

Aal-Imran آلِ عِمْرَانَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Name

The Surah takes its name from Ayat 33. *Aal-Imran*, like the names of many other Surahs, is merely a name to distinguish it from other Surahs and does not imply that the family of Imran has been discussed in it.

The Period of Revelation

The Surah consists of four discourses:

The first discourse (Ayats 1-32) was probably revealed soon after the battle of Badr.

The second discourse (Ayats 33-63) was revealed in 9 A.H. on the occasion of the visit of the deputation from the Christians of Najran.

The third discourse (Ayats 64-120) appears to have been revealed immediately after the first one.

The fourth discourse (Ayats 121-200) was revealed after the battle of Uhd.

Subject

Though these discourses were revealed at different periods and on different occasions, they are so inter-linked and so inter-connected in regard to their aim, object and central theme that they make together one continuous subject. This

Surah has been especially addressed to two groups, the people of the Book (the Jews and the Christians), and the followers of Muhammad (peace be upon him).

The message has been extended to the Jews and the Christians in continuation of the invitation in Surah *Al-Baqarah*, in which they have been admonished for their erroneous beliefs and evil morals and advised to accept, as a remedy, the truth of the Quran. They have been told here that Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught the same right way of life that had been preached by their own prophets. That it alone was the right way, the Way of Allah. Hence any deviation from it will be wrong even according to their own scriptures.

The second group, the Muslims, who had been declared to be the best community in Surah *Al-Baqarah* and appointed torch bearers of the truth and entrusted with the responsibility of reforming the world, have been given additional instructions in continuation of those given in the preceding Surah. The Muslims have been warned to learn a lesson from the religious and moral degeneration of the former communities and to refrain from treading in their footsteps. Instructions have also been given about the reformative work they had to perform. Besides this, they have been taught how to deal with the people of the Book and the hypocrites who were putting different kinds of hindrances in the Way of Allah. Above all, they have been warned to guard against those weaknesses which had come to the surface in the battle of Uhd.

Background

The following is the background of the Surah:

1. The believers had met with all sorts of trials and hardships about which they had been forewarned in Surah *Al-Baqarah*. Though they had come out victorious in the battle of Badr, they were not out of danger yet. Their victory had aroused the enmity of all those powers in Arabia which were opposed to the Islamic movement. Signs of threatening storms had begun to appear on all sides and the Muslims were in a perpetual state of fear and anxiety. It looked as if the whole Arabian world around the tiny state of Al-Madinah - which was no more than a village state at that time - was bent upon blotting out its very existence. This state of war was also adversely affecting its economy, which had already been badly disturbed by the influx of the Muslim refugees from Makkah.

2. Then there was the disturbing problem of the Jewish clans who lived in the suburbs of Al-Madinah. They were discarding the treaties of alliance they had made with the Prophet (peace be upon him) after his migration from Makkah. So much so that on the occasion of the battle of Badr, these people of the Book sympathized with the evil aims of the idolaters, in spite of the fact that their fundamental articles of the faith, Oneness of Allah, prophethood, life after death, were the same as those of the Muslims. After the battle of Badr, they openly began to incite the Quraish and other Arab clans to wreak their vengeance on the Muslims. Thus, those Jewish clans set aside their centuries old friendly and neighborly relations

with the people of Al-Madinah. At last when their mischievous actions and breaches of treaties became unbearable, the Prophet (peace be upon him) attacked the Bani-Qainuqaa, the most mischievous of all the other Jewish clans who had conspired with the hypocrites of Al-Madinah and the idolatrous Arab clans to encircle the believers on all sides. The magnitude of the peril might be judged from the fact that even the life of the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself was always in danger. Therefore his companions slept in their armors during that period and kept watch at night to guard against any sudden attack, and whenever the Prophet (peace be upon him) happened to be out of sight even for a short while, they would at once set out in search of him.

3. This incitement by the Jews added fuel to the fire which was burning in the hearts of the Quraish and they began to make preparations to avenge the defeat they had suffered at Badr. A year after this an army of 3,000 strong marched out of Makkah to invade Al-Madinah and a battle took place at the foot of Mount Uhd. The Prophet (peace be upon him) came out of Al-Madinah with one thousand men to meet the enemy. While they were marching to the battle field, three hundred hypocrites deserted the army and returned to Al-Madinah, but there still remained a small band of hypocrites among the seven hundred who accompanied the Prophet (peace be upon him). They played their part and did their worst to create mischief and chaos in the ranks of the believers during the battle. This was the first clear indication of the fact that within the fold

of the Muslim community there was quite a large number of saboteurs who were always ready to conspire with the external enemies to harm their own brethren.

4. Though the devices of the hypocrites had played a great part in the set back at Uhd, the weaknesses of the Muslims themselves contributed no less to it. And it was but natural that the Muslims should show signs of moral weakness for they were a new community which had only recently been formed on a new ideology and had not as yet got a thorough moral training. Naturally in this second hard test of their physical and moral strength, some weaknesses came to the surface. That is why a detailed review of the battle of Uhd was needed to warn the Muslims of their shortcomings and to issue instructions for their reform. It should also be noted that this review of the battle is quite different from the reviews that are usually made by generals on similar occasions.

Subject: Guidance

This Surah is the sequel to, *Al-Baqarah* and the invitation therein is continued to the people of the Book. In *Al-Baqarah* the Jews were pointedly invited to accept the guidance and in this Surah the Christians have particularly been admonished to give up their erroneous beliefs and accept the guidance of the Quran. At the same time, the Muslims have been instructed to nourish the virtues that may enable them to carry out their obligations and spread the divine guidance.

Topics and their Interconnection

Ayats 1-32 In these introductory verses, the fundamental

truths about Allah, revelation and life after death have been reiterated to serve as fitting preliminaries, leading to the main topics discussed in the Surah.

Ayats 33-65 This discourse is particularly addressed to the Christians and invites them to accept Islam. It clears Jesus (peace be upon him) and his mother not only from the stigma maliciously set upon them by the Jews, but also refutes the erroneous Christian creed of the divinity of Jesus (peace be upon him) which had been formulated because of his miraculous birth. For this purpose the instances of John the Baptist (peace be upon him) to a barren woman and an extremely aged man and that of Adam without father and mother have been cited to show that there is nothing in the birth of Jesus (peace be upon him) without a father to entitle him to divinity.

Ayats 66-101 In these verses the people of the Book, the Jews, have been invited to give up their sinister ways and accept the divine guidance. At the same time the Muslims have been warned to be on their guard against their malicious intentions, erroneous ways and absurd objections.

Ayats 102-120 The Muslims have been instructed to learn lessons from the history of the people of the Book and also to guard themselves against their machinations, and to prepare and train themselves to establish virtue and eradicate evil.

Ayats 121-175 In this portion, a review of the battle of Uhd has been done to teach and reassure the Muslims that the machinations of their enemies could do them no harm, if

they would practice restraint and fortitude and have fear of Allah. It has been pointed out that the setback they had suffered was due to the lack of some moral qualities and the existence of some evils. Since the main cause of the defeat was the greed of the archers, guarding the pass. The taking of interest has been prohibited to eradicate this evil.

Ayats 175-189 The main theme of the verses 109-120 has been resumed to reassure and encourage the Muslims against the dangerous plots of their enemies.

Ayats 190-200 This is the conclusion of the Surah and is not directly connected with the verses immediately preceding it but with the theme of the Surah as a whole.

1. Alif. Lam. Mim.

الم

2. Allah, there is no god except Him, the ever Living, the Sustainer of all that exists.*1

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

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*1 Though ignorant people might make several gods and set up objects of worship, the fact remains that the whole of creation belongs to the Eternal, who has no partner whatsoever. He is the living Allah who sustains the whole universe. He alone is the Master of His kingdom. None else is a partner in His attributes, characteristics, powers and rights. Hence a lie is invented whenever any false god is set up beside Allah on the earth or in the heavens and a war is waged against the truth.

3. He has sent down to you (Muhammad) the Book

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ

(the Quran) in truth, confirming that which was before it, and He revealed the Torah and the Gospel.

مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنْزَلَ
التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ

4. Before this, as a guidance for mankind.*² And He sent down the Criterion (the Quran). Indeed, those who disbelieve the verses of Allah, for them is a severe punishment. And Allah is All Mighty, the Owner of Retribution.

مِن قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَنْزَلَ
الْفُرْقَانَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ

*² There exists a common misconception about the Torah (Taurat) and the Gospel (Injil) for the people generally take the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) for the Torah, and the Gospels (the first four books of the New Testament) for the Injil. The misconception creates doubts about revelation itself and a question arises, “Are these books really the word of God? And does the Quran really confirm all their contents”? As a matter of fact, the Torah, which the Quran confirms, is not the Pentateuch but is contained in it, and the Injil is not “the four Gospels” but is within these books.

The Taurat consists of those commandments and injunctions which were given to Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) during his prophethood, which lasted for about forty years. Of these were the ten commandments which were inscribed on stone tablets and delivered to Moses

(peace be upon him) on Mount Tur: as regards the remaining commandments and injunctions, he himself had put down in writing. Then he handed one copy of the Torah to each of the twelve tribes of Israel for guidance. One copy was entrusted to the Levites for safe custody, which along with the stone tablets, was deposited in the Ark.

That Taurat remained quite safe and sound as an entire book up to the first destruction of Jerusalem. But, by and by, the Israelites grew so indifferent to and negligent and unmindful of it that when the Temple of Solomon was under repair during the reign of Josiah, Hilkiah the high priest came across it by chance but did not know that it was the Torah. He thought it was only a law book and passed it on to the royal scribe as a curio. The latter presented it to king Josiah who tore his clothes and ordered Hilkiah and others to consult the Eternal about the terms of the book. Such was the condition of the Israelites when Nebuchadnezzar sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple, and they lost forever even the very few copies of the Torah which had long lain neglected in some forgotten niches.

The Old Testament was compiled by Ezra, when the Israelites returned home to Jerusalem after their captivity in Babylon and built the Temple anew. Ezra gathered together some prominent men of his community, and with their help compiled the whole history of Israel which now comprises the first 17 books of the Bible. Of these Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy tell the life history of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) and include those

verses of the real Taurat which became available to Ezra and his assistants, who incorporated them in those books at appropriate places in the chronological order of their revelation. Thus it is obvious that the Pentateuch as a whole is not the Taurat but includes it. The real Taurat comprises those verses which are scattered all over the life story of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), and it is not difficult even today to locate and recognize them. Such portions where the author says, "God said to Moses," or Moses said, "The Lord your God says," the Taurat begins, and where the narrative of the life story is resumed, there that part of the Taurat ends. At those places the author of the Bible has inserted certain things by way of explanation or commentary, and it is here that the ordinary reader fails to distinguish the real Taurat from the commentary. However, those who have an insight into the nature of divine Scriptures, can distinguish, to some degree of exactness, the explanatory notes from the revealed verses. According to the Quran, only such scattered portions in the Pentateuch are the Taurat and it confirms them alone. And this can be testified by putting together these verses and comparing them with the Quran. Here and there one might come across a minor difference in their details, but one cannot find even the slightest difference between the fundamental teachings of the two. Even today one can see clearly that both the Scriptures have come from the same source.

Likewise, the Injil is the name of those inspired discourses and sayings which Jesus (peace be upon him) uttered as a

prophet during the last couple of years of his life. We have no means now of ascertaining whether these pious utterances were recorded and compiled during the lifetime of Jesus (peace be upon him). In the introduction to his translation of the Bible, Moffat says, Jesus (peace be upon him) wrote nothing and for a time his immediate disciples felt no impulse to write any account of him. The data of the historical Jesus (peace be upon him), therefore, is based on the vivid recollections and traditions of the primitive Palestinian disciples. How soon their materials took written shape we cannot tell, but at least one written record of them was probably in existence by about A.D. 50. Anyhow, when, long after his recall, the stories of Jesus (peace be upon him) were compiled in the shape of four Gospels, (the period of the composition of Mark, the first to be composed was 65-75 A.D.). Some of his written or inspired sayings were also inserted at appropriate places in the historical sketches. Thus it is obvious that the first four Gospels are not the Injil, the discourses and sayings of Jesus (peace be upon him), but they contain portions of it. We have no means of recognizing that as from the works of the authors except this: Wherever the authors say "Jesus said so or taught so and so," there the Injil begins and where they resume the narration, there it ends. According to the Quran, only such portions are the Injil and these alone are condensed by it. If these portions are compiled together and compared with the Quran, one will find no serious difference between the two, and, if somewhere a trivial difference appears, it can be removed very easily with

unbiased thinking.

5. Indeed, not a thing is hidden from Allah,^{*3} in the earth, nor in the heavens.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا تَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴿٥﴾

***3** That is, He has full, perfect, and exact knowledge of the whole universe. Hence the Book revealed by Him will contain nothing but the truth. As a matter of fact, one can learn pure truth from that Book alone which has been sent down by the All-Knowing and All-Wise."

6. He it is who shapes you in the wombs however He wills.^{*4} There is no god except Him, the All Mighty, the All Wise.

هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي
الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٦﴾

***4** This implies two important things here:

(1) Allah knows your nature better than yourself or anybody else: therefore, there is no other alternative for you but to trust in the Guidance sent down by Him.

(2) The Benevolent Allah who has been providing for all your needs, great and small, throughout all the stages of your life, ever since your mothers conceived you, could not possibly have neglected to provide for your guidance, which is after all the greatest need of your life.

7. He it is who has sent down to you the Book (the Quran). In it are clear verses, which are the foundation of

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ
مِنْهُ ءَايَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ

the Book,^{*5} and others (that are) allegorical. Then as for those in whose hearts is a deviation, they will follow that which is allegorical in them, seeking mischief, and seeking (their own) interpretation of it. And no one knows its interpretation except Allah.^{*6} And those firm in knowledge say: "We believe in it, all is from our Lord."^{*7}

And no one receives admonition except those with understanding.

الْكِتَابِ وَأُخْرُ مُتَشَبِهَاتٍ فَأَمَّا
الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ
مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ
وَأَبْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ ۗ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ
تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۗ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي
الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ
مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا
أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٧﴾

***5 Muhkam** is that which is precise, exact, clear and decisive. *Muhkamat* are those verses of the Quran which have been so couched as to make their meaning quite plain without any shade of ambiguity. They have been purposely so worded as to make their meaning definite and precise leaving little room for misinterpretation. These verses constitute the fundamental principles of the Book, i.e. they alone determine the aim and object for which the Quran has been sent down. They invite the world to Islam, teach morals and give warnings. They refute wrong beliefs and practices, and lay down the way of right living. They expound the fundamentals of religion and state beliefs and practices, morals and duties, commandments and

prohibitions. Therefore a seeker after truth should turn to these verses as these alone can satisfy his needs. Naturally such a person will concentrate on these verses and endeavor to derive the greatest benefit from them.

*6 *Mutashabihat* are those verses in which there is a possibility of more than one meaning. Their object is to give a certain minimum knowledge about the universe, its beginning and end, the position of man therein, and such other basic things, for these things are essential for the formulation of any system of life. It is obvious that no human language possesses words, expressions, idioms etc. to depict clearly those supernatural things, which have never yet been grasped by human senses, nor seen, nor heard, nor smelt, nor touched, nor tasted by human beings. That is why such supernatural things have to be described in terms of human life. That is why the Quran uses ambiguous verses in human language which are liable to give rise to more than one meaning. Thus it is clear that the main benefit of such verses is that they help one approach the reality and form a conception of it. Hence the more one tries to determine their precise meaning, the more one gets involved in doubts and ambiguities. As a result of this, one will not be able to find the reality but will be led further away from it and cause mischief. Therefore those, who seek after the truth and do not hanker after superfluities, rest content with the simple idea of reality they get from the ambiguous verses, which suffices them for an understanding of the Quran; they concentrate their whole attention on a fuller comprehension of the verses which are

precise in meaning. On the other hand, those who love superfluities or seek after mischief, spend their time and energies in giving arbitrary interpretations to the ambiguous verses.

*7 This might give rise to a question: How can one believe in the truth of the ambiguous verses, if one does not know their precise meaning? The answer is that a study of the precise verses, and not of the different interpretations of the ambiguous verses, confirms a sensible man in his belief that the Quran is the word of Allah. When the study of the precise verses once convinces him that the Book is really from Allah, then the ambiguous verses do not create any doubt in his mind and he accepts the simple meanings which are within his comprehension and leaves alone any complicacies if and when they appear. Instead of hair splitting and probing into them, he believes in the word of Allah as a whole and turns his attention to more useful things.

8. (They say): “Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after when You have guided us, and bestow upon us mercy from Yourself. Indeed, You are the Bestower.”

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ
 هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ
 رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ﴿٨﴾

9. “Our Lord, surely You will gather mankind on a Day in which there is no doubt. Indeed, Allah does not go against the promise.”

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَا
 رَيْبَ فِيهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ
 الْمِيعَادَ ﴿٩﴾

10. Indeed, those who disbelieve,^{*8} neither their wealth, nor their children will avail them against Allah anything at all. And it is they who will be the fuel for the Fire.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ
عَنَّهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا
أَوْلَادُهُمْ
مِّنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا^ط وَأُولَٰئِكَ
هُمُ وَقُودُ
النَّارِ



***8** The literal meaning of the word *kufr* is to conceal. By and by it came to be used for the concealment of the truth and then for its rejection, as the antonym of *iman*. *Iman* means to believe, to accept and to admit, and *kufr* means to disbelieve, to reject and to oppose. According to the Quran, one shall be guilty of *kufr*.

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

(2) If one professes to acknowledge Allah but refuses to accept His commandments and guidance as the sole source of the knowledge of truth and of law, or

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

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

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

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

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

11. Like the behavior of the people of Pharaoh and those before them. They denied our signs, so Allah seized them for their sins. And Allah is severe in punishment.

كَدَابٍ ءَالٍ فِرْعَوْنَ وَالَّذِينَ
مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ
شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ



12. Say (O Muhammad) to those who disbelieve: “You shall be overcome, and you shall be gathered to Hell. And (that is) an evil resting place.”

قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
سَتُغْلَبُونَ وَتُحْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ
جَهَنَّمَ ۚ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ

13. Indeed, there has been a sign for you in the two armies which met (in Badr). One army fighting in the cause of Allah, and the other disbelieving. They (the believers) saw them (the disbelievers) twice their number with their very eyes.*⁹ And Allah supports with His victory whom He wills. Indeed, in that is a lesson for those who have eyes to see.*¹⁰

قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ فِي فِئَتَيْنِ
الَّتَقَا ۖ فِئَةٌ تَقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ وَأُخْرَىٰ كَافِرَةٌ يَرَوْنَهُمْ
مِثْلِهِمْ رَأَىٰ الْعَيْنُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ
بِنَصْرِهِ ۚ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّ فِي
ذَٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ

***9** Although the actual ratio was three to one, yet even a casual observer could not have failed to notice that the number of the unbelievers was at least twice as great as that of the Muslims.

***10** A brief review of the battle of Badr, which had recently taken place, is being made with a view to imparting lessons by making a reference to its events and its results. This battle taught three important lessons:

(1) It taught that even on the battlefield the believers, who

fight in the Way of Allah, behave in quite a different manner from the disbelievers. The latter, like the Quraish, indulge in merry making and enjoying wine, women, music, dance etc., while the former, like the Muslims, practice piety, and fear Allah and absorb themselves in prayer.

(2) The victory of the Muslims, in spite of their smaller number and less equipment, over the disbelievers who had a larger number and better weapons was a clear proof that they had Allah's succor with them.

(3) The defeat was a shocking lesson for the disbelievers, who were neglectful of Allah's power and proud of their equipment and the large number of their helpers. By this, Allah taught that He can bestow power on a small number of poor migrants from Makkah and the farmers of Al-Madinah, to inflict crushing defeat on the Quraish, the most influential and powerful clan of Arabia.

14. Beautified for mankind is love of that they desire of women, and sons, and heaped up sums of gold, and silver, and horses branded, and cattle, and tilled land. That is enjoyment of the life of the world. And Allah, with Him is the excellent return.

زَيْنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ
مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ
الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ
وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ
وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ
مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ
عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَبَٰئِ

15. Say: “Shall I inform you of (something) better than these. For those who fear (Allah), with their Lord are, Gardens underneath which rivers flow wherein they will abide forever, and pure companions,^{*11} and the good pleasure of Allah. And Allah is All Seer of His servants.”^{*12}

قُلْ أَؤُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ ذَٰلِكُمْ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

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

***12** That is, Allah does not shower His favors erroneously, nor whimsically, nor does He make cursory and superficial decisions. He is fully aware of the actions, deeds and intentions of His servants, and evaluates them correctly and knows full well who should deserve His favor and who should incur His displeasure.

16. Those who say: “Our Lord, indeed, we have believed, so forgive us our sins and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.”

الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا ءَامِنَّا
فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ
النَّارِ

17. The steadfast,^{*13} and the truthful, and the obedient, and those who spend (in the cause of Allah), and those who seek forgiveness in the early hours of the morning.

الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ
وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْمُنْفِقِينَ
وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ

***13** It means, they stand steadfast for the sake of truth, are not daunted by losses or hardships, are not disheartened by failures, and are not turned aside from the right path by temptations. They adhere to the truth even when there appears to be no chance of success. In Sura *Al-Baqarah* the Quran says, If you face some difficulties in following the righteous way, *sabr* and Salat will help remove the difficulties and strengthen you to walk the way easily. Lexically, *sabr* means to check and tie, but in usage it stands for patience, perseverance, endurance and fortitude. The Quran uses this word to express that fortitude, that moral strength, that firmness of purpose and decision, that determination, moral discipline and self control. This enables a person to proceed with patience and courage in the face of afflictions, privations and temptations on the way he chooses in accordance with the dictates of his conscience.

18. Allah bears witness that there is no god except Him.*¹⁴

And (so do) the angels and those with knowledge, (that He is) maintaining (creation) in Justice.*¹⁵ There is no god except Him, the All Mighty, the All Wise.

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا
بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ



***14** That is: This is the testimony of Allah himself that He alone in the whole universe possesses the attributes of Godhead and the authority and the rights of Godhead. This is His testimony, and who could be a more reliable testifier than He who has direct knowledge of all the realities of the universe? He sees His whole creation spread before Him, and from Him nothing is hidden in the heavens or in the earth.

***15** Next to Allah, the most trustworthy witnesses are angels, who are the managing agents of the affairs of His kingdom of the universe. Their evidence is based on their personal knowledge, that is;

None but Allah wields command in this kingdom and none but He gives orders for the administration of the affairs of the earth and the heavens. Then all those people, who have been bestowed with the knowledge of the realities, have been unanimously bearing witness, since the beginning of the world to the present day, that Allah alone is the Master and the Designer of the entire universe.

19. Truly, the religion with Allah is Al-Islam.*¹⁶ And

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

those who were given the Scripture did not differ except after what had come to them as knowledge,^{*17} out of jealousy among themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the signs of Allah, then indeed, Allah is swift in taking account.

وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ اُوتُوا
الْكِتَابَ اِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
جَاءَهُمْ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا
بَيْنَهُمْ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ
بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَاِنَّ اللَّهَ
سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ



***16** It implies that in the sight of Allah, there is only one correct system and one right way of life for man. It is this: Man should worship Allah, acknowledge Him as his Master and surrender himself completely to Him in His worship and service. He should not invent his own way of worship but should faithfully follow that guidance alone which Allah has revealed through His Messengers (peace be upon them), without adding anything to or taking away anything from it. This way of thinking and behaving is called “Islam.” And it is the absolute right of the Creator and the Master of the universe that He should not accept as lawful from His subjects, His own creation, any way other than Islam. One might ignorantly think it to be one’s right to follow any system, atheism, idolatry, etc. but the Ruler of the universe will regard this behavior as rebellious.

***17** It means that originally Islam and Islam alone was professed and preached by every messenger who was sent by Allah at any time in any corner of the world. Hence any Scripture sent down to any community in any language

taught the same Islam. Afterwards, the people distorted this original religion and added to it something to suit their interests or to gratify their lusts, and omitted those things from it which went against their interests. They invented new religions just because they wanted to transgress the prescribed limits and run after undue privileges and gains and distinctions. Thus they made changes in the beliefs, principles and injunctions of the true faith to make it subservient to their own desires and lusts.

20. So if they argue with you, say: “I have submitted my face (self) to Allah, and (so have) those who follow me.” And say to those who were given the Scripture, and those who are illiterates: “Do you (also) submit.”*¹⁸ So if they submit, then truly they are rightly guided, and if they turn away, then it is upon you only to convey (the message). And Allah is All Seer of (His) servants.

فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ
 وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ ^ط وَقُلْ
 لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ
 ءَأَسْلَمْتُمْ ^ج فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ
 اهْتَدَوْا ^ص وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا
 عَلَيْكَ الْبَلْغُ ^ط وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ
 بِالْعِبَادِ



*¹⁸ The same thing may be expressed thus: Say, my followers and I have been convinced of this same pure Islam and have accepted the true religion of Allah; now tell us whether you also will give up the innovations which you and your elders have introduced into it and turn to the original true religion.

21. Indeed, those who disbelieve in the signs of Allah, and kill the prophets without any right, and kill those who order justice from among mankind, so give them tidings of a painful punishment.*19

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ
اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّنَ بِغَيْرِ
حَقٍّ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الَّذِينَ
يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ مِنَ
النَّاسِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ



***19** This is an ironical way of bringing home to the disbelievers the consequences of those mischievous deeds in which they rejoice today, regarding them as nice things.

22. They are those whose deeds will be lost in this world and the Hereafter,*20 and they will not have any helpers.*21

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَبِطَتْ
أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ



***20** That is, as they have spent all their energies and powers in evil ways, their works will bring them to ruin both in this world and in the next world.

***21** That is, there is no such power which can bring out good results from their wrongly directed efforts or at least make them harmless. All the various agencies, which they believe will help them in this world or in the next world or in both, shall be absolutely of no avail to them anywhere.

23. Have you not seen at those who were given a portion of the Scripture. They are invited to the Book of Allah that it should arbitrate between them, then a party of them turn away, and they are averse.*22

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُدْعَوْنَ
إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ
ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّى فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ وَهُمْ
مُّعْرِضُونَ



***22** That is, they are asked to acknowledge the Book of Allah as the final authority and bow before its decrees and accept as true whatever is proved to be true by it, and reject whatever is proved to be false by it. It should be noted that here by the Book of God is meant the Torah or the Gospel, and by the people who have received a share of the knowledge of the Book are meant the learned people of the Jews and the Christians.

24. That is because they say: “The Fire shall never touch us except for a certain number of days.”*23
And they are deluded in their religion by that which they used to invent.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَن تَمَسَّنَا
النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ
وَعَرَّهَمُ فِي دِينِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا
يَفْتُرُونَ



***23** As such people regard themselves to be the favorites of God, they delude themselves that they are going to enter into Paradise anyhow, irrespective of the quality of their

deeds. They foolishly believe that the fire of Hell dare not touch them because they are true believers and the children of such pious ancestors, and the followers of such and such prophets and the disciples of such and such saints, etc. And if at all they are cast into Hell, they argue, they will be kept there only for a few days to be cleansed of the impurity of sins and then will go into Paradise permanently. Such misleading ideas and conceptions have made them so bold that they commit the gravest crimes and the most heinous sins fearlessly: so much so that they openly disown the truth without the least fear of Allah.

25. So how (will it be) when We gather them on a Day about which there is no doubt. And each soul will be paid in full what it has earned, and they will not be wronged.

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَا
رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ
مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا
يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26. Say: “O Allah, Owner of sovereignty, You give sovereignty to whom You will, and You take away sovereignty from whom You will. And You honor whom You will, and You abase whom You will. In Your hand is the good. Indeed, You have Power over all things.”

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمَلِكِ تُؤْتِي
الْمَلِكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ
الْمَلِكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ
تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ
الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

27. “You cause the night to enter into the day, and You cause the day to enter into the night. And You bring the living out of the dead, and You bring the dead out of the living. And You give sustenance to whom You will without measure.”*24

تُؤَلِّجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَتُؤَلِّجُ
النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَتُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ
مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَتُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ
مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَتَرْزُقُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ

حِسَابٍ

*24 Verses 26 and 27 fit in beautifully between the preceding and the subsequent verses. From verse 19 begins a warning and challenge to the opponents of Islam, and in verse 25, the Muslims have been consoled with the assurance that their enemies shall be paid in full on the Day of Judgment. But in order to reassure them, Allah has in these verses, answered an unasked question which arises when one sees that the disbelievers and the disobedient to Allah are prospering in the world, while the believers and the obedient servants of Allah are starving and suffering from hardships. The question is: What wisdom underlies this disparity in the prosperity and adversity of the two groups? At the time (A.H. 3) of the revelation of this discourse the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions were so hard pressed on all sides that the same question was arising in the people's minds. Its answer is contained in these verses: Allah to whom belongs all authority, power, wealth, prosperity etc. gives a portion of these to whomsoever He wills, and they should not feel uneasy and anxious about this disparity because He is All

Wise and All Knowing. Moreover Allah gives wealth to whomsoever He wills; therefore it is not to be made the criterion of honor and friendship. Hence in the subsequent verses, the Muslims have been prohibited from making the prosperous disbelievers their friends.

28. Let not the believers take the disbelievers for their friends instead of the believers. And whoever does that, then has nothing (to do) with Allah in anything at all, except that you guard yourselves against them by way of precaution.*²⁵ And Allah warns you against Himself (His punishment), and to Allah is the final return.*²⁶

لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ
أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَمَنْ
يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ
فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ
تُقْلَةً وَيُحَذِّرْكُمْ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ
وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ

*²⁵ That is, if a believer falls into the hands of the enemies of Islam and is afraid of maltreatment and high handedness, he may conceal his faith, and live among them as if he were one of them. Or, if they come to know of his faith, he may make a show of his friendship towards them to save his life. In case of extreme fear, he is permitted even to disown his faith, if he feels that he is not strong enough to endure their oppression.

*²⁶ This is the admonition: Let not the fear of the people dominate over you so much as to drive out the fear of Allah from your hearts. The greatest harm the people can do to

you is confined to the worldly life only, but Allah has the power to inflict an everlasting torment on you. Therefore, if you are forced in a case of extremity to hide your faith due to any danger to your life, you may save your own life and property, provided that you do not in any way harm the interests of the Islamic mission and the Islamic community or the life or property of any Muslim. At the same time you must remain on your guard against becoming the instrument in the hands of disbelievers so as to strengthen the evil forces against Islam and render any service to the disbelievers that might enable them to overpower the Muslims. Remember that, if to save your life you do any kind of harm to the religion of Allah, or to the community of the faithful or even to the person of a single believer, or if you render any real service to the rebels against Allah, you will never be able to save yourselves on the Day of Reckoning, when you shall have to return to Allah.

29. Say, (O Muhammad): “Whether you hide that which is in your breasts or reveal it, Allah knows it. And He knows that which is in the heavens and that which is on the earth. And Allah has Power over all things.”

قُلْ إِنْ تَخْفُوا مَا فِي
صُدُورِكُمْ أَوْ تُبْدُوهُ يَعْلَمُهُ
اللَّهُ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا
فِي الْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

30. On the Day (when) every soul will find what

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا

it has done of good to be present (in front of it), and what it has done of evil. it will wish if there were, between itself and its (evil) a far away distance. And Allah warns you against Himself (His punishment). And Allah is Kind to (His) servants.*27

عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُحَضَّرًا وَمَا
عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ
بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُدْ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا
وَيُحَذِّرُكُمْ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُدْ وَاللَّهُ
رءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

*27 That is, it is simply out of His extreme compassion for you that Allah warns you beforehand of those things that might lead you to ruin.

31. Say (O Muhammad): “If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you, and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.”

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ
فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبِّكُمْ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ
لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

32. Say (O Muhammad): “Obey Allah and the messenger. But if they turn away, then indeed, Allah does not love the disbelievers.”*28

قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ
تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِينَ

*28 Here the first discourse ends. If we consider its theme, and especially its reference to the battle of Badr, we come

to the conclusion that the probable period of the revelation of this was some time after the battle of Badr and before the battle of Uhd, that is 3 A.H. A tradition of Muhammad bin Ishaq has generally misled people to fix the period of the revelation of the first 80 verses to 9 A.H., for according to that tradition it was sent down on the occasion of the deputation from Najran. But obviously, that is wrong for two reasons: first, the subject of this introductory discourse shows clearly that it was revealed much earlier. Second, the tradition of Mugatil-bin-Sulaiman is explicit on the point that on the occasion of the said deputation only those verses (33-63) were revealed which give an account of John the Baptist and Jesus (peace be upon them).

33. Indeed,^{*29} Allah chose Adam, and Noah, and the family of Abraham, and the family of Imran^{*30} above all people.

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا
وَأَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَأَالَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى
الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾



*29 From here begins the second discourse. It was sent down in 9 A.H. on the occasion of the visit of the deputation from the Christian state of Najran, which lay between Hijaz and Yemen. It is said that it comprised 73 villages and towns and was capable of raising an army of more than one hundred thousand strong. The population was wholly Christian and was governed by the "Aqib," who was the head of the community, and the "Sayyid," who was in charge of the social and political affairs and the Bishop, who looked after the religious affairs of the people. The

above mentioned deputation was one of the many who visited the Prophet (peace be upon him) after the conquest of Makkah, when the whole of Arabia came to realize that the future of the country was now in his hands. This deputation from Najran to Al-Madinah consisted of 60 men and the three heads of the government. As they had no intention to go to war, the question before them was either to embrace Islam or to live as zimmi (proteges). On this occasion Allah sent down this discourse to the Prophet (peace be upon him) to invite the members of the deputation to Islam.

***30** Imran was the name of the father of Moses and Aaron and has been mentioned as Amram in the Bible.

34. Descendants, some of them from others. And Allah is All Hearer, All Knower.*31

ذُرِّيَّةٌ بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ



***31** The main cause of the misguidance of the Christians is that they consider Jesus (peace be upon him) to be the son of God and a partner in Godhead, instead of His servant and messenger. Therefore this basic error is being corrected with a view to making them understand the true and real Islam. That is why the introduction to the discourse begins with the assertion that Adam and Noah and the prophets from the family of Abraham and from the family of Imran (peace be upon them), were all human beings and none of them was God. Their only distinction was that Allah had chosen them for the preaching of His religion and reforming the world.

35. When the woman of Imran^{*32} said: “O My Lord, I have indeed vowed to You that (child) which is in my womb to be dedicated for Your services. So accept (this) from me. Indeed, You are the All Hearer, the All Knower.”^{*33}

إِذْ قَالَتْ أُمُّرَاتُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي
نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا
فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ
الْعَلِيمُ



***32** If the woman of Imran is meant as the wife of Imran, then this must be a different Imran from the one mentioned above in Ayat 33. In that case one comes to the conclusion that the father of Mary was named Imran after that ancestor. But if the woman of Imran is meant as a woman from the family of Imran, then it merely shows that Mary’s mother was a descendant of Imran. We possess no authentic knowledge of the basis on which one opinion may be preferred to the other. Though according to some Christian traditions the name of Mary’s father was Iaachim, history does not say who the father of Mary was and to which family her mother belonged to. But if the tradition that the mothers of Mary and Elisabeth, the mother of John, were cousins be taken, (Luke 1:36), then the woman of Imran will mean a woman from the family of Imran. The Gospel of Luke (1:5) says that Elisabeth, the wife of Zacharia was of the daughters of Aaron. That is, Imran’s daughter or woman of Imran; therefore it is clear that there is no anachronism of confounding Miriam, the sister of Aaron, with the virgin Mary. It is a common

practice to call children by the names of their ancestors; so both the explanations are equally acceptable. Moreover, it does not make any difference whatsoever, in the line of argument adopted here to explain the miraculous birth of Jesus (peace be upon him), whether Imran was really the name of Mary's father or has been called so in the ancestral sense.

***33** That is, You hear the prayers of Your servants and are aware of their intentions.

36. Then when she delivered her, she said: "My Lord, I have indeed delivered a female child." And Allah knew best of what she delivered. And the male is not like a female.^{*34} "And I have named her Mary, and I seek refuge for her with You, and for her offspring from Satan the outcast."

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي
وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا
وَضَعْتُ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ
وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي
أَعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ
الرَّجِيمِ

***34** By this she meant, had it been a male, it would have been better because the female is handicapped by many natural frailties and social restrictions and cannot become a priest. A male child would, therefore, have served the purpose better for which I have dedicated my child in Your way.

37. So her Lord accepted her with good acceptance,

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ

and caused her to grow with a good growth, and put her under the care of Zechariah. Whenever Zechariah^{*35} went to her in the prayer sanctuary,^{*36} he found with her provision. He said: “O Mary, where is this from to you.” She said: “It is from Allah. Indeed, Allah provides to whom He wills without measure.

وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا
 زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا
 الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا
 قَالَ يَمْرُؤُا أَنَّى لَكَ هَذَا قَالَتْ
 هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ
 مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

***35** This happened when Mary had reached the age of discretion and had been admitted into the sanctuary of the Temple (Jerusalem), where she was busy, day and night, in the worship of Allah. Zacharias who had been made her guardian was probably the husband of her maternal aunt and was one of the keepers of the Temple. He was not the Prophet Zachariah, who was killed according to the Old Testament.

***36** The Arabic word *mihrab* usually reminds one of the arch (prayer niche) meant for the imam in the mosques. But here this word has been used for those cells which are built on comparatively raised ground adjoining the monasteries and churches. They are meant for the keepers and guardians of the places of worship, and for those who retire for worship in seclusion. In such a cell Mary had retired for worship in seclusion.

38. At that time Zechariah called upon his Lord, saying: “O my Lord, grant me from Yourself a good offspring. Indeed, You are the All Hearer of supplication.”^{*37}

هٰنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ
قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ
ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ



***37** Zacharia was childless until that time. Seeing this pious young girl, he longed for a good child. Seeing how she was growing under the special protection of Allah, Who supplied her in her seclusion, with provisions from His vast sources, he began to cherish the hope that Allah should bestow upon him a child even in his old age, if He so willed.

39. Then the angels called him, while he stood praying in the sanctuary: “Surely, Allah gives you good tidings of (a son) John,^{*38} (who will be) confirming the word from Allah,^{*39} and (he will be) noble, and chaste, and a prophet from among the righteous.”

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ
يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ
يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا
مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ



***38** The Bible mentions him as John the Baptist. (Matthew: Chaps. 3,11,14; Mark: 1,6; Luke: 1,3).

***39** Word from Allah, here refers to Jesus (peace be upon him). The Quran calls him a word from Allah because the birth was brought about miraculously by an extraordinary command from Allah.

40. He said: “My Lord, how can I have a son while indeed I have reached old age, and my wife is barren.” He (the angel) said: “Thus (shall it be),^{*40} Allah does what He wills.”

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَقَدْ
بَلَغَنِي الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ
قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا
يَشَاءُ



***40** That is, despite your old age and the sterility of your wife, Allah will bestow upon you a son.

41. He said: “My Lord, appoint for me a sign.”^{*41} He (the angel) said: “The sign to you is that you shall not (be able to) speak to people for three days, except by gesture. And remember your Lord much, and glorify (Him) in the evening and the morning.”^{*42}

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً
قَالَ آيَتُكَ إِلَّا أَتُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ
أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمَزًا^ق وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ
كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ
وَإِلْبَكْرِ



***41** That is, give me a token to assure me beforehand of the birth of a son to an old man and a barren woman.

***42** The main object of this discourse is to make the Christians realize the error of their belief in taking Jesus (peace be upon him) for the son of God, and making him an object of worship. The extraordinary birth of John (peace be upon him) has been mentioned in the Quran to serve as an introduction to the subsequent argument against their wrong belief. The miraculous birth of Jesus (peace be upon

him) could no more entitle him to divinity than the extraordinary birth of John (peace be upon him), brought about in the same family in a different and unusual way.

42. And when the angels said: “O Mary, indeed, Allah has chosen you and has purified you, and has chosen you above the women of the worlds.”

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يٰمَرْيَمُ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ
وَاصْطَفٰكِ عَلٰٓى
النِّسَاۗءِ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

43. “O Mary, be obedient to your Lord, and prostrate, and bow down with those who bow down (in worship).”

يٰمَرْيَمُ اَقْنِيْ لِرَبِّكِ
وَاسْجُدِيْ
وَارْكَعِيْ مَعَ الرَّاكِعِيْنَ

44. That is from the news of the unseen, which We reveal to you (O Muhammad). And you were not with them when they cast their pens as to which of them should be the guardian of Mary,^{*43} and you were not with them when they disputed.

ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اَنْبَاۗءِ الْغَيْبِ
نُوْحِيْهِ اِلَيْكَ
وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ
اِذْ يُلْقُوْنَ اَقْلَمَهُمْ
اَيْهُمْ يَكْفُلُ
مَرْيَمَ
وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ
اِذْ
يَخْتَصِمُوْنَ

*43 As Mary was a girl who had been dedicated by her mother to the Temple in the Way of Allah, the question of her guardianship had become a problem for the keepers because of her sex. They were therefore casting lots to decide the delicate problem.

45. When the angels said: “O Mary, indeed, Allah gives you good tidings of a word from Him, whose name will be the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, honored in this world and the Hereafter, and of those brought near (to Allah).”

إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَأِئِكَةُ يَمْرِيْمُ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ اسْمُهُ
الْمَسِيْحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ
وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ
الْمُقْرَبِيْنَ



46. “And he will speak to mankind in the cradle and in maturity, and will be of the righteous.”

وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ
وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِيْنَ



47. She said: “My Lord, how can I have a child when no man has touched me.” He (the angel) said: “Thus (so shall it be),^{*44} Allah creates what He wills.” When He decrees a matter, then He only says to it: “Be,” and it is.

قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وُلْدٌ وَلَمْ
يَمَسَّنِي بَشَرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ
اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ
أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ



***44** That is, although no man has touched you, yet a son shall be born to you. It should be noted that the same word *kazalika* meaning “so shall it be,” had been used in response to Zacharia’s prayer. It, therefore, carries the same sense

here. Moreover, the whole context here corroborates the story that Mary was given the glad tidings of the birth of a son without any sexual intercourse. And the birth of Jesus (peace be upon him), in actual fact, took place in that unusual way. If a son was to be born to her in the normal known way, and if the event of the birth of Jesus (peace be upon him) had taken place in a natural way, then the whole discourse starting from verse 33 and ending with verse 63 would become absolutely pointless. Not only that but all other references to the unusual birth of Jesus (peace be upon him) in the Quran would lose their significance and meaning. The Christians had made Jesus (peace be upon him) the son of God and worthy of worship simply because of his unusual birth without a father and the Jews had accused Mary because they had witnessed that she had given birth to a child, though she was not married. Had it been otherwise, then the two groups could have been told plainly that the girl was married to such and such a man and that Jesus (peace be upon him) was from his seed. In that case, one fails to see the reason why such a long introduction and a series of arguments should have been necessary to remove all doubts about his miraculous birth. Then Jesus (peace be upon him) could have been called the son of a particular man, instead of being called the son of Mary. The position of those people who, on the one hand, profess to believe the Quran to be the word of Allah, and on the other hand try to prove that Jesus (peace be upon him) was born after the natural coming together of a husband and wife, really try to show that Allah is not able to express

Himself as clearly as these people. (May God protect us from blasphemy).

48. “And He will teach him the Scripture and wisdom, and the Torah, and the Gospel.”

وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ

49. And (He will make him) a messenger to the Children of Israel, (saying): “That I have indeed come to you with a sign from your Lord, in that I make for you out of clay like the shape of a bird, then I breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by permission of Allah. And I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by permission of Allah. And I inform you of what you eat and what you store up in your houses. Indeed, in this is a sign for you, if you are believers.”^{*45}

وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ
جِئْتُكُمْ بِبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي
أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ
كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ
طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ
الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي
الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا
تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي
بُيُوتِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً
لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ

***45** That is, these signs are clear enough to convince you that I have been sent by that Allah who is the Creator and Absolute Ruler of this universe, provided that you are not

obdurate but are willing to accept the truth.

50. “And (I have come) confirming that which was before me of the Torah, and to make lawful for you some of that which was forbidden to you.^{*46} And I have come to you with a sign from your Lord,^{*47} so fear Allah and obey me.”

وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ
مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَلَا حِلَّ لَكُمْ
بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا

***46** That is, this is yet another proof of the fact that I have been sent by Allah. If I had been a false prophet I would have invented my own religion and by virtue of these miracles striven to divert you from your previous faith to the new creed. But I profess the same original religion to be true and confirm the same teachings which were brought by the prophets before me.

The fact that Jesus (peace be upon him) taught the same religion that had been presented by Moses (peace be upon him) and the other prophets is supported even by the existing Gospels. For example, according to the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus (peace be upon him) declared in the sermon on the Mount: “Think not that I have come to destroy the law, or the prophets. I have not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”

One of the Pharisees, who was a lawyer, asked Jesus (peace be upon him), which is the great commandment in the law? He replied: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy

heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and the great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and prophets." (Matthew 22: 37-40).

On another occasion Jesus (peace be upon him) said to his disciples: The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses (peace be upon him) seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." (Matthew 23: 2-3).

***47** That is, I have come to efface and abolish the superstitions of your ignorant people, the hairsplitting of your jurists, the religious austerities of your ascetics and the restrictive additions made in the law of Allah under the non-Muslim domination; I will make lawful or unlawful for you only those things which Allah has made lawful or unlawful.

51. "Indeed, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is the straight path."^{*48}

إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ
فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ



***48** This shows that like all other prophets, Jesus (peace be upon him) also based his teachings on the following three fundamentals:

(1) The Supreme Authority to which mankind should submit and surrender exclusively belongs to Allah and all the social and moral systems should be built entirely on it.

(2) Being a representative of the same Paramount Power, a prophet must be obeyed unconditionally.

(3) Allah alone is entitled to prescribe laws and regulations for making things lawful or unlawful, pure and impure; consequently all laws imposed by others must be abolished.

Thus it is clear that Jesus, Moses, Muhammad and all other prophets (peace be upon them) had one and the same mission. Those people who aver that different prophets were sent with different missions and to fulfill different aims, are gravely mistaken. Anyone, who is delegated by the Absolute Master of the universe to His subjects, cannot have any other mission than to prevent the people, from becoming disobedient to and independent of Him, and to forbid them to set others to rank with Allah as partners in His authority in any way. For, they are sent to invite the people to surrender and submit and be loyal to the Almighty God and worship Him alone.

It is a pity that the existing Gospels do not present the mission of Jesus (peace be upon him) so precisely and clearly as it has been presented above in the Quran. Nevertheless all the three basic things mentioned above are found scattered over in these Books. For instance, the fact that Jesus (peace be upon him) believed exclusively in the worship of One God is clear from the following:

(1) Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. (Matthew 4: 10).

(2) Not only did he believe in this, but also made it the ultimate aim of all his activities and strove to make the people of the earth to submit to the revealed law of Allah

just as the whole universe submits to His physical law.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6 :10).

Then the fact that Jesus (peace be upon him) always presented himself as a prophet and as a representative of the Kingdom of Heaven, and always invited the people to follow him in that capacity alone, is supported by a number of his sayings. When he started his mission in his native place, Nazareth, the people of his own town and his own kinsfolk rose against him and according to an agreed tradition of Matthew, Mark and Luke, he said: No prophet is accepted in his own country. And when his enemies were conspiring at Jerusalem to kill him and the people advised him to go to somewhere else, he replied: It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. (Luke 13: 33).

When he was entering Jerusalem for the last time, his disciples began to utter in a loud voice: Blessed be the king that cometh in the name of the Lord. At this the Pharisees felt offended and asked him to silence his disciples. He replied:

I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. (Luke 19: 38-40).

On another occasion he said: Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart. My yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (Matthew 11: 28-30).

Moreover the fact that Jesus (peace be upon him) wanted the people to obey the divine law rather than man made

laws becomes clear from that tradition of Matthew and Mark which says that when the Pharisees asked, why his disciples transgressed the tradition of the elders and took food without washing their hands, he replied and said, well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written. This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups, and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, honor thy father and thy mother; and, whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, if a man shall say to his father or mother, it is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. (Mark 7: 6-13).

52. Then when Jesus felt of their disbelief, he said: “Who are my helpers for (the cause of) Allah.” The disciples said: ^{*49} “We are the helpers of Allah. ^{*50} We have believed in Allah, and be (our) witness that we have

﴿ فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عَيْسَىٰ مِنْهُمْ
الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ
قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ
أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَأَشْهَدُ

submitted (to Allah).”

بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ

***49** The Arabic word *havari* is almost the equivalent of helper. In the Bible, they have been called disciples and at some places apostles because Jesus (peace be upon him) used to send them to the people to deliver his message, and not because God had appointed them as His apostles.

***50** Those people who help establish Islam have been called Allah’s helpers. In order to understand its significance, it should be kept in view that Allah has taken upon Himself to persuade human beings to adopt Islam of their free will. For He does not force His will on man in those spheres of his life in which He has granted him freedom of action, but likes to convince him by reason and admonition. As it is the work of Allah to bring the people to the right way by admonition and advice, He calls those people who exert their utmost to establish Islam His helpers and companions. This is indeed the highest position that a servant of Allah can aspire to achieve. For man’s position is merely that of a servant when he is engaged in praying, fasting and other kinds of worship, but he is elevated to the high and unique position of God’s companion and assistant when he is exerting for the establishment of the Way of Allah. And this is indeed the loftiest position of spiritual attainment, to which a man can aspire in this world.

53. “Our Lord, we have believed in that which You sent down, and we have followed the messenger so

رَبَّنَا ءَامَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا
الرَّسُولَ فَأَكْتُبْنَا مَعَ

write us among those who bear witness.”

54. And they (disbelievers) planned, and Allah planned (against them). And Allah is the best of planners.

55. When Allah said: “O Jesus, indeed, I will take you ^{*51} and raise you to Myself, and purify (free) you of those who disbelieve, and I will make those who follow you above those who disbelieve ^{*52} until the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me you (all) will return, then I will judge between you in that in which you used to dispute.”

الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

وَمَكْرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكْرِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَىٰ إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

***51** The word *mutawaffi* in the Arabic text is from *tawaffa* which literally means to take and to receive, and to seize the soul is not its lexical but metaphorical meaning. Here it means to recall from mission. Allah recalled Jesus because the Israelites had rejected him in spite of the clear signs he had brought. They had been disobeying God for centuries and, in spite of many a warning and admonition served to

them, their national character was rapidly deteriorating. They had killed several prophets, one after the other, and had grown so audacious as to demand the blood of any good man who ventured to invite them to the right way. In order to give them the last chance for turning to the truth, God appointed among them two great Prophets, Jesus and John (peace be upon them), at one and the same time. These prophets came with such clear signs of their appointment from Allah that only such people dared reject them as were utterly perverted and prejudiced against the truth and were averse to following the right way. Nevertheless, the Israelites lost their last chance also as they not only rejected their invitation but also had the head of a great prophet like John (peace be upon him) cut off openly at the request of a dancing girl. And their pharisees and jurists conspired and sought to get Jesus (peace be upon him) punished with the death sentence by the Roman government. Thus they had proved themselves to be so obdurate that it was useless to give the Israelites any further chance. So Allah recalled His Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) and inflicted on them a life of disgrace up to the day of resurrection.

It will be useful here to bear in mind the fact that this whole discourse is meant to refute and correct the Christian belief in the Godhead of Jesus (peace be upon him). Three main things were responsible for the prevalence of this belief among the Christians:

- (1) The miraculous birth of Jesus (peace be upon him).
- (2) His concrete and tangible miracles.

(3) His ascension to heaven about which their Scriptures were explicit.

The Quran confirmed the first thing and made it plain that the birth of Jesus (peace be upon him) without a father was only a manifestation of the infinite powers of Allah. He can create anybody in whatever manner He wills. His miraculous birth, therefore, is no reason why he should be made a god or a partner in Godhead.

The Quran also confirms the second thing and even recounts the miracles performed by Jesus (peace be upon him), but makes it clear that all those miracles were performed by him, as a servant of Allah, by His leave and not as an independent authority. It is, therefore, wrong to infer that Jesus (peace be upon him) was a partner in Godhead.

Now let us consider the third thing. If the Christian belief in Ascension had been wholly baseless, it could have been refuted by pointing out that the object of their worship, the so called son of God, expired long ago and had become one with dust, and that they could see, for their full satisfaction, his grave at such and such a place. But the Quran does not declare this explicitly. On the other hand, it not only uses such words as give at least a vague suggestion of his Ascension, but also denies that Jesus was crucified at all. According to it the one who gave a loud cry at his last hour, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? and the one whose picture they carry on the cross, was not Messiah at all, because God had recalled to Himself the real Messiah before the crucifixion took place.

It is thus clear that those people who try to prove the death of Jesus from these verses, really try to show that God is not able to express Himself clearly and unambiguously. May God protect us from such a blasphemy.

*52 Those who disbelieved and rejected him were the Jews who were invited by Jesus (peace be upon him) to accept the truth. Those who follow him are really the Muslims only but if it may be taken to imply all those who believe in him, then the sincere Christians may also be included.

56. “Then as for those who disbelieve, I will punish them with a severe punishment in this world and the Hereafter, and they will not have any helpers.”

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأُعَذِّبُهُمْ
عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ



57. And as for those who believe and do righteous deeds, He will give them in full their rewards. And Allah does not love the wrongdoers.

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ



58. This is what We recite to you (O Muhammad) of the verses and a wise reminder (the Quran).

ذَٰلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ
وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ



59. Certainly, the example of Jesus with Allah is like the

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

example of Adam. He created him from dust, then He said to him: "Be," and he was.*53

كَمَثَلِ ءَادَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ
ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

*53 That is, if one's miraculous birth entitles one to become God or son of God, then Adam (peace be upon him) was better entitled to it because he was created without either a human father or a mother, while Jesus (peace be upon him) was born without a father only.

60. (This is) the truth from your Lord, so do not be of those who doubt.*54

الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ
الْمُمْتَرِينَ

*54 The main points in the discourse presented before the Christians up to here are: First, they have been admonished to realize that their belief in the Godhead of Jesus is gravely ill founded. He was only a man who was born in a miraculous way by the will of Allah and given the power to perform certain miracles as a clear proof of his prophethood. As regards his Ascension, Allah had arranged to recall him to Himself before the disbelievers could crucify him. In fact, the Master of the universe has full powers to treat any of His servants in any special way He pleases. It is, therefore, wrong to infer from the exceptional treatment accorded to Jesus (peace be upon him) that he himself was the Master or the Master's Son or a partner in the authority of the Master. Secondly, their attention has been drawn to the fact that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) invites them to

the same truth that had been preached by Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) in his own time and that the teachings of the two prophets were basically identical.

Thirdly, the disciples of Jesus (peace be upon him) believed in and followed the same religion of Islam that is being presented in the Quran. However the Christians of the later age discarded the message of Jesus (peace be upon him) and digressed from the faith of his disciples.

61. Then whoever disputes with you about it, after what has come to you of the knowledge, say (to him): “Come, let us call our sons and your sons, and our women and your women, and ourselves and yourselves, then we pray humbly, then invoke the curse of Allah upon those who lie.”*55

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا
نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا
وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ
نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَل لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى
الْكَاذِبِينَ



*55 This method of settling the dispute was proposed to show conclusively that the members of the deputation of Najran were behaving obdurately. As a matter of fact, they had no answer to the things pointed out in the above discourse and could not bring any authority even from their own Scriptures to justify and support their beliefs under discussion. They could not, therefore, assert with full conviction that their beliefs conformed to the fact and were not false. Besides this, when they observed closely the

character and the teachings and the works of the Prophet (peace be upon him), the majority of the members of the deputation were so impressed that they became convinced in their hearts of his prophethood; or at least, they could not reject it boldly. That is why they did not accept the challenge: If you really believe in the truth of your creed, you should pray with us to Allah and invoke His curse on those who say false things about Christ. The fact that they declined to accept the challenge showed plainly to the whole of Arabia that the religious leaders and priests of the Christians of Najran who were known far and wide for their piety, professed beliefs about which they themselves were not sure.

62. Certainly this, this is the true narration. And there is not any god except Allah. And indeed, Allah, He is the All Mighty, the All Wise.

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ
وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

63. Then if they turn away, then indeed, Allah is All Aware of those who do mischief.

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ
بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ

64. Say:^{*56} “O People of the Scripture, come to a word (of agreement) equitable between us and you,^{*57} that we shall not worship except Allah, nor shall we associate

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى
كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ إِلَّا
نَعْبُدُ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكُ بِهِ

with Him anything, nor shall one of us take others for lords other than Allah.” So if they turn away, then say: “Bear witness that we are those who have submitted (to Allah).”

شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا
أَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا
فَقُولُوا أَشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا
مُسْلِمُونَ

*56 From here begins the third discourse. Its subject-matter clearly shows that it was revealed in the period intervening the battles of Badr and Uhd. The contents of the three discourses are so closely interlinked that there is no incoherence anywhere between them. That is why some commentators have been misled to believe that this also formed part of the discourse addressed to the Najran deputation. But the tone of the discourse commencing from here clearly shows that it was addressed to the Jews.

*57 That is, join us in the creed which we have accepted and which you also cannot reject as false, for it is confirmed and supported by the teachings of your own Scriptures.

65. “O People of the Scripture, why do you argue about Abraham, while the Torah and the Gospel were not revealed until after him.*58 Have you then no sense.”

يٰٓأَهْلَ
الْكِتَابِ لِمَ
تُحَاجُّونَ فِي
إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَا
أُنزِلَتْ التَّوْرَةُ
وَالْإِنْجِيلُ إِلَّا
مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَفَلَا
تَعْقِلُونَ

*58 That is, your Judaism and Christianity came into

existence long after the revelation of the Torah and the Gospel, whereas Abraham (peace be upon him) had passed away long before those books were sent down. Now, even a man of ordinary common sense can easily understand that the religion of Abraham (peace be upon him) could in no sense be Judaism or Christianity. Thus, if Abraham (peace be upon him) was on the right way and had obtained salvation, as you also believe, then it becomes abundantly clear that one need not follow Judaism or Christianity to be on the right way and to obtain salvation

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

(1) Judaism and Christianity were born long after the death of Abraham (peace be upon him). Judaism, with its special rituals, peculiar regulations, etc. took its birth and name some four hundred years before Christ. As to Christianity, it took its name and adopted its special creed and form long after the recall of Jesus (peace be upon him). Thus it is clear that their claim that one must become a Jew or a Christian in order to obtain guidance was historically untenable. For in that case, Abraham, Jesus and all the other prophets (peace be upon them) and all the good people who had passed away long before the birth of Judaism and Christianity could not be counted among the rightly guided persons for the simple reason that these religions did not exist at the time they lived. Thus, it was obvious that the Jews and Christians could not say that these prophets were not rightly guided, nor could they claim that they followed Judaism or Christianity. As a

corollary to this, true guidance did not, even according to them, consist of the particular features which divided them into two distinct religions, but it was that eternal universal way which has been shown by all the messengers of Allah and which has always been followed by the good people of all ages.

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

66. Here you are, those who have argued about that of which you have (some) knowledge. Why then argue you about that of which you have no knowledge. And Allah knows, and you do not know.

هَاتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ حَاجَجْتُمْ فِيمَا لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ تُحَاجُّونَ فِيمَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67. Abraham was not a Jew, nor a Christian, but he was true in faith,^{*59} who had submitted, and he was not of those who associate partners (with Allah).

مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

*59 The Arabic word *hanif* stands for a person who chooses

to follow one particular way after rejecting all other ways.

68. Indeed, among mankind, the nearest to Abraham are those who followed him, and this prophet (Muhammad), and those who have believed. And Allah is the Protector of those who believe.

إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ
لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ
وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

69. A party of the People of the Scripture wish if they could mislead you. And they shall not mislead except themselves, and they do not perceive (it).

وَدَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ
لَو يُضِلُّوكُمْ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا
أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ

70. O People of the Scripture, why do you disbelieve in the verses of Allah, while you witness (to their truth).^{*60}

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ
بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ

*60 There may be another rendering of this sentence: You yourselves testify these. But in neither case is the sense of the passage affected. The fact is that the pious life of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the marvelous effects which his precepts and example were producing on the lives of his companions, and the high and sublime teachings of the Quran, were all such clear signs of God that no one, who was familiar with the lives of the prophets and with the

nature of the heavenly Scriptures, could possibly doubt or deny his prophethood. Thus, in fact, many a people of the Book (especially the learned among them) had realized that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the same prophet whose coming had been foretold by the former prophets. So much so, that they were at times completely overpowered by the force of the plain truth, and would unwittingly admit and confirm that the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) were true. That is why, the Quran accuses them time and again of obduracy and deliberate rejection of the truth after seeing clear signs of God and being fully convinced of it in their hearts.

71. O People of the Scripture, why do you mix the truth with falsehood, and conceal the truth while you know (it).

يٰٓأَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُوْنَ
الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوْنَ
الْحَقَّ
وَاَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ



72. And a party of the People of the Scripture say: "Believe in that which has been revealed to those who believe at the beginning of the day, and reject it at the end of that, that perhaps they will return."^{*61}

وَقَالَتْ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْ
أَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ ءَامِنُوْا
بِالَّذِىٓ اُنزِلَ عَلٰى
الَّذِيْنَ ءَامِنُوْا وَجَهَ النَّهَارِ
وَكَفَرُوْا ءَاخِرَهُ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَرْجِعُوْنَ



***61** This was one of those tricks which the leaders and the rabbis of the Jews, living in the suburbs of Al-Madinah

used to play in order to weaken the force of the Islamic movement. They feigned an interest in Islam only to detach some of the Muslims by some subtle arrangements. Their object was to dishearten the Muslims and create doubts among the masses about teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him). For this purpose they began to send people to Al-Madinah to profess Islam openly and then become apostates and proclaim everywhere that they had come out of Islam because they had witnessed such and such evils among the Muslims and their Prophet (peace be upon him). They were stirred to play this wicked game by their envy of Islam and bias in favor of the religion of their forefathers. They have been rebuked, as if to say, God is not bound by your prejudices, but He bestows His guidance on anyone He wills, and He has by His grace blessed the Muslims with the same guidance that was once bestowed upon you. You must understand it well that your wily tricks will not succeed in snatching away that guidance from them, nor in changing it into misguidance but only in providing a strong argument against you before your Lord. By this, Allah willed to see whether they would give up their prejudice and accept the guidance which had been given to Muhammad (peace be upon him), or whether they would persist in their envy and reject it and provide the Muslims with a strong argument against themselves before their Lord that they rejected the truth merely because of their prejudice and obduracy.

73. “And do not believe except the one who follows

وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا لِمَنْ تَبِعَ دِينَكُمْ

your religion.” Say “Indeed, the guidance is the guidance of Allah.” (Do you fear) lest anyone be given (revelation) the like of that which was given to you, or that they may argue with you before their Lord. Say “Indeed, the bounty is in the hand of Allah. He grants it to whom He wills. And Allah is All Encompassing,^{*62} Knowing.”^{*63}

قُلْ إِنَّ الْهُدَىٰ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ أَنْ
يُؤْتَىٰ أَحَدٌ مِّثْلَ مَا أُوتِيْتُمْ أَوْ
يُحَاجُّوْكُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ
الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ



***62** The Arabic word *wase* (All-Encompassing) generally occurs on three occasions in the Quran:

- (1) When a community of people is warned of their narrow mindedness and told that Allah is not narrow minded like them;
- (2) When one is rebuked for miserliness and stinginess and is told that Allah is generous and not miserly like him;
- (3) When people believe Allah to be finite because of the limitations of their own imagination, they are told that Allah is Infinite and limitless.

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

***63 That is, Allah knows well who deserves honor and excellence.**

74. He selects for His mercy whom He wills. And Allah is the Owner of great bounty.

يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

75. And among the People of the Scripture is he who, if you entrust him with a great amount (of wealth), will return it to you. And among them is he who, if you entrust him with a single silver coin, will not return it to you, unless that you are standing over him constantly (demanding). That is because they say: "There is no blame upon us regarding illiterates. *64 And they speak a lie against Allah and they know (it).

وَمِنَ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بِقِنطَارٍ يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بِدِينَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِمًا ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ

وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

***64 That is, they were required to be fair only in their dealings with the Jews, and there was no harm in usurping the property of a non-Jew. This belief was not confined to the ignorant Jewish masses, but their whole religious system was so molded as to allow differentiation between Israelites and non-Israelites in their dealings. Their moral code disallowed a certain treatment towards the Israelites**

but allowed the same towards a non-Israelite; one and the same thing was right for an Israelite but the same thing was wrong for a non-Israelite. For instance, the Bible says: “At the end of every seven years, every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbor shall release it”, but “Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again.” (Deut. 15: 1-3). At another place the law about usury has been laid down like this: “Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury.” (Deut. 23: 20). “If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die.” (Deut. 24: 7).

76. Nay, but whoever fulfills his pledge and fears (Allah), then indeed, Allah loves those who fear (Him).

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ وَاتَّقَىٰ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77. Certainly, those who trade the covenant of Allah and their (own) oaths for a small price, they will have no portion in the Hereafter. And Allah will not speak to them, nor will He look upon them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them.^{*65} And they will have a painful punishment.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَٰئِكَ لَا خَلْقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

***65** Although they were guilty of the blackest sins, yet they had taken it for granted that they would rise as the

favorites of God on the Day of Resurrection and they alone would receive His blessings and favors, for they would be rescued from the consequences of the sins they committed in this world by the intercession of their saints in the next world, but the fact is that they will be dealt with on that day in quite a different manner.

78. And indeed, among them is a party who distort the Scripture with their tongues, so you may think that (what they say) is from the Scripture, and it is not from the Scripture. And they say:^{*66} “This is from Allah,” and it is not from Allah. And they speak a lie against Allah and they know (it).

وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلُودْنَ
الْسِنْتَهُم بِالْكِتَابِ لِتَحْسَبُوهُ
مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ
الْكِتَابِ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ
عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ
يَعْلَمُونَ



***66** Taken figuratively the Arabic text may also imply that they turn away from the right meaning of the Book or twist the words out of context and pervert the meaning. But the real meaning of the text is this: while reading the Book, they twist with their tongues certain words or sentences that are against their self interest or self invented religious beliefs or theories. Thus they change the meanings so as to mislead people into mental errors or false judgments or wrong religious beliefs. It is an irony that some people

sometimes treat the Quran itself in the same way. For instance, those people who believe in the Prophet (peace be upon him) to be superhuman twist Ayat 110 of Surah Al-Kahaf,

قل **إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ** with their tongues and read it as **قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ**

The first and correct reading means, “Say, (O Prophet), I am only a man like yourselves,” while the second reading perverts the meaning thus: “Say, (O Prophet), indeed I am not a man like yourselves.”

79. It is not (possible) for a human that Allah should give him the Book and wisdom and prophethood, then afterwards he would say to the people: “Be my worshippers instead of Allah,” but (he would say): “Be you worshippers of the Lord,^{*67} because of your teaching of the Book, and because of your studying it.”

مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ
يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا
رَبِّينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ



***67** Rabbani (rabbi) was the title of a religious functionary who guided the religious affairs of the Jews, established worship and expounded law.

80. Nor would he command you that you should take the angels and the prophets

وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ

for lords. Would he command you to disbelieve after when you have submitted (to Allah).^{*68}

وَالنَّبِيِّنَ أَرْبَابًا ۗ أَيَأْمُرُكُمْ
بِالْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ



***68** These two verses are a comprehensive refutation of all the wrong things that different people have ascribed to their prophets and entered into their books in order to make an angel or a prophet a god and an object of worship. Here a fundamental formula has been laid down: anything that teaches the worship of anyone other than Allah and raises a servant of God to the high pedestal of Godhead can never be the teaching of any messenger of God: therefore the very existence of such a thing in any book should be taken as a clear proof of its being a later insertion by some misguided people. Hence the claim to be the son of God and equal with God, could never have been made by Jesus (peace be upon him) himself, but by some misguided followers of his.

81. And when Allah took the covenant with the prophets, (saying): “Whatever I give you of the Scripture and wisdom, then afterwards there comes to you a messenger,^{*69} confirming what is with you, you shall believe in him and you

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا
ءَاتَيْتُكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ
وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ
مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ

shall help him.” He (Allah) said: “Do you acknowledge, and take (binding) upon you My covenant.” They said: “We have acknowledged.” He said: “Then bear you witness, and I am with you among the witnesses.”

وَلْتَنْصِرُنَّهُ^ج قَالَ^ح أَأَقْرَرْتُمْ^ط
وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَيَّ ذَالِكُمْ^ط إِصْرِي
قَالُوا أَأَقْرَرْنَا^ج قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا وَأَنَا
مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

*69 It implies this: You people of the Book are bound by the covenant of your own prophets to believe in and help Muhammad (peace be upon him) for we entered into a compact with every prophet to the effect that they (and their followers by implication) must help every prophet sent by Us for the preaching and the establishment of the way of life for which they had been appointed. Therefore you should not have any prejudice against him, nor consider religion as your own monopoly; you should not oppose the truth but come under the banner of anyone who raises it for this purpose.

It is interesting to note that according to Palmer (The Koran), the Talmudic sources confirm that God assembled all past, present, and future prophets on mount Sinai and entered into the compact mentioned in the text.

In this connection it should also be clearly understood that this compact was taken from every prophet before the advent of Muhammad (peace be upon him); therefore every prophet informed his followers about the prophet coming after him and told them to follow him. But there is no mention in the Quran or in the traditions that any such

compact was taken from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): nor did he inform his followers about the coming of any prophet after him and believing in him. On the contrary, he categorically declared that he was the last in the line of prophets.

82. Then whoever turns away after this, then those, they are the transgressors.^{*70}

فَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَٰسِقُونَ



***70** This implies that the people of the Book were breaking their covenant with Allah by rejecting Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and opposing his mission; they were disregarding that covenant which their prophets had made with Allah. Hence they were perverted transgressors who had gone beyond the limits imposed by Allah.

83. So, do they seek other than the religion of Allah, and to Him has submitted whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly,^{*71} and to Him they will be returned.

أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ



***71** That is, when the whole universe and everything in it follow Islam and submit to Allah, what other way of life than Islam do these rejectors, who live in the same universe, seek to follow?

84. Say: “We believe in Allah, and that which has been sent down to us, and that which was sent down to Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which was given to Moses, and Jesus, and the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them,^{*72} and to Him we have submitted.”

قُلْ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا
وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ
وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ
وَعِيسَىٰ وَالنَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ
لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ
لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ



***72** That is, we do not have different ways of treatment for different prophets: we accept each and every one of them and do not reject any one of them and we treat all of them as truthful prophets and none as a liar. We are free from prejudice and zeal for ignorance; we bear witness to the fact that each and every servant of Allah, who brought the truth from Him to any place whatever in the world, spoke the truth.

85. And whoever seeks other than Islam as religion, never will it be accepted from him. And he will be among the losers in the Hereafter.

وَمَن يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَن
يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ
الْخَاسِرِينَ



86. How shall Allah guide a people who disbelieved

كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوا

after their belief, and they had witnessed that the messenger is true and the clear signs (of Allah's Sovereignty) had come to them.^{*73} And Allah does not guide wrongdoing people.

بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ وَشَهِدُوا أَنَّ
الرَّسُولَ حَقٌّ وَجَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ



***73** It has been reiterated here that the Jewish scholars, who lived in Arabia at the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him), had understood clearly and borne witness to it that he was a true prophet of God and that his teachings were the same as those of the former prophets. But in spite of this, they not only rejected but also opposed him because of their centuries old prejudices, obduracy and antagonism to the truth.

87. Those, their recompense will be that upon them is the curse of Allah, and of angels, and of all mankind.

أُولَئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ أَنْ
لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ
أَجْمَعِينَ



88. Abiding eternally therein. The punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be reprieved.

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ
الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ



89. Except those who repent after that, and correct (themselves). Indeed, then Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ
وَأَصْلَحُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Merciful.



90. Certainly, those who disbelieve after their belief, and then went on increasing in disbelief,^{*74} never will their repentance be accepted. And they are those who are astray.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ
ثُمَّ أزدَادُوا كُفْرًا لَنْ تُقْبَلَ
تَوْبَتُهُمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الضَّالُّونَ



***74** They persisted in their disbelief. They did not stop at the rejection of the faith but went on further and further in their opposition and antagonism to it: they did their very best to hinder people from the Way of Allah by creating doubts and suspicions in their minds and by devising secret plans and plots to make the mission a failure.

91. Certainly, those who disbelieve, and die while they are disbelievers, never would be accepted from anyone of them the (whole) earth full of gold even if they offer it as a ransom. They are those, for them will be a painful punishment, and they will not have any helpers.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ
كُفَّارًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ
مِلَّةٌ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوْ
أَفْتَدَى بِهِنَّ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ
نَاصِرِينَ



92. Never shall you attain the righteousness until you spend from that which you

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا

love.*75 And whatever you spend of anything, then indeed Allah is All Aware of it.

تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ



*75 It is meant to remove the misconception of the Jews about virtue. Their highest ideal of virtue was to put on that outward appearance which had been enjoined by the traditional and centuries old heritage of their ancestors. Besides this they measured virtue by the standard of that elaborate legal system which had been evolved by their hair splitting scholars. But in spite of their outward religiosity, even their pious people were narrow minded, greedy and parsimonious. Moreover they did not hesitate to conceal the truth or to sell it, and yet the common people took them for virtuous people. This is why they are being told here that they can attain to real virtue not by the mere outward observance of some rituals of their own invention but by loving God and by keeping His will above every worldly thing. As the door of virtue is shut against anyone who loves any worldly thing more than Allah. The one, who is not ready to sacrifice the beloved thing for the sake of God's love, cannot attain to real virtue. The observance of rituals without this spirit of love is like the paint on worm eaten wood. It is possible that a human being might be deceived by such outward paint, but it is impossible to deceive God by such devices.

93. All food was lawful to the Children of Israel,*76 except that which Israel

كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حَلَالًا لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ

(Jacob)^{*77} had made unlawful to himself before that the Torah was revealed. Say: (O Muhammad): “So bring the Torah and read it (to us) if you are truthful.”

إِسْرَائِيلَ إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَائِيلُ
عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ مِن قَبْلِ أَنْ تُنزَلَ
الْتَّوْرَةُ ۗ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِالتَّوْرَةِ
فَاتْلُوهَا إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ



***76** This ayat answers an objection. When the Jews could not find fault with the basic teachings of the Quran and of the Prophet (peace be upon him), for there was absolutely no difference between these and the teachings of the previous prophets, they began to raise legal objections. One of their objections was that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had made lawful certain things which had been unlawful during the time of the previous prophets.

***77** If Israel refers to the children of Israel, then it would mean that before the revelation of the Torah, they themselves had made certain things unlawful because these had been unlawful by custom. But if it refers to Jacob (and that is more probable), then it means that he did not eat certain things because he did not like them or abstained from them on account of some illness, but his children began to believe these to be unlawful. The subsequent verse shows that the law in the Bible which declared the camel and the hare etc. to be unlawful was not in the Torah, but was later on inserted in it by the Jewish scholars. (For details refer to E.N. 122 of Al-Anaam).

94. Then whoever invents a lie against Allah after that, then they are those who are the wrong doers.

فَمَنْ أَفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ
مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

95. Say: “Allah speaks the truth. So follow the religion of Abraham, firm in faith. And he was not of those who join partners (with Allah).”^{*78}

قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ ۖ فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ
الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

***78** It is meant to bring home to them this lesson: obedience to God alone is the root of the real faith, which was taught by Abraham (peace be upon him), but you have discarded that and associated other gods with Him. Besides this, you have, entangled yourselves in minor legal issues which had been raised by your scholars after you had deviated from the way of Abraham (peace be upon him) during the centuries of your degradation.

96. Certainly, the first House (of worship) appointed for mankind was that at Becca (Mecca), blessed, and a guidance for the worlds.^{*79}

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ
لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى
لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾

***79** Their objection was about the change of *qiblah* to the Kaabah (Makkah) from the Temple (Jerusalem), which had been the *qiblah* of the previous prophets. This objection had already been answered in Surah *Al-Baqarah*, but as the

Jews persisted in their criticism, it has again been answered here. It has been asserted that the Kaabah was built by Abraham (peace be upon him) long before the Temple and therefore it had priority of time for being the *qiblah*. The Bible itself bears testimony to the fact that the Temple was built by Solomon some 450 years after Moses (I Kings, 6: 1) and made *qiblah* during his reign. (I Kings, 8: 29-30.) On the other hand, all the traditions of Arabia unanimously agree that the Kaabah was built by Abraham (peace be upon him) some 900 years before the advent of Moses. The fact that the Kaabah has priority of time over the Temple is so obvious that none can deny it.

97. In it are manifest signs,^{*80} the station of Abraham. And whoever enters it shall be safe.^{*81} And (due) to Allah from mankind is the pilgrimage to (this) House, for whoever can afford the journey to there. And he who disbelieves, then indeed, Allah is free from needs of the worlds.

فِيهِ ءَايَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ ءَامِنًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى
النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ
إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۗ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

*80 There are such clear signs in the House. This is to show that Allah has accepted it and approved it as His House. Though it has been built in a barren place, Allah has provided the people of the neighborhood with the best of provisions. Besides this, though there was chaos and disorder in the whole of Arabia for about 2500 years before

the advent of Islam, yet there reigned peace and security in the Kaabah and in its surroundings. Not only this: there was because of it, peace for four months every year in the whole of Arabia. Another sign was the miraculous destruction of Abrahah and his army, when he attacked Makkah in order to destroy the Kaabah. At the time of the revelation of the Quran, every Arab knew well even the details of this incident and there were even those who had actually beheld the occurrence.

***81** The inviolable sanctity of the Kaabah was so much respected even in the dark days of ignorance that blood thirsty enemies dared not touch each other in it. In Ayat 97, the word *kafara* does not mean that the one, who disobeys this commandment of Allah and does not perform Hajj even if one can afford it, becomes a disbeliever in the technical sense. It means that the person has adopted the attitude of a disbeliever even after his profession of belief in Allah and His prophet. This is obvious because the commandment to perform Hajj has not been addressed to the disbelievers but to those who profess to be Muslims. A Muslim judge, therefore, will not declare him to be a disbeliever and apostate for this reason, as if he had gone out of the pale of Islam.

Allah does not stand in need of any help from the people, whether they be believers or disbelievers. It is for their own good if they become sincere believers. On the other hand, those people, who reject the commandments of Allah by word or deed, will not be considered to be believers by Allah, even if they professed to be believers.

98. Say: “O People of the Scripture, why do you disbelieve in the revelations of Allah, and Allah (Himself) is witness over what you do.”

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ
بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾

99. Say: “O People of the Scripture, why do you hinder from the way of Allah those who believed, seeking to make it deviant, and you are witnesses (to Allah’s guidance). And Allah is not unaware of what you do.”

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ
تَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَن
ءَامَنَ تَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَأَنتُمْ
شُهَدَاءُ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

100. O those who believe, if you obey a party of those who were given the Scripture, they would turn you back to disbelievers after you have believed.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَطِيعُوا
فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
يَرُدُّوكُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ كَافِرِينَ
﴿١٠٠﴾

101. And how can you disbelieve, while unto you are recited the verses of Allah, and among you is His messenger. And whoever holds firmly to

وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَنتُمْ تُتْلَىٰ
عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَاتُ اللَّهِ وَفِيكُمْ
رَسُولُهُ ۗ وَمَن يَعْصِمْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ

Allah, then he is indeed guided to a right path.

هُدًى إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١١﴾

102. O those who believe, fear Allah as rightfully He should be feared, and do not die except that you are in submission (to Allah).^{*82}

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

***82** That is, be loyal and obedient to Allah up to your last breath.

103. And hold firmly, to the rope of Allah (the Quran) all together,^{*83} and do not become divided. And remember the favor of Allah upon you, when you were enemies, then He put love between your hearts so you became as brothers by His grace. And you were upon the edge of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it.^{*84} Thus Allah makes clear His revelations to you, that you may be guided.^{*85}

وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا
وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۗ وَآذِكُرُوا اللَّهَ
عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ
قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ
إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ
مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ
يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُم ءَايَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

***83** Allah's rope, is the way of life prescribed by Him. It is a rope because it keeps intact the relations of the believers with Allah and also binds and unites them into a

community. Holding firmly the rope of Allah, implies that the Muslims should give the greatest importance to Allah's Way, and should make it the centre of all their interests, and exert their utmost to establish it and cooperate with one another for its service. When and if they let loose this rope and deviate from its basic principles, they would inevitably suffer from disunity and would be divided into sections and subsections, like the communities of the former prophets. As a consequence of this, they would meet with disgrace both in this world and in the next.

***84** This refers to that horrible state of the Arabs from which they were rescued by Islam. Before Islam, their clans were divided into hostile camps, who went to war for frivolous reasons. Human life had lost its sanctity and people were killed without any pangs of conscience. The fire of enmity would have burnt to ashes all the Arabs, if blessed Islam had not rescued them from it. This blessing had appeared in a tangible form at Al-Madinah at the time of the revelation of these verses. The two clans Aus and Khazraj who had been enemies for years and had been involved in bitter feuds and bloody battles, became brethren after they embraced Islam. Not only this: they also showed that spirit of sacrifice for the rehabilitation of the refugees from Makkah that has no parallel in history.

***85** That is to say, if you have eyes to see, you can yourselves judge whether your welfare lies in holding fast to Allah's Way or in discarding it and reverting to the old ways of ignorance, and whether your well wishers are Allah and His Messenger or the Jews and the hypocrites and the

polytheists who are trying to revert you to your former condition.

104. And let there be (arising) from you a nation inviting to good, and enjoining to right, and forbidding from wrong. And such are those who will be the successful.

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى
الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105. And do not be like those who became divided, and differed after that which had come to them of the clear proofs.*⁸⁶ And those, for them is a great punishment.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا
وَأَخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمْ
الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾

***86** This refers to those communities which received the guidance and clear teachings from the messengers of Allah but after some time discarded the basic principles of the guidance and divided themselves into different sects on the basis of irrelevant and minor issues and were involved in useless and meaningless squabbles. They became so engrossed in these things that they totally forgot the mission which Allah had entrusted to them and lost interest even in the basic principles on which, in fact, depends the real success of humanity.

106. On the Day (some) faces will be white, and (some)

يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ

faces will be black. Then as for those whose faces will become black, (it will be said): “Did you disbelieve after your belief. Then taste the punishment for what you used to disbelieve.”

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ أَسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ
أَكْفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا
الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107. And as for those whose faces will become white, so (they will be) in the mercy of Allah. They shall abide forever therein.

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ أَبْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ
فَفِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108. These are the verses of Allah, We recite them to you (O Muhammad) in truth. And Allah wants no injustice to the worlds (His creatures).^{*87}

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ
بِالْحَقِّ وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا
لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

***87** As Allah, does not will to be unjust to the people of the world, He is showing them guidance and warning them before those things of which they shall have to ultimately render an account. Thus, those who follow the crooked ways even after this and do not return to the right way are doing injustice to themselves.

109. And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And to Allah will the

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ

matters be returned.



110. You are the best nation raised up for mankind.^{*88} You enjoin to right, and forbid from wrong, and you believe in Allah. And if the People of the Scripture^{*89} had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, and most of them are disobedient.

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ
تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِمَّنْهُمْ
وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
الْفَاسِقُونَ



***88** This is the same declaration that has been made in Al-Baqarah (Ayat 143). The followers of the Prophet (peace be upon him) are being reminded that they have been appointed to the leadership of the world from which the children of Israel had been deposed on account of their incompetence. The Muslims have been appointed to that office because they possess those moral qualities which are essential for just leadership. These are to establish virtue and to eradicate evil practically, and believe that there is no god other than Allah in order to put into practice the implication of this belief. They should, therefore, understand the responsibilities of the work which had been entrusted to them and avoid the errors into which their

predecessors had fallen. (See E.N. 123-144 of Al-Baqarah).

***89** Here the Jews are the people of the Book.

111. They will never harm you except a trifling hurt. And if they fight against you, they will turn on their backs. Then afterwards they will not be helped.

لَنْ يَضُرُّوكُمْ إِلَّا أَذًى وَإِنْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ يُؤَلُّوكُمُ الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يُنصَرُونَ

112. Humiliation has been laid over them (by Allah) wherever they are found, except for a rope (covenant) from Allah, and a rope (treaty) from the people.^{*90} And they have drawn on themselves the wrath of Allah, and the destitution is laid upon them. That is because they used to disbelieve in the revelations of Allah, and killed the prophets without right. That is because they disobeyed and used to transgress.

ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ أَيْنَ مَا تَقِفُوا إِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَحَبْلِ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ^ج ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِعَايَتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ^ج بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ^ج ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ

***90** That is, the little security that they enjoy anywhere in the world has not been won by themselves but has been the result of the help and kindness of others. They have been getting this either from some Muslim states in the name of Allah or from some non-Muslim states for other reasons.

And if sometimes they have succeeded in gaining even some political power, they have not accomplished this through their own efforts but have owed it to others.

113. They are not all alike. Among the People of the Scripture (there is) a community standing (right), they recite the verses of Allah during the hours of the night, and they prostrate.

لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً ۗ مِّنْ أَهْلِ
الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ
اللَّهِ ءَانَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ



114. They believe in Allah, and the Last Day, and they enjoin to right, and they forbid from wrong, and they hasten one another in good deeds. And those are among the righteous.

يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسْرِعُونَ فِي
الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَئِكَ مِنَ
الصَّالِحِينَ



115. And whatever of good they do, never will it be rejected of them. And Allah is All Aware of those who fear (Him).

وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ
يُكْفَرُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
بِالْمُتَّقِينَ



116. Certainly, those who disbelieve, neither their wealth, nor their children

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ

will avail them against Allah anything at all. And they are the dwellers of the Fire. They will abide therein.

عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِّنَ
اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

117. The example of that which they spend in this life of the world is as the example of a wind with frost in it, which struck the harvest of a people who have wronged themselves, then destroyed it.*91 And Allah did not wrong them, but they do wrong to themselves.

مَثَلُ مَا يُنْفِقُونَ فِي هَذِهِ
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ رِيحٍ
فِيهَا صِرٌّ أَصَابَتْ حَرْثَ قَوْمٍ
ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَأَهْلَكَتُهُ وَمَا
ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَٰكِن أَنْفُسَهُمْ
يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

***91** In this similitude, *harvest* stands for human life, for one sows in it deeds or misdeeds which one shall have to harvest in the next world. The *wind* refers to the superficial and hypocritical show of charity that impels the unbelievers to spend their wealth in charity and public works. And *frost* refers to the lack of faith and willingness to obey the divine law in its right spirit, which makes void the acts and deeds of one's life. By this similitude, Allah teaches this lesson; just as air is very useful for the growth of crops but it also destroys these if there is frost in it: in the same way charity helps nourish the harvest that is to be reaped in the next

world but it destroys the same, if it is poisoned with unbelief.

It is obvious that Allah is the Master of man as well as of the wealth that he possesses and of the kingdom in which he is acting. Now, if this slave of Allah does not acknowledge the sovereignty of his Master or unlawfully sets up other objects of worship and does not obey His law in his exploitation of His wealth and kingdom, he shall be guilty of a crime. Therefore, he will not be entitled to any reward for his charity, but shall be prosecuted for his unlawful exploitation. The charity of such a man maybe likened to the charity of a servant who steals a sum of money from the treasure of his master and spends it as he likes.

118. O those who believe, do not take as intimates other than (among) yourselves, they would not spare you (any) ruins.*92 They love that which distresses you. Indeed, the hatred appears by (the utterance of) their mouths, and that which their breasts hide is even greater. We have certainly made plain for you the revelations, if you will understand.

يَتَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا
بِطَانَةَ مِّنْ دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ
خَبَالًا وَدُّوا مَا عَنِتُّمْ قَدْ بَدَتِ
الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا
تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا
لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

*92 Here Allah warns the Muslims to guard against the hypocritical attitude of the Jews who lived in the suburbs of Al-Madinah. The two clans, Aus and Khazraj, had been on

friendly terms with them from very ancient times and kept sincere relations with them even after embracing Islam. In contrast to this, the Jews, who had turned into the enemies of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his mission, could not be friendly with anyone who had joined the new movement. Accordingly, they kept up an outward show of friendship with the Ansar, but in their hearts they had become their bitter enemies. They, however, exploited this outward friendship and tried to sow seeds of dissension and create chaos in the Muslim community. They also tried to draw out secrets from the Muslims and pass them on to their enemies. That is why Allah has warned the Muslims that they should not take such people into their confidence.

119. Here you are those, you love them, and they do not love you, and you believe in all the Scripture.^{*93} And when they meet with you, they say: “We believe,” and when they are alone, they bite (their) fingertips at you in rage. Say: “Die in your rage.” Certainly, Allah is All Aware of what is in the breasts.

هَآأَنُتُمْ أَوْلَآءِ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا
تُحِبُّونَكُمُ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ
كُلِّهِ وَإِذَا لَقُوكُمْ قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا
وَإِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمُ
الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ قُلْ مُوتُوا
بِغَيْظِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ
الصُّدُورِ

***93** That is, it is strange that the Jews, who themselves are guilty of rejecting your Book, whereas you believe in their Book, the Torah, along with your Book, the Quran, should

have a grievance against you. There is no reason why they should complain against you. On the other hand, you have a cogent grievance against them for their disbelief in your Book.

120. If any good happens to you, it grieves them, and if any misfortune befalls you, they rejoice at it. And if you are patient and fear (Allah), their plot will not harm you anything at all. Surely, Allah is surrounding that which they do.

إِنْ تَمَسَّكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ
وَإِنْ تُصِيبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا
وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا لَا
يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ
بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ

121. And when you (O Muhammad)^{*94} departed from your household at daybreak to assign to the believers the positions for the battle. And Allah is All Hearer, All Knower.

وَإِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ وَاللَّهُ
سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

***94** From here begins the fourth discourse, which was revealed after the battle of Uhd. It has been beautifully connected with the previous discourse which ended with the admonition that the machinations of their enemies could do them no harm, if they would show restraint, and fear Allah. This discourse is an apt continuation of the same theme, because the setback in the battle of Uhd was due to lack of restraint and lack of fear of Allah.

As a review has been made of all the important events of the battle in order to bring home the lessons, it will be very useful to keep in view their background, because in the discourse only passing references have been made to them without any details.

In the beginning of Shawwal (A.H. 3), the Quraish attacked Al-Madinah with an army of 3,000 men. They not only outnumbered the Muslims but were also much better equipped. Besides this, they were filled with passion to avenge their defeat at Badr. The Prophet (peace be upon him) and his experienced companions were of the opinion that they should defend Al-Madinah from within the walls. But some young men, who had not taken part in the battle of Badr, were so imbued with the spirit of martyrdom that they insisted on going out to meet the enemy. At last on their persistence, the Prophet (peace be upon him) decided to go out to fight. So he led out an army of 1,000 men but at Shaut, Abdullah bin Ubayy, the ring leader of the hypocrites, deserted him with his 300 men. Naturally this treacherous act produced much confusion in the Muslim army. So much so that two parties, Banu Salmah and Banu Harithah, were so disheartened that they began to waver in their minds and were about to turn back, but were dissuaded from this by those companions who had remained firm and constant.

Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) marched to Mount Uhd with the 700 men left with him after the desertion of Abdullah bin Ubayy. He arrayed his men at the foot of the Mount so that the army of the Quraish was in their front

and Mount Uhd at their back. Thus the only vulnerable point was a pass on one side, where he posted 50 archers under the command of Abdullah bin Jubair, saying, not to let any enemy come near to us, and not to leave their posts in any case whatsoever. Even if they see birds peck at our flesh, they should not abandon their posts at all.

In the initial stage of the battle, the Muslim army had the upper hand and succeeded in creating great confusion in the army of the enemy. But instead, of pursuing this initial success to the final victory, they were so lured by their greed for booty that they began to loot the spoils. When the archers, who were guarding the pass, saw their comrades plundering the fleeing enemy, they also deserted their posts in order to join the looters. In vain did Hadrat Abdullah bin Jubair remind them of the strict command of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to dissuade them from this, but only a few of them listened to him. Khalid bin Walid, who was commanding the cavalry of the enemy, made full use of this opportune moment. He rode round the Mount and attacked the Muslims from behind through the pass. Abdullah bin Jubair did his best to defend it with the few men left with him, but in vain, and Khalid fell upon the Muslims who were engaged in the plunder of spoils. They were so overwhelmed by this sudden attack from behind that they took to their heels in confusion. To add to their misery, the Quraish who were in flight before them also turned back to attack them from the front. This turned the scale of the battle against the Muslims who were put to rout by this unexpected situation. Still there were some brave

Muslims who stood firmly in the battlefield. But then a rumor started that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had been martyred, and his companions were so stunned by this rumor that even those who were standing firm in the battlefield lost heart and only a dozen or so of the devoted ones were left with him. Thus it was about to turn into an utter rout, when his companions heard that, though he was wounded, he was alive. Then they again rallied round him and took him to a safe side of the Mount.

In this connection it is very important to note the strange thing that happened: the Quraish did not make full use of this opportunity but marched back to Makkah instead. This is an enigma, for, if they had pursued their success to complete victory, nothing would have checked them, because the Muslims had been so utterly routed that they could not have given them a battle.

122. When two parties among you were about to lose courage,^{*95} and Allah was their protecting friend. And upon Allah let the believers put their trust.

إِذْ هَمَّتْ طَّائِفَتَانِ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ تَفْشَلَا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيَهُمَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ



***95** The two groups were Banu Salmah and Banu Harithah who had wavered in their minds at the desertion of Abdullah bin Ubayy, the hypocrite, and his 300 followers.

123. And Allah had already given you the victory at Badr, while you were weak. So fear Allah

وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرِ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

that you may be grateful.



124. When you said to the believers: “Is it not sufficient for you that your Lord should support you with three thousand of the angels sent down.”*96

إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَنْ
يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ
بِثَلَاثَةِ أَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ



***96** The Prophet (peace be upon him) heartened the Muslims with this promise when they were disheartened to confront an army of 3,000 men with a small army of 1,000 which was further reduced to 700 men by the desertion of 300 hypocrites.

125. “Nay but, if you are patient, and fear (Allah), and they (the enemy) come to you suddenly, your Lord will help you with five thousand of the angels having marks (of distinction).”

بَلَىٰ إِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم
مِّن فَوْرِهِمْ هَذَا يُمِدِّدْكُمْ
رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ أَلْفٍ مِّنَ
الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ



126. And Allah did not make it but as a good tidings for you, and that your hearts might be reassured thereby. And there is no victory except from Allah,

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ
وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ وَمَا
النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ

the All Mighty, the All Wise.

الْحَكِيمِ ١٢٦

127. That He might cut off a section of those who disbelieve, or suppress them, so that they turn back, frustrated.

لَيَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْ يَكْتَبُهُمُ فَيَنْقَلِبُوا خَائِبِينَ ١٢٧

128. Not for you at all (O Muhammad, but for Allah) is any decision, whether He should forgive them or punish them, then indeed they are wrongdoers.

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ١٢٨

129. And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. He forgives whom He wills, and punishes whom He wills. And Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful. ^{*97}

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ١٢٩

***97** These verses were an answer to the curse which the Prophet (peace be upon him) called on his enemies: when he was wounded in the battle, he involuntarily invoked evil upon his enemies and said, How can that community prosper which wounds the prophet?

130. O those who believe, devour not usury, doubling, and multiplying (many

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا

folds).^{*98} And fear Allah, that you may be successful.

تَأْكُلُوا الرِّبَا أَضْعَافًا
مُّضَاعَفَةً ط وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

***98** The main cause of the setback at Uhd was the greed for wealth shown by the Muslims. They were so overpowered by the lust for booty, that, instead of pursuing their initial success to victory, they got engaged in looting the spoils. This is why the All-Wise Allah has struck at interest, the root cause of the evils and prohibited it. For it is a common experience that those who lend money on interest become so absorbed in it that day and night they think of nothing but increasing their unearned profits and this naturally increases their greed for money.

131. And fear the Fire, which is prepared for the disbelievers.

وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ
لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

132. And obey Allah and the messenger, that you may obtain mercy.

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

133. And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord, and a garden (Paradise) as wide as the heavens and the earth,

﴿ وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ
وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ

prepared for those who fear (Allah).

لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

134. Those who spend (in the cause of Allah) in ease and adversity, and those who restrain anger, and those who forgive mankind. And Allah loves those who do good.*99

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

***99** The devouring of interest had created greed, avarice, parsimony and selfishness in those who took interest; hatred, anger, enmity and jealousy in those who had to pay it, and these moral evils contributed to some extent to the setback in the Battle of Uhd. Therefore Allah has condemned and prohibited interest and prescribed charity as an antidote to it. It is obvious that Paradise has been reserved for those who practice charity and spend money generously, and not for those greedy persons who practice money lending on interest. (See E.N. 320, Al-Baqarah).

135. And those who, when they have committed an indecency or wronged themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins. And who can forgive the sins except Allah. And they do not persist in what they

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرِ اللَّهُ فَمَا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

have done while they know.

١٣٥

136. Those, their reward is forgiveness from their Lord, and gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. And excellent is the reward for the (righteous) workers.

أُولَئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ

137. Many ways of life have passed away before you. So travel in the land, and see how was the end of those who denied.

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ

138. This (the Quran) is a declaration for mankind, and a guidance, and an admonition to those who fear (Allah).

هَذَا بَيَانٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

139. And do not become weak, nor grieve, and you shall gain the upper hand if you are (true) believers.

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ

140. If a wound has touched you, then surely a similar

إِن يَمَسَّكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ

wound has touched the (other) people.^{*100} And these are the days that We alternate among mankind. And that Allah may know those who believe, and may choose witnesses from among you.^{*101} And Allah does not love the wrongdoers.

الْقَوْمَ قَرَحُ مِثْلُهُ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ
نُداوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ
الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ
شُهَدَاءَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ



***100** God is encouraging the Muslims by mentioning the victory in the battle of Badr, saying, when the disbelievers did not lose heart by the blow at Badr, why should you, the believers, lose heart by the blow at Uhd?

***101** The original Arabic text may imply either of the two things: Allah desired to give some of you the honor of martyrdom. Or it may mean: He willed to winnow the believers from the hypocrites so that the true witnesses of the truth, who may really be worthy of performing the mission that has been assigned to the Muslim community, may be distinguished from the false ones.

141. And that Allah may purify those who believe, and may destroy the disbelievers.

وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا
وَيَمْحَقَ الْكٰفِرِينَ

142. Or do you think that you will enter Paradise, and Allah has not yet made evident those of you who

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ
وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا

strive (in His cause), and made evident the steadfast.

مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٤٢﴾

143. And you did indeed wish for martyrdom before that you encountered it (in the battle field). So surely (now) you have seen it (openly) while you were looking on. ^{*102}

وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِن قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

***102** This alludes to those who were so desirous of martyrdom that they had persuaded the Prophet (peace be upon him) against his wish to go out of Al-Madinah to fight with the enemy.

144. And Muhammad is not but a messenger. Indeed, (many) messengers have passed away before him. So if he dies or is killed, would you turn back on your heels (to disbelief). ^{*103} And he who turns back on his heels, will never harm Allah at all. And Allah will reward those who are grateful.

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِن مَّاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَن يَنقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَن يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا ۗ وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

***103** This is the answer to the mischievous talk of those hypocrites who had accompanied the Muslims in the battle of Uhd. When the rumor spread that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had been slain, naturally the Muslims lost heart,

but the hypocrites began to say, let us go to Abdullah bin Ubayy and request him to obtain amnesty for us from Abu Sufyan. Others who were more impudent, went even so far as to say, if Muhammad (peace be upon him) had been a true prophet of Allah, he could not have been slain. Let us now turn to our ancestral faith. Allah rebukes them as if to say, Muhammad (peace be upon him) is a prophet, and is mortal like other prophets who came before him: therefore, if your attachment to Islam is because of the person of Muhammad (peace be upon him), and if it stands on such flimsy ground that with his death you will again return to disbelief, then Allah's religion does not stand in need of you.

This verse was also meant to impress that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was mortal like all other prophets. According to a tradition, on the morning when the Prophet (peace be upon him) passed away, Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) came into the mosque at Al-Madinah and found the people all distracted, and Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) telling them that it was a sin to say that he passed away. Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) went and ascertained the truth, and coming back into the mosque, cried, surely as for him who worshipped Muhammad, Muhammad (peace be upon him) is dead, but as for him who worships Allah, Allah is alive and does not die. Then he recited this verse, and it was as if the people had not known till then that such a verse had been revealed.

145. And it is not (possible) for a person to die except by permission of Allah at a term appointed.*¹⁰⁴ And whoever desires a reward in (this) world, We shall give him thereof. And whoever desires a reward in the Hereafter, We shall give him thereof.*¹⁰⁵ And We shall reward those who are grateful.*¹⁰⁶

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ
إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِتَابًا مُؤَجَّلًا
وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ
مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الآخِرَةِ
نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا ۚ وَسَنَجْزِي
الشَّاكِرِينَ



***104** This is meant to teach the Muslims that fleeing from fear of death will be of no avail, because none shall die a moment before the time ordained for death by Allah, nor can one live a moment after it. Therefore, what one should care for is not how to escape from death but how best to spend the time that has been given in this world. The important question is this: Is it to be spent for the sake of this worldly life or for the life-after-death?

***105** As the consequences of all actions follow them inevitably, the most important question from the Islamic point of view is whether one's struggle in life is to be directed towards the transitory interests and enjoyments of this world or towards the everlasting joys of the next world. The answer to this will determine one's moral attitude in regard to good and evil.

***106** Grateful servants are those people who appreciate fully the blessings of Allah, which He has bestowed upon

them. He has informed them that there is a limitless life beyond the limited life of this world and that the consequences of the actions of this life are not confined to this life alone, but follow inevitably in the life-after-death. Hence he is really a grateful servant who trusts in God's promise of sure reward of good deeds in the next world, and then goes on performing those deeds, disregarding whether his deeds flourish in this life or produce the reverse results. On the other hand, those people are ungrateful who are not ready and willing to spend their time or money or energy on anything that is not expected to produce immediate good results in this world. They are ungrateful because they do not appreciate the correct knowledge which has been bestowed by God about the consequences which inevitably follow in the everlasting life in the next world.

146. And how many a prophet fought, (and) along with him (fought) many religious scholars. But they never lost heart to what afflicted them in Allah's Way, nor did they weaken, nor were they brought low.*107 And Allah loves the steadfast.

وَكَايِنٍ مِّن نَّبِيٍّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رِيشُونَ
 كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي
 سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا
 اسْتَكَانُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ



*107 That is, they did not surrender to the worshippers of falsehood, even though they were less in number and worse off in equipment than their enemies.

147. And their saying was nothing except that they said: “Our Lord, forgive us our sins, and our transgressions in our affairs, and establish our feet firmly, and give us victory over the disbelieving people.”

وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلَهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا
رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا
فِي أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا
عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

148. So Allah gave them the reward of this world, and the excellent reward of the Hereafter. And Allah loves those who do good.

فَعَاتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا
وَحُسْنَ ثَوَابِ الْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ
يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٤٨﴾

149. O those who believe, if you obey those who disbelieve, they will turn you back on your heels,^{*108} and you will then turn back as losers.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنْ
تَطِيعُوا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ
فَتَنقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

***108** That is, they will take you back to the state of unbelief from which you had come out. This warning was timely because after the reverse at Uhd, the hypocrites and the Jews tried to seduce the Muslims from their faith. Their fallacious reasoning was like this: Had Muhammad (peace be upon him) been a prophet, he would never have suffered a defeat. It is obvious from this that he is an ordinary man who gets victory one day and suffers defeat another day. It

is sheer propaganda that Allah had given him any promise of help and success.

150. But Allah is your protector, and He is the best of helpers.

بَلِ اللَّهِ مَوْلَانَكُمْ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ
النَّصِيرِينَ

151. We shall cast fear into the hearts of those who disbelieve because they ascribed partners with Allah that for which He has sent no authority. And their abode will be the Fire. And evil is the abode of the wrongdoers.

سَنُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ بِمَا أَشْرَكُوا
بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا
وَمَا أَوْلَهُمُ النَّارُ وَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى
الظَّالِمِينَ

152. And Allah has certainly fulfilled His promise to you when you were killing them (enemy) by His permission. Until when you lost courage, and you disputed about the order (of Muhammad) and you disobeyed, after what He had shown you that which you love. Among you are some who desired the world, and among you are some who desired the Hereafter.

وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ
تَحْسُونَهُمْ بِإِذْنِهِ حَتَّى إِذَا
فَاشَيْتُمْ وَتَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ
وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَرَاكُمْ مَا
تُحِبُّونَ مِّنْكُمْ مَّن يُرِيدُ
الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُرِيدُ
الْآخِرَةَ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُم عَنْهُمْ

Then He made you turn back from them (defeated), that He might test you. And He has surely forgiven you.*109 And Allah is Most Gracious to the believers.

لَيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ



*109 This refers to the conduct of the archers. When they were commanded to abstain from taking spoils, they argued with and disobeyed their leader and deserted their positions with the result that the scales of victory were turned against the Muslims.

Your desertion was an act which would have resulted in your total destruction, if Allah had not pardoned you. It was God's grace and succor that saved you from its grave consequences, and the Quraish, in spite of their victory, retreated of their own accord without any apparent reason.

153. When you climbed (the hill) without looking back at anyone, while the messenger was calling you from your behind.*110 So He repaid you with distress upon distress,*111 that you would not grieve for that which had escaped you, nor that which had befallen you. And Allah is All informed of what you do.

إِذ تَصْعَدُونَ وَلَا تَلُودُونَ
عَلَى أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ
يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أُخْرَانِكُمْ
فَأَثَبَكُمْ غَمًّا بِغَمِّ لِكَيْلَا
تَحْزَنُوا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا مَا
أَصَابَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ



*110 It was the courage and firmness of the Prophet (peace

be upon him) that saved the situation from utter ruin in the confusion caused by the sudden attack of the enemy who was charging from the front and from the rear. When some of the Muslims were fleeing towards Al-Madinah and the others were climbing up the Uhd, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stood firm and resolute at his post with a dozen or so of his companions who had stood the test. He was rallying those who were taking to flight, calling out, O servants of Allah, come to me.

*111 Sorrow was caused by the reverse and by the rumor that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had been martyred and by the loss of their companions and by the misery of their wounded and by the insecurity of their homes and by the fear that the victorious Quraish army, that outnumbered the total population of Al-Madinah, would crush the routed army, enter into the town and reduce it to ruins.

154. Then after the distress, He sent down security upon you. Slumber overcoming a party of you,^{*112} while (another) party, being anxious about themselves, thinking of Allah, other than the truth, the thought of ignorance. They said: “Is there for us anything in this matter.” Say: “Indeed, the matter completely belongs to Allah.” They hide within

ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ
أَمْنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَغْشَى طَآئِفَةً مِّنْكُمْ
وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ
يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ
الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَقُولُونَ هَل لَّنَا
مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قُلْ إِنَّ
الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُ لِلَّهِ يُخْفُونَ فِي

themselves that which they will not reveal to you. Saying: "If there was for us (to do) in the matter anything, we would not have been killed here." Say: "Even if you had been in your homes, those for whom killing was decreed would have gone forth to the places of their death." And (it was) so that Allah might test what is in your breasts, and that He may purify what is in your hearts. And Allah is All Aware of what is within the breasts.

أَنْفُسِهِمْ مَا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ
 يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ
 شَيْءٌ مَّا قُتِلْنَا هَاهُنَا قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ
 فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ
 عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ
 وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ
 وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ
 عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ



***112** This was a favor shown to those Muslims who had remained firm in the battle. They experienced such a strange sense of security that in spite of their sorrow, they began to feel drowsy. Abu Talhah (may Allah be pleased with him), who had taken part in the battle, says that they were so overpowered by drowsiness that even their swords began to fall from their hands.

155. Certainly, those who turned back among you on the day when the two armies met (at Uhad). It was only Satan who caused them to

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ
 الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ

backslide (from the battle), because of some of that which they had earned. And Allah has surely forgiven them. Indeed, Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Forbearing.

الْشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا
وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ ^ق إِنَّ اللَّهَ
غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

156. O those who believe, do not be like those who disbelieved, and said about their brothers when they traveled through the land, or they were out in fighting: “If they had been (here) with us, they would not have died, nor would have been killed.” So that Allah may make it ^{*113} a cause of regret in their hearts. And it is Allah who gives life and causes death. And Allah is All Seer of what you do.

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا
كَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَقَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ
إِذَا ضَرَبُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ كَانُوا
غُزًى لَوْ كَانُوا عِندَنَا مَا مَاتُوا
وَمَا قُتِلُوا لِيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ
حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ ^ق وَاللَّهُ يَحْيِي
وَيُمِيتُ ^ق وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

***113** These were their vain regrets which were the result of their wrong thinking. The fact is that the decrees of God are inevitable. Such regrets produce only grief and anguish in the hearts of those who do not trust in Allah but trust in their own plans and designs. However, when their efforts also end in utter failure, they wring their hands, saying, Oh! had it been thus and thus, the result would have been

so and so.

157. And if you are killed in the Way of Allah or die, forgiveness from Allah and mercy are better than whatever they accumulate.

وَلَيْن قُتِلْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ مُتُّمْ
لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ
مِّمَّا تَجْمَعُونَ

158. And whether you die, or are killed, verily, unto Allah you shall be gathered.

وَلَيْن مُتُّمْ أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لِيَّ إِلَى اللَّهِ
تُحْشَرُونَ

159. So by the mercy from Allah, you (O Muhammad) were lenient with them. And if you had been stern, harsh of heart, they would have dispersed from around you. So pardon them, and seek forgiveness for them, and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have decided, then put your trust in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ
وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ
لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ
عَنَّهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي
الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى
اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

160. If Allah helps you, then no one can overcome you. And if He forsakes you, then who is there who can help you after Him.

إِن يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ
وَإِن يَخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي

And in Allah let the believers put their trust.

يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ
فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

161. And it is not to any prophet that he would embezzle.*¹¹⁴ And whoever embezzles will come with what he embezzled on the Day of Resurrection. Then every soul will be paid in full what it has earned, and they will not be wronged.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ ۗ وَمَنْ
يَغُلَّ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا
كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦١﴾

***114** This is the answer to the suspicion of the archers about the honesty of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in regard to the division of the spoils. When they saw their companions plunder the enemy, the archers feared that the former would get the whole of the spoil and they would be deprived of it at the time of division; just because they had not taken part in the plunder. That is why they spontaneously deserted their posts. When later on, they put forward some lame excuses, these were not accepted. Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, the real thing is that you had no trust in me. You suspected that I would deal dishonestly with you and would not give you your due share. In this verse Allah has taken them to task for cherishing such wrong ideas about the Prophet (peace be upon him), by putting searching questions as if to say: How is it that you suspected that your interests would not be safe

in the hands of the Prophet (peace be upon him) of Allah?
Can you ever expect that the Messenger of Allah would divide unjustly the wealth that is in his trusteeship.

162. Is then he who follows the pleasure of Allah like him who brings upon himself the anger from Allah, and his abode is Hell, and evil, is the destination.

أَفَمَنْ أَتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ كَمَنْ بَاءَ
بِسَخَطٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ
وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٦٢﴾

163. They are in varying degrees with Allah. And Allah is All Seer of what they do.

هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ
بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

164. Certainly, Allah conferred a great favor upon the believers when He raised from among them a messenger of their own, reciting to them His verses, and purifying them, and teaching them the Book (the Quran), and wisdom. While before that they had been in manifest error.

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ
بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ
يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ
مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٦٤﴾

165. And why (was it so) when a disaster struck you (in Uhad), although you had struck (them with a disaster)

أَوْلَمَّا أَصَبَتْكُمْ مُّصِيبَةٌ قَدَّ
أَصَبْتُمْ مِّثْلَهَا قُلْتُمْ أَنَّى هَذَا قُلْ

twice as (great in Badr),^{*115}
you said: “From where is
this.”^{*116} Say: “It is from
yourselves.”^{*117} Indeed, Allah
has power over all things.^{*118}

هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٦٥﴾

***115** This verse is meant to remove the confusion caused in the minds of the common Muslims by the reverse at Uhd. Though the intimate companions close to the Prophet (peace be upon him) were under no delusion that his mere presence among them was a sure guarantee of success, yet the common Muslims were suffering from this misunderstanding. They thought that the disbelievers could in no way win a victory over them because the Prophet (peace be upon him) was present among them and the help and succor of Allah was with them. Therefore, when contrary to their expectations, they met with a reverse at Uhd, they began to ask questions like this: Why has this misfortune befallen us. We were fighting for the cause of Allah, and that happened at the hands of the disbelievers, who had come to destroy Islam? Above all, they could not understand this because Allah had promised to help and succor to them and the Prophet (peace be upon him) was himself present in the battlefield. They have been told that they themselves were responsible for the disaster.

***116** In the battle of Uhd, 70 Muslims were martyred whereas in the battle of Badr, 70 disbelievers were killed and 70 taken as prisoners.

***117** That is, this is the result of your own weakness and wrong acts: you did not show patience; you did things

which were against piety; you disobeyed the order of your leader; you became victims of greed and you got engaged in disputes among yourselves: still you ask, where has this disaster come from?

***118** That is, Allah is able to give victory and is also able to bring about defeat.


166. And that which befell you, on the day (of Uhad) when the two armies met, was by permission of Allah, and that He might know the true believers.

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ التَّقَى
الْجَمْعَانَ فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ



167. And that He might know those who are the hypocrites. And to whom it was said: “Come, fight in the Way of Allah, or defend.” They said: “If we had known (there would be) fighting, we would certainly have followed you.”***119** They were nearer to disbelief that day than to faith. Saying with their mouths that which was not in their hearts. And Allah is best aware of what they conceal.

وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ
تَعَالَوْا قَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ
ادْفَعُوا قَالُوا لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا
لَاتَّبَعْنَاكُمْ هُمْ لِلْكَفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ
أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ
يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ
فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا
يَكْتُمُونَ



***119** This was the pretext with which Abdullah bin Ubayy returned to Al-Madinah with his 300 men from his way to

the battlefield. When the Muslims perceived that he was about to desert the Muslim army, they tried to persuade him to accompany them but he replied, we are quite certain that there will be no battle today. That is why we are returning home; we would have most surely accompanied you, if we had expected any battle today.

168. Those who said about their brothers while sitting (at homes): “If they had obeyed us, they would not have been killed.” Say (O Muhammad): “Then avert death from yourselves if you are truthful.”

الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا
لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا ۗ قُلْ
فَادْرَأُوا عَن أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾

169. And do not think of those who are killed in the Way of Allah as dead. Nay but, they are alive^{*120} with their Lord, they are given provision.

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءُ عِنْدَ
رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

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

170. Jubilant in that which Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty,^{*121} and rejoicing about those (to be martyred) who have not joined them, from those left behind, that there shall be no fear upon them, nor shall they grieve.

فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ
فَضْلِهِ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ
يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ

١٧٠

***121** It has been explained by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the tradition cited in Musnade Ahmad. “One, who enters the next world with good deeds, is blessed by Allah with such a cheerful and joyful life that he never wishes to return to this world, but the case of a martyr is different. He does wish that he should again be sent to this world so that he may again enjoy the pleasure, joy and exultation that he felt at the time of laying down his life in the Way of Allah.

171. They rejoice because of the favor from Allah and a bounty, and that Allah will not waste the reward of those who believe.

❖ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ
وَفَضْلٍ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

١٧١

172. Those who responded to Allah and the messenger after what befell them of injury (in the fight).^{*122} For those who did good among

الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ

them, and feared (Allah), there is a great reward.

لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقُوا أَجْرٌ

عَظِيمٌ

***122** This verse alludes to those devoted servants of Islam who willingly accompanied the Prophet (peace be upon him) in his pursuit of the Quraish at that critical juncture. After the battle of Uhd, the Quraish marched back towards Makkah. When they had covered a good deal of distance from Al-Madinah, they realized that they had not utilized the golden opportunity of crushing the power of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and they began to regret: what a folly have we committed by losing that excellent chance. Accordingly, they halted and held a council of war. Though they were in favor of returning to Al-Madinah and making a sudden attack, yet they could not muster up courage and continued their march towards Makkah. At the same time, the Prophet (peace be upon him) surmised an attack from the enemy; so he assembled the Muslims on the next day after the battle of Uhd and said, let us go in pursuit of the Quraish. Although that was a very critical situation, yet the believers and the devoted servants of Allah responded to the call and willingly marched with the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Hamra-ul-Asad, a place at a distance of 8 miles from Al-Madinah.

173. Those^{*123} (believers) to whom men (hypocrites) said: “Surely, the people (an army of pagans) have

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ
النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ

gathered against you, so fear them.” But it (only) increased them in faith, and they said: “Allah is sufficient for us, and excellent (is He) for trusting.”

فَأَخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا
وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ
الْوَكِيلُ



*123 Ayats 173-175 were revealed one year after the battle of Uhd, but have been included in this discourse because they deal with the events which are connected with the same.

174. So they returned with favor from Allah and bounty, no harm touched them. And they followed the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is the owner of great bounty.

فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ
لَّمْ يَمَسَّسَهُمْ سُوءٌ وَاتَّبَعُوا
رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ
عَظِيمٍ



175. That is only the Satan who frightens (you) of his supporters. So do not fear them, and fear Me, if you are (true) believers. *124

إِنَّمَا ذَالِكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ
أَوْلِيَآءَهُ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونَ
إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ



*124 This refers to the terrifying rumors which were being spread in Al-Madinah. On the occasion of his return from Uhd, Abu Sufyan had challenged the Muslims to a fight the following year at Badr. But when the time approached, he could not find courage on account of the famine that was

raging in Makkah. So in order to save face, he tried to shift on to the Muslims the responsibility for the postponement. Accordingly, he sent a special spy to Al-Madinah to terrify them by spreading rumors that the Quraish were making great preparations for war and collecting such a large army as could defeat any army in Arabia. This device of Abu Sufyan succeeded in producing the desired panic. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) made an appeal to the Muslims to meet the Quraish in combat at Badr, it failed to produce any encouraging response. So much so that the Messenger (peace be upon him) of Allah had to declare before the gathered assembly, I will go to the combat all alone, if none else is willing to go. It was then that 1,500 devotees volunteered to accompany him, and he reached Badr with them. From the other side, Abu Sufyan left Makkah with an army of 2,000 men. But after two days journey, he told his men that it did not appear to suit them to have a fight that year, and that they would come next year for it. Accordingly, he returned to Makkah with his men. The Prophet (peace be upon him), however, waited for him at Badr for eight days. During these days, his companions did profitable business with a trading party. Then he came to know that the disbelievers had gone back to Makkah, and he returned to Al-Madinah.

176. And let not grieve you (O Muhammad) those who hasten into disbelief. Indeed, they will never harm Allah anything at all. Allah

وَلَا تَحْزُنَكَ الَّذِينَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي
الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا

intends that He should give them no portion in the Hereafter. And for them is a great punishment.

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَلَّا يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حَظًّا
فِي الْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ



177. Certainly, those who purchase disbelief for (the price of) faith, never will they harm Allah anything at all. And for them is a painful punishment.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الْكُفْرَ
بِالْإِيمَانِ لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ



178. And let not those who disbelieve think that the respite We give them is good for them. We only give them respite that they may increase in sin. And for them is a humiliating punishment.

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ
نُؤْمِلُهُمْ خَيْرًا ۗ لَّا نُنْفِسِهِمْ
إِنَّمَا نُؤْمِلُهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِثْمًا
وَهُمْ فِي عَذَابٍ مُّهِينٍ



179. Allah will not leave the believers in that (state) in which you are (now),^{*125} until He separates the evil from the good. Nor would Allah disclose to you of the unseen.^{*126} But Allah chooses of His messengers whom He

مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى
مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ
مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ
لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ
يَجْتَبِي مِنْ رُسُلِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

wills. So believe in Allah and His messengers. And if you believe and fear (Allah), then for you there is a great reward.

فَعَامِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَإِن
تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ



***125** That is, Allah does not like to see the believers remaining mixed up with the hypocrites in one and the same Muslim community.

***126** That is, Allah does not separate the believers from the hypocrites by informing the Muslims that, in their middle, such and such are hypocrites. He distinguishes true believers from hypocrites by creating such occasions as practically separate the two groups from each other.

180. And let not those who withhold that which Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty think that it is better for them. Nay, it is worse for them. It will be a twisted collar around their necks that which they withheld on the Day of Resurrection. And to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth. ^{*127}

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا
ءَاتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا
لَهُمْ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ
مَا بَخَلُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلِلَّهِ
مِيرَاثُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ



And Allah is well informed of what you do.

***127** Everything shall ultimately return to God as His

inheritance because it really belongs to God. Whatever is in the possession of any of His creatures is a temporary trust. Everyone in every case shall be dispossessed of the property and wealth that he calls his own during the short life here and that shall ultimately return to God, the real Owner. Therefore the wise one is he who generously spends Allah's property in Allah's Way and the foolish one is he who tries to hoard it.

181. Certainly, Allah has heard the statement of those who said: "Indeed, Allah is poor, and we are rich."^{*128} We shall record what they said, and their killing of the prophets without right, and We shall say: "Taste you the punishment of burning fire."

لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ
قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ
سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا وَقَتْلَهُمُ
الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَنَقُولُ ذُوقُوا
عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

***128** The Jews uttered these words on the occasion of the revelation of Ayat 245 of Al-Baqarah, "who is there among you, who will lend to Allah a goodly loan." They ridiculed this appeal, saying, Oh yes, God has been reduced to poverty, and now He is begging His servants for a loan.

182. That is because of that which your own hands have sent before. And certainly, Allah is not unjust to (His) servants.

ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ
اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ

183. Those who said: “Indeed, Allah has taken our promise that we believe not in any messenger until he brings to us an offering which fire (from heaven) shall devour.” Say (O Muhammad): “There have indeed come to you messengers before me with clear signs, and with that which you describe. So why did you kill them,^{*129} if you are truthful.”

الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عٰهَدَ
إِلَيْنَا اَلَّا نُوْمِنَ لِرِسُوْلِ حَتّٰى
يَاْتِنَا بِقُرْبٰنٍ تَاْكُلُهٗ النَّارُ قُلْ
قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِى
بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ وِبِالَّذِى قُلْتُمْ فَلِمَ
قَتَلْتُمُوهُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ



***129** This was a lie invented and attributed to God by the Jews, for Allah never enjoined such a thing. Though burnt sacrifices have been mentioned in the Bible, these have not been held out as essential signs of true prophethood. They were merely symbols of the acceptance of sacrifices by God. It is obvious that this demand was merely a pretext for rejecting the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him). As a further proof of their insincerity, it may be recalled that these enemies of the truth did not hesitate to slay even some of their own prophets who showed to them this same sign of the burnt sacrifice.

The case of Elijah may be cited as an instance: “When Ahab did more to vex the Eternal than all the kings of Israel before him, Elijah went to him and remonstrated that He had ruined Israel by forsaking the Eternal. So

Ahab gathered all Israel. Then Elijah told the people to have a couple of bullocks for the test of the burnt sacrifice. Of course, the prophets of Baal failed in the test. Then God's lightning burnt the sacrifice and all Israel witnessed it but even after this they turned against Elijah who had to flee for his life.”

184. Then if they deny you (O Muhammad), so indeed were denied messengers before you, who came with clear signs, and the Scripture, and the enlightening Book.

فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ
رُسُلٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ جَاءُوا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ
وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ

185. Every soul will taste death. And you will only be paid in full your wages on the Day of Resurrection. Then whoever is removed from the Fire, and is admitted to Paradise, then indeed, he is successful. And the life of this world is not but an enjoyment of deception.*130

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا
تُؤَفَّفُونَ^ط عَنْ أَجُورِكُمْ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ
وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا
الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ

*130 The life of this world (as it appears) is a thing that deceives because it helps create false impressions which deceive one about the ultimate results of deeds and misdeeds. One may thus be misled to take apparent prosperity or adversity as the criterion of truth or falsehood. If one is apparently prosperous in this life, it is

wrong to conclude that the one is on the right side and high in God's favor. On the other hand, if another is suffering from misfortunes and is a victim of adversity, it does not necessarily mean that the one is on the wrong side and incurs the disfavor of God. For often the results in this world are just the opposite of those which are to be met with in the next world. The latter are, however, real and therefore deserve one's greatest consideration.

186. You shall certainly be tested in your wealth, and your personal selves, and you shall certainly hear from those who were given the Scripture before you, and from those who ascribe partners (to Allah) many hurtful things. And if you persevere and fear (Allah),^{*131} then indeed that is of the matters of determination.

لَتُبْلَوْنَ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ
وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ
الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ
قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا
أَذَى كَثِيرًا وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا
وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ
الْأُمُورِ

***131** That is, you should prove the strength of your high character even in the face of provocation by keeping your temper under control. Endure with patience their taunts, derision, accusations and improper words and false propaganda. Do not get exasperated even in the most trying circumstances so as to say or do false, unjust, uncivilized and immoral things.

187. And when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Scripture (saying): “You must make it clear to mankind and not conceal it.”^{*132} But they threw it away behind their backs, and purchased with it a small gain. So evil is that which they have purchased.

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا
تَكْتُمُونَهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ
ظُهُورِهِمْ وَأَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
فَبِئْسَ مَا يَشْتُرُونَ



***132** That is, remind them of the covenant that God made with them and of the great mission that was entrusted to them because they had forgotten it, though they did remember the sign of the burnt sacrifices given to some of their prophets.

The covenant referred to in this verse has been mentioned many times in the Bible, especially it has been repeated over and over again in Deuteronomy. Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) exhorted them not to add unto the word, nor to diminish aught from it, and to keep the commandments of the Lord. And to teach them diligently unto thy children, and to talk of them when thou sittest in their house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, write them upon the posts of thy house, and on the gates. In his last will, he urged the elders of Israel to set up great stones in mount Ebal after crossing the boundary line of Palestine.

Here is an instance of their negligence of the Book. Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) entrusted one copy of the Torah

to the Levites and instructed them to recite it word by word every seventh year on the occasion of the Passover festival before a gathering of all Israeli men, women and children. But owing to their gross negligence of their duty, within seven hundred years of the death of Moses (peace be upon him), they had even forgotten that there was such a Book as Torah. so much so that even the high priest of the Temple and the Jewish king of Jerusalem were ignorant of its existence.

188. Do not think that those who rejoice in what they have brought about, and they love to be praised for what they have not done. So do not think them ^{*133} (to be) in safety from the punishment. And for them is a painful punishment.

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا
 أَتَوْا وَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ تُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ
 يَفْعَلُوا فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ مِنَ
 الْعَذَابِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ



***133** For instance, such people wish to hear people praise them for being very pious, religious, God fearing servants of the faith and defenders of the law. while, in fact, they possess none of the characteristics. Or, they desire that propaganda should be made in their favor that such and such is an embodiment of self sacrifice, sincerity and honesty. And has rendered meritorious services with the community, when in fact, he is quite the opposite of it.

189. And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. And Allah has

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

power over all things.

وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٨٩﴾

190. Certainly, in ^{*134} the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, are indeed signs for those of understanding.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ
لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٠﴾

***134** From here begins the concluding part of the Surah and it has no direct connection with the preceding verses, but with the Surah as a whole. Therefore it is worth while to turn to the introduction to this Surah to understand this portion.

191. Those who remember Allah, standing, and sitting, and (lying) on their sides, and reflect in the creation of the heavens and the earth, ^{*135} (saying): “Our Lord, You have not created this in vain. Glory be to You. So protect us from the punishment of the Fire.” ^{*136}

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا
وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي
خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا
مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا
سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

***135** That is, these signs can help one understand the reality, provided that one is not unmindful of God and observes the phenomena of nature like a thinking person and not like an animal.

***136** A close observation of the system of the universe leads them to the right conclusion that most surely there is a life in the Hereafter with its rewards and punishments. The system itself speaks eloquently of the great wisdom that underlies it, so it follows that the All-Wise Creator must have a definite purpose in the creation of man. Moreover, the very fact, that He placed everything at man's disposal and has endowed him with a moral sense to discriminate between good and bad, clearly shows that he must be accountable to Him as to whether he had fulfilled that purpose. Consequently he should be rewarded for the good he does in this world and punished for the evil. This thinking leads one to the conclusion that there must be a life after death, where one will be accountable for his deeds. This realization fills man's heart with fear of punishment in the Hereafter, and he spontaneously prays to Him to save him from the Hellfire.

192. “Our Lord, indeed, whoever You admit to the Fire, then certainly, You have disgraced him. And for wrongdoers there will not be any helpers.”

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَنْ تَدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ
 أَخْزَيْتَهُ^ط وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ
 أَنْصَارٍ

193. “Our Lord, indeed We have heard a caller (Muhammad) calling to faith (saying) that: ‘Believe you in your Lord.’ So we believed.^{*137} Our Lord, so

رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي
 لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ
 فَءَامَنَّا^ج رَبَّنَا فَاعْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا

forgive us our sins, and remove from us our evil deeds, and cause us to die with the righteous.”

وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ
الْأَبْرَارِ



*137 In the same way, this observation also convinces right thinking men that the point of view of the messengers about the beginning and the end of the universe and the purpose of its creation is the correct one; hence the way of life preached and prescribed by them is the only right way.

194. “Our Lord, and grant us that which You promised us through Your messengers, and do not humiliate us on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, You do not break (Your) promise.”*138

رَبَّنَا وَءَاتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَى
رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
إِنَّكَ لَا تَخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ



*138 It does not mean that they have any doubts about the promises of Allah, but this merely shows that they are anxious to know whether they themselves are entitled to the blessings that have been promised. That is why they pray to God, “Our Lord, forgive us, You do not break your promises,” for they fear lest they should be ridiculed in the Hereafter by the disbelievers as they were here in this world by such taunts at these; “Look at these people-even their faith in the messengers has not saved them from disgrace.”

195. So their Lord responded them (saying): “Indeed, never will I allow

فَأَسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا

to be lost the deed of (any) doer among you, of male or female. You are one from another.*139 So those who emigrated, and were driven out from their homes, and suffered harm in My cause, and who fought, and were killed. Surely, I will remove from them their evil deeds, and surely I will enter them into Gardens underneath which rivers flow. A reward from Allah. And Allah, with Him is the best of the rewards.”*140

أُضِيعُ عَمَلٍ عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ
ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُتِيَ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ
فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ
دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُودُوا فِي سَبِيلِي وَقَتَلُوا
وَقُتِلُوا لَا نُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ
وَلَا نُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ



*139 That is, in My sight all of you are alike as human beings and I have the same standards of justice and judgment for all, and men should not forget that women are of the same human status as they themselves have. I do not discriminate between man and woman, master and slave, the black and the white, the high and the low.

*140 There is a tradition that Ayats 190-195 were recited by the Prophet (peace be upon him) before some non Muslims who came to him and said, “All the prophets brought one sign or the other with them. For instance, Moses (peace be upon him) had the miraculous staff and his bright hand to show, and Jesus (peace be upon him) healed the blind and the lepers. Please tell us what sign have you

brought to us as a proof of your prophethood.” The Prophet (peace be upon him) recited these verses and said, “I have brought this.”

196. Let not deceive you the movement (with affluence), of those who disbelieve, through the land.

لَا يَغُرَّنَكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي
الْبِلَدِ



197. A brief enjoyment. Then afterwards, their ultimate abode will be Hell. And an evil resting place.

مَتَعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ
وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ



198. But those who fear their Lord, for them are Gardens underneath which rivers flow, they will abide forever therein. A gift of welcome from Allah. And that which is with Allah is better for the righteous.

لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ
جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ
اللَّهِ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ



199. And indeed, among the People of the Scripture there are those who believe in Allah and that which is revealed to you, and that which was revealed to them, humbling themselves before Allah.

وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَمَنْ
يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَا
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ خَاشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا
يَشْتُرُونَ بِعَايَتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا

They do not sell the verses of Allah for a little price. Those, for them their reward is with their Lord. Indeed, Allah is swift in taking account.

أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

200. O those who believe, persevere, and excel in endurance,^{*141} and strengthen each other, and fear Allah, that you may be successful.

يَتَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

***141** The word *sabiru* in the original Arabic text implies two things: Show more valor in fighting for the right cause than that which the disbelievers are showing for a wrong cause. And vie with one another in showing valor in your fight with the disbelievers.

