



Al-Maidah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Name

This Surah takes its name from verse 112 in which the word *maidah* occurs. Like the names of many other Surahs, this name has no special relation to the subject of the Surah but has been used merely as a symbol to distinguish it from other Surahs.

Period of Revelation

The theme of this Surah indicates, and traditions support it, that it was revealed after the treaty of Hudaibiyah at the end of A.H. 6 or in the beginning of A.H. 7. That is why it deals with those problems that arose from this treaty.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) with 1400 Muslims went to Makkah in Zil-Qaadah 6 A.H. to perform Umrah, but the Quraish spurred by their enmity, prevented him from performing the Umrah, though it was utterly against all the ancient religious traditions of Arabia. After a good deal of hard and harsh negotiations, a treaty was concluded at Hudaibiyah according to which it was agreed that he could perform Umrah the following year. That was a very appropriate occasion for teaching the Muslims the right way of performing a pilgrimage to Makkah with the true

Islamic dignity, and enjoining that they should not prevent the disbelievers from performing pilgrimage to Makkah as a retaliation for their misbehavior. This was not difficult at all as many disbelievers had to pass through Muslim territory on their way to Makkah. That is why the introductory verses deal with those things connected with pilgrimage to Makkah and the same theme has been resumed in Ayats 101-104. The other topics of this Surah also appear to belong to the same period.

The continuity of the subject shows that most probably the whole of the Surah was revealed as a single discourse at one and the same time. It is also possible that some of its verses were revealed at a later period and inserted in this Surah at different places where they fitted in. But there appears to be not the least gap anywhere in the Surah to show that it might have comprised two or more discourses.

Occasion of Revelation

This Surah was revealed to suit the requirements of the changed conditions which were now different from those prevailing at the time of the revelation of Surah Aal-Imran and Surah An-Nisa. Then the shock of the setback at the battle of Uhd had made the very surroundings of Al-Madinah dangerous for the Muslims, but now Islam had become an invulnerable power and the Islamic State had extended to Najd on the east, to the Red Sea on the west, to Syria on the north and to Makkah on the south. The setback which the Muslims had suffered at battle of Uhd had not broken their determination. It had rather spurred them to action. As a result of their continuous struggle and

unparallel sacrifices, the power of the surrounding clans, within a radius of 200 miles or so, had been broken. The Jewish menace which was always threatening Al-Madinah had been totally removed and the Jews in the other parts of Hijaz had become tributaries of the State of Al-Madinah. The last effort of the Quraish to suppress Islam had been thwarted in the battle of the Trench. After this, it had become quite obvious to the Arabs that no power could suppress the Islamic movement. Now Islam was not merely a creed which ruled over the minds and hearts of the people but had also become a State which dominated over every aspect of the life of the people who lived within its boundaries. This had enabled the Muslims to live their lives without let or hindrance, in accordance with their beliefs.

Another development had also taken place during this period. The Muslim civilization had developed in accordance with the principles of Islam and the Islamic viewpoint. This civilization was quite distinct from all other civilizations in all its details, and distinguished the Muslims clearly from the non Muslims in their moral, social and cultural behavior. Mosques had been built in all territories, prayer had been established and Imams (leaders) for every habitation and clan had been appointed. The Islamic civil and criminal laws had been formulated in detail and were being enforced through the Islamic courts. New and reformed ways of trade and commerce had taken the place of the old ones. The Islamic laws of marriage and divorce, of the segregation of the sexes, of the punishment for adultery and calumny and the like had cast the social life of

the Muslims in a special mold. Their social behavior, their conversation, their dress, their very mode of living, their culture etc., had taken a definite shape of its own. As a result of all these changes, the non-Muslims could not expect that the Muslims would ever return to their former fold.

Before the treaty of Hudaibiyah, the Muslims were so engaged in their struggle with the non Muslim Quraish that they got no time to propagate their message. This hindrance was removed by what was apparently a defeat but in reality a victory at Hudaibiyah. This gave the Muslims not only peace in their own territory but also respite to spread their message in the surrounding territories. Accordingly the Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed letters to the rulers of Iran, Egypt and the Roman Empire and the chiefs of Arabia, inviting them to Islam. At the same time the missionaries of Islam spread among the clans and tribes and invited them to accept the divine way of Allah. These were the circumstances at the time when Al-Maidah was revealed.

Topics

It deals with the following three main topics:

1. Commandments and instructions about the religious, cultural and political life of the Muslims.

In this connection, a code of ceremonial rules concerning the journey for Hajj has been prescribed; the observance of strict respect for the emblems of Allah has been enjoined; and any kind of obstruction or interference with the pilgrims to the Kabah has been prohibited. Definite rules

and regulations have been laid down for what is lawful and unlawful in the matter of food, and self imposed foolish restrictions of the pre-Islamic age have been abolished. Permission has been given to take food with the people of the Book and to marry their women. Rules and regulations for the performance of wudu (ablutions) and bath and purification and tayammum (ablutions with dust) have been prescribed. Punishment for rebellion, disturbance of peace and theft have been specified. Drinking and gambling have absolutely been made unlawful. Expiation for the breaking of oath has been laid down and a few more things have been added to the law of evidence.

2. Admonition to the Muslims.

Now that the Muslims had become a ruling body, it was feared that power might corrupt them. At this period of great trial, Allah had admonished them over and over again to stick to justice and to guard against the wrong behavior of their predecessors, the people of the Book. They have been enjoined to remain steadfast to the covenant of obedience to Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him), and to observe strictly their commands and prohibitions in order to save themselves from the evil consequences which befell the Jews and the Christians who had violated them. They have been instructed to observe the dictates of the Quran in the conduct of all their affairs and warned against the attitude of hypocrisy.

3. Admonition to the Jews and the Christians.

As the power of the Jews had been totally weakened and almost all their habitations in north Arabia had come

under the rule of the Muslims, they have been warned again about their wrong attitude and invited to follow the right way. At the same time a detailed invitation has also been extended to the Christians. The errors of their creeds have been clearly pointed out and they have been admonished to accept the guidance of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Incidentally, it may be noted that no direct invitation has been made to the Majusees and idolaters living in the adjoining countries, because there was no need for a separate address for them as their condition had already been covered by the addresses to the mushrik Arabs.

Consolidation of the Islamic Community

In continuation of the instructions about the consolidation of the Islamic community given in Surah An-Nisa, the Muslims have been directed to observe and fulfill all their obligations. Further regulations have been prescribed to train the Muslims for that purpose.

They have also been particularly warned as rulers to guard against the corruption of power and directed to observe the covenant of the Quran. They have also been exhorted to learn lessons from the failings of their predecessors, the Jews and the Christians, who in their turn have been admonished to give up their wrong attitudes towards the right way and accept the guidance taught by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Topics and their Interconnection

Ayats 1-10. The Believers have been exhorted to fulfill scrupulously all of their obligations and follow the

regulations prescribed by the divine law about food, sex, salat, justice, etc.

Ayats 11-26. The Muslims have been warned to guard against the errors of their predecessors; they should follow the right path and avoid the bad example of the Jews and the Christians, who broke their covenants and went astray into evil ways. They, in their turn, have been admonished to give up their wrong ways and accept Islam.

Ayats 27-32. The story of the two sons of Adam has been related to reproach the Jews for their plot to kill the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions. (Ayat 11 & E.N. 30). The story has also been used to emphasize the sanctity of human life.

Ayats 33-40. To achieve this object, punishments have been prescribed for those who create chaos in the Islamic State, and the believers have been urged to exert their utmost to establish the right way; the sanctity of property has also been emphasized.

Ayats 41-50. The Prophet (peace be upon him), and through him the Muslims, has been reassured that he should not mind the enmity, the evil designs and the machinations of the Jews, but continue exerting his utmost to establish the right way in accordance with the guidance of the Quran; for nothing better could be expected from those who had forsaken their own Torah. He should deal with the Christians likewise, for they, too, had forsaken their Gospel.

Ayats 51-69. In view of the degenerate moral condition of the Jews and the Christians, the believers have been

warned not to make them their friends and confidants. Likewise they should be on their guard against the evil designs of the hypocrites, the disbelievers and the like and should rely on the true believers alone. The people of the Book have, in their turn been exhorted to give up their enmity and adopt the right attitude, for they cannot get salvation without this.

Ayats 70-86. The theme of the corruptions of the Jews and Christians has been resumed. The Christians especially have been reproved for their errors in regard to the doctrine of *Tauhid*. At the same time they have been preferred to the hard hearted Jews, for there are among them some who are more inclined towards the truth.

Ayats 87-108. In this portion of the Surah, further regulations about the lawful and the unlawful, in addition to those contained in Ayats 1-10, have been given.

Ayats 109-119. At the end of the Surah, the mention of the conversation that will take place between Allah and His Prophets on the Day of Judgment, has been made for the benefit of the erring people to serve as a corrective to their creeds. The conversation with Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) has been cited as a specimen to warn, particularly the Christians, who profess to believe in him, and generally all those people who put false hopes in their prophets, etc.

Ayat 120. Conclusion: “O mankind! The Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah: therefore you should become His true servants and fear Him, for He has full power over everything.”

1. O those who believe, fulfill (your) obligations.*¹ Lawful for you are the animals of grazing livestock,*² except that which is recited to you (in the Quran), hunting not being allowed while you are in Ihram (pilgrimage).*³ Indeed, Allah ordains that which He intends.*⁴

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَوفُوا
بِالْعُقُودِ ۚ أُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيمَةُ
الْأَنْعَامِ إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ
مُحِلِّي الصَّيْدِ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
يُحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ

*1 Fulfill (your) obligations. Another meaning is the prescribed limit; the limits which are being prescribed for you in this Surah and which in general have always been laid down in the divine law. After this brief introductory sentence begins the statement of those limits that are to be observed strictly.

*2 The Arabic word *anaam* applies to camel, cow (ox), sheep and goat and *bahimah* to all kinds of grazing quadrupeds. The combination of the two words has made the meaning more comprehensive by including all the grazing quadrupeds that resemble those four contained in the word *anaam*. It also implies that the carnivore that kill other animals for food are unlawful. The Prophet (peace be upon him) made this explicit in a tradition declaring the carnivore unlawful. Likewise he also declared unlawful those birds that have claws and kill other animals for food or eat dead bodies. According to Ibn Abbas, the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited the eating of the flesh of the

carnivore and of the birds with claws. Other traditions from several companions also support the same.

*3 *Ihram* is the pilgrim's robe which has to be put on at fixed boundaries at the known distances from the Kabah. It is not lawful for any pilgrim to proceed to the Kabah until he puts off his usual dress and puts on the pilgrim's garb. This consists of two pieces of cloth without seam or ornament, one of which is wrapped round the loins and the other thrown over the shoulders. The instep, heel and head must be bare. This is called the state of *Ihram* because it makes unlawful even some of the things that are ordinarily lawful. For instance, one should not have a shave or a haircut and should not wear other clothes or ornaments nor use perfumes nor indulge in sensual desires and the like. Another restriction is the prohibition against killing any animate object or against hunting or against directing anyone else to help hunt an animal. (Refer to E.N. 213, Surah Al-Baqarah).

*4 This means that Allah has absolute authority to issue any decree He wills, and that the servants have no right at all to question it. Though all His decrees and commands are based on wisdom and are full of excellence, yet a Muslim, His servant, does not obey these just because they are proper and conducive to his good, but obeys them because they are commandments from his Sovereign. If He declares anything to be unlawful, it becomes unlawful for no other reason than that it has been made unlawful by Him. Likewise, if He makes anything lawful, it becomes lawful for no other reason than that its Owner and the Owner of

everything permits His servants to use it. That is why the Quran establishes with full force the fundamental principle that the only basis which makes a thing lawful or unlawful is whether there is the permission of the Owner for its use or not. Likewise there is no other basis for the servant to consider a thing to be lawful or unlawful except that it is lawful if Allah makes it lawful and unlawful if He prohibits it.

2. O those who believe, do not violate the emblems^{*5} of Allah, nor (the sanctity of) the sacred month, nor the sacrificial offering, nor the garlanded animals, nor (the safety of) those coming to the sacred house (Mecca), seeking the bounty of their Lord and (His) pleasure.^{*6} And when you have come out of Ihram, then you may go hunting.^{*7} And let not lead you, the hatred of some people who stopped you from the Sacred Mosque, that you commit transgression.^{*8} And help one another in righteousness and piety, and do not help one another in sin and

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَحِلُّوا
شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا
أَهْدَىٰ وَلَا الْقَلْبَةَ وَلَا ءَامِينَ
الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّن
رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا ۚ وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ
فَأَصْطَادُوا ۚ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ
شِقَاقُ قَوْمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ
الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا ۗ
وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ
وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ
وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ

transgression, and fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is severe in punishment.

شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

*5 *Shaair* is the plural of *shiar* (emblem). Every object or a representation of it, that symbolizes a way or a creed or a mode of thought or action or a system is called its *shiar* because it serves as an emblem of it. Official flags, police and army uniforms, coins, currency notes, stamps etc., are the shaair of governments which demand due respect for these from all under them, and, as far as possible, from others as well. For instance, Temple, Altar, Cross etc. are the shaair of Christianity. the Hammer and Sickle is the shaair of the communist party, and the swastika of the Nazi party. All of them demand reverence and respect for their emblems from their followers. If anyone shows disrespect for any of the emblems of any system, it is an indication that he has enmity with that system. And if the offender belongs to the same system, this act will be tantamount to apostasy and rebellion against it.

The Shaair-Allah (Emblems of Allah) are those signs and symbols that represent the pure way of God-worship as against the ways of idolatry, unbelief, paganism and atheism. The Muslims are required to show respect to the emblems of Allah wherever they find them in any way or system, provided that their psychological background is purely attributed to God-worship and has not in any way been polluted by any association with idolatry or unbelief. Therefore, if a Muslim comes across anything in the creed and deed of a non-Muslim which has an element of God-

worship in it, he will show due respect to that element and to the emblems connected with God-worship. There will be no dispute with the non Muslims on that account: a dispute arises only when he pollutes God-worship with the worship of others.

In this connection, it should be noted that the command to show due respect to the emblems of Allah was given at a time when the Muslims were at war with the pagan Arabs who were in possession of Makkah. This was necessitated because some of the pagan Arabs had to pass on their way to the Kabah through places where the Muslims could strike at them easily. Therefore the Muslims were enjoined not to molest them when they were proceeding to the House of Allah, even though they were idolaters and at war with them. Likewise, the Muslims should not attack them during the months of Hajj, nor snatch from them those animals which they were taking to the House of Allah as offering. This is to ensure that the element of God-worship, which had remained intact in their corrupt religion, should be respected and not violated.

*6 Immediately after this command, a few emblems of Allah have been specially mentioned because there was an imminent danger of their violation by the Muslims owing to the state of war. This does not, however, mean that these emblems alone are to be respected.

*7 Incidentally the command about *ihram* has been given here because this is also one of the emblems of Allah. Hunting during the state of *ihram* is prohibited, because it is the violation of one of the emblems of Allah. But when

the restrictions of *ihram* come to an end according to the law, one is permitted to hunt, if one desires to do so.

*8 This prohibition was laid down to check the Muslims from preventing the pagan Arabs from proceeding to Hajj and attacking them when they were passing through their territories. The Muslims had been so enraged when their enemies had prevented them from visiting the Kabah and from the performance of Hajj in contravention of their old custom that they were prone to retaliate, but Allah warned them not to transgress the bounds.

3. Forbidden to you are carrion,*⁹ and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that which has been slaughtered for other than Allah,*¹⁰ and (the animals) killed by strangling, and killed by a violent blow, and died of falling, and killed by (the goring of) horns, and that which has been eaten by a wild animal, except that which you slaughter (before its death),*¹¹ and that which has been sacrificed on stone altars,*¹² and that*¹³ you seek luck by the divining arrows.*¹⁴ That is abomination. This day*¹⁵

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ
وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلِيَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ
بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ
وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ
السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ
عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا
بِالْأَزْلَمِ ذَٰلِكُمْ فَسْقُ طَّ الْيَوْمَ
يَيْسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ
فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنَ الْيَوْمَ
أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ

those who disbelieve are despaired of your religion, so do not fear them, and fear Me. This day I have perfected for you your religion, and completed upon you My favor, and I have approved for you Al-Islam as the way of life.*16 So he who is forced by severe hunger, with no inclination to sin, then indeed, Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.*17

عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ
 الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا فَمَنْ أَضْطُرَّ فِي
 مَخْصَةٍ غَيْرِ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمٍ
 فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ



*9 That is, the flesh of the animal that dies a natural death.

*10 That is, the flesh of the animal which has been slaughtered in the name of another than Allah or has been slaughtered with the intention of dedicating it to a saint or a god or a goddess etc. (See E.N.171 of Surah Al-Baqarah).

*11 That is, if an animal falls victim to any of these accidents but is still alive and is duly slaughtered, it is lawful to eat its flesh. This also implies that the flesh of a clean animal becomes lawful only when it is slaughtered in the prescribed way and that there is no other way of making it lawful. In the prescribed way only that much of the throat is cut that enables the blood to flow out freely. This cannot happen if the whole of the neck is cut off or if the animal is strangled or killed in any other way because in that case most of the blood remains in the body and congeals at different places and sticks to the flesh. But

when it is slaughtered in the prescribed way, the whole of the body remains connected with the brain for a sufficiently long time to allow the blood to flow totally out of the body and the flesh is cleansed of the blood which in itself is unlawful. Therefore it is essential that the flesh should be cleansed of blood in order to become lawful.

***12** The Arabic word *nusub* applies to all those places which have been specifically dedicated to any saint or god, etc. for making offerings to them or for any other kind of ungodly worship whether there is, or is not any sort of stone or wooden idol therein.

***13** In this connection, it should be understood well that the limits prescribed by the law for making eatables lawful or unlawful are not laid down from the point of view of physical health but from the moral and spiritual points of view. As regards the matters concerning physical health, these have been left to man's own judgment and discretion, It is his own business to find out what things are useful or harmful for his physical health and nourishment, and the law does not take any responsibility for his guidance in this respect. Had it done so, poison would have been the first thing to be made unlawful, but there is absolutely no mention of this or other deadly things in the Quran or the traditions. The law is only concerned about what is morally or spiritually harmful or beneficial and also about the right or wrong means for obtaining lawful things. It is obvious that man has no means of finding out these things by himself and is consequently liable to commit errors in this matter without the guidance of the law. For whatever has

been prohibited, has been prohibited because it is harmful from the point of view of cleanliness or morality or belief. On the contrary, whatever has been made lawful, it has been made so because it is free from all these evils.

One might ask why Allah has not explained the philosophy underlying the prohibition of certain things for the clear understanding of the people. This is because it is not possible for mankind to comprehend this. For instance, it is not possible for us to make a research into the nature of moral evils that are produced by eating carrion, blood or the flesh of swine, nor is it easy to find out how they are produced and to what extent, because we have no means of measuring or weighing morality, It is, therefore, obvious that, even if their evil effects had been explained, the position of the skeptic would have remained the same as before for the lack of means of testing their veracity.

This is why Allah has declared the observance of the limits prescribed for the lawful and the unlawful as a matter of belief. One, who believes in the Quran as the book of God and in the Prophet as His Messenger (peace be upon him) and in Allah as All-Knowing and All-Wise, will observe the prescribed limits whether one understands their philosophy or not. On the other hand, if one does not believe in this basic creed, one will avoid only those things which are harmful according to human knowledge and will go on suffering from the consequences of those which man has not learned to be harmful.

***14** This verse comprises three categories of prohibitions:

(1) It prohibits the pagan ways of taking omens from a god

or a goddess and the like, about one's fortune or getting indications as to the future or deciding disputes. For instance, the pagan Quraish of Makkah had specified the idol of Hubal at the Kabah for this purpose and kept near it seven divining arrows. They would, after presenting the offering to the priest and performing certain ceremonies, pull out an arrow and regard the words engraved on it as the verdict of Hubal.

(2) The second category consists of the superstitious ways and irrational methods of taking decisions about the daily problems of life for anything regarded as portending good or evil regardless of reason or knowledge, or of finding out future events blindly by the ominous significance of particular things, circumstances, occurrences or proceedings or the like. In short, it included all the so-called arts of prediction and prophetic significance.

(3) The third category includes all kinds of gambling in which the distribution of things etc. is based on mere chance and not on merit, right, service or other rational considerations. For instance, all the schemes of lottery which entitle a certain holder of a ticket to a prize merely on chance, and at the expense of a large number of other holders of such tickets, or the award of prizes for cross-word puzzles in which a certain answer out of a large number of correct ones corresponds, by mere chance, to the answer that has been ear-marked as correct for the purpose. All these things are unlawful.

However, one simple form of casting lots is lawful in Islam, when there are two equally lawful things or rights and

there is no rational method of deciding between them. Supposing two persons have equal rights, in every respect, to something and the judge finds no rational justification to give preference to either of the disputants, neither of whom is willing to forgo his rights. In such a case, if they mutually agree, the matter may be decided by casting lots, or if one has to choose one of the two lawful things and is in difficulty in regard to the choice, one is allowed to cast lots for it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) adopted this method on such occasions as required a choice to be made between two persons with equal rights, whenever he thought that if he himself decided in favor of one, the other might be grieved.

*15 “This day” does not mean a particular day or date but the time when this verse was revealed.

“Those who disbelieve are despaired of your religion” means: After a long systematic resistance and opposition, they have lost hope of defeating your religion. Now they do not expect that you will ever return to the former way of ignorance because your religion has become a permanent way of life and has been established on a firm footing. Therefore, “Do not fear them, and fear Me.” That is, there is no longer any danger of interference from the disbelievers that they will prevent you from the performance of your religious obligations. You should, therefore, fear God and observe His commands and instructions because no ground for fear has been left for you. Now your disobedience of the law will mean that you do not intend to obey Allah.

***16** “This day I have perfected for you your religion” means: “I have provided it with all the essential elements of a permanent way of life which comprises a complete system of thought and practice and civilization and have laid down principles and given detailed instructions for the solution of all human problems. Hence there is no need for you to seek guidance and instructions from any other source.”

The completion of “My favor” is the completion of the blessing of guidance.

“I have approved Islam as the way of life for you” because you have practically proved by your obedience and devotion to it that you sincerely believe in Islam which you have accepted. As I have practically set you free from every kind of subjection and servitude, there is no compulsion for you to submit to any other than Me in your practical life. It also implies, “As a gratitude for these blessings of Mine, you should show no negligence in the observance of the prescribed limits.”

Authentic traditions show that this declaration was revealed on the occasion of the last Hajj performed by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in A.H. 10. I am however of the opinion that it was at first revealed in A.H. 6 close after the treaty of Hudaibiyah as a part of this discourse, but was again sent down to the Prophet (peace be upon him) for its declaration on that suitable occasion. This is because this verse is so well knit in this context that it would be incomplete without it. Therefore, it cannot be imagined that it was inserted here afterwards when it was revealed in A.H. 10. I believe (and the real knowledge is with Allah)

that at the time of its revelation in this context its real significance was not realized, therefore in A.H. 10, when the whole of Arabia was subdued and the power of Islam reached its zenith, Allah again sent down these sentences to His Prophet for their declaration on the occasion of his last Hajj.

*17 Refer to E.N. 172 of Surah Al-Baqarah.

4. They ask you (O Muhammad) what (food) has been made lawful for them. Say: "Lawful for you are (all) good things.*18 And that which you have trained of hunting animals as hounds (to catch), you teach them of what Allah has taught you. So eat of that which they catch for you,*19 and mention Allah's name upon it,*20 and fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is swift in reckoning."

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ
أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُم
مِنَ الْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ تُعَلِّمُونَهُنَّ
مِمَّا عَلَّمَكُمُ اللَّهُ فَكُلُوا مِمَّا
أَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ
عَلَيْهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ
الْحِسَابِ



*18 A subtle point is hidden in this answer. It is meant to set right the doubting attitude of some religious persons, who regard everything as unlawful unless it is explicitly declared to be lawful. There was a need to remove this doubt because it makes people very fastidious. So much so that such people begin to demand a complete list of lawful things in every sphere of life and look at everything with a doubting attitude. Those who asked the question did so

with the intention of obtaining a detailed list of the lawful things so that they might consider all other things as unlawful. However, the Quran did the opposite of it and gave a detailed list of the forbidden things and made all other good things lawful. This was a great reform, for it set human life free from many bondages and opened wide the doors of the vast world for mankind. Before its revelation only a limited number of things were lawful and the remaining vast world was unlawful, but this verse declared a limited number of things unlawful and made the remaining vast world lawful.

“Lawful” has been qualified with “pure” so that impure things might not be made lawful just because they have not been included in the list of prohibition. As regards the criterion for judging whether a thing is pure or not, it should be noted that all those things are pure which are not unclean according to any principle of the Islamic law, or which are not offensive to good taste or have not universally been regarded as repugnant by cultured people.

***19** Hunting animals are dogs, leopards, falcons, hawks and other beasts and birds of prey which are trained to chase wild animals and catch them for their masters, without mangling them. The game of the trained hunting animals is lawful because they do not mangle it and that of the untrained beasts and birds of prey is unlawful because they mangle it.

There is, however, a difference of opinion among the jurists about this matter. Imam Shafai and those of his school of thought are of the opinion that if the hunting beast or bird

eats a part of what it catches, it becomes unlawful, for this means that the animal had caught the game for itself and not for its master. Imam Malik and those of his school of thought are of the opinion that if the hunting bird or beast eats less than one third of the game, the remaining two thirds or so is lawful for the master. Imam Abu Hanifah and those of his school of thought are of the opinion that if the hunting beast eats a part of what it catches, the remaining game will become unlawful, but if the hunting bird eats a part of it, the remaining game will not become unlawful because the hunting beast can be trained to catch and hold the game for its master without eating anything of it, but the hunting bird cannot be so trained. In contrast to these views, Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) is of the opinion that the game of the hunting bird is absolutely unlawful, because it cannot be trained to catch and hold the game for its master without eating something of it. But in case it is not found alive, it will be lawful if the name of Allah was mentioned at the time of letting loose the hunting animal. The same also applies to hunting with arrows.

***20** That is one should recite *bismillah* (In the name of Allah), when letting loose the hunting animal for game. According to a tradition, Adi-bin Hatim asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) whether he could hunt a game with a hunting dog, the Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, "You may eat of the game if you recited the name of Allah at the time of letting loose the hunting dog, provided that he did not eat of it. In the other case, you should not eat it because that would mean that the dog had actually caught

it for himself.” Then Adi-bin-Hatim further asked, “If I let loose my own dog on the game, but afterwards find another dog there, what should I do in that case?” The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, “Do not eat it because you mentioned the name of Allah in relation to your own dog and not the other dog.”

The verse enjoins that the name of Allah must be mentioned at the time of letting loose the hunting animal in order to make the game lawful. If, however, the hunted animal is found alive, it should be duly slaughtered in the name of Allah. But in case it is not found alive, it will be lawful if the name of Allah was mentioned at the time of letting loose the hunting animal. The same also applies to hunting with arrows.

5. This day (all) good things have been made lawful for you. And the food of those who were given the Book is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them.^{*21} And the virtuous women from among the believers, and the virtuous women among those who were given the Book before you^{*22} (are lawful to you in marriage), when you give them their bridal gifts, desiring chastity, not illegal

الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ
 وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ
 لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَهُمْ
 وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
 وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
 الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا
 آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ
 غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِي

sexual intercourse, nor taking as (secret) lovers. And whoever denies the faith, then indeed worthless is his work. And he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers.*23

أَخْدَانٍ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِيمَانِ
فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ وَهُوَ فِي
الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَسِرِينَ

***21** The food of the People of the Book, also includes what has been slaughtered by them.

“And the food of those who were given the Book is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them” means that there are no restrictions either on us or on them to take food together. The Muslims are permitted to take meals with the People of the Book and they are permitted with the Muslims. But the repetition of the sentence “good things have been made lawful for you” is very significant. It shows that the Muslims should not partake of their food, if the people of the Book do not observe those rules which are essential from the point of view of the Islamic law, or if they include unlawful things in their food and drink. For instance, if they do not mention the name of Allah over the animal they slaughter or mention any other name than that of Allah over it, the flesh would be forbidden for the Muslims. Likewise if liquor or pork or any other forbidden things is served, the Muslims are not permitted to sit at the same table with them.

The same rule also applies to the food and drink of other non-Muslims except that the Muslims are not permitted at all to eat the flesh of the animals slaughtered by non

Muslims. They are permitted to eat the flesh of the clean animals, slaughtered by the People of the Book only, if they duly pronounced the name of Allah over it.

*22 This refers to the Jews and the Christians. Permission to marry only their women has been given, and that, too, with the provision that they should be chaste (*muhsanat*). There is a difference of opinion in the details of the application of this permission. According to Ibn Abbas, a Muslim may marry from among the women of the People of the Book who are the subjects of the Islamic State, but is not permitted to marry from among the women of the People of the Book living in the regions which are at war with the Islamic State or are living in a territory of the unbelievers. The Hanafis differ a little from this and consider it undesirable, though not unlawful, to marry women from among the People of the Book living in a foreign territory. On the contrary, Said bin Musayyib and Hasan Basri are of the opinion that the command is of a general nature; therefore there is no need to make any kind of distinction between the People of the Book whether they are subjects of an Islamic State or living in a foreign territory.

Besides this, there is also a difference in the interpretations of the word *muhsanat*. According to Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), it refers to virtuous and chaste women. That is why he excludes characterless women of the People of the Book from this permission. Hasan, Shabi and Ibrahim Nakhai are of the same opinion and the Hanafis also approve of this. On the other side, Imam Shafai takes

it to mean free women of the people of the Book as opposed to the slave girls from among them.

***23** The warning that immediately follows the permission given to marry women from among the People of the Book is very significant. The Muslim who makes use of this permission has been warned to guard his faith and morality very cautiously against the influence of his unbelieving wife. There is a genuine danger that his deep love might tender him a prey to wrong creeds and acts of his unbelieving wife and he might lose both his faith and morality, or he might adopt a wrong moral and social attitude which might be against the spirit of his faith.

6. O those who believe, when you rise up for prayer, so wash you faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and rub your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles.^{*24} And if you are unclean, (sexual discharge), then purify yourselves.^{*25} And if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes from a call of nature, or you had (sexual) contact with women, then you do not find water, then seek

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ
إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ
وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا
بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى
الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا
فَاطَهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ
عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ
مِّنَ الْغَايِبِ أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ
فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا

clean earth, and rub
 your faces and your
 hands with it.^{*26} Allah
 does not want to place
 any burden on you,
 but He wants to purify
 you and to complete His
 favor upon you,^{*27} that
 you may be thankful.

طَيِّبًا فَاَمْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ
 وَاَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ
 لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ
 وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ
 نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ

تَشْكُرُونَ

***24** According to the practice and instructions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), washing of the face includes the inside washing and cleaning of the mouth, throat and nose. It is also essential to wipe the ears from outside and inside as they form part of the head. The hands should be cleansed first because the other parts are to be cleansed with them.

***25** A full bath is essential in case one becomes unclean by cohabitation or by a discharge of semen during sleep etc. It is forbidden to touch the Quran or to offer the Prayer while one is unclean. (Refer to E.Ns 67-69 of Surah An-Nisa).

***26** Refer to E.Ns 69-70 of Surah An-Nisa.

***27** Cleanliness of the body is a blessing like the purity of the soul. The blessing of Allah becomes complete only when one gets full guidance for the purity of both, the body and the soul.

7. And remember Allah's favor^{*28} upon you, and His

وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ

covenant that which He did bind you with, when you said: “We hear and we obey.” And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is All Knower of what is in the breasts.

وَمِيثَقَهُ الَّذِي وَاثَقَكُمْ بِهِ إِذْ
قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ



***28** The blessing is that Allah has made the right way of life clear for the Muslims and appointed them to the high position of the leadership of the world to guide it on the straight path.

8. O those who believe, be standing firmly for Allah, as witnesses in justice.*29 And let not lead you, the hatred of some people upon that you do not deal justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to piety. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is informed of what you do.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا
قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ
وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَا نُ قَوْمٍ
عَلَىٰ ءَلَا تَعْدِلُوا ءَاعْدِلُوا هُوَ
أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ



***29** Refer to E.Ns 164-165 of Surah An-Nisa.

9. Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds, for them

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ

there is forgiveness and great reward.

عَظِيمٌ ﴿١﴾

10. And those who disbelieve and deny Our revelations, they are the companions of Hell fire.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

11. O those who believe, remember Allah's favor upon you, when a people intended to stretch out their hands against you, so He withheld their hands from you,^{*30} and fear Allah. And in Allah let believers put their trust.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ أَن يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

***30** This refers to the incident that has been related by Abdullah bin Abbas. Some Jews plotted to kill the Prophet (peace be upon him) and some of his eminent companions in order to give a crushing blow to Islam. Accordingly, they invited him to a dinner. But right in time, the Prophet (peace be upon him) by the grace of God came to know of the plot and did not go to the dinner. This incident has been mentioned here by way of introduction, as the address onward is directed towards the Israelites. The address, which begins from here, has two objects.

First, it is meant to warn the Muslims to guard against the attitude which the Jews and the Christians had adopted towards the covenant they had made with God: they had broken the covenant and swerved into wrong and evil ways. Second, it warns the Jews and the Christians of their error and invites them to the right way.

12. And indeed, Allah has taken a covenant with the Children of Israel. And We appointed among them twelve chieftains.*³¹

And Allah said: "I am indeed with you. If you establish prayer and give the poor-due, and believe in My messengers and support them,*³² and lend unto Allah a kindly loan,*³³ surely I shall remove from you your evils,*³⁴ and surely I shall admit you into Gardens underneath which rivers flow. Then whoever disbelieved among you after this, he has indeed gone astray from the straight path."*³⁵

﴿ وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا وَقَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَيْتُمُ الزَّكَاةَ وَآمَنْتُمْ بِرُسُلِي وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ﴾



*³¹ The Arabic word *nageeb* means one who guards and

keeps a protecting and restraining watch. Allah commanded Moses to appoint twelve supervisors, one each from the twelve tribes of Israel to keep watch over their affairs in order to protect them from irreligious and immoral ways. The Bible mentions twelve princes of the tribes of their fathers (Numbers, 1:16) as heads of thousands in Israel but not as supervisors of religion and morality as is implied in the word *naqeeb*.

***32** That is, if you accept the invitation of the Messengers who come from Me and help them in their mission.....”

***33** “A kindly loan to Allah” is the money spent in His way. Such money has been called a good and kindly loan in the Quran at several places and Allah has very graciously promised to return every farthing of the loan after increasing it manifold, provided that it is a good loan which has been lawfully earned and spent in accordance with the divine law with good intentions.

***34** Allah wipes out evils in two ways: (1) When a person adopts the right way and follows the divine guidance in thought and action, his soul begins to purify itself and his life begins to be clean of many evils. (2) But if, in spite of this, he does not attain to the high rank of perfection as a whole, and still has some evils left in him, Allah, by the exercise of His grace, will not take him to task and will wipe out these from his account. This is because Allah is not hard and strict in taking account of minor evils, provided that the person sincerely accepts the fundamental guidance and begins to reform himself accordingly.

***35** The significance of “He has indeed gone astray from

the straight path,” is that at first he found the right way and then lost it and strayed into paths of ruin.

The right way or straight path does not fully express the meaning of *sawa-as-sabil*. It is that way of life which enables a man to develop harmoniously all his powers, faculties, and abilities: which satisfies all his cravings, urges and feelings and the demands of his body and soul in a congenial manner: which guides him rightly to keep balanced the multi fold complex relations with other human beings: which leads him individually and collectively to exploit and use equitably the natural resources for his own good and that of humanity. In short, it is that way of life which enables the individual and the society to solve spiritual, moral, social, physical, economic, political and international problems in a straight, smooth, even and just manner.

It is obvious that man with his limited powers and intellect cannot by himself solve these problems, as he is simply incapable of comprehending at one and the same time all the aspects of human problems so as to weigh and estimate their relative importance and judge between the different courses before him. That is why, whenever he has tried to plan a way of life for himself, he has utterly failed to do justice to his own self or to his society, and made a mess of all his affairs and problems, and created a state of chaos everywhere. This is because, with his narrow vision, he becomes so absorbed in one basic need out of many and one problem out of many that he loses sight of all others and neglects them intentionally or un-intentionally. As a result

of that, life loses its balance and begins to rush towards one extreme. When this state of affairs becomes unbearable, one of the neglected needs or problems takes hold of man and life begins to rush towards another extreme with the same destructive result. In this way, life goes on running from one extreme to the other and man never finds the balanced middle way which is the right way, because all the ways planned by him keep him running in wrong directions from one extreme to the other.

As has been pointed out, man cannot plan that right way which may lead him clear of the pitfalls of the myriad wrong and crooked ways; so Allah has very graciously made arrangements for showing the right way to mankind. He sent His Messengers with guidance to lead mankind to the right way to real success in this world and in the Hereafter; and the one who loses this way will go wrong here and act wrongly, and inevitably go to Hell in the next world, for all the wrong ways lead to Hell.

In this connection it will be pertinent to point out the blunder that has been committed by some so-called philosophers. When they noticed that human life was continually running between two extremes, they came to the wrong conclusion that the dialectical process was the natural way of the evolution of human progress. According to them, internal contradictions are inherent in all things and the struggle between these opposites and their synthesis constitutes the contents of the process of development. They apply the dialectical methods to the study of social life and come to the wrong conclusion that the same is the right way

of evolution. Accordingly, they start with a thesis of an extreme nature for the solution of a problem and go on rushing away from the right way towards one extreme till they discover, to their dismay, that in this process gross injustice has been done to some other equally important problems. Then they turn back with the antithesis of the first theory and presume that the synthesis of the two will help evolve its right solution. Though it is true that the struggle between the two opposite theories helps them approach the right way, yet they cross it rapidly towards the other extreme because they do not believe in divine guidance which alone can make one firmly adhere to it. Then they do gross justice to some other problems and the same process is repeated over and over again. If such short-sighted philosophers had not rejected God and religion and trade an impartial study of the Quran, they would have discovered to their joy that the right way is the straight path, leading to the human evolution, and not the myriad crooked and curved paths. Thus they would have saved mankind from continually rushing aimlessly between extremes.

13. Then because of their breaking of their covenant, We cursed them and caused their hearts to harden. They change the words from their context, and have forgotten a portion of that which they

فِيمَا نَقَضُوا مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ
 وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً
 يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن
 مَوَاضِعِهِ وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا

were reminded with. And you will not cease to discover of deceit in them, except a few of them, so forgive them and overlook (their misdeeds). Indeed, Allah loves those who do good.

ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَىٰ خَائِنَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَأَصْفَحْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ



14. And from those who say: “We are Christians,”*³⁶ We took their covenant, so they have forgotten a portion of that which they were reminded with. So We caused among them enmity and hatred till the Day of Resurrection. And Allah will inform them of what they used to do.

وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرَىٰ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَقَهُمْ فَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَأَغْرَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ وَسَوْفَ يُنَبِّئُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ



***36** It is wrong to presume that the title Nasara pertains to Nazareth, the home of Jesus. In fact, its root is *nusrat* (help). The Christians have been called Nasara (helpers) for the reason that when Jesus (peace be upon him) asked, “Who will be my ansar (helpers) in the cause of Allah,” his disciples answered, “We are ansar in the cause of Allah.” (Surah As-Saff, Ayat 14). The Christian writers got the wrong impression that the Quran contemptuously calls the

Christians Nasara because of the apparent similarity between Nasara and Nazarenes, a sect of early Christians who were contemptuously called Nazarites. But the Quran makes it clear here that the Christians themselves said, “We are Nasara.” It is obvious that the Christians never called themselves Nazarites.

In this connection, it may be noted that Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) never called his disciples “Christians” or “Messiahites” for he had not come to found a new religion after his own name but to revive the same religion that Moses (peace be upon him) and the other Prophets before and after him had brought. Therefore he did not form any new community other than that of the Israelites; nor they lived like a new one; nor adopted a distinctive name or symbol for themselves. They used to go to the Temple (Jerusalem) for prayer along with the other Jews and considered themselves to be bound by the Mosaic law. (Refer to the Acts, 3: 1, 10: 14, 15: 1 & 5, 21: 22).

Later on the process of separation began from two sides. On the one side, saint Paul, a follower of the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), put an end to the observance of the law and declared that the only thing needed for salvation was belief in Messiah. On the other side, the Jewish rabbis cut off the followers of Christ by declaring them to be a misguided sect. But in spite of this separateness, at first the sect bore no distinctive name. The followers of Christ called themselves by different names, such as disciples, brethren, believers, saints, etc. (Refer to the Acts, 2: 44, 4: 32, 9: 26, 11: 29, 13: 52, 15: 1 & 23; Romans, 15: 45, and Corinthians,

1:12). But the Jews called them Galileans or the sect of the Nazarenes contemptuously and tauntingly (Luke, 13: 2, The Acts, 24: 5) because of the Roman Province of Galilee in which Nazareth, the birth place of Jesus (peace be upon him) was situated. These satirical names, however, did not become current as the permanent names of the followers of Christ.

As a matter of fact, the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch, when Barnabas and Paul went there in 43-44 A.D. to preach the Gospels. (The Acts, 11: 26). Though this name was also given to them contemptuously by their enemies, yet, by and by, their leaders accepted this, saying, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye,....if any man suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed." (I Peter, 4: 16). At long last, they lost the feelings that the name "Christian" was a bad title that had been given to them by their enemies.

Thus it is clear that the Quran has not called them Christians because of the contempt associated with it, but has called them Ansar (helpers) in order to remind them that they were the name-sake of those disciples of Jesus (peace be upon him) who had responded to his invitation and said, "We are helpers of Allah." Is it not an irony that instead of being grateful to the Quran for giving them their name, the Christian missionaries of today should bear a grievance against it for not calling them Christians?

15. O People of the Book, there has indeed come to you Our

يٰٓاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ قَدْ جَاۤءَكُمْ
رَسُوْلُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيْرًا

Messenger (Muhammad), making clear to you much of what you used to hide of the Scripture, and forgiving of much.*³⁷ Indeed, there has come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book (the Quran).

مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَخْفُونَ مِنْ
الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ
كَثِيرٍ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ
اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ

*³⁷ That is, “He makes known many things which you were dishonestly keeping back from the scripture, for these are essential for the establishment of the true faith, but disregards many other such things for there is no real need to disclose them.”

16. By which Allah guides those who seek His good pleasure to the ways of peace,*³⁸ and He brings them out from the darkneses into light by His decree, and guides them to a straight path.

يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ
رِضْوَانَهُ سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ
وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى
النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى
صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

*³⁸ Allah guides to the paths of peace those who intend to walk in the light of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him). They remain safe from wrong notions, wrong thoughts and wrong acts and their consequences, because at every cross-road they come to know the safe way with the help of that light.

17. Indeed they have disbelieved, those who say: “Surely, Allah, He is the Messiah, son of Mary.”*39 Say: “Who then can have power against Allah at all, if He so willed to destroy the Messiah, son of Mary, and his mother, and whoever is on the earth together. And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them. He creates what He wills.*40 And Allah has Power over all things.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ
 اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۚ قُلْ
 فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا
 إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ الْمَسِيحَ
 ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ ۚ وَمَنْ فِي
 الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ
 السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا
 ۗ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
 شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ



*39 The Christians were guilty of blasphemy in regarding Jesus (peace be upon him) as God and worshiping him as such. This was the result of the error they committed in regarding Jesus (peace be upon him) as the union of man and God, for it made his personality an enigma, which their scholars have not been able to solve in spite of their verbosity and argumentations. The more they tried to solve it the more complicated it became. Those who were impressed by the human aspect of this complex personality made him the son of God and one of the Trinity, while others, who were impressed by the divine aspect of his personality, declared him to be the incarnation of God and

worshiped him as such. There were still others who tried to adopt the middle course between the two extremes and spent all their abilities to prove the impossibility that Jesus (peace be upon him) was both man and God at one and the same time and that God and the Messiah were two separate beings, but at the same time a single being. (Refer to E.Ns 212, 213, 215 of Surah An-Nisa).

*40 “He creates what He wills” implies that the miraculous birth of Jesus (peace be upon him) was merely one of God’s countless wonderful manifestations, and that this and his moral excellences and his perceptible miracles should not mislead the Christians to regard the Messiah as God. It was their shortsightedness that they did not consider the other creations of God which were even more wonderful than the creation of Jesus (peace be upon him) and foolishly made him God. They forgot that His power has no bounds and seeing the miracles performed by a wonderful creation of the Creator they began to regard him as a creator; whereas wise men see the All-Powerful Creator in the wonders of His Creation and get the light of faith from them.

18. And the Jews and the Christians say: “We are sons of Allah, and His loved ones.” Say: “Why then does He punish you for your sins.” Nay but, you are mortals, among those He has created. He forgives whom He wills, and He punishes whom He

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصْرَىٰ نَحْنُ
أَبْنَاؤُا اللَّهِ وَأَحِبُّوهُ^ج قُلْ فَلِمَ
يُعَذِّبُكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ^ط بَلْ أَنْتُمْ
بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ^ج
وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ^ج وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ

wills. And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them, and to Him is the return.

السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا
وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ

19. O People of the Book, there indeed has come to you Our Messenger making clear to you (teachings), after an interval (of cessation) of the messengers, lest you should say: “There did not come to us any bringer of glad tidings, nor a warner.” So indeed there has come to you a bringer of glad tidings and a warner. And Allah has Power over all things.^{*41}

يٰٓأَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ
رَسُولُنَا يَبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ عَلَى فِتْرَةٍ مِّنَ
الرُّسُلِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا مِنْ
بَشِيرٍ وَلَا نَذِيرٍ فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ
بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
قَدِيرٌ

***41** In this context, this sentence is very comprehensive and significant and has double meanings. One meaning is that God who had the power of sending bearers of good news and warner before, has now appointed the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) for the same mission and He has the power to do so. The other meaning is that if they do not obey the bearer of good news and warner they should bear in mind that Allah is All-Powerful and is able to inflict on them any punishment He likes without any hindrance.

20. And (remember) when Moses said to his people: “O my people, remember Allah’s favor upon you, when He appointed among you prophets, and He made you kings, and gave you that which He had not given to anyone in the world.”*42

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يٰقَوْمِ
أَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ
جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ وَجَعَلَكُمْ
مُلُوكًا وَءَاتَاكُمْ مَا لَمْ يُؤْتِ
أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

*42 This refers to the past glory of the Israelites that they enjoyed at a much earlier period before the advent of Moses (peace be upon him). On the one hand, Prophets of the high rank of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph (peace be upon them) were raised among them; on the other, they won great political power in Egypt during the time of the Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him) and after him. For a long time they remained the greatest rulers of their time in the then civilized world, and their currency was in circulation not only in Egypt but also in the countries around it.

In contrast to the general belief that the glory of the Israelites begins with the advent of the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), the Quran makes it clear here that the period of their real glory and greatness had passed long before him and he himself was holding that period before his people as an instance of their glorious past.

21. “O my people,
enter the holy land

يٰقَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا
الْأَرْضَ

which Allah has assigned to you.^{*43} And do not turn on your backs, for then you will return as losers.”^{*44}

الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ
وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ
فَتَنقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

***43** By the holy land is meant Palestine, which had been the home of the Prophets Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (peace be upon them). When the Israelites left Egypt for good, God allotted this land to them and commanded them to conquer it.

***44** This speech was made by the Prophet Moses when two years after their exodus from Egypt, the Israelites were encamping in the desert of Paran which lies in the Sinai Peninsula contiguous to the northern boundary of Arabia and the southern boundary of Palestine.

22. They said: “O Moses indeed, in it are a people of tyrannical strength, and surely we will never enter it until they depart from it. So if they do depart from it, then we will surely enter.”

قَالُوا يَمُوسَىٰ إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا
جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَنَندْخُلُهَا حَتَّىٰ
يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا
فإِنَّا دَاخِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23. Two men^{*45} from those who feared (Allah and) upon whom Allah had bestowed His favor said: “Enter upon them through

قَالَ رَجُلَانِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ
يَخَافُونَ أَنعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمَا

the gate, for when you have entered it, indeed you will then be victorious. And in Allah put your trust if you are believers.”

أَدْخُلُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ فَإِذَا
دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَإِنَّكُمْ غَالِبُونَ وَعَلَى
اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ



***45** It may mean that the two persons were from among those who were filled with the fear of the mighty people, or they were from among those who were God-fearing people.

24. They said: “O Moses, indeed, we shall never enter it, ever, as long as they are in it. So go you and your Lord and fight, indeed we are sitting right here.”

قَالُوا يَمُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَنْ نَدْخُلَهَا
أَبَدًا مَا دَامُوا فِيهَا فَادْهَبْ
أَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلَا إِنَّا هَاهُنَا
قَاعِدُونَ



25. He said: “My Lord, certainly, I have power over none except myself and my brother, so separate us and the disobedient people.”

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِي
وَإِخِي فَافْرُقْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ
الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ



26. He (Allah) said: “Then surely, this (the land) will be forbidden to them for forty years.

قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ
سَنَةً يَتِيهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ

They will wander through the earth.*46 So do not grieve over the disobedient people.”*47

فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ
الْفَاسِقِينَ



*46 The details of their homeless wandering can be had from the books, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua, of the Bible. In brief, it is this: The Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) dispatched twelve chiefs of Israel from the desert of Paran to spy out the Holy Land. Accordingly, they spied it out and returned after forty days and made a report before all the congregation of Israel. They said, “Surely it floweth with milk and honey.....Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land: (and) We be not able to go up against (them)....and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers and so we were in their sight.” At this, all the community wailed aloud and said, “Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt: or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return into Egypt? But Joshua and Caleb, who had been among the twelve spies, rebuked the community for its cowardice. Caleb said, “Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.” Then both declared, “If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it us.....Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the

land....and the Lord is with us: fear them not. But all the congregation stoned them with stones.” At last God became wrathful at their continuous misbehavior and decreed, “Doubtless ye shall now wander in the wilderness forty years until all that were numbered of you....from twenty years old and upward shall fall as carcasses in this wilderness, (and) your little ones (grow young).....then will I bring in and they shall know the land...” According to this divine decree, they took 38 years to reach Jordan from the desert of Paran. During this period all those who were young at the time of the exodus from Egypt died and after the conquest of Jordan the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) also died. After this, during the time of Joshua, son of Nun, the Israelites were able to conquer Palestine.

*47 The incident contained in Ayats 20-26 has been cited here with the special object to warn the Israelites. They have been reminded that they disobeyed Moses (peace be upon him) and swerved from the right path and showed cowardice and were consequently condemned to wander homeless for forty years but if they persisted in their attitude of rebellion against the mission of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the chastisement would be much more severe than that.

27. And recite to them the story of Adam's two sons in truth, when they offered each a sacrifice, so it was accepted from one of them and was not accepted from the other.

﴿ وَآتَلُّ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ
بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقْبِلَ مِنْ
أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ

He said: “I will surely kill you.” He (the other) said: “Allah accepts only from those who fear (Him).”^{*48}

قَالَ لِأَقْتُلَنَّكَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ
اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ



***48** That is, it is no fault of mine if your sacrifice has not been accepted; it is because you lack piety. You should, therefore, try to foster piety in yourself instead of making an attempt at slaying me.

28. “Even if you stretch out your hand against me to kill me, I shall not stretch out my hand against you to kill you.^{*49} I indeed fear Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.”

لَئِنْ بَسَطْتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا
أَنَا بِبَاسِطٍ يَدِيَ إِلَيْكَ لِأَقْتُلَكَ
إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ



***49** It does not mean: “If you attempt to kill me, I will sit with folded hands before you, ready to be killed without any resistance.” What it means is: “You may cherish evil intentions of murdering me, but I will not. You may make schemes for my murder but I will do nothing to forestall you, even after knowing that you are making preparation for my murder.” In this connection, it should be understood clearly that it is not virtue to offer oneself for murder, nor is it a virtue to refrain from resisting an aggressive attack. True virtue is that one should not plan the murder of an enemy though he might be in search of an opportunity to kill the one. A virtuous man would rather prefer, like the noble son of Adam, that the enemy might be

the aggressor and not he.

29. “Indeed, I intend that you be laden with my sin and your sin,^{*50} then become among the dwellers of the fire. And that is the recompense of the wrong doers.”

إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبُوءَ بِإِثْمِي وَإِثْمِكَ
فَتَكُونَ مِنَ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ
وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ

*50 That is, I would rather prefer that you alone should be guilty of the sin of cherishing evil intentions of slaying me than that I should also be guilty of the same. Thus you shall bear the burden of your own sin of aggression as well as of the injury that I might inflict on you in self-defense.

30. So his (the other's) soul drove him to the murder of his brother, so he murdered him, then he became among the losers.

فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ
فَقَتَلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِينَ

31. Then Allah sent a crow, who scratched on the ground to show him how to hide the dead body of his brother. He said: “Woe unto me, am I not even able that I be like this crow, so I could hide the dead body of my brother.”^{*51} Then he became

فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي
الْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُورِي
سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ قَالَ يَا وَيْلَتَى
أَعَجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَذَا
الْغُرَابِ فَأُورِيَ سَوْءَةَ أَخِي

of those who regretted.^{*52}

فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّادِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

***51** Thus Allah warned the erring son of Adam of his ignorance and folly through a raven. And when once he became aware of the fact that the raven was better equipped for hiding the dead body, he was not only filled with remorse on this account but also began to feel that he had done an evil deed by slaying his brother. This is implied in: “Then he became of those who regretted”.

***52** The story of the two sons of Adam has been related here to reproach the Jews in a subtle manner for their plot to kill the Prophet (peace be upon him) and some of his eminent companions. (Refer to E.N. 30 of this Surah).

The similarity between the two incidents is quite obvious. The Jews plotted against the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions for the same reason for which the erring son of Adam had slain his pious brother. The Jews became jealous of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions because God withdrew His favor from them and bestowed it upon the un-lettered Arabs just because the former lacked piety and the latter were God-fearing. Instead of considering the matter coolly and considering why they had been condemned and making up for their error which had brought God’s wrath on them, they plotted to kill those whom God had blessed with His favors. And they did so in spite of the fact that they knew it well that their evil reaction could not win the favor of Allah but would make them even more condemnable than before.

32. Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel^{*53} that whoever kills a soul other than (retribution for murder of) a soul, or for spreading corruption in the earth, it would be as if he killed all mankind. And whoever saves one, it would be as if he saved all mankind.^{*54} And certainly, there came to them Our messengers with clear proofs. Then indeed, many of them, even after that, were those who committed excesses in the land.

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَى
بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا
بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا
وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا
النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ
رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا
مِّنْهُمْ بَعَدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
لَمُسْرِفُونَ



***53** That is, “Allah enjoined the Israelites to refrain from murder because they were showing the same murderous symptoms as had been shown by the cruel son of Adam. That is why such strict checks on murder were applied.” But the pity is that these precious instructions are not found in the present Bible. The Talmud, however, says, “To him who kills a single individual of Israel, it shall be reckoned as if he had slain the whole race and he who preserves a single individual of Israel, according to the Book of Allah, he preserves the whole world.” It also says that a judge of the Israelites in a case of murder would warn the witness saying, “To him who kills a single

individual of Israel, it shall be reckoned as if he has slain the whole race.”

***54** This is to emphasize the sanctity of human life: it is essential for the preservation of human life that everyone should regard the life of the other as sacred and help to protect it. The one who takes the life of another without right, does not commit injustice to that one alone, but also proves that he has no feeling for the sanctity of human life and of mercy for others. Hence he is most surely the enemy of the whole human race, for if every individual suffered from the same kind of hard-heartedness, the whole human race would come to an end. On the contrary, if one helps to preserve a single human life, he is indeed a helper of all mankind for he possesses those qualities upon which depends the survival of the entire human race.

33. The only recompense for those who wage war against Allah and His messenger, and strive in the land (to spread) corruption^{*55} is that they be killed, or crucified, or their hands and their feet be cut off on the opposite sides, or be expelled from the land.^{*56} Such is for them a disgrace in the world, and for them in the Hereafter is a

إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ
تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِّنْ
خَلْفٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ
ذَٰلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

great punishment.



***55** Here “the land” refers to that country or territory in which the maintenance of law and order is the responsibility of the Islamic State and “to wage war against Allah and His Messenger” is to wage war against the righteous system of government established by the Islamic State. As Allah likes that such a system of government should be established, He sent His Messenger (peace be upon him) to establish an equitable system of government, which should guarantee peace and justice to human beings, animals, trees, vegetation and everything on the earth, which may enable human beings to develop to the fullest of their natural capabilities; which should exploit natural resources of the earth for the true progress and improvement of humanity and not for its destruction. It is obvious that any attempt, big or small, to undermine or overthrow such an established system, is in reality a war against Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him). It does not make any difference whether that mischief is created by criminals and murderers who cause disorder in the settled and peaceful society or by armed forces who attempt to overthrow the Islamic State and establish some corrupt un-Islamic system instead. And every sovereign treats such a violation directed against his authority or against any of his officials as war against himself.

***56** An abstract of these alternative punishments has been given so that the judge or the ruler may exercise his discretion and award punishment according to the nature

and extent of the crime. The real object is to show that any attempt by any person, residing in the Islamic State, to overthrow its government is high treason and a most heinous crime, and that the offender is liable to be awarded any of these capital punishments according to the circumstance.

34. Except for those who repent before that you overpower them. And know that Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful. ^{*57}

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ
تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ
اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

^{*57} This implies that if they have refrained from creating mischief and from making any attempt at overthrowing the righteous system, and have shown by their conduct that they are peace loving and law abiding good citizens, none of the above mentioned punishments will be inflicted upon them, even if they might have committed any of the crimes before their repentance. They would, however, be liable to be called to account in a court of law for any offense against any individual, such as murder, theft, etc. but they will not be tried for any previous offense of treason or rebellion or war against Allah and His Messenger.

35. O those who believe, fear Allah, and seek the means (of approach) to Him, ^{*58} and strive in His cause ^{*59} that you may be successful.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ
وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ

***58** That is, you should seek all those means that help obtain Allah's nearness and His pleasure.

***59** "And strive in His cause" does not fully convey the meaning of *jahidu*. It implies that the believers should struggle against all the forces that stand in the way of Allah, as if to say, "You can please Allah and win His favor only if you exert your utmost in the way of Allah: struggle hard against all the persons, parties and forces which stand in Allah's way, which hinder you from Allah's way to turn you away from it, which do not let you follow Allah's way as His servants and force you to become their servants or servants of others. Such exertion and struggle will lead you to true success and become the means of obtaining your nearness to Allah."

Thus, this verse exhorts the believer to fight his enemies on all fronts. On one side, he confronts Satan and a host of his followers, and on the second, his own self and its alluring temptations. On the third side, he has to fight many people who have swerved from the way of God, and with whom he is bound by close social, cultural and economic relations. On the fourth side, he is required to oppose all those religious, cultural and political systems that are founded on rebellion against God and force people to submit to falsehood instead of the truth. Though these enemies employ different weapons, they all have one and the same object in view, that is, to subdue their victims and bring them under their own subjection. It is obvious that true

success can only be achieved if one becomes fully and solely a servant of God and obeys Him openly and also secretly, to the exclusion of obedience to all others. Thus there is bound to be a conflict with all the four enemies. Therefore the believer cannot achieve his object unless he engages himself with all these hostile and opposing forces at one and the same time and at all events, and removing all these hindrances marches onwards on the way of Allah.

36. Indeed, those who disbelieve, if that they should have all that is in the earth, and the like of that with it, by which to ransom them from the punishment on the Day of Resurrection, it would not be accepted from them. And for them is a painful punishment.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ أَن
لَهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ
مَعَهُ لِيَفْتَدُوا بِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ
يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا تُقْبَلُ مِنْهُمْ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

37. They will wish to get out of the Fire, and never will they get out there from, and for them will be a lasting punishment.

يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُخْرَجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ
وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنْهَا وَلَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

38. And the male thief and the female thief, cut off their hands.*⁶⁰ A recompense for what they earned, an exemplary punishment from

وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا
أَيْدِيَهُمَا جِزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

Allah. And Allah is All
Mighty, All Wise.

***60** One hand of the thief (and not both hands) is to be cut off, and the consensus of opinion is that the right hand should be cut off for the first theft.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) has excluded an act of breach of trust from theft and decreed that the hand of the one guilty of this is not to be cut off. An act of theft is committed only when a person wrongfully takes away goods from the custody of another and brings them into his own possession.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) has also decreed that a hand is not to be cut off for the theft of a thing whose value is less than that of a shield. At that time the price of a shield according to (a) Abdullah bin Abbas was ten dirhams, (b) Ibn Umar, three dirhams, (c) Anas bin Malik, five dirhams, and (d) Aishah, one-fourth of a dinar. That is why there has been a difference of opinion among the jurists in regard to the minimum limit for theft for the cutting off of a hand. According to Imam Abu Hanifah, it is ten dirhams and according to Imams Malik, Shafai and Ahmad it is one-fourth of a dinar. (At that time a dirham was equal to the value of three mashas and one ands half rattis of silver, and one-fourth of a dinar was equal to three dirhams).

Moreover, there are many things for the theft of which the hand is not to be cut off. For instance, the Prophet (peace be upon him) directed that hand should not be cut off for the theft of fruits and vegetables, and that there should be no cutting off of hand for the theft of eatables. According to

a tradition from Aishah, “Hands were not cut off for the theft of paltry things during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him).” Uthman and Ali decreed, and no companion disagreed, that a hand is not to be cut off for the theft of a bird. Moreover, Umar and Ali did not cut off a hand for a theft from the public treasury and there is no mention of any kind of disagreement among the companions about this also. (May Allah be pleased with them all).

That is why the jurists have not included certain things in the list of those for the theft of which hands should be cut off. According to Imam Abu Hanifah, hands should not be cut off for the theft of vegetables, fruits, flesh, cooked food, grain which has not yet been gathered together, articles used for sports and music. Besides these, he is of the opinion that the hand should not be cut off for the theft of animals grazing in forests and for theft from the public treasury. Likewise the other Imams also have excluded the theft of certain things from this punishment, but this does not mean that there is no punishment at all for those thefts. These crimes should be punished in other ways than this.

39. So he who repents after his wrongdoing, and reforms, then indeed, Allah will turn to him in forgiveness.*61
 Certainly, Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

فَمَنْ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِ
 وَأَصْلَحَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتُوبُ
 عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

*61 This does not mean that if the thief repents, his hand should not be cut off. It only means that if a person repents

after his hand has been cut off and reforms himself and becomes a true servant of God, he will save himself from the wrath of Allah, Who will cleanse him of his sin. On the contrary, if a person does not repent and reform himself even after his hand has been cut off, but goes on nurturing evil thoughts, this clearly shows that he has not cleansed his heart even after this severe punishment. Therefore he shall deserve the wrath of Allah as he did before his hand was cut off. That is why the Quran exhorts such a person to beg for the forgiveness of Allah and reform himself. The hand is cut off for the preservation of society. The punishment does not necessarily purify the soul. This can only be achieved by repentance and turning to God. It is reported in the traditions that once the hand of a thief was cut off by the order of the Prophet (peace be upon him). After this he sent for him and asked him to say, "I beg for Allah's forgiveness and turn to Him." Accordingly, the thief uttered these words. Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) invoked Allah's forgiveness for him.

40. Do you not know that to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He punishes whom He wills, and He forgives whom He wills. And Allah has Power over all things.

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يُعَذِّبُ مَنْ
يَشَاءُ وَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

41. O Messenger, let not grieve you those who

يَأْتِيهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا تَحْزُنَكَ

hasten into disbelief^{*62} among those who say: “We believe,” with their mouths, and their hearts believe not. And from among those Jews, (they are) listeners to falsehood,^{*63} listening to another people who have not come to you.^{*64} They change the words beyond their context.^{*65} They say: “If you are given this, then take it, and if you are not given it, then beware.”^{*66} And he for whom Allah intends a trial, then you can not do a thing for him against Allah.^{*67} Those are the ones whose hearts Allah does not intend to purify.^{*68} For them in this world there is a disgrace, and for them in the Hereafter is a great punishment.

الَّذِينَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ
الَّذِينَ قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ
وَلَمْ تُؤْمِن قُلُوبُهُمْ وَمِنَ
الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمَّعُونَ
لِلْكَذِبِ سَمَّعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ
ءَاخِرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ تَحْرِفُونَ
الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ
يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ أُوتِيتُمْ هَذَا
فَخُذُوهُ وَإِنْ لَمْ تُؤْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوا
وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ
لَهُ مِنْ أَلَيْسَ شَيْئًا أُوتِيكَ
الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُطَهِّرْ
قُلُوبَهُمْ هُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ
وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ



^{*62} This refers to the people who were using all their intellectual powers and energies to preserve the previous

state of ignorance against the reformative efforts of Islam. They were planning all sorts of shameless schemes against the Prophet (peace be upon him). They were distorting the truth knowingly and doing their best to defeat his holy mission by lies, deceit, cunning and the like, though he was selflessly working for the good of humanity and their own good. Naturally, it grieved him to see that those mean and ignoble people were employing mean tactics to defeat his noble mission. Of course Allah does not mean to ask the Prophet (peace be upon him) to suppress that grief which is felt over such a state but consoles him not to be disheartened by their evil machinations and advises him to go on working patiently for the reform of the people who cannot be expected to behave otherwise.

***63** It implies two things: (1) These people are the slaves of their lusts and are not interested at all in the truth but in falsehood only. They eagerly listen to lies because that alone can gratify their lust for falsehood. (2) They attend the meetings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his followers so that they might spread false reports about them in order to malign them.

***64** This also implies two things: (1) They come as spies to the meetings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his followers in order to obtain some secret information for the benefit of the enemies of Islam. (2) They come with hostile intent to gather material for bringing false accusations and slander against the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his followers so that they may cause misunderstandings among those who had no opportunity of making direct contacts

with him and the Muslims.

*65 Allah consoles the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he should not be disheartened by the behavior of those people who do not hesitate to twist the words of the Torah out of their context and change their meanings to suit their lusts.

*66 That is, “The Jewish scholars tell their illiterate people to accept any teaching of the Prophet (peace be upon him) only if it agrees with theirs. If it does not, they should reject it.”

*67 Allah puts to trial a man who cherishes evil inclinations by putting temptations before him to test whether he has any good left in him or not. If he has no goodness left in him, he takes each temptation as an opportunity, and the evil in him overcomes him and renders him an easy prey to further temptations. In a degenerate case like this, it is not in the power of any well wisher to save such a person from falling into temptation. Allah puts to trial not only individuals but communities as well.

*68 Allah did not will to purify such a person because he himself did not wish to purify himself. It is not the way of Allah to deprive a man of purification, if he desires it and tries for it. He does not will to purify only that person who does not intend to purify himself.

42. Listeners to falsehood,
devourers of unlawful.*69

So if they come to you
(O Muhammad), then judge
between them or turn
away from them. And if

سَمْعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَلُونَ
لِللُّسْحَةِ ۚ فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم
بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ

you turn away from them, then they can not harm you at all. And if you judge, then judge between them with justice. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.*70

تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا
وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَأَحْكُم بَيْنَهُم
بِالْقِسْطِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ
الْمُقْسِطِينَ



*69 This particularly refers to their jurists and judges who accepted false evidence and unjustly decided cases in favor of those from whom they took bribes or from whom they expected unlawful gains.

*70 At that time the Jews had freedom in their internal affairs and their cases were decided by their own judges according to their own law, for they had not as yet become subjects of the Islamic State, but had only entered into treaties with it. Therefore they were not bound to bring their cases to the Prophet (peace be upon him) or to the judges appointed by him. Nevertheless, sometimes, when their own law did not suit them, they would take their cases to the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the hope that they might obtain a more favorable decree from him than they could from their own law.

Here it refers to a case of illicit relationship between a man and a woman who belonged to respectable families of the Jews of Khaibar. According to the Torah (Deut. 22: 23-24), their punishment was that both of them should be stoned to death. As the Jews did not want to inflict this punishment, they decided that the case should be taken to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and that they would accept his

decision only if it was other than stoning to death. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) had heard the case he decreed that they should be stoned to death, but the Jews rejected it. Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) asked them what the punishment was according to the Torah. They replied that it was to flog the culprits and to blacken their faces and to mount them on a donkey. The Prophet (peace be upon him) asked their rabbis to declare on oath whether that was the punishment for adultery committed by a married couple. They all but one answered that it was so. The one who had kept quiet was Ibn surya, who was considered to be the greatest scholar of the Torah by the Jews themselves. The Prophet (peace be upon him) pointedly addressed him and asked, "I want you to swear, by that God Who saved your people from the Pharaoh and gave you the law on the Toor, and answer whether it is this same punishment for adultery in the Torah that these people tell." He said, "I would never have confessed that the punishment for adultery is stoning the culprits to death, if you had not laid upon me such a heavy oath. The fact is that when adultery became common among us, the judges would let the offenders go if they happened to be big people. But as this differentiation caused a great discontent among the common people, we made a change in the law that instead of stoning the culprits to death they should be flogged and mounted on a donkey with blackened faces." After this, no other course was left for the Jews and the culprits were stoned to death by the order of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

43. And how is it that they come to you for judgment, and they have the Torah, in which is the judgment of Allah, then they turn away even after that.^{*71} And they are not believers.

وَكَيْفَ يُحْكُمُونَكَ وَعِنْدَهُمُ
التَّوْرَةُ فِيهَا حُكْمُ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ
يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَمَا
أُولَئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ

***71** In this verse Allah has fully exposed the dishonesty of these religious people who had established their authority for piety and knowledge of the Book throughout Arabia. The very fact that they had discarded the Book they themselves believed to be the Book of Allah and brought their case to the Prophet (peace be upon him), whom they did not believe to be a Prophet, showed that their claim of belief in the Book was hollow. This also showed that they did not sincerely believe in anything but their lusts. They discarded the Book which they believed to be the Book of God, just because its decree was against their lusts and they went to the one whom they considered to be a false prophet in the hope that they might get a decree that might suit their lusts.

44. Indeed, We sent down the Torah, in which was guidance and light, the prophets who submitted (to Allah) judged by it for those who are Jews,^{*72} and the rabbis and the

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى
وَنُورٌ لِّمَنْ حَقَّقَ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ
الَّذِينَ اسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا
وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا

priests^{*73} (also judged) by that which they were entrusted of Allah's Scripture, and they were witnesses thereto. So do not fear people, and fear Me. And do not sell My verses for a little price. And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, then it is those, they are the disbelievers.

أَسْتَحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ
وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ فَلَا
تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَأَخْشَوْنَ وَلَا
تَشْتَرُوا بِعَايَتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَمَنْ
لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

***72** Here the fact that all the Prophets were Muslims and that the Jews had given up Islam and turned Jews, has also incidentally been stressed.

***73** The *Rabbanis* were the doctors and the *Ahbar* the jurists of the law.

45. And We ordained for them therein that, a life for a life, and an eye for an eye, and a nose for a nose, and an ear for an ear, and a tooth for a tooth, and for wounds is legal retribution.^{*74} Then whosoever forgoes it (in the way of charity), then it shall be expiation for him.^{*75} And whoever does not judge by

وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ
بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ
وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ وَالْأُذُنَ
بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ
قِصَاصٌ فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ
فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَهُ وَمَنْ لَمْ

that which Allah has revealed, then it is those, they are the wrongdoers.

يَحْكُمُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

*74 Compare this with Exodus, 21: 23-27.

*75 It implies that if one forgoes retaliation with the intention of doing a good turn, this good act will atone for many of his sins. The Prophet (peace be upon him) explained this, saying, "If one receives a wound on his body and forgoes its retaliation, then his sins will be forgiven in proportion to the degree of forgiveness."

46. And We sent, following in their footsteps, Jesus, son of Mary, confirming that which was (revealed) before him in the Torah, and We bestowed on him the Gospel in which was guidance and light and confirming that which was (revealed) before it in the Torah,^{*76} and a guidance and an admonition to those who fear (Allah).

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ
مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ
التَّوْرَةِ ۚ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ
هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَهُدًى
وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

*76 This means that Jesus (peace be upon him) did not bring any new religion but followed the same way that was followed by all the Prophets before him and invited the people to the same. He believed in what was intact in his time from among the original teachings of the Torah, and the Gospel also testified to the same. (Matthew, 5: 17-18).

The Quran reiterates the fact that each and every prophet, who was sent by Allah to any part of the world, confirmed the Message of all the Prophets who had gone before him and exerted his utmost to complete the work which they had left as a holy heritage, for he did not come to refute them or efface their religion and establish his own religion instead. Likewise Allah did not send down any of His Books to refute any of His own previous Books, but to support and confirm them.

47. And let the People of the Gospel judge by that which Allah has revealed therein. And whoever does not judge by that which Allah has revealed, then it is those, they are the evil liverers.*77

وَلِيَحْكُمَ أَهْلُ الْإِنجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ
 اللَّهُ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا
 أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ
 الْفَاسِقُونَ



*77 In this passage (Ayats 44-47) Allah has shown that those who do not judge by the law sent down by Him are: (1) disbelievers, (2) unjust people and (3) transgressors. As a corollary to this, the person who discards the law of Allah and judges by the law formulated by himself or by others is guilty of three crimes. First, he practices disbelief by his rejection of the law of Allah. Secondly, he becomes guilty of injustice because he violates the law of Allah which is perfectly just and equitable. Thirdly, he became a transgressor (*Fasiq*) against Allah, because, in spite of being Allah's servant, he transgressed against his Master's law and adopted his own law or that of another. Thus

practically he broke away from the allegiance and subjection of his Master and denied His Authority: this is *fisq*.

This disbelief, injustice and transgression are inherently part and parcel of the violation of divine law. It is, therefore, not possible to avoid these three crimes where there is such a violation. They, however, vary in their relative guilt in accordance with the nature and extent of the rejection of the law. If one gives judgment against the divine law on the basis that he considers that law to be wrong and his own or someone else's law to be right, such a person shall be a disbeliever, an unjust person and transgressor, in the fullest sense of the words. However, if one holds the belief that the law of Allah is right, but in practice gives judgment against it, such a one shall not be outside the Muslim community, but shall be considered to be mixing his belief with disbelief, injustice and transgression. Likewise, if one rejects the law of Allah in all affairs of life, he shall be considered to be a disbeliever, unjust person and transgressor in every aspect of life, and if one accepts the law in certain matters and rejects it in others, One shall have a mixture of belief and Islam, disbelief, injustice and transgression all mixed together in one's life, exactly in the proportion one obeys the law or violates it.

Some commentators are of the opinion that the above mentioned verses apply only to the People of the Book, but the words of the Quran do not support this at all. Hudhaifah refuted this version very aptly. Someone said to

him that these verses applied to the children of Israel only, that is, if one of the Jews judged against the law sent down by Allah, he would be a disbeliever, transgressor and rebel but not a Muslim, Hudhaifah replied. "What good brethren the children of Israel are to you: all that is bitter is for them and all that is sweet is for you! By God, you will follow their way step by step (and shall be dealt with like them)."

48. And We have sent down to you (O Muhammad) the Book (the Quran) in truth, confirming that which was before it from the Book,^{*78} and a criterion over it.^{*79} So judge between them by that which Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires (diverging away) from what has come to you of the truth. For each among you, We have appointed a divine law and a clear way.^{*80} And if Allah had willed, He would have made you one nation. But that He may try you in that which He has given you. So race one with another in good deeds. To Allah you will return all together, He

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ
 مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنْ
 الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ
 فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
 وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ
 مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ
 شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
 لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَٰكِن
 لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ
 فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ
 مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ

will then inform you about that in which you used to differ.*81

بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

*78 The use of the word *Alkitab* (the Book) here is very significant. Instead of saying, "The Quran confirms whatever has remained intact from the former Books," it says, "from the Book." This is to show that the Quran and all the Books that were sent down by Allah in different languages and in different ages are in reality one and the same Book which has one and the same Author and one and the same object and aim: they impart one and the same knowledge and teaching to mankind with the only difference that they are couched in different languages and employ different methods to suit the various addresses. Therefore the fact that these Books support and do not refute, confirm and do not contradict, one another, shows that they are all different versions of one and the same Book (*Alkitab*).

*79 The Arabic word *Muhaimin* is very comprehensive in meaning. It means criterion, one who safeguards, watches over, stands witness, preserves, and upholds. The Quran safeguards "the Book," for it has preserved within it the teachings of all the former Books. It watches over them in the sense that it will not let go waste their true teachings. It supports and upholds these Books in the sense that it corroborates the word of God which has remained intact in them. It stands a witness because it bears testimony to the word of God contained in those Books and helps to sort it out from the interpretations and commentaries of the

people which were mixed with it; what is confirmed by the Quran is the word of God and what is against it is that of the people.

***80** “We have appointed a divine law and a clear way” is a parenthesis, which answer a perplexing question that might arise from the preceding passage. The question is: Why are there differences in the details of their laws, if all the Prophets and all the Books taught the same way of life and all of them confirmed and supported one another? For instance, how is it that there are some differences in the details of the form of worship, in the limits of the lawful and the unlawful and in cultural and social regulations taught by different Prophets and Books?

***81** Here is the answer to the above mentioned question:

(1) It is wrong to infer from the above mentioned differences in the details of the different laws that they have been derived from different sources and have different origins. As a matter of fact, they all have come from Allah, Who prescribed different regulations to suit different communities and different ages.

(2) No doubt Allah could have prescribed one and the same law for all human beings from the very beginning and made them a single community, but He did not do so for many good reasons. One of these reasons is to test people whether they obey or not what is given to them by Allah. Those people, who understand the real nature and spirit of the divine way and the position of the regulations in it and are not prejudiced, will recognize and accept the truth in whatever form it comes. Such people will never hesitate to

submit to the new regulations sent by Allah to replace the former ones. On the contrary, those, who do not understand the true spirit of the way, but consider the regulations and their details alone to be the way and who have become static and prejudiced because of their own additions to it, will reject every new thing that comes from Allah to replace what they already possess. And such a test was essential to distinguish the two above mentioned kinds of people; therefore different laws and regulations were prescribed.

(3) As the real object of all the laws is the cultivation of virtues, Allah has commanded the people to excel one another in virtues, without paying heed to the apparent differences in different laws. This is why those people, who keep in view the real aim of the law, should advance towards it on the lines indicated by the divine laws and regulations.

(4) As regards the differences, which have been produced by the prejudice, obduracy and wrong mental attitude, these can neither be resolved in polemical symposiums nor on the battlefield, but will be decided by Allah Himself in His final judgment. Then the reality will be revealed and the people will come to know the amount of truth or falsehood that lay hidden in the arguments in which they were engaged throughout their lives.

49. And that,^{*82} judge (O Muhammad) between them by that which Allah has revealed, and do not follow

وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَأَحْذَرَهُمْ

their desires, and beware of them, lest they tempt you away from some of that which Allah has sent down to you. So if they turn away, then know that Allah only intends to afflict them for some sins of theirs. And indeed, many of the mankind are evil-livers.

أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا
أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا
فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ
بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ
النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

***82** From here the same subject has been resumed that was interrupted by the parenthesis.

50. Is it the judgment of the time of (pagan) ignorance that they are seeking.^{*83} And who is better than Allah for judgment to a people who have firm faith.

أَفْحَكَمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ^ج وَمَنْ
أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِّقَوْمٍ
يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

***83** The word *Jahiliyyat* (ignorance) is the antonym of Islam. The way of Islam is entirely based on the knowledge imparted by Allah Who possesses the knowledge of all realities. On the contrary, every way different from and opposed to the way of Islam is the way of ignorance. The pre-Islamic period of Arabia is called the period of ignorance in the sense that the people had invented their own ways of life that were based on mere guess work or desires. Therefore, whenever any of these ways will be adopted, that period will be called the period of ignorance. Likewise, the knowledge which is imparted in schools and

universities today is only a partial knowledge and cannot in any way suffice for the right guidance of mankind. That is why all the systems of life that are based on fancies and desires with the help of such partial knowledge, in utter disregard of true knowledge, shall likewise be the ways of ignorance, like the ways of the pre-Islamic period.

51. O those who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians for allies. They are allies of one another. And he who takes them for allies among you, then indeed he is of them. Indeed, Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصْرَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِّنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنَّهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾

52. So you see those in whose heart is a disease (of hypocrisy), hastening into them, saying: “We fear that a misfortune may befall us.”*84 Then it may be that Allah brings a victory or a commandment from Him. Then they will become, for what they have been concealing within themselves, regretful.*85

﴿ فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ يُسْرِعُونَ فِيهِمْ يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَىٰ أَن تُصِيبَنَا دَآئِرَةٌ ۚ فَعَسَىٰ اللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِيَ بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِّنْ عِنْدِهِ ۖ فَيُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا أَسْرُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ نَدِيمِينَ ﴾

***84** This refers to the condition of the hypocrites during the period when the conflict between Islam and kufr had not yet come to any decisive conclusion. Although Islam had become a power by dint of the sacrifices of its followers, the opposing forces were also very powerful and there were equal chances of the victory of either side. The hypocrites, while living among the Muslims, wanted to keep good relations with the Jews and the Christians so that if the conflict ended in the defeat of the Muslims, they might safely take refuge with their enemies. Then, there was also the economic factor. At that time the Jews and the Christians were economically the most powerful people in Arabia. The money lending business was almost entirely in their hands and they had a strong economic hold upon the people. Moreover, the most fertile regions of Arabia were in their possession. This also led the hypocrites to preserve their old relations with them. In short, they considered it very dangerous to break relations with these people because of the conflict between Islam and kufr, for they feared that it might ruin them economically and politically.

***85** That is, something short of a decisive victory that might convince the people that it was Islam that was ultimately going to win in the conflict.

53. And those who believe will say: "Are these (hypocrites) they who swore by Allah their most binding oaths, that they were surely with you (Muslims)." Their

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ
الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ
أَيْمَانِهِمْ إِنَّهُمْ لَمَعَكُمْ حَبِطَتْ

deeds have become worthless, then they have become the losers.*86

أَعْمَلُهُمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا خَسِرِينَ



*86 All the good acts that they did as Muslims were lost because they lacked sincerity. The Prayers they offered, the fasting they observed, the Zakat dues they paid, and other things they did in obedience to the Islamic law became null and void because there was no sincerity in them. They did not dedicate themselves entirely to Allah but had divided their loyalties equally between Allah and His rebels for the sake of their worldly interests.

54. O those who believe, whoever among you turns back from his religion, then Allah will bring forth a people whom He will love and they will love Him, humble towards the believers, stern against the disbelievers,*87 striving in the way of Allah, and not fearing the blame of any critic.*88 Such is the grace of Allah which He gives to whom He wills. And Allah is All Sufficient, All Knowing.

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ
مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي
اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ
عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى
الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ
ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ



*87 “Humble towards the believers” means that they will never use force against the believers and will never employ

their intelligence, ability, influence, wealth, power or anything else to suppress or oppress them or inflict loss on them. The Muslims will always find such persons to be mild, kindly, amiable and sympathetic.

“Stern against the disbelievers” means that a believer will be firm, strict, uncompromising and militant towards the opponents of Islam by virtue of his firm faith, sincere religious sense, strict principles, strong character and God given intelligence. Whenever the disbelievers will come in conflict with him, they will find that a believer can neither be bought nor coerced because he is so uncompromising in his Islamic principles that he would rather die than yield.

*88 That is, they will fearlessly follow the way of Allah and act upon His commandments, and declare to be right what is right, and wrong what is wrong, according to it. And will not mind in the least the opposition, the censure, the criticism, the objections, the derision and ridicules of their opponents. They will boldly follow the way of Islam which they sincerely believe to be right, even if the popular opinion is against Islam and they are exposed to the ridicule, derision and taunts of the world.

55. Your ally is only Allah, and His messenger, and those who have believed, those who establish prayer, and pay the poor-due, and they bow down in worship.

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ
وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

56. And whoever takes as an ally Allah and His messenger and those who have believed, then indeed the party of Allah, they will be the victorious.

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ
الْغَالِبُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57. O those who have believed, do not take those who have made your religion mockery and an amusement from among those who were given the Book before you, and the disbelievers, as allies. And fear Allah if you are true believers.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا
الَّذِينَ آخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُوءًا وَلَعِبًا
مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن
قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكَفَّارَ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58. And when you proclaim the call to prayer, they take it as a mockery and an amusement.^{*89} That is because they are a people who do not understand.^{*90}

وَإِذَا نَادَيْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ
آخَذُوهَا هُزُوءًا وَلَعِبًا ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

***89** They make the call to the Prayer an object of ridicule by mimicking and deriding it and by perverting its words.
***90** This very fact of their making the call to the Prayer an object of ridicule is a clear proof of their lack of understanding. Had they not been involved in folly and ignorance, they would never have indulged in such frivolous things in spite of their religious difference with

the Muslims, because no sensible person would ever think of ridiculing the call to the worship of Allah made by any people whatsoever.

59. Say: “O People of the Book, do you resent us except that we believed in Allah and that which is revealed to us and that which was revealed before, and that most of you are evil liverers.”

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ هَلْ
تَنْقِمُونَ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ
ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ
وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا
وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن
قَبْلُ وَأَنْ أَكْثَرُكُمْ
فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60. Say: “Shall I inform you of (what is) worse than that for retribution with Allah. Those who incurred the curse of Allah, and on whom His wrath has fallen, and He made of them apes and swines, and the slaves of false deities. Such are in worse plight and further astray from the right path.”*91

قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرِّ
مِمَّنْ ذَٰلِكَ
مَثُوبَةٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
لَمَنْ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ
وَعَضَبَ عَلَيْهِ
وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ
الْقِرَدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ
وَعَبَدَ
الطَّاغُوتِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ
شَرُّ مَكَانًا
وَأَضَلُّ عَن سَوَاءِ
السَّبِيلِ ﴿٦٠﴾

*91 This verse contains a subtle reference to the shame faced impudence of the Jews in opposing the Muslims in spite of the fact that they had often been under the curse and wrath of Allah for their evil deeds. According to their own history they broke the Sabbath and many of them were turned into apes and swine. They had become so

degraded that they began to worship *taghut*. Therefore they were warned to desist from their opposition to the Muslims who sincerely believed in Allah and followed the right way, whereas they themselves were involved in disobedience and indecency and other moral sins of the worst type.

61. And when they come to you, they say: “We believe,” and in fact, they entered with disbelief, and they certainly left with it. And Allah knows best what they were hiding.

وَإِذَا جَاءُوكُمْ قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا وَقَدْ
دَخَلُوا بِالْكَفْرِ وَهُمْ قَدْ خَرَجُوا
بِهِ ؕ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا
يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

62. And you see many of them hastening into sin and transgression and their devouring of unlawful. Evil indeed is what they have been doing.

وَتَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي
الْآثِمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ
السُّحْتِ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63. Why do not forbid them the rabbis and the priests, from saying sinful words and their devouring of unlawful. Evil indeed is what they have been practicing.

لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّانِيُّونَ
وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْآثِمَ
وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتِ لَبِئْسَ مَا
كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64. And the Jews say: "Allah's hand is tied up."^{*92} Tied up are their hands,^{*93} and cursed are they for what they say.^{*94} Nay, but both His hands are outspread. He spends however He wills. And that which has been revealed to you from your Lord will surely increase many of them in rebellion and disbelief.^{*95} And We have cast among them enmity and hatred till the Day of Resurrection. Every time they kindled the fire of war, Allah extinguished it. And they strive in the land to make corruption. And Allah does not love the corrupters.

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ
 غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلُعِنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا
 بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ يُنفِقُ كَيْفَ
 يَشَاءُ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُم مَّا
 أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا
 وَكُفْرًا ۗ وَأَلْقَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ
 وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
 كُلَّمَا أَوْقَدُوا نَارًا لِلْحَرْبِ
 أَطْفَأَهَا اللَّهُ ۗ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي
 الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
 الْمُفْسِدِينَ



***92** According to the Arabic idiom, one whose hands are tied is an excessively parsimonious person. What the Jews meant by this was that Allah had ceased to be bounteous. When they had fallen into the lowest state of degradation for centuries and lost all hope of their national recovery, they used to lament their lost glory and blame Allah for showing niggardliness towards them. The foolish people

from among them went so far as to say, “God has become so stingy that He has shut the doors of His treasures against us. He has now nothing left with Him for us except calamities and misfortunes.”

This attitude is not peculiar to the Jews alone. The foolish people of other communities, instead of turning to Allah, utter insolent words like these when a calamity befalls them.

***93** That is, they themselves have become so niggardly as to become a proverb for parsimony and narrow mindedness.

***94** If they meant to provoke Allah to bounty by their taunts, they miserably failed in their object. On the contrary, they became subject to the curse of Allah in consequence of their insolent and impudent words and were deprived of His blessing and clemency.

***95** Instead of producing the desired effect on the Jews, the word of God fell on deaf ears. So they did not learn any lesson from it but in their obduracy began to oppose the truth. Instead of redressing their wrong doings and evil deeds and mending their ways, they strove hard to suppress that voice so that no one else might listen to it. Thus the word of God that was sent down to Muhammad (peace be upon him) for their own good and the good of humanity produced no good effect upon them but increased the rebellion and disbelief of many of them.

65. And if only the People of the Book had believed and feared, We would have surely removed from them their

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ ءَامَنُوا
وَاتَّقَوْا لَكَفَّرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ

evil deeds, and admitted them into Gardens of Delight.

وَلَا دَخَلَتْهُمْ جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٦٥﴾

66. And if only they had stood by the Torah, and the Gospel, and what has been sent down to them from their Lord, they would have been nourished (with provisions) from above them and from beneath their feet.*96 Among them are a moderate community, and many of them, evil is what they do.

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَةَ
وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ
رَبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ
تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ
مُقْتَصِدَةٌ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ سَاءَ مَا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

***96** This concise sentence refers to a speech of the Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) contained in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. In this he warned the Israelites in detail: “If you will carefully carry out all His commands....., then your God will lift you high above all the nations of the earth and all His blessings shall come upon you”, but “If you do not listen to the voice of God and are not mindful of all His commands and rules,.....then shall all sorts of curses, calamities and plagues come upon you.....The Eternal will have you routed in front of your foes.”

67. O Messenger, proclaim (the message) that which has been sent down to you from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ
إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ
فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ

not conveyed His message. And Allah will protect you from the people. Indeed, Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.

يَعَصْمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ



68. Say: “O People of the Book, you are not on anything (as to guidance) until you observe the Torah and the Gospel and that which has been sent down (the Quran) to you from your Lord.”^{*97} And that which has been revealed to you from your Lord will surely increase many of them in rebellion and disbelief.^{*98} So do not grieve for the disbelieving people.

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ حَتَّى تُقِيمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَّا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ



***97** “To observe the Torah and the Gospel” means to follow their teachings sincerely and to follow the code of life laid down in them. In this connection, one must keep in mind that the Bible contains two kinds of writings. Some portions in it have been interpolated by the Jewish and the Christian scholars. It is obvious that the Quran does not demand the observance of these parts. But there are other portions that have been put down as the commandments of God or as the

sayings of Moses, Jesus and other Prophets (peace be upon them all). The Quran demands the observance of the latter parts only, for there is no marked difference between the teachings contained in them and those of the Quran. Even though these parts of the Bible have not remained wholly intact and have been tampered with by the translators, the commentators etc. nevertheless, one does feel that they teach the same fundamental principle of *Tauhid* that the Quran teaches, present the same creed which the Quran presents, and guides man to the same way of life that has been laid down in the Quran. Thus it is clear that if the Jews and the Christians had been following those teachings which have been attributed to God and their Prophets in the Bible, they surely would have been a community of righteous people at the time when Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent as a Messenger, and would have readily recognized that the Quran contained the same Message that was contained in the former Books. In that case they would have felt no difficulty in following the Prophet (peace be upon him), for, then, there would have been no question of changing their religion. This would have been a continuation of the same way that they were following before.

*98 The foregoing decree enjoined by Allah will increase their rebellion and disbelief because they will not consider it with a cool mind but in their obduracy oppose it more vigorously.

69. Indeed, those who have believed (in the Quran and

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ

Muhammad), and those (before) who were Jews, and Sabaeans, and Christians, (among them) who believed in Allah and the Last Day, and did righteous deeds, there shall be no fear upon them, nor shall they grieve.*99

هَادُوا وَالصَّابِغُونَ وَالنَّصْرَى
مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

*99 Refer to Ayat 62 and E.N. 80 of Surah Al-Baqarah.

70. Indeed, We took a covenant from the Children of Israel, and We sent to them messengers. Whenever there came to them a messenger with that which their souls did not desire, a group (of messengers) they denied, and (another) group they killed.

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ
وَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ رُسُلًا كَمَا
جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى
أَنْفُسُهُمْ فَرِيقًا كَذَّبُوا وَفَرِيقًا
يَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71. And they thought that there will be no trial (or punishment), so they became blind and deaf. Then Allah turned (in forgiveness) to them. Yet again, many of them became blind and deaf. And Allah is All Seer of what they do.

وَحَسِبُوا أَلَّا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً
فَعَمُوا وَصَمُوا ثُمَّ تَابَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ عَمُوا وَصَمُوا كَثِيرٌ
مِّنْهُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

72. They have surely disbelieved, those who say: “Indeed Allah, He is the Messiah, son of Mary.” And the Messiah (himself) said: “O Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.”*99a Indeed, whoever associates partners with Allah, then Allah has certainly forbidden for him paradise. And his abode is the Fire. And for the wrongdoers there are not any helpers.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ
 مَرْيَمَ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يَبْنَى
 إِسْرَائِيلَ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي
 وَرَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ مَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ
 فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ
 وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ
 مِن أَنْصَارٍ



***99a** Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. (Matthew 4: 10).

73. They have surely disbelieved, those who say: “Indeed, Allah is the third of the three.” And there is not any god except One God. And if they do not desist from what they say, there will surely afflict those who disbelieve among them a painful punishment.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ
 اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا
 إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ وَإِن لَّمْ يَنْتَهُوا عَمَّا
 يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ
 كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ



74. So will they not repent to Allah and seek forgiveness of Him. And Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونََهُ^ج وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
رَّحِيمٌ

75. The Messiah, son of Mary, was not but a messenger. The messengers (the like of whom) have passed away before him. And his mother was a woman of truth. They both used to eat (earthly) food. See how We make clear for them the revelations, then see how they are deluded away.*100

مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا
رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ
الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صَدِيقَةٌ كَانَا
يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ أَنْظُرْ
كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ
ثُمَّ أَنْظُرْ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ

*100 This verse repudiates very clearly the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus (peace be upon him). If one sincerely wishes to know what he really was, one can judge very easily with the help of the signs given herein that he was no more than a man. The Gospel itself bears witness that he was a human being, and subject to the usual wants and necessities of ordinary persons: he was born of a woman (Mary): he had a genealogical tree like all other human beings: he had a human body which had all the characteristics and limitations of other human bodies: he slept, he ate food and he felt heat and cold: he was even

tempted by the devil. These things clearly show that he could not be God nor could he have been a partner with God in His Godhead.

But it is a strange feat of mental perversion that the Christians insist on ascribing Godhead to Jesus (peace be upon him) in spite of the fact that their own Gospels depict him purely as a human being. This is a clear proof of the fact that they do not believe in the Gospels but in an imaginary Christ whom they themselves have invented and raised to Godhead.

76. Say (O Muhammad):
“Do you worship other than Allah that which has no power over you to harm, nor to benefit. And Allah, He is the All Hearer, the All Knower.”

قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ
مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا
نَفْعًا ۗ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ



77. Say: “O people of the Book, do not go beyond bounds in your religion other than the truth, and do not follow the desires of people who have gone astray before, and led many astray, and strayed (themselves) from the right path.”*101

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا
فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا
تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِن
قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّوا عَن

سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ



*101 This refers to the misguided nations from whom the

Christians picked up wrong creeds and false ways. The reference is especially to the Greek philosophers whose fancies misled the Christians from the right way which had been shown to them at the start. The beliefs of the first followers of the Messiah conformed to a great extent to the reality they themselves had witnessed and to what had been taught to them by their Prophet. But later on the Christians went so much beyond the limits in showing reverence and veneration to the Messiah and were so influenced by the fancies and philosophical interpretations of their beliefs that they invented a new religion that had nothing in common with the real teachings of the Messiah. In this connection, the following extracts from Jesus Christ, by the Rev. Charles Anderson Scott (Encyclopedia Britannica, Fourteenth Edition) are worth reading.

“Apart from the birth stories at the opening of Matthew, Mark and Luke (the exact significance of which in this respect is ambiguous) there is nothing in these three Gospels to suggest that their writers thought of Jesus as other than human, a human being specially endued with the spirit of God and standing in an unbroken relation to God which justified His being spoken of as the “son of God”. Even Matthew refers to him as a carpenter’s son and records that after Peter had acknowledged Him as Messiah he “took him and began to rebuke Him” (Matt. XVI. 22). And in Luke the two disciples on the way to Emmaus can still speak of Him as “a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people” (Luke, XXIV. 19). It is very singular that in spite of the fact that before Mark was

composed, “the Lord” had become the description of Jesus common among Christians; he is never so described in the second Gospel (nor yet in the first, though the word is freely used to refer to God). All three relate the Passion of Jesus with a fullness and emphasis of its great significance, but except the “ransom” passage (Mark, X. 45) and certain words at the Last Supper, there is no indication of the meaning which was afterwards attached to it. It is not even suggested that the death of Jesus had any relation to sin or forgiveness. Had the “ransom” saying been suggested by Paul, it would not stand as it does in its isolated vagueness.” The same author says, “That He ranked Himself as a Prophet appears from a few passages such as I have to go on my way today, tomorrow or day after tomorrow, because it cannot be that a Prophet perish out of Jerusalem.” (Luke, 13 : 33). He frequently referred to himself as “the son of Man.”.....”Jesus never refers to Himself as the “son of God”, and the title when bestowed upon Him by others probably involves no more than the acknowledgment that He was the Messiah. But He does describe himself “as the son” absolutely....Moreover, he uses the word “Father” in the same absolute way to define His relationship to God. It is conceivable that He did not always realize the uniqueness of this relationship, that in early life He thought of the privilege as one which He shared with other men, but that experience of life and deeper knowledge of human nature forced upon Him the discovery that in this He stood alone.

Certain words of Peter spoken at the time of Pentecost, “a

man approved of God” describe Jesus as He was known and regarded by His contemporaries..... The Gospels leave no room for doubt as to the completeness with which these statements are to be accepted. From them we learn that Jesus (peace be upon him) passed through the natural stages of development, physical and mental, that He hungered, thirsted, was weary and slept, that He could be surprised and required information, that He suffered pain. He not only made no claim to omniscience, He distinctly waived it. Indeed any claim to omniscience would be not only inconsistent with the whole impression created by the Gospels, it could not be reconciled with the cardinal experiences of the Temptation, of Gethsemane and of Calvary. Unless such experiences were to be utterly unreal, Jesus (peace be upon him) must have entered into them and passed through them under the ordinary limitations of human knowledge, subject only to such modifications of human knowledge as might be due to prophetic insight or the sure vision of God. There is still less reason to predicate omnipotence of Jesus (peace be upon him). There is no indication that He ever acted independently of God, or as an independent God. Rather does He acknowledge dependence upon God, by His habit of prayer and in such words as “this kind goeth not forth save by prayer”. He even repudiates the ascription to Himself of goodness in the absolute sense in which it belongs to God alone. It is a remarkable testimony to the truly historical character of these Gospels that though they were not finally set down until the Christian Church had begun to look up to the

risen Christ as to a divine being, the records on the one hand preserve all the evidence of His true humanity and on the other nowhere suggest that He thought of Himself as God.”

“It may not be possible to decide whether it was the primitive community or Paul himself who first put fully religious content into the title “Lord” as used of Christ. Probably it was the former. But the Apostle undoubtedly adopted the title in its full meaning and did much to make that meaning clear by transferring to “the Lord Jesus Christ” many of the ideas and phrases which in the Old Testament had been specifically assigned to the Lord Jehovah. He gave unto him that name that is above every name, the name of “Lord”. At the same time by equating Christ with the wisdom of God and with glory of God, as well as ascribing to Him sonship in an absolute sense, Paul claimed for Jesus Christ a relation to God which was inherent and unique, ethical and personal, eternal. While, however, Paul in many ways and in many aspects, equated Christ with God, he definitely stopped short of speaking of him as God.... (Pages 22-25, Enc. Britt., Vol. 13, 1946).

The molds of thought (of Trinity) are those of Greek philosophy and into these were run the Jewish teachings. We have thus a peculiar combination the religious doctrines of the Bible, as culminating in the person of Jesus, run through the forms of alien philosophy....

For the Doctrine of Trinity, “The Jewish source furnished the terms Father, Son and Spirit. Jesus seldom employed the last term and Paul’s use of it is not altogether clear.

Already in Jewish literature it has been all but personified. Thus the material is Jewish, though already doubtless modified by Greek influence: but the problem is Greek; it is not primarily ethical, nor even religious but it is metaphysical. What is the ontological relationship between these three factors? The answer of the Church is given in the Nicene formula, which is characteristically Greek....”

(Enc. Britannica, Vol. 5, page 633 last line, Article “Christianity”).

In the same connection, the following passage from “Church History” (Enc. Britannica, Vol. 5, Copy Right 1946) is also worth reading:

“The recognition of Christ as the incarnation of the “logos” was practically universal before the close of the 3rd century, but His deity was still widely denied and the Arian controversy which distracted the Church of the 4th century concerned the latter question. At the council of Nicaea in 325 the deity of Christ received official sanction and was given formulation in the original Nicene creed. Controversy continued for some time, but finally the Nicene decision was recognized both in East and West as the only orthodox faith. The deity of the Son was believed to carry with it that of the Spirit, who was associated with Father and Son in the baptismal formula and in the current symbols and so the victory of the Nicene Christology meant the recognition of the doctrine of the Trinity as a part of orthodox faith.

The assertion of the deity of the Son incarnate in Christ raised another problem which constituted the subject of dispute in the Christological controversies of the 4th and

following centuries. What is the relation of the divine and human natures in Christ? At the council of Chalcedon in 451 it was declared that in the person of Christ are united two complete natures, divine and human, which retain after the union all their properties unchanged. This was supplemented at the third council of Constantinople in 680 by the statement that each of the natures contains a will, so that Christ possesses two wills. The Western Church accepted the decisions of Nicaea, Chalcedon and Constantinople and so the doctrines of the Trinity and of the two natures in Christ were handed down as orthodox dogma in West as well as East.....

Meanwhile in the Western Church the subject of sin and grace and the relation of divine and human activity in salvation, received special attention and finally, at the 2nd Council of Orange in 529, after both Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism had been repudiated, a moderate form of Augustinianism was adopted, involving the theory that every man as a result of the Fall is in such a condition that he can take no steps in the direction of salvation until he has been renewed by the divine grace given in baptism, and that he cannot continue in the good thus begun except by the constant assistance of that grace which is mediated only by the Catholic Church. (Page 677-678).

It has become very clear from the above quotations from Christian Scholars that the first thing which misled the Christians was their exaggerated credulity. Accordingly, they went beyond the limits in their reverence and love of Christ. That is why they began to apply epithets like

“Lord” and “Son of God” to Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) and to ascribe divine attributes to him and to invent the doctrine of atonement, when, in fact, there was absolutely no room, for such things in his teachings. Afterwards, when they came under the influence of philosophy, they began to put forward interpretations to justify the errors of their former religious leaders and went on inventing new creeds, one after the other, in utter disregard of the real teachings of Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), merely on the strength of philosophy and logic, whereas the right thing for them would have been to turn to the real teachings of Christ. It is against such wrong beliefs that the Quran warns in Ayats 72-77.

78. Cursed were those who disbelieved among the Children of Israel by the tongue of David, and Jesus, son of Mary. That was because they disobeyed and used to transgress.

لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ
بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ
دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ذَلِكَ
بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا
يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79. They used not to forbid one another from the abominable deeds that they committed. Indeed, evil was that which they were doing. *102

كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ
مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ لَبِئْسَ مَا
كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

***102** The corruption of the children of Israel took place according to the universal process. At first some individuals of a community become corrupt, and if the collective conscience of the community is alive, the public opinion keeps them suppressed, and the community, as a whole, is saved from corruption. But, on the other hand, if the community connives at their evil ways, and leaves them free to do as they like, by and by, that corruption which was at first confined only to some individuals, spreads in the whole community. The same thing happened in the case of the children of Israel.

As to the curse by the tongue of the Prophets David (peace be upon him) and Jesus (peace be upon him), refer to Psalms 10 and 50 and Matthew 23.

80. You see many among them making allies with those who disbelieved. Evil indeed is that which their selves have sent forward for them. (For) that Allah is angry with them, and in the punishment they will abide eternally.

تَرَى كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِبِئْسَ مَا
قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ أَنْ سَخِطَ
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي الْعَذَابِ هُمْ
خَالِدُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81. And if they had believed in Allah and the Prophet, and that which has been revealed to him, they would not have taken

وَلَوْ كَانُوا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالنَّبِيِّ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَا

them as allies.*¹⁰³ But many of them are evil livers.

أَتَّخَذُوهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَلَكِنَّ كَثِيرًا
مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

*103 If the Jews had been sincere believers in God, prophethood and revelation, they would naturally have taken the side of the Muslims, who were believers in these teachings. But the Jews were a strange sort of believers in the Book: they sided with the mushriks against the believers in the battle between the unity of God and shirk. Moreover, they professed to believe in prophethood, but took the side of those who did not believe in it. Still they shame-facedly declared that they were believers in God, prophets and the Books.

82. You will certainly find the most intense of people in hostility to those who believe, the Jews and those who associate others. And you will certainly find the nearest of them in affection to those who believe, those who say: "We are Christians." That is because among them are priests and monks, and because they are not arrogant.

﴿٨٢﴾ لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً
لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ
أَشْرَكُوا ۗ وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ
مَّوَدَّةً لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الَّذِينَ
قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِيُّكَ يَا
مِنْهُمْ قِيسِيْنَ وَرُهَبَانَا
وَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

83. And when they hear what has been sent down to

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى

the messenger (Muhammad), you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of what they have recognized of the truth. They say: "Our Lord, we believe, so write us among the witnesses."

الرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰ أُعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ
مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ
الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ءَاْمَنَّا
فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84. "And why should we not believe in Allah and that which has come to us of the truth. And we desire that our Lord will admit us (in Paradise) along with the righteous people."

وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا جَاءَنَا
مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَنَطْمَعُ أَنْ
يُدْخِلَنَا رَبُّنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ
الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

85. So Allah has rewarded them, for what they said, gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. And that is the reward of those who do good.

فَأَثَبَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86. And those who disbelieved and denied Our revelations, they are the dwellers of the Hell fire.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾

87. O those who believe, do not forbid the good things which Allah has made lawful for you,^{*104} and do not transgress.^{*105} Indeed, Allah does not love the transgressors.

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُحْرَمُوا
طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا
تَعْتَدُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُعْتَدِينَ



***104** This divine commandment implies two things. First, you have no authority to make certain things lawful and others unlawful. Lawful is only that which Allah has made lawful and unlawful is that which Allah has made unlawful. Therefore if you make a lawful thing unlawful, and vice versa, you will be following your own law and not the divine law. Secondly, you should not adopt the way of asceticism like the Christian monks or the Hindu friars or the Buddhist mendicants and the like. This was meant to warn the Muslims against the general tendency, which has always existed among the religious-minded people, to consider even the normal satiation of the desires of the body and mind to be against spiritual progress. They imagine that self-torture, self-denial and abstinence are virtues in themselves and that one could not approach God without these austerities. As a matter of fact, there were some companions, who had developed such tendencies. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) came to know that some of his companions had taken vows that they would always observe fast during the day and would not go to bed for sleep but keep awake and worship God the whole night,

and would abstain from flesh, fat and women, he forbade them from such practices. He said, I have not ordained such things; your own self has rights on you; therefore observe fast and also eat easefully. Stand in worship at night and also go to sleep. I myself sometimes observe fast and at others I do not. I eat flesh and butter. This is my way, and the one who does not like my way, is not of me.

According to another tradition, he emphasized the same and said, now is it that some people have made unlawful for themselves women, good food, scents and perfumes, sleep and other good things of the world? As for me, I have not taught you to become monks and hermits. The way of life taught by me does neither allow abstention from women nor from eating flesh nor retirement and seclusion from the world. The law has prescribed fasting for self-discipline, and jihad for the same benefits that might be obtained from asceticism. Worship Allah and associate none with Him as partner, perform Hajj and Umrah, establish the Salat and pay Zakat and observe the fasting during the month of Ramadan. The people who were doomed before you, were doomed because they practiced austerity of their own accord, and when they did so, Allah also prescribed the same for them. Those are of them whom you now see in the monasteries.

In the same connection, we learn from some traditions that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) came to know that a certain companion had been abstaining from having conjugal relations with his wife for a long time and had been devoting himself to worship, he immediately sent for

him and ordered, "Go to your wife instantly." The companion replied, "I am with fast." The Prophet (peace be upon him) again said, "Break the fast and go to your wife." There is another instance of the same kind. A woman came to caliph Umar and complained, "My husband observes fast during the day and passes the night in worship and does not have conjugal relations with me." Umar ordered Kaab bin Saur al-Azdi to hear the case. He decreed that the husband was permitted to pass three nights in worship but he must go to his wife on the fourth night.

***105** "To transgress" has very extensive meanings. One goes beyond the limits, if one makes lawful things unlawful or abstains from things which Allah has declared to be pure as if they were impure or if one is extravagant in the use of pure things, or if one makes use of unlawful things as if they were lawful. Allah does not like such acts of transgression.

88. And eat of that which Allah has provided for you, lawful, good things. And fear Allah, Him in whom you are believers.

وَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَلًا
طَيِّبًا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ
بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ

89. Allah does not hold against you for what is meaningless in your oaths, but He does hold against you for the oaths which you have sworn in earnest. So its

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي
أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ
بِمَا عَقَدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانَ فَكَفَّرْتُمْ

expiation is the feeding of ten needy persons with the average of that which you feed your own families, or the clothing of them, or the freeing of a slave. So whoever can not find (the means to do so), then (he shall) fast three days. That is the expiation of your oaths when you have sworn.^{*106} And protect your oaths.^{*107} Thus Allah makes clear to you His revelations, that you may be grateful.

إِطْعَامُ عَشْرَةِ مَسْكِينٍ مِنْ
 أَوْسَطِ مَا تَطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ
 كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ فَمَنْ
 لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ
 ذَلِكَ كَفْرَةٌ أَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا
 حَلَفْتُمْ^ج وَأَحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ^ج
 كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ
 لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ



***106** The commandment about oaths has been laid down here in connection with instructions about food, because some people had taken oaths of making some lawful things unlawful for themselves. The commandment is that if one uttered a word of oath without any intention behind it, he shall not be bound to observe it, for there is no punishment or expiation for this. But if one has deliberately taken such an oath, he must break it and expiate the violation because he must abrogate such a sinful oath. (Refer to E.Ns 243 and 244 of Surah Al-Baqarah and E.N. 125 of Surah An-Nisa).

***107** “Protect your oath” implies three things. First, one should make the right use of an oath and should not take it for useless and sinful things. Secondly, when one takes an oath for anything, he should remember it lest he should

forget it and violate it. Thirdly, if one takes a deliberate oath to do a right thing, he must fulfill it, and if one violates it, he should expiate the sin.

90. O those who believe, intoxicants, and gambling, and idolatrous sacrifices at altars, and divining arrows are only an abomination of Satan's handiwork.*108 So avoid it that you may be successful.*109

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ
وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَمُ
رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ
فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

***108** Refer to E.Ns 12 and 14 of this Surah for the meaning of *ansab* (ungodly shrines), *azlam* (methods of divination) and *maisar* (gambling). Though *azlam*, divination, is in its very nature a form of gambling, there is a slight difference between it and *maisar*. *Azlam* applies to those forms of divination and casting of lots, which are tinged with shirk and superstition and *maisar* applies to all those forms by which wealth is acquired or divided by devices of chance.

***109** In this verse four things have been made absolutely unlawful. They are wine, gambling, ungodly shrines (which are dedicated to the worship of others than Allah and in which sacrifices are made and offerings given in the name of others than Allah) and divining devices. The nature of the last three has already been explained. Here are the details of the commandment about wine.

Before making wine absolutely unlawful in this verse, two other commandments concerning its prohibition had already been given in Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayat 219 and

Surah An-Nisa, Ayat 43. Before this last commandment was given, the Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed the people in order to prepare them for its absolute prohibition. He warned and said, Allah does not like at all that people should drink wine. Probably absolute prohibition will soon be prescribed: therefore those who possess wine are advised to sell it. Sometime after this, when Ayat 90 was revealed, he declared, "Now those who possess wine, can neither drink it nor sell it; they should, therefore, throw it away." Accordingly, it was spilled in the streets of Al-Madinah to run wastefully. Some people, however, asked the Prophet (peace be upon him), "May we give it as a present to the Jews?" He replied, "The One Who has made it unlawful has also forbidden to give it as a present." Others asked, "May we convert it into vinegar?" He replied, "No, you must spill it." Another asked again and again, "Is one permitted to use wine as medicine?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) emphatically rejected this also and said, "No, it is not a medicine but a disease." Yet another asked, we live in a place, which is very cold, and we have to do tiresome labor. So we drink wine to refresh ourselves from fatigue and to keep warm in the cold. He asked, "Is what you drink intoxicant?" The man replied, "Yes." The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, "Then refrain from it." At this the man said, "The people of our part of the country will not submit to this." He replied, "If they do not submit to this, then go to war with them."

According to a tradition related by Ibn Umar, the Prophet (peace be upon him) declared, Allah has cursed wine and

the one who drinks it, and the one who serves it, and the one who sells it, and the one who buys it, and the one who extracts it, and the one who has it extracted, and the one who carried it, and the one for whom it is carried.

According to another tradition the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited the Muslims from eating the food which is served along with wine. In the initial stage of the prohibition, he forbade even the use of those utensils which were employed for extracting wine or for drinking it. Afterwards when the prohibition had become thoroughly effective, the use of such utensils was permitted.

Though originally the Arabic word *khamr* meant only wine made from grapes, and it was also applied to the liquors made from wheat, barley, dried grapes, dates and honey, the Prophet (peace be upon him) applied the prohibition to all the intoxicants, and there are traditions that clearly support this. For instance, “Every intoxicant is *khamr* and is unlawful.” “Every drink that intoxicates is unlawful.” “I prohibit every intoxicant.” In one of his Friday sermons, the Caliph Umar defined *khamr* as everything that dulls the faculty of thinking.

In this connection, the Prophet (peace be upon him) laid down the general principle: if a large dose of something is intoxicant, then its smallest dose also is unlawful, and if a cup of anything is intoxicant, then a drop of it also is unlawful.

During the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him), there was no fixed punishment for a drunkard. The culprit, who was arrested and brought for trial was beaten with shoes,

kicked, given blows and thrashed with sticks and ropes. Forty stripes were the maximum punishment given for this crime. The same was the punishment during the time of Abu Bakr and the early days of Umar. But when the latter saw that the crime was on the increase, he in consultation with the other companions laid down eighty stripes for this. Imam Malik and Imam Abu Hanifah and, according to a tradition, Imam Shafai also, were of the same opinion. But Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, and according to another Tradition, Imam Shafai also, were of the opinion that forty stripes should be inflicted for the crime of drinking. Ali also considered forty stripes to be the punishment for it. (may Allah be pleased with them all).

According to the Sharia, it is the duty of the Islamic State to enforce prohibition. That is why during the time of Umar the shop of a man, named Ruvaishid, who belonged to the clan of Bani-Thaqif, was burnt by his order because wine was secretly sold there. On another occasion a whole village was burnt down by the orders of Umar for the crime that wine was secretly extracted and sold there.

91. Satan only wants to cause between you enmity and hatred with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah, and from the prayer. So, will you refrain.

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ
بَيْنَكُمْ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي
الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنِ
ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ
مُنْتَهُونَ



92. And obey Allah and obey the messenger and beware. Then if you turn away, then know that upon Our messenger is only the clear conveyance (of the message).

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ
وَاحْذَرُوا فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا
أَنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَّغُ الْمُبِينُ



93. On those who believe and do righteous deeds, there is no sin for what they have eaten (in the past), as long as they fear (Allah), and believe and do righteous deeds, then fear (Allah) and believe, then again fear (Allah) and do good. And Allah loves those who do good.

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا
وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا
طَعَمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا وَءَامَنُوا
وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا
وَءَامَنُوا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَأَحْسَنُوا
وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ



94. O those who believe, Allah will surely test you by something of the game that is well within reach of your hands and your spears, that Allah may know him who fears Him in unseen. Then whoever transgresses after that, for him there is a painful punishment.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَيَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ
اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الصَّيْدِ تَنَالَهُ
أَيْدِيكُمْ وَرِمَاحُكُمْ لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ
مَنْ يَتَخَفُهُ بِالْغَيْبِ فَمَنْ
أَعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٌ



95. O those who believe, do not kill wild game while you are in Ihram for the pilgrimage.^{*110} And whoever of you kills it intentionally, so the penalty is an equivalent to what he killed, of domestic animals, as judged by two just men among you, an offering delivered to the Kabah. Or as expiation, the feeding of needy persons, or the equivalent of that in fasting,^{*111} that he may taste the evil consequences of his deed. Allah has forgiven whatever happened in the past. And whoever commits it again, then Allah will take retribution from him. And Allah is All Mighty, Able of Retribution.

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا
 الصَّيْدَ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ وَمَنْ قَتَلَهُ
 مِنْكُمْ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا
 قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعْمِ تَحْكُمُ بِهِ ذَوَا
 عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ هَدِيًّا بَلِغَ الْكَعْبَةِ
 أَوْ كَفَّرَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسْكِينٍ أَوْ
 عَدْلٌ ذَلِكَ صِيَامًا لِيَذُوقَ
 وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِ ۗ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا
 سَلَفَ ۚ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ
 وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ۖ



***110** It is forbidden to hunt game or to help another to hunt it, in any way whatsoever, while one is in the pilgrim's garments or in the sacred precincts. It is also unlawful for one in this state to eat of the game that has been specifically killed for him. If, however, someone else, not in this state, kills a game for himself and then gives a part of it to a pilgrim as a present, there is no harm for the latter to eat it.

Of course, the harmful animals are an exception to this prohibition. One is permitted to kill a snake, scorpion, mad dog or any other harmful animal, even when one is under the restrictions imposed on a pilgrim.

*111 Those two just men will also decide how many indigent persons are to be fed, or how many fasts are to be observed, for killing a certain animal.

96. Lawful to you is the sea game and its food,^{*112} a provision for you and those on a journey. And forbidden to you is the land game as long as you are in Ihram for the pilgrimage. And fear Allah, He, to whom you will be gathered.

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ
وَطَعَامُهُ مَتَعًا لَكُمْ وَلِلسَّيَّارَةِ
وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَرِّ مَا
دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا^ط وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي
إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

*112 Game from the sea has been made lawful because sometimes when provisions run short on a sea journey, there is nothing else close at hand to eat.

97. Allah has appointed the Kabah, the Sacred House, an asylum of security for mankind, and the sacred month (of Hajj), and the animals of sacrificial offerings, and (animals with) the garlands.^{*113} That is so you may know that Allah

جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتِ
الْحَرَامِ قِيَمًا لِلنَّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ
الْحَرَامَ وَأَهْدَى^ج وَالْقَلْبَةَ
ذَلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا
فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, and that Allah is Knower of all things.*114

وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ



*113 For Arabia, the Kabah was not merely a sacred place of worship, but it occupied a central position in the country and because of this and of its sanctity, it was the means of stabilizing its economy and culture. The people from all over the country came there to perform Hajj and Umrah and the huge gathering helped to create the feeling of unity among the Arabs who were otherwise torn by clannish strife. The pilgrims who came from different clans and places met together and established cultural relations. Poetic contests helped to make their language and literature rich. Trade and commerce which were transacted on the occasion helped to satisfy the economic needs of the people. The sacred months provided peace to the Arabs for four months and this was the only period during which their caravans could travel in security from one part of the country to the other. The animals dedicated to sacrifice and the collars round their necks proved very helpful to the movements of the caravans, for the Arabs showed so much reverence for them that none dared touch them with the intention of robbery.

*114 That is, if you just think deeply about the wisdom contained in the sanctity of the Kabah and the restrictions laid down for the pilgrimage to it and the benefits accruing from it, you yourselves would be convinced that Allah, Who has prescribed these, has deep and perfect knowledge of the

welfare and needs of His creatures. You will realize that each one of His commandments is very beneficial for different aspects of human life. Even during the centuries of chaos before the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), Allah had made the Kabah a means of security and stability for your national life though you yourselves were senselessly bent upon destroying it. In the same way, commandments of Allah guaranteed your own security and welfare; therefore you should, for your own good observe these, for there are hidden benefits in them that you can neither foresee nor obtain by your own devices.

98. Know that Allah is severe in punishment, and that Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

أَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ
الْعِقَابِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ



99. Not (a duty) upon the messenger except to convey. And Allah knows whatever you reveal and whatever you conceal.

مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا أَلْبَعُغُ^ق وَاللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ



100. Say (O Muhammad): “Not equal are the evil and the good, even though the abundance of the evil may please you.^{*115} So fear Allah, O men of

قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ
وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ
فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

understanding, that you
may be successful.”

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلِحُونَ

***115** This verse sets up a new standard of values, which is quite different from the standard of those who look only at the outward aspect of things. Such people usually judge things by their quantity and not by their quality. For instance, one hundred rupees are always considered greater in value than five rupees by one who does not attach any value to the means by which these might have been obtained. But contrary to this evaluation, this verse declares that if these one hundred rupees have been obtained by unfair means and those five rupees earned by fair means, then the former are less in worth because of their impurity than the latter because of their purity. According to this standard, it is not the number or the quantity of a thing that increases or decreases its true worth but the question whether it has been obtained by fair means or foul. Obviously, a drop of rose scent has greater value than a heap of filth and a cup of pure water is far greater in worth than a cistern full of impure urine. Therefore one who is really wise will always remain content with the lawful, though it may appear to be very insignificant and worthless, and will never try to grab the unlawful, though it might appear to be very alluring and grand.

101. O those who believe, do not ask about things which, if they were made known to you, may cause you

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا
عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ إِن تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ تَسْؤُكُمْ

trouble.*¹¹⁶ And if you ask of them while the Quran is being revealed, they will be made known to you. Allah has forgiven that. And Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Forbearing.

وَإِنْ تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ
الْقُرْآنُ تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهَا
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ



*116 This verse forbids people to ask useless and unnecessary questions because some people used to put such questions to the Prophet (peace be upon him) as were of no practical good for mundane affairs nor for spiritual uplift. For example, once a certain person while sitting in a gathering asked him, “Who is my real father?” Likewise, sometimes, some people put unnecessary questions concerning legal matters so as to get these defined, whereas they had been purposely kept undefined for the good of the people. For example, when Hajj was made obligatory by a commandment in the Quran, a certain person heard it, and instantly asked; “Has it been made obligatory to perform Hajj every year.” The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not reply. The man repeated the question, but he again kept quiet. When the man put the question for the third time, he replied, "Woe to you! If I had said: ‘Yes’, the performance of Hajj every year would have become obligatory and people like you would have been unable to perform it and been guilty of disobedience.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) himself forbade people to ask questions for the sake of it and to probe into things aimlessly. In a tradition he warned, “The worst offender

against the Muslims is the person who asked a question about something that had not been made unlawful but was made so because of his question.” In another tradition he said, “Allah has prescribed some obligatory duties for you; let not these go unfulfilled, and He has made certain things unlawful, so do not go near them. He has prescribed certain limits, do not transgress them. He has been silent concerning certain things, but not because He has forgotten them; so do not try to probe into such things.”

In these two traditions a warning has been served against a very serious matter. There are certain things and commandments which have been left vague and without details. This is not because the law-giver had forgotten to give details or to make them specific but because He did not intend to limit these in order to leave a wide scope for the people. Therefore if a person goes on creating one issue after the other, by putting unnecessary and useless questions and thus creates limitations and specifications, he puts the people to unnecessary trouble. Likewise if he tries to deduce the details by the force of his reasoning, and does not rest content till he has made the vague things specific and the indefinite as definite, he in reality puts the Muslims in a very awkward position. This is because the more details we offer for the unseen and the next world, the more will be the chances for creating doubts about them, and likewise, the more limitations are imposed concerning the commandments, the greater will be the chance for their violation.

102. Indeed, a people asked such (questions) before you, then they became on that account disbelievers. ^{*117}

قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ
أَصْبَحُوا بِهَا كَافِرِينَ

***117** The people, who were involved in disbelief because they asked useless and unnecessary questions, were the Jews. At first they were involved in hairsplitting, which led them to put unnecessary questions about the details of the faith and the commandments. Consequently, they helped to impose upon themselves such restrictions as they could not observe and so became guilty of disobedience and disbelief, What a pity that the Muslims are following the Jews, step by step, in spite of these warnings by the Quran and the Prophet (peace be upon him)!

103. Allah has not instituted any (things as innovations like) Bahirah, nor Saibah, nor Wasilah, nor Hami. ^{*118} But those (pagans) who disbelieve invent lies against Allah. And most of them have no understanding.

مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بُحَيْرَةٍ وَلَا
سَائِبَةٍ وَلَا وَصِيلَةٍ وَلَا حَامٍ
وَلَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى
اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا
يَعْقِلُونَ

***118** In this verse the superstitious practice of dedicating animals to idols, graves, gods or saints, and leaving them to roam about and graze at liberty has been condemned. In the pre-Islamic Arabia, they gave different names to such animals and marked them off, and considered it unlawful

to take any service from them or slaughter them for food or derive any benefit from them in any way. *Bahirah* was the name given to a she-camel which had five young ones, the last of which was a he-camel. Her ear was then split and she was turned loose to roam at liberty. After this, none would ride her nor drink her milk nor slaughter her nor shear her hair. She was allowed to graze in any field and pasture and drink from any watering place.

Saibah was the name given to that he-camel or she-camel which was let loose as a mark of gratitude in fulfillment of a vow taken for recovery from some illness or safety from some danger. *Saibah* was also the name given to the she-camel which had ten young ones, each of which was a she-camel. *Wasilah* was the name given to a special he-goat which was one of the first born twins, the other of which was a she-goat. The practice about the first born young ones was that they used to sacrifice, in the haute of their deities, the first horn young one if it happened to be a he-goat. But if they happened to be twins they would not sacrifice the he-goat and would call it *Wasilah* and set it at liberty in the name of deities. *Ham* was the name given to a he-camel as soon as his grandson became grown up and fit for riding: it was then set at liberty. The same name also was given to a he-camel which begot ten young ones and was set at liberty.

104. And when it is said to them: “Come to that which Allah has revealed and to the messenger (Muhammad),”

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا
أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَىٰ الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا

they say: “Enough for us is that upon which we found our fathers.” Even though their fathers had no knowledge whatsoever, nor were they guided.

حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَاءَنَا
أُولَٰئِكَ كَانُوا ءَابَاؤَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105. O those who believe, upon you is (responsibility of) your own selves. Those who have gone astray cannot harm you when you are rightly guided.^{*119} To Allah is your return all together, then He will inform you of what you used to do.

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ
أَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مِّنْ ضَلَّ
إِذَا أَهْتَدَيْتُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ
جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

***119** This is a warning against a common human weakness. Some people are always on the lookout to find out and criticize errors in others. Here such people have been admonished against this evil and asked to concentrate their attention on their own acts, deeds, morals and beliefs instead of probing into and criticizing the conduct and beliefs of others. If a man himself is obedient to Allah and fulfills his obligations to Him and man, and treads the path of truth and righteousness, which also includes the establishment of virtue and the eradication of vice, then most surely the crookedness and deviation of any other can do him no harm.

This verse however, does not mean that a person should think only of his own salvation and leave alone the reform

of others. Abu Bakr Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) refuted this misconception in an address, saying, “O people, you recite this verse and put on it a wrong interpretation. I myself heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) say, when the people become so indifferent that they see evil and do not try to eradicate it and see an unjust person doing an injustice and do not prevent him from it, Allah may punish all of them. I swear by Allah that it is obligatory on you to enjoin virtue and forbid evil. If you neglect this, Allah will place you under the worst people who will inflict hardships on you. Then your good people will offer prayers but He will not accept these.

106. O those who believe, testimony (should be taken) between you when death approaches one of you, at the time of bequest, two just men^{*120} from among you, or two others from outside of you, if you are traveling through the land, and the calamity of death befalls you.^{*121} Detain them both after the prayer, then let them both swear by Allah, if you doubt (their truthfulness), (saying): “We will not exchange it (oath) for a price, even if he should

يَتَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا شَهَدَةٌ
بَيْنَكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمْ
الْمَوْتُ حِينَ الْوَصِيَّةِ اثْنَانِ ذَوَا
عَدْلٍ مِّنْكُمْ أَوْ ءَاخِرَانِ مِّنْ
غَيْرِكُمْ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي
الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَبْتُمْ مُصِيبَةً
الْمَوْتِ تَحْبِسُونَهُمَا مِنْ بَعْدِ
الصَّلَاةِ فَيُقْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ
أَرْتَبْتُمْ لَا نَشْتَرِي بِهِ ثَمَنًا وَلَوْ

be near relative, nor shall we hide the testimony of Allah, indeed we would then be of the sinful.”

كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ وَلَا نَكْتُمُ شَهَادَةَ
اللَّهِ إِنَّا إِذَا لَّمِنَ الْأَثِمِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

*120 That is, pious, righteous and trustworthy Muslims.

*121 This shows that the Muslims are permitted to make the non-Muslims their witnesses only in case the Muslim witnesses are not available.

107. Then if it is found about that those two were guilty of sin, then two others shall stand in their place, from among those who claim right, those nearest (the deceased). So let them swear by Allah, (saying): “Our testimony is truer than the testimony of both of them, and we have not transgressed. Indeed, we would then be of the wrong doers.”

فَإِنْ عُرِيَ عَلَىٰ أَنَّهُمَا اسْتَحَقَّا
إِثْمًا فَأَخْرَانِ يَقُومَانِ
مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَحَقَّ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَوْلَىٰنِ فَيُقْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ
لَشَهَادَتُنَا أَحَقُّ مِنْ
شَهَادَتِهِمَا وَمَا أَعْتَدَيْنَا إِنَّا إِذَا
لَّمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108. That is closer (to the fact) that they will give testimony in its true nature, or they would fear that (other) oaths would be admitted after their oaths. And fear Allah and listen.

ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِالشَّهَادَةِ
عَلَىٰ وَجْهَهَا أَوْ يَخَافُوا أَنْ تُرَدَّ
أَيْمَانُهُمْ بَعْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَسْمَعُوا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ

And Allah does not guide the disobedient people.

الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

109. On the Day^{*122} when Allah will gather the messengers, then will say: What was the response you received (from mankind).^{*123} They will say: We have no knowledge.^{*124} Indeed You, only You are the Knower of the unseen.

﴿١٠٨﴾ يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ
مَاذَا أُجِبْتُمْ قَالُوا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿١٠٩﴾

***122** The Day of Resurrection.

***123** That is, what was the response of the world to the invitation that you gave towards Islam?

***124** That is, we know only of that outward response which was made to our invitation during our lifetime. As regards the real practical response, we have no correct knowledge of it for that is known to You alone.

110. When Allah will say:^{*125} “O Jesus, son of Mary, remember My favor upon you and upon your mother, when I supported you with the holy spirit. You spoke to mankind in the cradle and maturity. And when I taught you the Book and wisdom, and the Torah, and the Gospel. And

إِذْ قَالَ اللهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى
وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدْتُكَ بِرُوحِ
الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ
وَكَهْلًا وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ

when you made of clay as it were the figure of a bird by My permission, then you breathed into it, and it became a bird by My permission. And you healed those born blind, and the lepers by My permission. And when you brought forth the dead by My permission.*126 And when I restrained the Children of Israel from (harming) you when you came to them with clear proofs, then those who disbelieved among them said:

“This is nothing but a clear magic.”

وَالْإِنجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ
 كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنْفُخُ فِيهَا
 فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُبْرِئُ
 الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي
 وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ
 كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ
 إِذْ جِئْتَهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ
 الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِن هَذَا إِلَّا
 سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ



*125 At first this question will be put collectively to all the Messengers. Then each of the Messengers will stand as a witness individually. Here that question, which will be put to Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), has been specially mentioned because it fits into the context.

*126 That is, “You brought them back to life after death.”

111. And when I inspired to the disciples, (saying) that: “Believe in Me and in My messenger.” They said: “We believe. And bear witness

وَإِذْ أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ
 ءَامِنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوا

that indeed we are those who surrendered (to Allah).”^{*127}

ءَامِنَّا وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّآ مُسْلِمُونَ

***127** That is, it was a favor upon you that the disciples believed in you, by Our Grace; otherwise you had no power by yourself to convert even a single person out of the disbelievers.

Incidentally, the use of the word Muslims for the disciples is meant to show that their religion was Islam and not Christianity.

112. When ^{*128} the disciples said: “O Jesus, son of Mary, is your Lord able to send down for us a table spread with food from heaven.” He said: “Fear Allah, if you are believers.”

إِذْ قَالَ أَلْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَٰعِيسَىٰ
أَبْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ
أَنْ يُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِّنَ
السَّمَآءِ ۖ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِن
كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ

***128** This incident has been inserted here as a parenthesis to show that even his disciples, who had received his teachings from him directly, considered Jesus (peace be upon him) a man and servant of God. Therefore, they could never conceive to make their master a god or a partner of God or son of God. This also shows that Jesus (peace be upon him) also presented himself as a servant without having any authority of his own.

It may be asked, what was the occasion of inserting this parenthesis here to interrupt the conversation that was

being cited? The answer is that the conversation that would take place on the Day of Resurrection has been quoted here for the benefit of the Christians so that they may learn the lesson and adopt the right way. It is, therefore, quite pertinent to insert the incident mentioned in the parenthesis to impress the same lesson.

113. They said: “We wish that we eat from it, and that we may satisfy our hearts, and know that you have indeed spoken truth to us, and that we may be among its witnesses.”

قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا
وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ
صَدَقْتَنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ
الشَّاهِدِينَ

114. Jesus, son of Mary, said: “O Allah, our Lord, send down for us a table spread with food from heaven, that it may be for us a feast, for the first of us, and the last of us, and a sign from You. And provide us sustenance, and You are the Best of Sustainers.”

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا
أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا
وَءَايَةً مِنْكَ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ
الرَّازِقِينَ

115. Allah said: “Indeed, I will send it down for you. ^{*129} So whoever disbelieves afterwards from among you, then surely will I punish him with a

قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنَّي مُنْزِلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَنْ
يَكْفُرْ بَعْدُ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنِّي أُعَذِّبُهُ
عَذَابًا لَّا أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِّنْ

punishment such as I have not punished anyone among all the peoples.”

الْعَلَمِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

***129** The Quran is silent as to whether the “table spread with food” was sent down or not and there is no other authentic source of information. Possibly it was sent down, but it is equally possible that the disciples themselves might have taken back their request after the warning in verse 115.

116. And when Allah will say: “O Jesus, son of Mary, did you say to the people: Take me and my mother for two gods other than Allah.”^{*130} He will say: “Glory be to You, it was not for me that I say that I had no right of. If I had said it, then You would surely have known it. You know what is within myself, and I do not know what is within Yourself. Indeed You, You are the Knower of the unseen.”

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
ءَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي
وَأُمِّي إِلَهَيْنِ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ قَالَ
سُبْحٰنَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِيَ أَنْ أَقُولَ
مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقِّ ۚ إِن كُنتُ قُلْتُهُ
فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ ۚ تَعَلَّمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي
وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ
أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿١١٦﴾

***130** This refers to another error of the Christians. They had made Mary an object of worship along with Christ and the Holy Ghost, though there is not a word or hint in the Bible about this doctrine. During the first three centuries

after Christ, the Christian world was totally unaware of this creed. Towards the end of the 3rd century, the words “Mother of God” were used for the first time by some theologians of Alexandria. Though the response which these words found in the popular heart was great, yet the Church was not at first inclined to accept the doctrine and declared that the worship of Mary was a wrong creed. Then at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D., the words Mother of God were officially used by the Church. As a result Mariolatry began to spread by leaps and bounds both inside and outside the Church. So much so that by the time the Quran was revealed, the exaltation of the Mother of God had eclipsed the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Her statues were set up in Churches and she was worshiped, implored and invoked in prayers. In short, the greatest source of reliance of a Christian was that he should obtain the help and protection of the Mother of God. Emperor Justinian in the preamble to one of his laws bespeaks her advocacy for the empire and his general, Narses, looks to her directions on the battlefield. Emperor Heraclius, a contemporary of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), bore her image on his banner and believed that because of its auspicious nature it will never be lowered. Though the Protestants after the Reformation did their best to fight against Mariolatry, yet the Roman Catholic Church still adheres to it passionately.

117. “Never did I say to them except what You commanded me to (say),

مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ

that worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. And I was a witness over them while I was among them. Then when You took me, You were the Watcher over them. And You are Witness over all things.”

أَنْ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ
وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ
فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتَ أَنْتَ
الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْتَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ



118. “If You punish them, then indeed they are Your slaves. And if You forgive them. Then indeed You, only You are the All Mighty, the All Wise.”

إِنْ تُعَذِّبِهِمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ وَإِن
تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ



119. Allah will say: “This is the day in which the truthful will profit from their truth.” For them are Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. That is the great success.

قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمٌ يَنْفَعُ
الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ
الْعَظِيمُ



120. To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

the earth and all that is
within them, and He has
Power over all things.

وَمَا فِيهِنَّ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

قَدِيرٌ

