, has been made lawful on the basis of knowledge and wisdom and whatever He has made unlawful also has been made unlawful on the basis of knowledge and wisdom. Nothing has been made lawful or unlawful at random. Therefore, those who believe in Allah should understand that it is Allah Who is All-Knowing and All-Wise and not they, and their well-being lies only in carrying out duly the Commands given by Him.

6. Different things have been reported in different traditions, saying that the Holy Prophet had told such and such a thing to one of his wives in confidence, which she disclosed to another wife. But for us, in the first place, it is not right to investigate it, for it is on the disclosure of a secret that Allah is taking a wife to task; it cannot therefore be right for us to enquire into it and try to uncover it. Secondly, in view of the object for which this verse was sent down, it is not at all important to know what the secret was. Had it any connection with the object of the discourse, Allah would Himself have mentioned it The real object for which this incident has been related in the Qur'ān is to warn the Holy Prophet's wives and, through them, the wives of the responsible people among the Muslims not to be careless in the matter of guarding secrets. Had it been only a private and personal affair, as is generally the case between the husband and the wife in the world, there was no need that Allah should have directly informed the Holy Prophet of it through revelation, and then did not rest content only with giving the information, but should also have recorded it in the Holy Book which the whole world has to recite forever. The reason why it was given such importance was that this wife was not the wife of an ordinary husband but of that illustrious husband, whom Allah had appointed to the office of the highest responsibility, who was locked in an incessant battle with the disbelievers, polytheists and hypocrites at all times and under whose leadership a fierce conflict was going on for establishing Islam in place of paganism. In the house of such an illustrious man there could be countless things which if not kept secret but disclosed before time, could harm the great mission which he was performing. Therefore, when a lady of the house happened to show this weakness for the first time in that she disclosed a secret that had been told her in confidence, to another (a member of her own household), the weakness was immediately pointed out to her, not secretly but openly in the Qur'ān, so as to impart training in the guarding of secrets not only to the wives of the Holy Prophet but also to the wives of all responsible people of the Muslim community. In the verse the question whether the secret disclosed pertained to a matter of any consequence or not, and whether its disclosure could cause any harm to the mission or not, has been altogether ignored. What has been disapproved and pointed out in particular is that the secret was disclosed to another. The higher the position of responsibility a person holds the more

dangerous would be the leakage of secrets from his house. No matter whether a thing is of any consequence or not, once a person becomes careless in the matter of guarding secrets, he may reveal important things as well as trivial matters.

7. The word *ṣaghat* in the original is from *ṣaghy* which means to swerve and to become crooked. Shāh Waliyullah and Shāh Rafi'uddin have translated this sentence, thus: "Crooked have become your hearts." Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, Sufyān Thaurī and Ḍaḥḥāk have given this meaning of it: "Your hearts have swerved from the right path." Imām Rāzī explains it thus: "Your hearts have swerved from what is right, and the right implies the right of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace)." And 'Allama Ālūsī's commentary is "Although it is incumbent on you that you should approve what the Holy Messenger (upon whom be peace) approves and disapprove what he disapproves, yet in this matter your hearts have swerved from conformity with him and turned in opposition to him."

8. The word *taẓāhur* means to cooperate mutually in opposition to another person, or to be united against another person. Shah Waliyullah has translated this sentence, thus: "If you mutually join together to cause distress to the Prophet." Shāh 'Abdul Qādir's translation is: "If you both overwhelm him." Maulānā Ashraf 'Ali Thānwī's translation runs: "And if you both continued to work thus against the Prophet." And Maulānā Shabbīr Aḥmad 'Uthmāmi has explained it thus: "If you two continued to work and behave thus (against the Prophet)."

The verse is clearly addressed to two ladies and the context shows that these ladies are from among the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) for in vv. 1-5 of this Surah the affairs concerning the Holy Prophet's wives only have been discussed continuously, and this becomes obvious from the style of the Qur'ān itself. As for the question who were the wives, and what was the matter which caused Allah's displeasure, the details are found in the *Ḥadīth*. In Musnad Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim, Tirmidhī and Nasā'ī, a detailled tradition of Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās has been related, which describes the incident with some variation in wording. Ibn 'Abbās says:

"I had been thinking a long time to ask Ḥaḍrat 'Umar as to who were the two of the Holy Prophet's wives, who had joined each other against him, and about whom Allah sent down this verse: *In tatūbā...*; but I could not muster courage because of his awe-inspiring personality until he left for Ḥajj and I accompanied him. On our way back while helping him to perform ablutions for the Prayer at one place I had an opportunity to ask him this question. He replied: they were 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah. Then he began to relate the background, saying: "We, the people of Quraish, were used to keeping our womenfolk under strict control. Then, when we came to Madīnah, we found that the people here were

under the control of their wives, and the women of Quraish too started learning the same thing from them. One day when I became angry with my wife, I was amazed to see that she argued with me, I felt badly about her conduct. She said, 'Why should you feel so angry at my behaviour? By God, the wives of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) answer him back face to face,' (the word in the original is *li-yurāji'nahū*) and some one of them remains angrily apart from him for the whole day. (According to Bukhārī: the Holy Prophet remains angry and apart from her the whole day). Hearing this I came out of my house and went to Ḥafṣah (who was Ḥadrat 'Umar's daughter and the Holy Prophet's wife). I asked her: Do you answer back to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) face to face? She said: Yes. I asked: And does one of you remain apart from him for the whole day (According to Bukhārī: the Holy Prophet remains angry and apart from her for the entire day). She said: Yes. I said: Wretched is the one from among you, who behaves thus. Has one of you become so fearless of this that Allah should afflict her with His wrath because of the wrath of His Prophet and she should perish? So, do not be rude to the Prophet (here also the words are: *lā turājī-'ī*), nor demand of him anything, but demand of me whatever you desire. Do not be misled by this that your neighbor (i.e. Ḥadrat 'Ā'ishah) is more beautiful and dearer to the Holy Prophet. After this I left her house and went to the house of Umm Salamah, who was related to me, and talked to her on this subject. She said: Son of Khaṭṭāb, you are a strange man: you have meddled in every matter until you are now interfering in the affair between Allah's Messenger and his wives. She discouraged me. Then it so happened that an Anṣārī neighbour came to my house at night and he called out to me. We used to sit in the Holy Prophet's assembly by turns and each used to pass on to the other the news of the day of his turn. It was the time when we were apprehending an attack by the Ghassānids any time. On his call when I came out of my house, he said that something of grave significance had happened. I said: Have the Ghassānids launched an attack? He said: No, but something even more serious! The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has divorced his wives. I said: Doomed is Ḥafṣah (the words in Bukhārī are: *Raghima anfu Hafsah wa 'Āishah*). I already had a premonition of this."

We have left out what happened after this, how next morning Ḥadrat 'Umar went before the Holy Prophet and tried to appease his anger. We have described this incident by combining the traditions of Musnad Aḥmad and Bukhārī. In this the word *murāj'at* which Ḥadrat 'Umar has used cannot be taken in its literal sense, but the context shows that the word has been used in the sense of answering back face to face and Ḥadrat 'Umar's saying to his daughter: *Lā turaji-'ī Rasūl Allāh* clearly has the meaning: Do not be impudent to the Messenger of Allah. Some people say that this is a wrong translation, and their objection is: Although it is correct to translate *murāja'at* as answering back, or

answering back face to face, yet it is not correct to translate it as "bing impudent". These objectors do not understand that if a person of a lower rank or position answers back or retorts to a person of a higher rank and position, or answers him back face to face this very thing is described as impudence. For example, if a father rebukes his son for something or feels angry at his behaviour, and the son instead of keeping quiet or offering an excuse, answers back promptly, this could only he described as impudence. Then, when the matter is not between a father and a son, but between the Messenger of Allah and an individual of his community, only a foolish person could say that it was not impudence.

Some other people regard this translation of ours as disrespectful, whereas it could be disrespectful in case we had had the boldness to use such words in respect of Hadrat Hafsah from ourselves. We have only given the correct meaning of the words of Hadrat 'Umar, and these words he had used while scolding and reproving his daughter for her error. Describing it as disrespectful would mean that either the father should treat his daughter with due respect and reverence even when scolding and rebuking her or else the translator should render his rebuke and reproof in a way as to make it sound respectful and reverent.

Here, what needs to be considered carefully is that if it was such an ordinary and trivial matter that when the Holy Prophet said something to his wives they would retort to Him, why was it given so much importance that in the Qur'ān Allah administered a severe warning directly to the wives themselves? And why did Hadrat 'Umar take it as such a grave matter that first he reproved his own daughter, then visited the house of the other wives and asked them to fear the wrath of Allah? And, above all, was the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) also so sensitive that he would take offence at minor things and become annoyed with his wives, and was he, God forbid, so irritable that once having been annoyed at such things he had severed his connections with all his wives and retired to his private apartment in seclusion? If a person considers these questions deeply, he will inevitably have to adopt one of the two views in the explanation of these verses Either on account of his excessive concern for reverence for the holy wives he should not at all mind if a fault is imputed to Allah and His Messenger, or else he should admit in a straightforward way that at that time the attitude and behaviour of these holy wives has actually become so objectionable that the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was justified in becoming annoyed over it, and more than that, Allah Himself was justified that He should administer a severe warning to the wives on their unseemly behaviour and attitude.

9. That is, "You would only harm yourselves if you upheld and supported each other against the Messenger of Allah (upon whom be Allah's peace), for none could succeed against him whose Protector was Allah and who had Gabriel and the angels and all the righteous Believers on his side."

10. This shows that the fault did not lie only with Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'isha and Ḥaḍrat Ḥafsah but the other wives also had some share in it. That is why, after them, all the other wives too, have been warned in this verse. No light has been thrown on the nature of the error in the Qur'ān. However, some details are found in the *Ḥadīth*, which we shall relate below.

In Bukhārī, a tradition has been reported from Ḥaḍrat Anas, saying that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar said: "The Holy Prophet's wives because of their mutual envies and rivalries had utterly displeased him. At this I said to them: It may well be that if the Holy Prophet divorced you, Allah would give him in your place better wives than you." Ibn Abī Ḥātim has, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Anas, reported the statement of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar in these words: "I was informed that a discord had been created between the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and his wives. At this I went to each of them and asked them to refrain from vexing the Holy Prophet; otherwise Allah would give him in their stead better wives than themselves. So much so that when I went to the last of them (and according to a tradition of Bukhārī, to Umm Salamah), she said to me: O 'Umar, is not the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself enough to admonish his wives? Then why should you come out to counsel them? This made me quiet, and after this Allah sent down this verse.'

In Muslim, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās has related that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar said to him: "When the Holy Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) separated himself from his wives, I went to the Mosque and found the people worried and upset and playing with pebbles and saying to one another: 'The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has divorced his wives.' After this Ḥaḍrat 'Umar related his visiting the apartments of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah and admonishing them, then said: I went before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and said: Why do you feel upset with regard to your wives? If you divorce them, Allah is with you, all the angels and Gabriel and Michael are with you, and I and Abū Bakr and all the Believers are with you. I thank Allah that seldom has it so happened that I said a thing and did not have hope from Allah that He would testify to what I said. So, after this these verses of Sūrah At-Taḥrīm were sent down. Then I asked the Holy Prophet: Have you divorced your wives? He said: No. Thereupon I stood at the entrance of the Mosque and announced in a loud voice: The Holy Prophet has not divorced his wives."

The traditions related in Bukhārī from Ḥaḍrat Anas and in Musnad Aḥmad from Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah and Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah say that the Holy Prophet had pledged to remain away from his wives for a month and he retired in seclusion to his apartment. When 29 days passed, Gabriel came and said; "You have fulfilled your oath: a month has come to completion."

Ḥāfiẓ Badruddīn 'Aini in *'Umdat al-Qārī* has related this on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah: The wives of the Holy Prophet had become divided into two parties: one party consisted of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah herself and Ḥaḍrat Ḥafṣah. Ḥaḍrat Saudah and Ḥaḍrat Safiyyah, and the other of Ḥaḍrat Zainab, Ḥaḍrat Umm Salamah and the rest of the wives.

These traditions indicate to some extent the conditions ,that existed in the Holy Prophet's domestic life at that time, which made it necessary that Allah Almighty should intervene and reform the attitude of the holy wives. Although the wives were the best ladies of society, yet they were human beings and were not free from human weaknesses. Sometimes when it became difficult for them to lead a life of continuous poverty and hardship, they would become restive, impatient and would start pressing the Holy Prophet for better maintenance. At this Allah sent down vv. 28-29 of Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb and admonished them to the effect: "If you seek the world and it adornments, Our Messenger will give you of these and send you of in a good way. But if you seek Allah and His Messenger and the Hereafter, you should bear up against the hardships with patience, which you might have to face when living with the Messenget." (For details, see E.N. 41 of Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb and the Introduction to it). Then on account of the feminine nature they sometimes happened to behave in a way, which though not unusual in everyday human life, did not go well with the unique dignity and great responsibilities of the house to which Allah had given them the honour to belong. So, when it was apprehended that those things might embitter the Holy Prophet's domestic life and might even adversely affect the great mission that Allah had entrusted to him, He sent down this verse in the Qur'ān, and reformed them so that the holy wives may realize the responsibilities of the position and rank which they had attained as the life companions of the Last Messenger of Allah, and should not regard themselves as ordinary women and their household as a common household. The very first sentence of this verse was such as might have caused their hearts to shudder. There could be no severer warning for them than ,this: "It may well be that if the Prophet divorces all of you, Allah will give him in your place better wives than yourselves." In the first place, even the thought of being divorced by the Prophet (upon whom be Allah's peace) was unbearable for them; more than that, this would deprive them of the honour of being Mothers of the Believers, and the other women whom Allah would give as wives to the Prophet would be better than them, After this it was no longer possible for the holy wives to behave in a way as would have occasioned a reproof from Allah. That is why we find only two places in the Qur'ān where these select and distinguished ladies have been administered a warning, in Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb and here in ,". Sūrah ,At-Taḥrīm.

11. In the places where the words *muslim* and *mu'min* have been used together, *muslim* means the one who carries out Divine Commands practically, and *mu'min* the one who believes sincerely and truly. Thus, the foremost quality of the best Muslim wives is that they should be believing in Allah and His Messenger and His Religion *(dīn)* sincerely and also practically following Allah's Religion in their morals, habits, customs and conduct.

12. "Obedient" *has* two meanings and both are implied here (1) They are obedient to Allah and His Messenger: (2) they are obedient to their husbands.

13. The word *tā'ib* when used as attribute of a man does not imply the one who offers repentance only once but the one who continues to implore Allah again and again for the forgiveness of his mistakes, whose conscience is alive and active, who is always a are of his weaknesses and errors and is penitent for them. Such a person never feels proud, arrogant and conceited, but is gentle and clement by nature.

14. A worshipper can never be so heedless of God as a non-worshipper. This also helps much in making a woman a good wife. Being devout she adheres to the bounds set by Allah, recognizes and discharges the rights of others and keeps her faith fresh and alive at all times. Because of these qualities she can better be expected that she would not reject obedience to Divine Commands.

15. The word *sā'ihāt* in the original has been interpreted by several Companions and large number of their successors to mean the same as *sā'imāt* (those given to fasting). The reason why the *word siyāhat* (journeying) has been used for fasting is that in the ancient times journeys were mostly undertaken by the monks and ascetics, who had no provisions and had to go without food till they got something to eat from somewhere. On that account fasting also is a kind of asceticism, for a faster has to remain hungry until the time of breaking the fast. Ibn Jarīr in his Commentary of *At-Taubah:* 12 has cited a saying of Hadrat 'A'ishah, saying: "The journeying (i.e. asceticism) of the *Ummah is* fasting." Here, making mention of fasting as an attribute of the pious wives does not mean that they observe the obligatory fasting month of Ramadān only but that they observe voluntary fasts also besides the obligatory fasts.

Addressing the holy wives Allah's saying: "If the Holy Messenger divorces all of you, Allah will give him in your place better wives who will have this quality" does not mean that the wives were not virtuous, but it means; "Give up your wrong conduct which is causing so much distress to the Holy Prophet; instead, pay attention to developing in yourselves these noble qualities to the highest degree."

16. This verse tells that a person's responsibility is not confined to making effort to save himself from the punishment of God but it is also his responsibility that he should so educate and train to the best of his ability members of his family also to become Allah's favourite servants, who have been entrusted to his care in the natural process of life; and if they might be following a path to Hell, he should try, as far as he can, to correct them. His concern should not only be that his children should lead a happy and prosperous life in the world but, more than that, he should be anxious to see that they do not become fuel of Hell in the Hereafter. According to a tradition reported in Bukhārī by Ḥadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said: "Each one of you is a herdsman and is accountable with regard to his herd: the ruler is a herdsman and is accountable with regard to his subjects; the man is a herdsman of his family and is accountable with regard to them; and the woman is a herdsman of her husband's house and his children and is accountable with regard to them."

"Whose fuel...stone" probably implies coal. Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbas, Mujāhid, Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Suddī say that this will be brimstone.

17. That is, they will enforce on every culprit precisely the same punishment which they will be commanded to enforce on him without making any alteration in it, or showing any pity for him.

18. The style of both these verses contains a severe warning for the Muslims. In the first verse the Muslims have been addressed and told that they should save themselves and their households from the dreadful punishment; in the second that this will be said to the disbelievers while subjecting them to punishment in Hell. This by itself gives the meaning that the Muslims in the world should avoid adopting that conduct and behaviour in consequence of which they may have to meet with the fate as the disbelievers in the Hereafter.

19. Literally, *"taubat an-naṣūḥ-an"* may either mean that one should offer such true repentance as may have no tinge of pretence and hypocrisy in it, or that one should wish one's own self well and repenting *of* sin should save oneself from the evil end, or that one should so adorn and improve one's life after repentance as to become a cause of admonition for others, and seeing his example others also may reform themselves accordingly. These are the meanings of *taubat an-naṣūḥ* which are indicated by its literal sense. As for its religious meaning, its explanation is found in the *Ḥadīth* which Ibn Abi, Ḥātim has related on the authority of Zirr bin Hubaish. He says: "When I asked Ḥadrat Ubayy bin Ka'b the meaning of *taubat an-naṣūḥ*, he said that he had asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) the same question, and he had replied: 'It implies that when you happen to commit an error, you should feel penitent for it, then should implore Allah for forgiveness remorsefully, and then should refrain from committing the

same error again." This same meaning has been reported from hadrat 'Umar. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd and Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās also, and in a tradition Ḥaḍrat 'Umar has defined *taubat an-nasūh*, thus: "After offering repentance one should not even think of committing the sin, not to speak of repeating it." (Ibn Jarīr) Ḥaḍrat 'Alī once heard a desert Arab chanting the words of repentance and forgiveness quickly and mechanically and remarked: 'This is the repentance of the liars." The man asked: 'What is true repentance? Hadrat 'Alī replied: It should be accompanied by six things:

(1) You should feel penitent for the wrong you have done: (2) you should carry out the duties that you have ignored; t3) restore the rights that you have usurped; (4) ask forgiveness of him whom you have wronged; (S) make a resolve not to repeat the sin again; and (6) consume yourself in obedience to Allah as you have so far been consuming it in wrongdoing, and cause it to taste the bitterness of obedience as you have so far been causing it to enjoy the sweet taste of disobedience and sin." *(Al-Kashshāf).*

In connection with repentance there are some other points also which should be well understood: (1) That repentance, in fact, is to show remorse for an act of disobeience only because it is a disobeience of Allah; otherwise to make a resolve to refrain from a sin because it is harmful for health, for instance, or it is likely to cause defamation or financial loss, is no repentance; (2) that man should offer repentance as soon as he realizes that he has commited disobedience of Allah and should compensate for it without delay in whatever form possible and should not defer it in any way; (3) that violating one's repentance again and making a jest of repentance and repeating the sin again and again of which one has repented, is a proof of the falsity of one's repentance, for the essence of repentance is penitence, and breaking one's repentance repeatedly is a sign that it has not been motivated by penitence; (4) that if the person who has repented sincerely and resolved not to repeat the sin again, happens to repeat it once again because of human weakness, it will not revive his past sin: however, he should offer a fresh repentance for the latter sin sod should resolve more firmly that he would not commit the sin in future; (5) that it is not necessary to renew one's repentance again everytime one remembers the disobedience committed in the past, but if one's self derives pleasure from the remebrance of the past, sinful life, one should offer repentance again and again until the remembrance of the sins causes remorse instead of pleasure and enjoyment. For the person who has actually repented of disobedience because of fear of God cannot derive pleasure

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نُوحٍ وَّامْرَاَتَ لُوْطٍ ؕ كَانَتَا تَحْتَ عَبْدَيْنِ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا صَالِحَيْنِ فَخَانَتٰهُمَا
فَلَمْ يُغْنِيَا عَنْهُمَا مِنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْـًٔا وَّقِيْلَ ادْخُلَا النَّارَ مَعَ الدّٰخِلِيْنَ ﴿١٠﴾
وَضَرَبَ اللّٰهُ مَثَلًا لِّلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا امْرَاَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ اِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِيْ
عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِيْ مِنْ فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهٖ وَنَجِّنِيْ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ
الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ عِمْرٰنَ الَّتِيْٓ اَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيْهِ مِنْ
رُّوْحِنَا وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمٰتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُتُبِهٖ وَكَانَتْ مِنَ الْقٰنِتِيْنَ ﴿١٢﴾

Allah cites for the disbelievers the example of the wives of Noah and Lot. They were married to two of Our righteous servants, but they betrayed their husbands,[24] and they could not avail them anything against Allah. To both it was said, "Enter the Fire along with those who enter." And for the believers, Allah cites the example of the wife of Pharaoh, when she prayed, "My Lord, build for me, in Your Presence, a house in Paradise, and save me from Pharaoh and his work[25] and deliver me from the wicked". And (Allah) cites the example of Mary, daughter of 'Imrān,[26] who had guarded her chastity.[27] So We breathed into her body of Our Spirit,[28] and she testified to the Words of her Lord and His Books, and she was one of the obedient.[29] 10-12

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from the thought that he has been disobeying God. His deriving pleasure from it is a sign that fear of God has not taken root in his heart.

20. The words of the verse deserve deep consideration. It has not been said that if you repeat, you will surely be forgiven and will certainly be admitted to Paradise, but that: "If you offer true repentance, it may well be that Allah will

treat you kindly." It means that it is not incumbent upon Allah to accept the repentance of the sinner and to grant him Paradise instead of subjecting him to punishment. but it will be His kindness and compassion that He may forgive well as reward His servant. One should have hope of Hit forgiveness, but one should not commit a sin with the confidence that one will achieve forgiveness by repentance.

21. That is, "He will not allow the reward of their good deeds to go to waste. He will not let the disbelievers and the hypocrites taunt the believers that they had gained nothing n spite of their worship. Humilitation will be the fate of the rebels and the disobedient and not of the faithful and obedient."

22. When this verse is read along with w. 12-13 of Sūrah Al-Hadīd, it becomes clear that the running on of the light before the believers will take place when they will be proceeding towards Paradise from the Plain of Resurrection. There it will be pitch dark all around and those who will have been condemned to Hell, will be groping about in it; the light will only be with the believers by which they will be travelling on their way. On this critical occasion, hearing the wailings and groanings of those groping in the dark the believers will be feeling terror-stricken. In view of their past errors and short-comings they will be afraid lest they too should be deprived of their light and made to grope about like those wretched people. Therefore, they will pray: "O our Lord, forgive us our sins and let our light remain with us until we reach Paradise." Ibn Jarīr has cited Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās as explaining the meaning of *Rabbanā-atmim lana nūranā* thus: "They will implore Allah Al-mighty that their light be allowed to remain with them and kept from going out until they have crossed the bridge across Hell." The commentary given by Ḥadrat Ḥasan Baṣri, Mujāhid and Ḍaḥḥāk also is almost the same. Ibn Kathīr has cited their this saying: "When the believers see that the hypocrites have been deprived of the light, they will pray to Allah for the perfection of their light." (For further explanation, see E.N. 17 of Sūrah Al-Ḥadid).

23. For explanation, see E.N., 82 of Sūrah *At-Taubah*.

24. This "betrayal" was not in the sense that they had committed an indecency but in the sense that they did not follow the Prophets Noah and Lot on the way of faith but sided with their enemies against them. Ibn 'Abbās say: "No Prophet's wife has ever been wicked and immoral. The betrayal of these two women in fact was in the matter of faith and religion: they did not acknowledge the religion of the Prophets Noah and Lot. The Prophet Noah's wife used to convey news about the believers to the wicked of her people, and the Prophet Lot's wife used to inform the immoral people about those who visited him in his house." (Ibn Jarīr).

25. "From Pharaoh and his work": from the evil end that Pharaoh would meet in consequence of his evil deeds.

26. It may be that the name of Mary's father was 'Imrān, or she may have been called "daughter of 'Imrān" because she belonged to the family of 'Imran.

27. This is a refutation of the accusation by the Jews that the birth of Jesus was, God forbid, the result of a sin of his mother. Their same accusation has been called a "monstrous calumny" in An-Nisā': 156. (For explanation, see E.N. 190 of An-Nisā').

28. That is, without her having any connection with a man, Allah breathed into her womb a Spirit from Himself. (For explanation, see E.N.'s 212, 213 of An-Nisā' and E.N. 89 of Al Anbiyā').

29. For the explanation of the object for which these three kinds of women have been cited as an example, see the Introduction to the Sūrah.