



## النَّحْلُ An-Nahal

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

### Name

The name, *An-Nahal*, of this Surah has been taken from Ayat 68. This is merely to distinguish it from other Surahs.

### Period of Revelation

The following internal evidence shows that this Surah was revealed during the last Makkan stage of Prophethood:

1. Ayat 41 clearly shows that persecution had forced some Muslims to emigrate to Habash before the revelation of this Surah.
2. It is evident from Ayat 106 that at that time the persecution of the Muslims was at its height. Therefore a problem had arisen in regard to the utterance of a blasphemous word, without actual disbelief, under unbearable conditions. The problem was that if one did so how he should be treated.
3. Ayats 112-114 clearly refer to the end of seven year famine that had struck Makkah some years after the appointment of the Prophet (peace be upon him) as Allah's Messenger.
4. There is a reference to Ayat 116 of this Surah in Surah

**Al-Anaam, Ayat 145. And Ayat 118 of this Surah contains a reference to Surah Al-Anaam, 146. This is a proof that both these Surahs (Al-Anaam and An-Nahal) were sent down in the same period.**

**The general style of the Surah also supports the view that this was revealed during the last stage at Makkah.**

### **Central Theme**

**All the topics of the Surah revolve round different aspects of the message, that is, refutation of shirk, proof of Tauhid, and warning of the consequences of the rejection of and opposition and antagonism to the message.**

### **Topics of Discussion**

**The very first verse gives direct and strict warning to those who were rejecting the message outright, as if to say, Allah's decision has already been made concerning your rejection of the message, why are you then clamoring for hastening it? Why don't you make use of the respite that is being given to you. And this was exactly what the disbelievers of Makkah needed at the time of the revelation of this Surah. For they challenged the Prophet (peace be upon him) over and over again: Why don't you bring that scourge with which you have been threatening us. For we have not only rejected your message but have been openly opposing it for a long time. Such a challenge had become a byword with them, which they frequently repeated as a clear proof that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was not a true Prophet.**

**Immediately after this warning, they have been admonished to give up shirk, for this false creed was the**

main obstacle in the way of the message. Then the following topics come over and over again, one after the other:

1. Very convincing proofs of Tauhid and refutation of shirk have been based on the plain signs in the universe and in man's own self.
2. The objections of the disbelievers have been answered, their arguments refuted, their doubts removed and their false pretexts exposed.
3. Warnings have given of the consequences of persistence in false ways and antagonism to the message.
4. The moral changes which the message of the Prophet (peace be upon him) aims to bring practically in human life have been presented briefly in an appealing manner. The mushriks have been told that belief in Allah, which they also professed, demanded that it should not be confined merely to lip service, but this creed should take a definite shape in moral and practical life.
5. The Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions have been comforted and told about the attitude they should adopt in the face of antagonism and persecution by the disbelievers.

1. The command of Allah will come to pass,<sup>\*1</sup> so do not seek to hasten it. Glorified be He and Exalted above what they associate (with Him).<sup>\*2</sup>

أَتَىٰ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوهُ  
سُبْحٰنَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

\*1 That is, the time for final judgment has come near. As regards to the use of the past tense in the original, this may

be to show certainty of its occurrence in the near future or to emphasize the fact that the rebellion and the wrong deeds of the Quraish had become so unbearable that they warranted that the time for decisive action had come.

Here question arises as to what that judgment was and how it came. We are of the opinion (and true knowledge is with Allah alone) that that judgment was *hijra* (the migration) of the Prophet (peace be upon him) from Makkah. For a short time after this revelation, he was bidden to emigrate from there. And according to the Quran, a Prophet (peace be upon him) is bidden to leave his place only at that time when the rebellion and antagonism of his people reaches the extreme limit. Then their doom is sealed, for after this Allah's punishment comes on them either as a direct scourge from Him, or they are destroyed by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his followers. And this did actually take place. At the occasion of the migration, the people of Makkah regarded it as a victory for themselves, but in fact it turned out to be a defeat for shirk and disbelief which were totally uprooted within a decade or so after the migration, not only from Makkah but from the rest of Arabia as well.

**\*2** In order to understand the interconnection between the first and the second sentences, one should keep in view the background. The challenge of the disbelievers to the Prophet (peace be upon him), to hasten divine judgment, was really based on their assumption that their own religion of shirk was true and the religion of Tauhid presented by Muhammad (peace be upon him) was false.



Otherwise, they argued, the divine scourge with which he threatened them would have come upon them long before because of their disbelief and rebellion, if there had been the authority of Allah behind it. That is why after the declaration of the judgment, their misunderstanding about the cause of delay in the punishment was removed, as if to say: You are absolutely wrong to assume that punishment has not been inflicted on you because your creed of shirk is true, for Allah is free from and far above shirk and has no partner.

2. He sends down the angels, with the Spirit<sup>\*3</sup> of His command, upon whom He wills of His slaves,<sup>\*4</sup> (saying) that: “Warn that there is no god except Me, so fear Me.”<sup>\*5</sup>

يُنزِلُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ بِالرُّوحِ مِنْ  
 اَمْرِهِ عَلٰى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ  
 عِبَادِهِ اَنْ اُنذِرُوْا اَنْهٗ لَا اِلٰهَ  
 اِلَّا اَنَا فَاتَّقُوْنَ

<sup>\*3</sup> This means the Spirit of Prophethood with which a Prophet is imbued in order to fulfill his mission by word and deed. The Quran has called this the Spirit in several places, for this has the same relation to the mission of a Prophet and his moral life, which the soul has to the physical human life.

<sup>\*4</sup> As one of the things, which prompted the disbelievers to challenge the Prophet (peace be upon him) for scourge, was their presumption that he was not a true Prophet. Allah told them categorically that he was a true Prophet who had been imbued with the Spirit which We had sent down on

him.

“Spirit of His command, upon whom He wills.” This is the answer to the objections which the chiefs of the Quraish used to raise against the Prophet (peace be upon him): Had Allah wanted to send a Messenger to them, was there no one better than Muhammad (peace be upon him), son of Abdullah, for this mission. Why did He not choose one of the big chiefs of Makkah or Taif for the purpose? Such absurd objections needed no other answer than this that is why such an answer has been given in several places of the Quran as if to say: Allah knows best how to do His work, and does not stand in need of any advice from you. He chooses for His mission anyone whom He considers fit for it.

\*5 This verse declares the essence of the Spirit of Prophethood, which is this: Godhead belongs to one Allah alone, so only He is worthy of fear. Therefore, there is no other anchor that might make fast and hold together human moral system than His fear. For it is the fear of His displeasure and His punishment, and the fear of the consequences of His disobedience which alone can act as a strong deterrent to restrain one from deviation. That is why mankind has been admonished: Fear Me.

3. He created the heavens and the earth with truth. Exalted is He above what they associate (with Him).<sup>\*6</sup>

خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ  
بِالْحَقِّ تَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ



\*6 That is to say, the entire system of the earth and the heavens is a witness to the truth of the doctrine of Tauhid and to the negation of shirk. You may look at anything in the universe and consider the system from any point of view you like, you will find proof of this fact that it is being run by one God and not by many gods. Then how is it that you believe in shirk when there is no proof whatsoever of this in the universe

As a fitting sequence of this, proofs of Tauhid and refutation of shirk have been given from man himself and from other signs in the universe, and it has also been shown that Prophethood is based on truth.

4. He created man from a drop of fluid, then behold, he is an open disputer.\*7

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُبِينٌ



\*7 This has two meanings and both are meant here.

(1) Though Allah created man from an insignificant sperm-drop, he is capable of arguing and giving reasons in support of his claim.

(2) Man who has such an insignificant origin, has become so vain that he does not hesitate to dispute even with his Creator.

If considered in its first sense, it is a chain in the series of arguments given in many succeeding verses to prove the truth of the message of the Prophet (peace be upon him). (Please refer to E.N. 15). If taken in the second sense, it is meant to warn man that he should not forget the insignificant origin of his existence while engaged in his

rebellious arguments against his Creator. If he remembered the different stages of his humiliating birth and growth, he would consider many times before he assumed a haughty and rebellious attitude towards his Creator.

5. And the cattle, He has created them, for you, in them there is warmth (clothing), and (other) benefits, and from them you eat.

وَالْأَنْعَمَ خَلَقَهَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا  
دِفْءٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ



6. And for you in them is beauty, when you bring them (home in the evening), and when you take them out (to pasture).

وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ حِينَ  
تُرْتَحُونَ وَحِينَ تَسْرَحُونَ



7. And they carry your loads to a land you could not reach except with great difficulty to yourselves. Truly, your Lord is indeed Kind, Most Merciful.

وَتَحْمِلُ أَثْقَالَكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ لَّمْ  
تَكُونُوا بَلِغِيهِ إِلَّا بِشِقِّ الْأَنْفُسِ  
إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ



8. And (He created) horses and mules and donkeys that you may ride them, and as adornment. And He creates that which you have no knowledge.\*8

وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْبِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ  
لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً وَتَخْلُقُ مَا لَا  
تَعْلَمُونَ



\*8 That is, there are many agencies which are working for



the good of man but he is quite unaware of such servants and the services rendered by them.

9. And upon Allah is the straight path. And among them (side ways) are those deviating.\*9 And if He had willed, He could have guided you, all together.\*10

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا  
جَائِرٌ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَيْنَاكُمْ  
أَجْمَعِينَ



\*9 This contains an argument for Prophethood along with a proof of Tauhid and of Allah's compassion and providence.

The argument is this:

There are many divergent ways of thought and action open for man to choose from. Obviously all these divergent ways cannot be straight ways, because there can be only one straight way; therefore, there can be only one right theory of life which is based on that way, and only one right way of life which is based on that right theory. Thus it is clear that the choice of the right way of life is man's most important and basic need, for its wrong choice would inevitably lead to his ruin. This is because all other things fulfill his animal needs only, but this is the greatest necessity of his life as a human being and without its fulfillment his life would be an utter failure.

Now, it cannot be expected that Allah Who made so many provisions, and on such a large scale, for the fulfillment of the animal life of man, did not make any arrangement for the fulfillment of this real and greatest necessity of man. Just as He has provided for all the necessities of his life, so He has also provided for this greatest need of his through

Prophethood. If Prophethood is denied then it should be pointed out in what way Allah has fulfilled this basic need of man. Experience of centuries has shown that mankind has always blundered whenever it has chosen a way of life by itself. This is because man's wisdom and intelligence are limited, and he cannot depend on these for the choice of the right way of life. Above all, one cannot say that Allah has made no arrangement for this basic need of man, for this will be the greatest misconception of Allah that He may make most elaborate arrangements for man's animal life but should leave him in the lurch to search out a way for himself for the fulfillment of this most important and basic need.

\*10 Here a question arises: Why didn't Allah will to guide all the people aright inherently when He had taken upon Himself to show the right way? It is true that Allah could have imbued man, like other creatures, with the inborn instinct and enabled him to choose the right way without conscious thought, experience or teaching. But this would have been against His will which was to create a being, having will and power and freedom to follow the right way or the wrong way, whichever he chose for himself. This is why he has been endowed with different means of knowledge and power of conscious thought, deliberation and will, and has been empowered with the authority to make use of all powers in him and all things around him. Moreover, He has placed in him and all around him such factors as might lead him to guidance or deviation. All these things would have become meaningless, had he been

created righteous by birth, and he could never have attained the heights of progress, which can be achieved only by the right use of freedom. That is why Allah has chosen Prophethood for man's guidance, and left him free to follow or reject a Prophet. This is a test by means of which Allah judges whether man accepts the guidance that is presented to him in a rational way.

**10.** He it is who sends down water from the sky, from it is drink for you, and from it (grows) foliage on which you pasture (your cattle).

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ  
مَاءً لَكُمْ مِنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ  
فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

**11.** He causes to grow for you with it (water) the crops, and the olives, and the date palms, and the grapevines, and of all kinds of fruits. Indeed, in that is a sure sign for a people who reflect.

يُنْبِتُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ  
وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ  
وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ  
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ  
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١١﴾

**12.** And He has subjected for you the night, and the day, and the sun, and the moon. And the stars are made subservient by His command. Indeed, in that are sure

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ  
وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ  
مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ فِي

signs for a people who understand.

ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ



**13.** And that which He has scattered for you on the earth of diverse colors. Indeed, in that is a sure sign for a people who remember.

وَمَا ذَرَأًا لَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ  
لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ



**14.** And He it is who has subjected the sea that you may eat from it tender meat, and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear. And you see the ships plowing through it, and that you may seek of His bounty,<sup>\*11</sup> and that you may be grateful.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ  
لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا  
وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً  
تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ  
مَوَاجِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ  
فَضْلِهِ وَلِعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ



**\*11** That is, try to get your sustenance in lawful ways.

**15.** And He has placed on the earth firm mountains lest it should shake with you,<sup>\*12</sup> and streams and

وَأَلْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ  
تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَارًا وَسُبُلًا



roads<sup>\*13</sup> that you may be guided.

لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

**\*12** This shows that the real function of mountains is to regulate the motion and speed of the earth. We have come to this conclusion, for the Quran has made this benefit of mountains very prominent in many places. Therefore, their other benefits should be regarded as incidental.

**\*13** Natural ways are those routes which are formed along the banks of streams, ravines and rivers. Though the importance of these ways is great even in the plains, one feels their sore need, especially in the mountainous regions.

**16.** And landmarks,<sup>\*14</sup> and by the stars they are guided.<sup>\*15</sup>

وَعَلَّمَتِ<sup>ج</sup> وَبِالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ



**\*14** This is a sign of Allah that He has broken the monotony of land by placing conspicuous landmarks on it to distinguish different regions from one another. These have many benefits and one of these is to help guide travelers and navigators to their destinations. One also realizes the importance and value of these landmarks, when one is traveling through a sandy desert where there are hardly any objects to guide on the way, and one is liable to lose the way any time. One feels the lack of landmarks much more in the sea voyage. It is in the deserts and the seas that people realize the true significance of stars by which they are directed aright to their destinations.

This verse contains arguments for Tauhid. Providence, and Compassion of Allah, and also a proof of Prophethood. For

the mind is instinctively turned towards this question: Can it be possible that Allah who has made so elaborate arrangements for man's guidance to fulfill his physical needs has neglected to provide for his moral and spiritual needs? It cannot be so, for it is obvious that even the greatest loss of some physical necessity due to the adoption of a wrong way is nothing as compared with the loss of spiritual and moral values due to deviation from the right way. It would be nothing less than having doubt in Allah's Compassion and Providence to think that He, Who had made so elaborate provision for man's guidance on land and sea by creating mountains, rivers, stars and other objects, would have neglected to make provision for his moral and spiritual guidance. And it stands to reason that He must have provided prominent beacons of light to guide man to that right way of life which is indispensable to his true success.

\*15 In Ayats 4-16, some signs have been mentioned in succession in order to focus people's attention on the creation of man himself and of the earth and the heavens. They will thus find that everything supports the truth of the doctrines taught by the Prophet (peace be upon him). A critical study of all these signs shows that these must have been designed and created by an All-Wise Being, and One Being alone, and there could not have been any partner or associate to help Him. Let us consider this theme from the point of view of man, the central figure in the creation. This wonderful being, who is able to speak with his tongue and is capable of arguing his case with it, has been created from

an insignificant sperm drop. Then many animals have been created to satisfy the necessities of his life. They provide food, clothing and conveyance for him and help satisfy his aesthetic taste as well. Then there is a remarkable system of rain water from the sky to produce crops, fruits and verdure, etc. on the earth to fulfill man's needs. Then there is the creation of regular days and nights and seasons, which are closely connected with all kinds of production of the earth, and also with man's general well being. Then there are oceans, which help fulfill many of his physical and aesthetic demands and provide water ways for traffic. Likewise, mountains have been created to provide man with many benefits. Then there are landmarks on the earth and stars in the heavens to guide travelers and navigators to the destinations. In short, there are innumerable signs in the earth and the heavens which are closely interconnected and are also indispensable to man's welfare, nay, to his very existence. All these are clear proofs that only One Being has designed the entire universe and created it in accordance with that design. It is He Who is all the time creating new things to fit in that scheme, and working this wonderful universe that spreads from the earth to boundless heavens. Who can then claim, except a foolish or obdurate person, that all this has come into existence by a mere accident? Or, who can say that these different aspects, which are working under a perfect system and are intimately connected with one another and are well balanced, have been created by different gods and are under the control of different guardians?

17. Is He then who creates like him who does not create.\*<sup>16</sup> Will you then not be reminded.

أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ



\*<sup>16</sup> That is, if you, people of Makkah, acknowledge (and they acknowledged this just as other mushriks did) that Allah alone is the Creator of all of you and everything, and no one of the partners, you have set up with Him, has created anything in the universe. How is it, then, that you ascribe from among the creation, a status equal to or like that of the Creator in the system of universe created by Him? How can it be possible that the power and the rights of the creation should be equal to the power and the rights of the Creator in the universe created by Himself? How can it be believed that the Creator and the creation possess the same qualities and characteristics, or can have such relationship as of father and son?

18. And if you should count the favors of Allah, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving, Compassionate.\*<sup>17</sup>

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ



\*<sup>17</sup> Here the connection of Allah's attributes, "Forgiving and Compassionate", with the preceding verse is so obvious that it has been left unmentioned. It is this: Though Allah goes on showering countless blessings upon people, they behave in an ungrateful, faithless and rebellious manner towards Him. He does not punish them immediately, but



gives them respite, for He is Forgiving and Compassionate. This is true of both individuals and communities. There are people, who deny even the existence of God, yet He goes on bestowing His favors on them for years. There are others who set up partners with Him in his attributes, power and rights, and show their gratitude to others than Him for His blessings, yet He does not withhold His favors from them. There are still others who profess to acknowledge Him as their Creator and Benefactor, yet rebel against Him and are disobedient to Him and consider freedom from Him to be their birth right, but in spite of all this He continues to shower His countless blessings on them as long as they live.

**19.** And Allah knows what you conceal and what you proclaim.\*18

وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُسْرُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ



\*18 A grave misunderstanding might arise as to why Allah's blessings should continue to be showered even on those who deny Him and set up partners with Him and are disobedient to Him. The foolish people are liable to conclude from this that He does not withhold His favors from such people because He has no knowledge of their wicked deeds, The Quran declares: Even though He has full knowledge of all the deeds of the people, whether these are done secretly or openly, He does not discontinue His blessings on the sinners, for He is Forgiving, Compassionate and Merciful. Therefore: O people, get rid of this misunderstanding and reform yourselves.

20. And those whom they call upon other than Allah, they have not created anything, and they (themselves) are created.

وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ  
لَا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ  
يُخْلَقُونَ

21. (They are) dead, not living. And they do not perceive when they will be raised.\*19

أَمْوَاتٌ غَيْرُ أَحْيَاءٍ وَمَا  
يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ

\*19 The words employed here to refute man made deities clearly indicate that these deities were deceased prophets, saints, martyrs and pious and other extraordinary beings buried in their graves and not angels, jinns, devils or idols. For the angels and devils are alive: therefore, the words, “They are dead, not living” cannot apply to them, and it is out of the question to say about idols of stone or wood that “They do not know at all when they shall again be raised to life” in the Hereafter. As regards the objection to this version that there were no such deities in Arabia, this is based on the lack of knowledge of the history of the pre-Islamic period. It is well known that there was a large number of Jews and Christians living among many clans of Arabia, who used to invoke and worship their Prophets, saints, etc. It is also a fact that many gods of the mushriks of Arabia were human beings, whose idols they had set up for worship after their death. According to a tradition cited in Bukhari on the authority of Ibn Abbas: “Wadd, Sua, Yaghuth, Yauq, and Nasr were pious human beings, whom

the succeeding generations had made gods.” In another tradition, related by Aishah: “Asaf and Nailah were human beings.” There are also traditions to the same effect about Lat, Munat and Uzza. So much so that according to some traditions of the mushriks, Lat and Uzza were the beloved ones of Allah who used to pass His winter with Lat and summer with Uzza. But Allah is absolutely free from such absurd things they attribute to Him.

**22.** Your god is One God. Then those who do not believe in the Hereafter, their hearts refuse (to know), and they are arrogant.\*20

إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ فَالَّذِينَ  
لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ  
مُنْكَرَةٌ وَهُمْ مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ

\*20 That is, those who do not believe in the life in the Hereafter, have become so irresponsible, carefree and intoxicated with the life of this world, that they feel no hesitation or pang in denying any reality, and they put no value on or attach no worth to truth. That is why, they are not prepared to impose any moral restraint on themselves and feel no need to investigate as to whether the way, they are following is right or wrong.

**23.** Undoubtedly, that Allah knows what they conceal and what they proclaim. Indeed, He does not love the arrogant.

لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا  
يُسْرُونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ إِنَّهُ  
لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ

24. And <sup>\*21</sup> when it is said to them: “What is it that your Lord has sent down.” They say: “Legends of the former people.”<sup>\*22</sup>

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ مَآذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ  
قَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

**\*21** In the preceding Ayat 23 those arrogant people who were rejecting the message were warned that Allah has full knowledge of all their deeds. Now from Ayat 24 the Quran takes up those deeds one by one and deals with the arguments they presented against the Messenger (peace be upon him), the objections they raised and the lame excuses they invented for their rejection, and reproaches and admonishes them.

**\*22** One of their cunning devices was to create doubts about the Quran. Whenever outsiders came to visit Makkah, they would naturally make inquiries about the Quran, which the Prophet (peace be upon him) declared, was being sent down to him by Allah. The disbelievers would answer that it contained merely fairy tales of the ancients. They would say such things in order to create doubts in the minds of the inquirers so that they should not take any interest in the message of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

25. That they may bear their burdens (of their sins) in full on the Day of Resurrection, and of the burdens of those whom they mislead without knowledge.

لِيَحْمِلُوا أَوْزَارَهُمْ كَامِلَةً يَوْمَ  
الْقِيَامَةِ وَمِنْ أَوْزَارِ الَّذِينَ  
يُضِلُّونَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا سَاءَ مَا



Behold, evil is that which they bear.

يَزْرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

**26.** Certainly, those before them plotted, so Allah came at their building from the foundations, then the roof fell upon them from above them, and the punishment came to them from where they did not perceive.

قَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ  
فَأَتَى اللَّهُ بُنْيَانَهُمْ مِنَ  
الْقَوَاعِدِ فَخَرَّ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّقْفُ  
مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَأَتَتْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ  
حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

**27.** Then on the Day of Resurrection, He will disgrace them and will say: “Where are My those (so called) partners, you used to oppose (guidance) for whose sake.”\*<sup>23</sup> Those who were given knowledge will say: “Indeed, disgrace, this day, and evil are upon the disbelievers.”

ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُخْزِيهِمْ وَيَقُولُ  
أَيْنَ شُرَكَآئِيَ الَّذِينَ كُنْتُمْ  
تُشَاقِقُونَ فِيهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ  
أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ إِنَّ الْخِزْيَ الْيَوْمَ  
وَالسُّوْءَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

**\*23** There is a gap between this answer and the preceding question which has been left for the reader to fill. When Allah will ask: Now where are My partners, there will be dead silence in the plain where the entire mankind shall have to gather on the occasion of Resurrection. The disbelievers and the mushriks will be dumb founded for they will be at a loss to find an answer to this. Then those

who had been given knowledge will make the assertion, “Indeed, disgrace, this day, and evil are upon the disbelievers.”

**28.** Those <sup>\*24</sup> whom the angels take in death, (while) they are doing wrong to themselves. Then, they will make full submission (saying): <sup>\*25</sup> “We were not doing any evil.” Yes, indeed, Allah is Knower of what you used to do.

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ  
ظَالِمِينَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ فَأَلْقَوْا السَّلَامَ  
مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ مِنْ سُوءٍ بَلَىٰ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ



**\*24** This is Allah’s addition to the previous assertion, and not its continuation. Those commentators, who have wrongly considered this as continuation of the preceding sentence, are unable to offer any satisfactory explanation for their opinion.

**\*25** That is, when the angels take possession of their souls at the time of death.

**29.** So enter the gates of Hell, to abide forever therein. <sup>\*26</sup> Then evil indeed is the lodging of the arrogant.

فَادْخُلُوا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ  
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا فَلَبِئْسَ مَثْوَىٰ  
الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ



**\*26** The Ayats 28 and 32, and several other verses in the Quran, clearly and definitely assert that immediately after death, souls suffer torment or enjoy peace in the world of

**Barzakh.** The traditions use the word *qabar* (grave) metaphorically for this existence of the souls. This is the world in which souls enter immediately after death and will remain therein up to the Day of Resurrection. Yet the disbelievers of the traditions declare that after death souls will remain in a dormant state up to the time of Resurrection, and will neither feel any pain nor joy, nor will be conscious of anything at all. Obviously, this is a wrong opinion. For, according to Ayat 28, just after death when the disbelievers will be conscious of the fact that they had been leading an evil life, they will try to make the angels believe that they had not done any evil deed. The angels will rebuke them at this boldness and will tell them that they shall have to go into Hell. On the other hand, according to verse 32, just after their death, the pious believers are welcomed by the angels and given the good news that they will enter into Paradise. Besides these verses, there is the mention of a dialogue between the angels and those Muslims, who did not migrate to Al-Madinah, after their souls were seized by the angels in Surah An-Nisa, Ayat 97. Above all, according to Surah Al-momin, Ayats 45-46, the people of Pharaoh have been encircled by a torment and are exposed before the fire of Hell every morning and every evening. This will go on till the Day of Resurrection when they shall be sentenced to eternal torment.

In fact, both the Quran and the traditions present the same kind of picture of the condition of the soul after death till Resurrection. Death causes merely the separation of the

soul from the body but does not annihilate it. The soul lives with the same personality that was formed by the different experiences and the mental exercises and moral activities it had in its worldly life in cooperation with the body. This nature of the consciousness, feelings, observations and experiences of the soul, during the waiting period, is similar to that in a dream. Just as a criminal sentenced to death suffers from mental torture on the eve of his crucifixion, in the same way the angels take to task the guilty as in a dream, torture it and take it to the horrible Hell in order to make it foretaste the impending torture. In contrast to this, the pure soul is welcomed by the angels and is given the good news of entry into paradise and is made to enjoy its pleasant breeze and smell, and to feel happy like the faithful servant who is invited to the headquarters to receive his reward. But this life in the world of *Barzakh* will suddenly come to an end on the second blowing of the Trumpet of Resurrection. When the guilty souls will again enter into their former bodies and muster in the Plain, they will cry in horror: Oh! woe to us! Who has roused us from our sleeping places? But the true believers will say with perfect peace of mind: This is exactly what the Beneficent had promised, and the Messengers had told the truth. (Surah Yaseen, Ayat 52).

As the guilty ones will be under the delusion that they had been lying in their death bed for an hour or so and had been roused from sleep. Those who were given knowledge and faith will say: According to the Record of Allah, you have remained after death till this Day of Resurrection and



this is the same Day of Resurrection, but you did not know this. (Surah Ar-Room, Ayats 55-56).

**30.** And (when) it is said to those who fear (Allah): “What is it that your Lord has sent down.” They say: “Good.”\*<sup>27</sup> For those who do good in this world there is a good (reward), and the home of the Hereafter is better. And excellent indeed is the abode of the righteous.

﴿ وَقِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا مَاذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ ۗ قَالُوا خَيْرًا ۗ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ ۗ وَلَدَارُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ وَلَنِعَمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

\*<sup>27</sup> In contrast to the disbelievers (Ayat 24), the righteous people spoke highly of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and of the teachings of the Quran to the people coming from the suburbs of Makkah. Unlike the former they did not delude the people nor created misunderstandings in the minds. They were full of praise for them and told the truth about the Prophet (peace be upon him).

**31.** Gardens of Eden which they will enter, beneath which rivers flow, they will have therein whatever they wish.\*<sup>28</sup> Thus does Allah reward the righteous.

﴿ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۗ لَهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَاءُونَ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يَجْزِي اللَّهُ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

\*<sup>28</sup> This is the best blessing of Paradise. The dweller will get there whatever he will desire and wish and there will be

nothing at all to offend him. This is the blessing that has never been attained even by the richest and the most powerful people in this world. On the contrary, every dweller of Paradise will enjoy this blessing to his fill because he will always have everything to his desire and liking, and will have each and every wish and desire fulfilled.

**32.** Those whom the angels take in death, (while) in a state of purity. They say: "Peace be upon you. Enter the Garden because of what you used to do."

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ  
يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ  
أَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ  
تَعْمَلُونَ

**33.** Do they (the disbelievers) await except that the angels should come to them, or your Lord's command should come to pass. \*29 Thus did those before them. And Allah wronged them not, but they used to wrong themselves.

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ  
الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ أَمْرٌ رَبِّكَ  
كَذَلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ  
وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا  
أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

\*29 This is to admonish the unbelievers to this effect: Why are they still hesitating to accept the message which is very simple and clear? We have tried every method to present each aspect of the truth clearly with arguments and brought witnesses thereof from the whole system of the

universe, and have left no room for any man of understanding to stick to shirk. Now what are they waiting for is nothing more than this that the angel of death should come before them and then they will accept the message at the last moment of their lives. Or, do they wait for the scourge of God to overtake them and make them accept the Message?

**34.** So that the evils, of what they did, overtook them, and surrounded them that which they used to ridicule.

فَأَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّئَاتُ مَا عَمِلُوا  
وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ  
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

**35.** And those who associate (others with Allah) say: “If Allah had willed, we would not have worshipped other than Him any thing. (Neither) we, nor our fathers. Nor would we have forbidden without His (command) any thing.”<sup>\*30</sup> Thus did those before them. So is there (anything) upon the messengers except clear conveyance.<sup>\*31</sup>

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ  
اللَّهُ مَا عَبَدْنَا مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ  
شَيْءٍ نَحْنُ وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا وَلَا  
حَرَمْنَا مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ  
كَذَلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ  
قَبْلِهِمْ فَهَلْ عَلَى الرُّسُلِ إِلَّا  
الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٣٥﴾

**\*30** In order to understand the significance of this argument the reader should keep in view Ayats 148-150

and E.N.s 124-126 of Surah Al-Anaam, for this has been cited and answered there.

**\*31** That is, your argument is not a new one but the same old one which had always been offered by erroneous people who went before you. Today you are, like them, excusing yourselves for your deviation and evil conduct, saying that it is the will of God. You know that this is a lame excuse that has been invented to delude yourselves, and to escape from admonition.

This answer also contains a subtle retort to the objection of the disbelievers that the Quran consisted merely of old stories of the ancients (Ayat 24). They meant to imply that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had nothing new to offer. So he was repeating the same old stories that had been repeated over and over again since the time of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him). The retort is this: If the Prophet (peace be upon him) was not presenting anything new but was reciting the old stories of the ancients, you yourselves are not putting forward any new excuse in defense of your evil deeds, but the same old excuse that was put forward by the people who went before you.

**36.** And certainly, We raised in every nation a messenger, (saying) that: “Worship Allah and avoid the Evil One.”<sup>\*32</sup> Then among them were those whom Allah guided, and among them were those

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنْ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَأَجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ حَقَّتْ



upon whom the straying was justified.\*<sup>33</sup> So travel in the land, then see how was the end of those who denied.\*<sup>34</sup>

عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي  
الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ  
عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ



\***32** That is, you are not justified in excusing yourselves for these sins, saying that it is the will of God for We sent Messengers to every *ummat*, who told the people in plain words that they should worship Us and none else, and should not follow and obey *taghut*. Besides this, We have already warned you that We do not approve of your deviations. Why should you then put forward this excuse for your deviations? Do you mean to say that We ought to have sent such Messengers as would have forced you to follow the right way instead of bringing you to it by preaching? (Please refer to E.N. 80 of Surah Al-Anaam for the distinction between God's will and God's approval).

\***33** That is, Whenever a Messenger came to a people, they were divided into two groups.

(1) Those who accepted the message (and that, too, could not have been possible except with the will of Allah).

(2) Those who rejected it and stuck to their deviation (For explanation see E.N. 28 of Surah Al-Anaam).

\***34** That is, you can see for yourselves the lesson of human history. It is this that the people, who rejected the message, incurred the scourge of Allah like Pharaoh and the people of Pharaoh, while Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) received the blessings of Allah.

**37.** (Even) if you (Muhammad) are eager for their guidance, still Allah assuredly does not guide those whom He sends astray. And for them there are not any helpers.

إِنْ تَحْرَصْ عَلَىٰ هُدْيِهِمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ يُضِلُّ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

**38.** And they swear by Allah their most binding oaths (that) Allah will not resurrect him who dies. Yes, it is a promise (binding) upon Him in truth, but most of mankind do not know.

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَمُوتُ بَلَىٰ وَعَدًّا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

**39.** That He may make clear to them that wherein they differ, and that those who disbelieved may know that indeed they were liars.\*35

لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَذِبِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

**\*35** In Ayat 39 those two things have been stated which rationally and morally require that there must be Resurrection and life after death, that is:

- (1) To reveal what the reality was, and
- (2) To reward or punish people in accordance with the right or wrong stand they took about it in this world. It is common knowledge that since the creation of man on the earth there have been many differences regarding the

reality which have been sowing dissension between families, nations and races. These have also led to the formation of many different societies, cultures and creeds on different theories. In every age millions of the torch bearers of each of these theories have been putting at stake all their life, property and honor to propagate and defend their favorite theory. Nay, there has always been such a bitter conflict between them that each group tried to annihilate the other, who, in his turn, stuck to it to the last. This being the case, common sense demands that such far reaching and serious differences should be cleared some time or other, so as to decide with certainty what was right and what was wrong, who was in the right and who was in the wrong. Obviously, it is not possible to lift the curtain from the reality in this world so as to reveal things in their true perspective. This is because the system on which this world has been created does not allow this. Therefore, there should be another world to fulfill this demand of common sense.

This is not the demand of common sense alone but also of the moral sense, which requires that the partners in this conflict should be rewarded or punished according to right or wrong, just or unjust part they played in it. For, some of these committed cruelties on the others, who had to make sacrifices for their cause. Then each one should also bear the responsibility for formulating and practicing a moral or immoral philosophy which influenced millions and billions of others for better or worse. Moral sense demands that there should be a time for the moral consequences to take their due course. As this is not possible in this world there

should be another world for the purpose.

40. Indeed, Our word unto a thing, when We intend it, is only that We say unto it: "Be" And it is.<sup>\*36</sup>

إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَنْ  
نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٤٠﴾

**\*36** This is the answer to those who imagined that it was the most difficult thing to raise the dead, and that, too, to raise together at once all the people who had died at any time. They have been told that it is an easy thing for Allah, Who has the power to bring into existence anything He desires, merely by His command, "Be," for He does not stand in need of any provisions, any means and any favorable environment for this. His mere command produces necessary provisions, means and environment. This world was brought into existence by His mere command, "Be," and likewise the next world will at once come into existence by His single command.

41. And those who emigrated for (the cause of) Allah after what they had been wronged, We will surely settle them in this world in a good (place). And surely the reward of the Hereafter is greater, if (only) they could know.<sup>\*37</sup>

وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ  
مَا ظَلَمُوا لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا  
حَسَنَةً ۗ وَلَا جُرْأَلَاءُ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ  
كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

**\*37** This is to comfort the Muslim emigrants from Makkah to Habash, who were forced to leave their homes because of the unbearable persecution they suffered at the hands of



the disbelievers. The change of the scene from the disbelievers to the emigrants to Habash contains a subtle warning to the disbelievers that they should not remain under any delusion that they would get off free from punishment for their cruel behavior towards those Muslims, so as to say: O cruel people! There shall be Resurrection to reward the oppressed believers and to punish you for your persecution of them.

42. Those who remain steadfast, and put their trust in their Lord.

الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ  
يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43. And We did not send (as Our messengers) before you except men to whom We inspired.<sup>\*38</sup> So ask those who possess knowledge if you do not know.<sup>\*39</sup>

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا  
رِجَالًا نُّوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ  
الذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

\*38 This is the answer to the objection of the mushriks of Makkah (which has not been cited here) that they could not believe that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a Prophet of God because he was a human being like them. They have been told that the same objection had been raised against all the Prophets who came before him.

\*39 “Those who possess knowledge” are the scholars of the people of the Books and others, who, though not scholars in the strict sense had sufficient knowledge of the teachings of the revealed Books and were acquainted with the stories of the former Prophets.

44. With clear proofs and Books. And We have sent down unto you (O Muhammad) the reminder (the Quran) that you may make clear to mankind what is sent down to them,<sup>\*40</sup> and that they might reflect.

بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ  
الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ  
إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

**\*40** In this connection, it is worthwhile to note that this duty of making plain and explaining the teachings of the Book was to be performed by Prophet not only by word of mouth but also practically. It was required that he should organize, under his own guidance, a Muslim community and establish it in accordance with the principles of the Book. This duty of the Prophet (peace be upon him) has been stated here especially to show the wisdom of sending a man as a Messenger, for, otherwise the Book could have been sent through the angels or could have been printed and sent directly to each man. But in this way; that purpose for which Allah in His Wisdom and Bounty and Providence designed to send the Book could not have been served. For, that purpose demanded that the Book should be brought by a perfect man, who should present it piece by piece, explain its meaning, remove the difficulties and doubts, answer objections etc. and above all, he should show towards those who rejected and opposed it that kind of attitude which is worthy of the bearer of this Book. On the other hand, he should guide those who believed in it in every aspect of life and set before them his own excellent pattern of life. Then

he should train them individually and collectively on the principles of the Book; so as to make them a model society for the rest of mankind.

Let us now consider this verse (43) from another point of view. Just as it cuts at the root of the argumentation of those who rejected the creed that a human Prophet could bring the Book, in the same way, it repudiates the view of those who plead that the Book should be accepted without any exposition of it from the Prophet. This latter view is contradictory to this verse, whatever be the position taken by its exponents. They might either be of the opinion that (a) the Prophet did not give any explanation of the Book he presented or that (b) the only acceptable thing is the Book and not any exposition thereof by the Prophet, or that (c) now the Book alone suffices us, for its exposition by the Prophet has lost its utility or that (d) now the Book alone is authentic for the exposition by the Prophet has ceased to exist, or if it does exist, it cannot be relied upon.

If they take the position (a), it will mean that the Prophet did not fulfill the purpose for which he was chosen to be the bearer of the Book: otherwise Allah could send it through an angel or directly to each person.

If they take the position (b) or (c), (God forbid) they will be accusing Allah of doing a useless thing by sending His Book through a Prophet, when He could have printed copies of the Quran and sent those directly to the people.

In case, they take the position (d), they, in fact, repudiate both the Quran and its exposition by the Prophet (peace be upon him). Then the only rational course left for them

would be to accept the view of those who believe in the necessity of a new Prophet and a new revelation; whereas Allah Himself considers the exposition of the Book by the Prophet as an essential thing, and puts it forward as an argument for the necessity of a Prophet. Now if the view of those who reject tradition that the explanation of the Prophet (peace be upon him) has disappeared from the world is to be accepted, then two conclusions are inevitable; First, the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a pattern for us has ceased to exist, and the only relation we have with him is the same that we have with the other former Prophets, e.g. Houd, Salih, Shuaib, etc. (peace be upon them). That is, we have only to testify that they were Prophets but we have no obligation to follow their patterns, for we have none with us. This position obviously leads to the need of a new Prophet, for it automatically refutes the doctrine of the finality of Prophethood. The second inevitable conclusion will be that a new Book is needed because in that case the Quran alone could not, according to its author, suffice. Thus in the face of this verse, there is no argument left to prove that the Quran is self sufficient to explain itself, for it itself says that there is no need of a Prophet to explain it. Thus it is absolutely necessary that a new Book must be sent down. May Allah destroy such people. In their enthusiasm to repudiate tradition, they are really cutting at the very root of Islam itself.

45. Then, do those who plot evil deeds feel secure that Allah will (not) cause

أَفَأَمِنَ الَّذِينَ مَكَرُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ أَنْ  
تَحْسِفَ اللَّهُ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ أَوْ



the earth to swallow them, or the punishment will (not) come upon them from where they do not perceive.

يَأْتِيَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46. Or that He would (not) seize them in the midst of their going to and fro, so there can be no escape for them.

أَوْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ فِي تَقْلِبِهِمْ فَمَا هُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47. Or that He would (not) seize them with a gradual wasting (of life and wealth). But indeed, your Lord is Kind, Merciful.

أَوْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ عَلَى تَخَوُّفٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٤٧﴾

48. And have they not seen at what Allah has created among things, (how) their shadows incline to the right and (to) the left, making prostration to Allah,<sup>\*41</sup> and they are in utter submission.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ يَتَفَيَّؤُا ظِلَّهٗ عَنِ الِّيمِينِ وَالشَّمَايِلِ سُجَّدًا لِلَّهِ وَهُمْ دَاخِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

**\*41** The argument is this: The fact that everything a man, an animal, a tree or a mountain casts its shadow, is a clear proof of its material nature, and everything which is made of matter, is a creation of Allah and is subject to a universal law. In this case the law is that every material thing casts its shadow, which is symbolical of its servitude, and it cannot have any share whatsoever in Godhead.

49. And to Allah makes prostration whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth, of living creatures, and the angels,\*42 and they are not arrogant.

وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ  
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ



\*42 That is, not only all things on the earth alone but also all things in the heavens, including all those whom people have been regarding as gods and goddesses, and considering to be closely related to Allah are subservient to God, and have no share whatsoever in His Godhead. Incidentally, it implies the existence of living creatures not only on the earth but in the planets, too.

50. They fear their Lord from above them, and they do what they are commanded.

يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ  
وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

*AsSajda*

51. And Allah said: “Do not take for yourselves two gods.\*43 He (Allah) is only One God. So you fear only Me.”

❖ وَقَالَ اللَّهُ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا إِلَهَيْنِ  
أَتْنَيْنِ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ  
فَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونَ

\*43 Negation of two gods by itself negates the existence of more than two gods.

52. And to Him belongs what is in the heavens and

وَلَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

the earth, and religion is His for ever.\*44 Will you then fear other than Allah.\*45

وَلَهُ الدِّينُ وَاصِبًا أَفَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَتَّقُونَ

\*44 In other words it means that the entire system of the universe exists on its obedience to Him.

\*45 That is, when it is so, will you then make the fear of any other than God the basis of the system of your life?

53. And whatever of blessings you have, it is from Allah. Then, when harm touches you, so unto Him you cry for help.\*46

وَمَا بِكُمْ مِّنْ نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْرُونَ

\*46 That is, the fact, that you run to Allah for help in your distress and not to anyone else, is a clear proof of the Oneness of Allah, which has been embedded in your own hearts. At the time of your affliction, your true nature, which had been suppressed by the gods you had forged, involuntarily comes to the surface and invokes Allah, for it knows no other god or lord or master, having any real power. (For further details please refer to E.Ns 29 and 41 of Surah Al-Anaam).

54. Then, when He removed the harm from you, behold, a group among you attribute partners with their Lord.\*47

ثُمَّ إِذَا كُشِفَ الضُّرُّ عَنْكُمْ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْكُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ

\*47 That is, at the time of showing gratitude to Allah for removing his affliction, he begins to make offerings also to

some god, goddess or saint to show that Allah's kindness to him was due to the intercession of his patron, for he imagines that otherwise Allah would not have removed his distress.

**55.** So they deny that which We have bestowed on them. So enjoy yourselves for a while, then soon you will know.

لِيَكْفُرُوا بِمَا آتَيْنَهُمْ<sup>ج</sup> فَتَمَتَّعُوا  
فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ<sup>ل</sup>

**56.** And they assign, to what they do not know (false deities), a portion of that which We have provided them.<sup>\*48</sup> By Allah,<sup>\*49</sup> you will indeed be asked about what you used to invent.

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ نَصِيبًا  
مِّمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ<sup>ك</sup> تَاللَّهِ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ  
عَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَفْتُرُونَ<sup>ه</sup>

**\*48** They assign shares to those patrons about whom they have no authentic knowledge that God has made them His partners and allotted some duties of Godhead to them and made them governors of some territories in His Kingdom.

**\*49** That is, they set apart a portion of their incomes and land products to make offerings of this to their patron.

**57.** And they assign daughters for Allah.<sup>\*50</sup> Be He glorified. And for themselves what they desire.<sup>\*51</sup>

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ الْبَنَاتِ سُبْحَانَهُ<sup>ي</sup>  
وَلَهُمْ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ<sup>و</sup>

**\*50** This refers to a tradition of the ancient Arabs. They regarded their goddesses and angels as daughters of God.

**\*51** That is, "sons."



**58.** And when news is brought to one of them (of the birth) of a female, his face becomes dark, and he is filled with grief.

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ  
وَجْهَهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

**59.** He hides himself from the people because of the evil of that which he has been informed. (Asking himself), shall he keep her with dishonor, or bury her in the ground. Certainly, evil is whatever they decide. <sup>\*52</sup>

يَتَوَارَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوءِ مَا  
بُشِّرَ بِهِ ۚ أَيُمْسِكُهُ عَلَىٰ  
هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ فِي التُّرَابِ ۗ  
أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

**\*52** This attitude of contempt towards daughters has been mentioned to bring home to them the height of their folly, ignorance and impudence in regard to God. This is why they did not hesitate to assign daughters to Allah, though they themselves felt that to have daughters was a matter of disgrace for them. Besides this, it shows that they had a very low estimation of Allah, which had resulted from their ways of shirk. So they felt nothing wrong in ascribing such foolish and absurd things to Allah Who is above such things.

**60.** For those who do not believe in the Hereafter is an evil similitude. And for Allah is the highest similitude. And He is the All Mighty, the All Wise.

لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ مَثَلُ  
السُّوءِ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَىٰ ۗ وَهُوَ  
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾

**61.** And if Allah were to seize mankind for their wrong doing, He would not leave on it (the earth) any living creature, but He reprieves them to an appointed term. Then when their term comes, neither can they delay an hour nor can they advance.

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِمْ  
مَا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَلَكِنْ  
يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَإِذَا  
جَاءَ أَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ  
سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

**62.** And they assign to Allah that which they dislike (for themselves), and their tongues assert the lie that the better things will be theirs. Assuredly that, theirs will be the Fire, and that they will be abandoned to it.

وَجَعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ مَا يَكْرَهُونَ  
وَتَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُهُمُ الْكَذِبَ  
أَنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ الْحُسْنَىٰ لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّ  
لَهُمُ النَّارَ وَأَنَّهُمْ مُّفْرَطُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

**63.** By Allah, We did indeed send (messengers) to the nations before you, but Satan made their deeds fair seeming to them. So he is their patron this day, and theirs will be a painful punishment.

تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِّنْ  
قَبْلِكَ فَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ  
أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَهُمْ  
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

**64.** And We have not sent down the Book (the Quran) to you except that you may

وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا  
لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ

make clear unto them that in which they differ, and (as) a guidance, and a mercy for a people who believe. <sup>\*53</sup>

وَهْدَىٰ وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ



**\*53** That is, this Book has afforded them an excellent opportunity to resolve their differences which have been caused by the superstitious creeds of their forefathers, and which have divided, them into warring factions. They can then unite on the permanent basis of the truth presented by the Quran, but those foolish people preferring their former condition even after the coming of this blessing, shall meet with disgrace and torment. On the other hand, only those, who believe in this Book, will find the right way and blessed with mercy and favors from Allah.

**65.** And Allah sends down from the sky water, then He revives therewith the earth after its death. Indeed, in this is a sure sign for a people who listen. <sup>53a</sup>

وَاللَّهُ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً  
فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا  
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ

يَسْمَعُونَ



**\*53a** That is, had you listened to the message of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and observed those signs carefully, you would have cried from the core of your heart. These signs support his message. Year after year you witness these signs. There is the land, all barren before you, without any sign of life, no blade of grass, no bud or flower, and no insect. Then comes rain. All of a sudden, the same land is covered with life. There crop upon numerous kinds

of insects of which no vestige had been left. You witness this process of life and death, and death and life, repeated year after year. Yet you doubt this when the Prophet (peace be upon him) tells you that Allah will again bring to life all human beings after their death. This is because you see these signs as animals do, who do not see the wisdom of the Creator underlying this phenomenon; otherwise you would have discovered that these signs support the message of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

**66.** And indeed, for you in the cattle there is a lesson. We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies, between excretions and the blood, pure milk,<sup>\*54</sup> palatable to the drinkers.

ط  
وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً  
نُسْقِيكُمْ مِمَّا فِي بُطُونِهِمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ  
فَرْثٍ وَدَمٍ لَبْنَا خَالِصًا سَائِغًا  
لِّلشَّارِبِينَ

**\*54** “Between excretions and the blood”. This refers to the most wonderful process of the formation of pure milk in the bellies of the cattle. For, the fodder they eat turns into blood, filth and pure milk, which is altogether different from the first two in its nature, color and usefulness. Some cattle produce milk in such abundance that after suckling their young ones a large quantity of it is left to make excellent human food.

**67.** And from the fruits of date palm and grapevines, you take intoxicants out of

وَمِنْ ثَمَرَاتِ النَّخِيلِ وَالْأَعْنَابِ  
تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْهُ سَكَرًا وَرِزْقًا



them, and a good provision.<sup>\*55</sup> Certainly, in that is a sure sign for a people who have wisdom.

حَسَنًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ  
يَعْقِلُونَ



**\*55** Incidentally it implies that the juice of the fruits of date palms and vines contains two things. One is that which is pure and wholesome food for man and the other is that which turns into alcohol after it becomes rotten. But it has been left to the choice of man to obtain pure healthy food from this providence or to drink it as intoxicant wine to excite him and make him lose his self control. This also contains a hint as to the prohibition of wine.

**68.** And your Lord inspired to the bee,<sup>\*56</sup> (saying) that: “Set up hives in the mountains, and in the trees, and in that which they erect (the trellises).”

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنْ  
اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ  
الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ



**\*56** The lexical meaning of the Arabic word *wahi* is secret inspiration which is felt only by the one who inspires and the other who is inspired with. The Quran has used this word both for the instinctive inspiration by Allah to His creation in general and for the revelation towards His Prophets in particular. Allah sends His *wahi* to the heavens with His command and they begin functioning in accordance with it (Surah Al-Momin, Ayat 12). He will send this to the earth with His command and it will relate the story of all that had happened on and in it. He sends *wahi* to the bee and inspires it with faculties to perform the

all of its wonderful work instinctively (Ayat 68). The same is true of the bird that learns to fly, the fish that learns to swim, the newly born child that learns to suck milk, etc. Then, it is also *wahi* with which Allah inspires a human being with a spontaneous idea (Surah Al-Qasas, Ayat 7). The same is the case with all the great discoveries, inventions, works of literature and art, etc. which would not have been possible without the benefit of *wahi*. As a matter of fact, every human being at one time or the other feels its mental or spiritual influence in the form of an idea or thought or plan or dream, which is confirmed by a subsequent experience to be the right guidance from the unseen *wahi*.

Then there is the *wahi* (revelation) which is the privilege of the Prophets. This form of *wahi* has its own special features and is quite distinct from all other forms. The Prophet, who is inspired with it, is fully conscious and has his firm conviction that it is being sent down from Allah. Such a revelation contains doctrines of creed, commandments, laws, regulations and instructions for the guidance of mankind.

69. “Then eat of all the fruits, and follow the ways of your Lord, made smooth (for you).”<sup>\*57</sup> There comes forth from their bellies a drink of varying colors, wherein is healing for mankind.<sup>\*58</sup> Certainly, in this is a sure

ثُمَّ كُلِي مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ  
فَأَسْلِكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلَالًا يَخْرُجُ  
مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ  
أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ إِنَّ فِي

sign for a people who give  
thought.\*59

ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّتَفَكَّرُوْنَ

\*57 “Follow the ways of your Lord” means work in accordance with the methods which have been taught to thee by Allah’s *wahi* for the smooth running of hive life. It is Allah’s *wahi* (instinctive inspiration) that has taught the bees how to build their wonderful factory with separate combs to rear brood, combs to turn nectar into honey, combs to store food, in short, separate combs to fulfill every aspect of hive life. It is *wahi* that has taught the bees how to organize themselves into a cooperative society for collective effort to run the factory with the queen and thousands of workers to perform a variety of specific tasks. All these things have been made so smooth for them by *wahi* that the bees never feel the necessity of ever thinking about it. They have been running smoothly their factory with their collective effort for thousands of years with perfect accuracy.

\*58 Though honey is a wholesome food with a sweet taste and has medicinal power as well, its latter quality has been mentioned only because the former is too obvious. It is used as a medicine to cure several diseases because it contains the juice and glucose of flowers and fruits in the best form. Besides this, it is also used in preparing and preserving other medicines because it does not rot. It also preserves other things from decay. That is why it has been used for centuries as a substitute for alcohol. And if the beehive is built at a place, which abounds in certain medicinal herbs, its honey does not remain mere honey, but becomes also the

essence of that herb. It is expected that if bees are used methodically for extracting essence from herbs, that essence will prove to be much better than the one obtained in the laboratories.

**\*59** This passage (Ayats 48-69) contains proofs of Tauhid and life after death. These were necessitated, for the disbelievers and the mushriks were bitterly opposed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) mainly because of these two doctrines. The acceptance of the first doctrine demolished the whole system of life based on shirk or atheism because to acknowledge Allah to be the sole Provider, the Helper and the Protector left no room for the worship of any god or goddess. The proof of Tauhid is based on the observance of the structure of the cattle, the bees, the date palms and vineyards and their usefulness to mankind. Naturally the question arises: Who has designed these in the manner and for the purpose they have been created? The only obvious answer is that it is the All-Wise and All-Beneficent Allah Who has designed all these things for the benefit of mankind to produce such varieties of food that are so wholesome and so tasty. The Prophet, therefore, rightly demanded: When you yourselves admit, and you cannot but admit, that it is Allah alone Who has provided milk, honey, dates, grapes and the like, He and none but He is worthy of your worship, praise, gratitude and allegiance. Why do you then insist on making offerings to your self-made gods and goddesses?

The second doctrine to which the disbelievers took strong objection was that there is surely the life after death. They



were against this doctrine for its acceptance changed the whole moral system and they were not prepared to change their immoral ways. Their objection was based on the presumption that it was impossible to bring to life anyone after death.

They have been asked to observe that the barren land, which once had been covered with vegetable life, was again covered with it after rainfall and they have been watching such repetition of life year after year. That Allah, Who could so easily bring to life the dead vegetable, could do the same and bring to life all the dead without any difficulty at all.

**70.** And Allah has created you, then He causes you to die,<sup>\*60</sup> and among you is he who is brought back to a feeble age, so that he will not know a thing after having known (much).<sup>\*61</sup> Indeed, Allah is All Knowing, All Powerful.

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَفَّاكُمْ  
وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْدَلِ الْعُمْرِ  
لَكِي لَا يَعْلَمَ بَعْدَ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا ۚ إِنَّ  
اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ



**\*60** It is to emphasize this: Allah not only provides you with the necessities and good things of life (as stated in the preceding verses), but also has full power over your life and death. None else has any power to give life or cause death.

**\*61** This fact has been mentioned to bring home to the disbelievers and the mushriks that knowledge, which gives superiority to man over all creatures on this earth, has been given by Allah, as if to say: You yourselves have seen that

when a man, who once possessed much knowledge, becomes very old, he is reduced to a mere lump of flesh. Then that man who once taught knowledge to others loses all his senses and cannot look even after his own self.

**71.** And Allah has preferred some of you above others in provision. Then, those who are preferred do not hand over their provision to those (slaves) whom their right hands possess, so they become equal (partners) in it. Is it then the bounty of Allah that they deny.\*62

وَاللَّهُ فَضَّلَ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ  
فِي الرِّزْقِ ۖ فَمَا الَّذِينَ فُضِّلُوا  
بِرَادِي رِزْقِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَا مَلَكَتْ  
أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيهِ سَوَاءٌ ۗ  
أَفَبِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ تَجْحَدُونَ

\*62 It will be worthwhile to give deep thought to the meanings of this verse, for some modern commentators of the Quran have founded strange economic theories and systems on it. Their interpretation is an instance of perverting the meaning of the Quran by isolating verses from their context and treating it as a separate whole in order to formulate a new philosophy and law of Islamic Economics. In their opinion the verse implies this: Those people to whom Allah has given more provisions than others, should share these equally with their servants and slaves: otherwise they shall be guilty of ingratitude to Allah in regard to the wealth with which He had blessed them. This commentary on the verse is obviously wrong and far-fetched because in the context it occurs there is no mention at all of any law of economics. The whole passage in which

this verse occurs deals with the refutation of shirk and proof of Tauhid. The same themes are continued in the subsequent verses. There seems to be no reason why an economic law should have been inserted here, which would have been absolutely irrelevant, to say the least. On the contrary, when the verse is considered in its context, it becomes quite obvious that it is no more than the statement of a fact to prove the same theme that is contained in this passage. It argues like this: When you yourselves do not make your servants and slaves equal partners in your wealth, which in fact is given to you by Allah, how is it that you join other gods with God in your gratitude to Him for the favors with which He has blessed you. You know that these gods have no powers to bestow anything on anyone, and, therefore, have no right in your worship of Allah, for they are after all His slaves and servants.

This interpretation of the verse under discussion is corroborated by Surah Ar-Room, Ayat 28: "Allah sets forth to you an instance from your own selves. Do your slaves share with you the wealth We have bestowed on you so that you and they become equals in this? And do you fear them as you fear one another? Thus We make clear Our signs to those who use their common sense." A comparison of the two verses makes it quite clear that these have been cited to bring home to the mushriks that they themselves do not associate their slaves with themselves in their wealth and status, but they have the impudence and folly to set up His own creature as partner with God.

It appears that the erroneous interpretation has been

strengthened by the succeeding sentence: What! do they then deny to acknowledge Allah's favor? As this sentence immediately follows the similitude of the rich people and their slaves, they conclude that it will be ingratitude on the part of those, who possess more wealth not to share it equally with those who have less. As a matter of fact, everyone who has studied the Quran critically knows that ingratitude to Allah is to show gratitude to others than Allah for His blessings. This interpretation is so patently wrong that those who are well versed in the teachings of the Quran can have no misconception about it. And such verses as these can mislead only those who have a cursory knowledge of the Quran.

Now that the significance of the ingratitude towards Allah's blessing has become plain, the meaning of the verse will be quite clear, and it is this: When the Mushriks understand the implication of the difference between the master and his slave and observe this distinction in their own lives, why do they then persist in ignoring the immense difference between the Creator and His creatures and set up the latter as His partners and pay homage of gratitude to them for the blessings bestowed on them by Allah.

72. And Allah has made for you from among yourselves wives, and has made for you, from your wives, sons and grandsons, and has made provision for you of good

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ  
 أَزْوَاجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ  
 أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةً  
 وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ



things. Is then in falsehood that they believe,<sup>\*63</sup> and in the bounty of Allah that they disbelieve.<sup>\*64</sup>

أَفَبِالْبَاطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَتِ  
اللَّهِ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ



**\*63** “Is then in falsehood that they believe”: they have this false and baseless belief that there are certain gods and goddesses, jinns and saints, dead and alive, who possess the power to make or mar their fates, fulfill their desires and answer their prayers, give them children, cure their diseases and help them win law suits.

**\*64** “In the bounty of Allah that they disbelieve”: by associating others with Allah in offering gratitude to Him for His favors, though they did not have any proof or authority that their false gods had played any part in regard to those favors. The Quran considers such an association to be the denial of Allah’s favors. It puts forward the fundamental principle: It is the denial of the favor of the real benefactor to offer gratitude for his favor to anyone who has not done that favor, or to presume without any proof or reason that the real benefactor has nor granted that favor of his own accord but because of the mediation or regard or recommendation or intercession of this or that person.

**73.** And they worship other than Allah that which has no control over provision for them, (with) anything from the heavens and the earth, nor are they able.

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا  
يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ رِزْقًا مِّنَ السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ

**74.** So do not make up any similitude for Allah.\*65  
Indeed, Allah knows and you do not know.

فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا لِلَّهِ الْأَمْثَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

**\*65** “So do not make up any similitude for Allah”: You should not compare Allah with others nor consider Him to be unapproachable like worldly kings and rulers, to whom none can have access without the mediation and intercession of their courtiers and servants. As Allah is not surrounded by angels, saints, favorites, etc. everyone can have direct access to Him without mediation by anyone.

**75.** Allah sets forth a parable\*66 (of two men), a slave owned (by another), he has no power over anything, and him (the other one) on whom we have bestowed from Us a good provision, so he spends thereof secretly and openly. Can they be equal. Praise be to Allah.\*67  
But most of them do not know.\*68

ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا عَبْدًا مَمْلُوكًا  
لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَمَنْ رَزَقْنَاهُ  
مِنَّا رِزْقًا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ يُنْفِقُ مِنْهُ  
سِرًّا وَجَهْرًا هَلْ يَسْتَوُونَ  
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا  
يَعْلَمُونَ

**\*66** In the preceding verse, the mushriks were told not to make comparisons between Allah and His creatures, for there is nothing like Him. As the bases of their comparison were wrong, their conclusions were also misleading. In this

verse appropriate similitude have been cited and right comparisons have been made to lead them to reality.

**\*67** Between the last question and “Praise be to Allah” there is a gap which is to be filled with the help of the latter. When the question was posed, obviously the mushriks could not say that the two men were equal. So some of them would have admitted that they were not equal, while the others would have kept quiet for fear that in case of admission, they would have to abide by its logical conclusion, that is, the admission of refutation of the doctrine of shirk. Therefore, the words, “Praise be to Allah” have been put in the mouth of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in answer to both kinds of the response to the question. In the first case, it would mean: “Praise be to Allah” you have admitted at least so much. In the second case, it would mean: “Praise be to Allah” you have kept quiet in spite of all your obduracy and have not had the audacity to say that both were equal.

**\*68** “But most of them do not know” this simple thing that while they feel and carefully observe the distinction between those who have powers and those who are powerless, they neither feel nor observe the clear distinction between the Creator and His creation. That is why they associate the creatures with the Creator in His Attributes and Powers and show the kind of allegiance to them as is the exclusive right of the Creator. The pity is that in their everyday life, they would beg for some thing from the master of the house and not from the servants but in contrast to this, they would beg for their needs from the

servants of Allah and not from Him.

**76.** And Allah sets forth a parable of two men, one of them dumb, he has no power over anything, and he is a burden to his master. Whichever way he (master) directs him, he brings no good. Is he equal with him, and who enjoins justice, and he (himself) is on a straight path.\*69

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا رَجُلَيْنِ  
أَحَدُهُمَا أَبْكَمٌ لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَى  
شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ كَلٌّ عَلَى مَوْلَاهُ  
أَيْنَمَا يُوَجِّهُهُ لَا يَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ هَلْ  
يَسْتَوِي هُوَ وَمَنْ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ  
وَهُوَ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

**\*69** In the first similitude, distinction between Allah and false gods has been made clear in regard to the possession of powers and the lack of these. In the second one, the emphasis is on the use of those powers. Allah is not only All-Powerful, but also hears all the prayers and fulfills all the needs, while the slave is utterly powerless. He does not and cannot hear prayers, nor can make a response to them nor has the power to do anything at all. He is totally dependent on the Master and quite incapable of doing anything by himself. On the other hand, the Master is All-Powerful and All-Wise. He enjoins justice on the world: whatever He does is right and accurate. Ask them: Is it then a point of wisdom to regard such Master and such a slave as equal?

**77.** And to Allah belongs the unseen of the heavens and the earth.\*70 And the matter of the Hour is not

وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَمَا أَمْرُ السَّاعَةِ إِلَّا كَلَمْحِ



but as a twinkling of the eye, or it is nearer.<sup>\*71</sup> Indeed, Allah has Power over all things.

الْبَصْرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

**\*70** The subsequent sentence shows that this is the answer to a question which was frequently put to the Prophet (peace be upon him) by the disbelievers of Makkah. The question which has not been cited was this: If the Resurrection so often you talk of is really coming, let us know the date of its coming.

**\*71** That is, don't be under the delusion that the Resurrection will come gradually and take a long time: you will neither be able to see it coming at a distance nor guard against it and make preparations to meet it. For it will come suddenly without any previous notice, in the twinkling of an eye or even will take less time than this. Therefore, now is the time to consider this matter seriously and to decide about your attitude towards it. You should not depend upon this false hope that there is still a long time in the coming of the Resurrection and you will set matters right with Allah when you will see it coming. It may be pointed out that the Resurrection has been mentioned here during the discussion on Tauhid in order to warn the people that the choice between the doctrines of Tauhid and shirk is not merely a theoretical question. For that choice determines different courses of life for which they will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection. They have also been warned that it will come all of a sudden at some unknown time. Therefore, they should be

very careful to make that choice which will determine their success or failure on that Day.

**78.** And Allah has brought you out from the wombs of your mothers, (while) not knowing anything, and He made for you hearing, and sight, and hearts<sup>\*72</sup> that you might give thanks.<sup>\*73</sup>

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ  
أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا  
وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ  
وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ



**\*72** This is to remind them that when they were born they were more helpless and ignorant than the young one of an animal, but Allah gave them ears to hear, eyes to see and minds to think and reflect. These have enabled them to acquire every kind of information and knowledge to carry on their worldly affairs efficiently. So much so that these sensory faculties are the only means which help man attain so much progress as to rule over everything on the earth.

**\*73** That is, you should be grateful to that Allah Who has bestowed upon you such blessings as these. It will be ingratitude on your part if you hear everything with your ears except the word of God, and see everything with your eyes except the signs of Allah and consider seriously about all the matters except your Benefactor Who has blessed you with these favors.

**79.** Do they not see at the birds held (flying) in the

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ

midst of the sky. None holds them except Allah. Indeed, in that are sure signs for a people who believe.

فِي جَوِّ السَّمَاءِ مَا يُمْسِكُهُنَّ  
إِلَّا اللَّهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ  
لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

**80.** And Allah has made for you in your homes an abode, and has made for you from the skins of the cattle dwelling (tents),<sup>\*74</sup> which you find light (to carry) on the day when you travel, and on the day when you camp.<sup>\*75</sup> And of their wool, and their fur, and their hair, (are) furnishings and commodities for a while.

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ بُيُوتِكُمْ  
سَكَنًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ جُلُودِ  
الْأَنْعَامِ بُيُوتًا تَسْتَخِفُّونَهَا يَوْمَ  
ظَعْنِكُمْ وَيَوْمَ إِقَامَتِكُمْ وَمِنْ  
أَصْوَابِهَا وَأَوْبَارِهَا وَأَشْعَارِهَا  
أَثْنَا وَمَتَاعًا إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٨٠﴾

**\*74** Tents of skin which are in common use in Arabia.

**\*75** That is, when you want to start on a journey, you can easily fold your tents and carry them, and when you want to make a short halt, you can easily unfold them and pitch them for shelter and rest.

**81.** And Allah has made for you, of that which He has created, shade (from the sun). And He has made for you resorts in the mountains. And He has made for you

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِمَّا خَلَقَ  
ظِلَالًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ  
أَكْنَانًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ سَرَابِيلَ

garments to protect you from the heat,<sup>\*76</sup> and coats (of armor) to protect you from your (mutual) battle.<sup>\*77</sup> Thus does He perfect His favor upon you,<sup>\*78</sup> that you might submit (to Him).

تَقِيكُمْ الْحَرَّ وَسَرَابِيلَ تَقِيكُمْ  
بَأْسِكُمْ كَذَلِكَ يُتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهُ  
عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسَلِمُونَ



**\*76** The Quran has not mentioned protection from cold for either of the two reasons:

(1) Because the use of garments in the summer season is a symbol of cultural perfection and obviously there is no need to mention the lower stages of culture. Or

(2) the use of garments in hot countries has specially been mentioned because the main use of garments there is for protection from the hot pestilential furious wind. Therefore, one has to cover one's head, neck, ears, and the whole of his body to protect it from the hot wind which would otherwise scorch him to death.

**\*77** That is, Armors.

**\*78** "Thus does He perfect His favor upon you": Allah makes provision for the minutest needs and necessities of every aspect of human life. For example, let us take the instance of the protection of the human body from external influences. We find that Allah has made such elaborate arrangements as require a complete book to relate them. These arrangements reach their perfection in the case of clothing and housing arrangement. Or, if we consider the food requirements, we realize that it is of many varieties



which fulfill every need. More than this: the means Allah has provided for food requirements of man are so numerous that the list of the varieties and the names of different kinds of food require a big volume. This is the perfection of the blessing of food. Likewise, one would see perfection of the blessings of Allah in the fulfillment of each and every human need and necessity.

**82.** So if they turn away (O Muhammad), then upon you is only to convey (the message) in a clear way.

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَّغُ  
الْمُبِينُ

**83.** They recognize the favor of Allah, then they deny it.<sup>\*79</sup> And most of them are disbelievers.

يَعْرِفُونَ نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ  
يُنْكِرُونَهَا وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ  
الْكَافِرُونَ

**\*79** Here the denial of the blessings of Allah refers to practical denial by the disbelievers of Makkah. For they did not deny that all these blessings were from Allah but along with this they believed that their saints and gods also had contributed towards them. This is why they associated their intercessors in their gratitude to Allah for these blessings. Nay, they were even more grateful to them than to Allah. Allah regards this association as denial of His blessings, ingratitude and forgetfulness of His favors.

**84.** And the Day when We shall raise from each nation a witness,<sup>\*80</sup> then permission

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا

will not be granted (to put forward excuses)<sup>\*81</sup> to those who disbelieved, nor will they be allowed to repent.<sup>\*82</sup>

ثُمَّ لَا يُؤْذَنُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ

**\*80** The witness will be the Prophet of that community or his follower who invited that community to Tauhid and God worship and warned it of the consequences of shirk and superstitious rites and customs and cautioned it against the accountability on the Day of Resurrection. He will bear witness of the fact that he had conveyed the true message to those people, and that they committed evils deliberately and not in ignorance.

**\*81** This does not mean that the criminals will not be given any opportunity to clear themselves but it means that their crimes will be proved to the hilt by means of irrefutable evidence which will leave no room for excuses.

**\*82** That is, they will not be given the opportunity to beg pardon of their Lord for their crimes. For that will be the time of judgment as the time of begging pardon would have ended long before this. The Quran and the traditions are explicit on this point that the place for penitence is this world and not the next world. Even in this world the opportunity is lost as soon as signs of death begin to appear, for the penitence at that time will be of no avail when a person knows that the time of his death has come. Respite for deeds expires as soon as one enters into the boundary of death, and the only thing that remains after that is the award of reward and punishment.

**85.** And when those who did wrong will see the punishment, then it will not be lightened for them, nor will they be reprieved.

وَإِذَا رَأَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الْعَذَابَ  
فَلَا يَخَفُوا عَنْهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ  
يُنظَرُونَ



**86.** And when those who associated partners (with Allah) will see those partners of theirs, they will say: “Our Lord, these are our partners whom we used to call besides you.” But they will throw back at them (their) word (and say): “Surely, you indeed are liars.”\*83

وَإِذَا رَأَى الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا  
شُرَكَاءَهُمْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا هَؤُلَاءِ  
شُرَكَائُنَا الَّذِينَ كُنَّا نَدْعُوا  
مِن دُونِكَ فَأَلْقَوْا إِلَيْهِمُ  
الْقَوْلَ إِنَّكُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ



**\*83** It does not mean that they would deny the fact that the mushriks used to invoke their help. They will call them liars in the sense that they had made them deities without their knowledge, information and permission, as if to say: We never told you to leave Allah aside and pray to us for help. As a matter of fact, we never approved of this. Nay, we were utterly unaware of this that you were invoking us. It was an utter lie that you considered us to be able to hear your prayers, answer them and help you out of your difficulties. As you yourselves were responsible for this shirk, why are you involving us in its consequences?

87. And they will offer unto Allah submission that day, and will have vanished from them what they used to invent.\*84

وَأَلْقَوْا إِلَى اللَّهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ السَّلَامَ  
وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ



\*84 That is, all those things on which they had relied will prove to be false, for they will not find anyone to hear their supplication nor anyone to remove their hardships. Nay, there will be none who will come forward and say: These are my dependents, so no action should be taken against them.

88. Those who disbelieved and hindered (others) from the path of Allah, for them We will increase punishment over punishment,\*85 for that they used to spread corruption.

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنِ  
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ زِدْنَاهُمْ عَذَابًا فَوْقَ  
الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا  
يُفْسِدُونَ



\*85 “We will increase punishment over punishment”: one for their own disbelief and the other for hindering others from the Way of Allah.

89. And the Day when We shall raise from each nation a witness against them from amongst themselves, and We shall bring you (O Muhammad) as a witness

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا  
عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَجِئْنَا  
بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ



against these. And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things,<sup>\*86</sup> and a guidance, and a mercy, and good tidings for those who have submitted (to Allah).<sup>\*87</sup>

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تَبْيِينًا  
لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً  
وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ



**\*86** The Quran makes manifest everything on which depends guidance or deviation, success or failure. Whose knowledge is essential for following the right way. What clearly distinguishes truth from falsehood.

In this connection one should guard against that meaning of this sentence and the like in the Quran according to which some people interpret “everything” to mean the knowledge of all sciences, arts, etc. and in order to prove the correctness of their interpretation, they have to pervert the real meaning of the Quran.

**\*87** This Book is a guidance for those who surrender to it as a divine Book and follow it in every aspect of life. Then it will bring Allah’s blessings upon them, and will give them the good news that they will come out successful in the court of Allah on the Day of Judgment. Or, the contrary, those people who reject it shall not only be deprived of guidance and blessing but will also find it as a testimony against themselves on the Day of Resurrection when Allah’s Messenger will stand up to testify against them. This Book will prove to be a strong argument against them. For Allah’s Messenger will say that he had conveyed its message which made manifest the distinction between truth

and falsehood.

**90.** Indeed, Allah enjoins justice and kindness, and giving (their due) to near relatives,<sup>\*88</sup> and forbids from lewdness, and abomination, and rebellion.<sup>\*89</sup> He admonishes you that you may take heed.

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ  
وَالْإِحْسَنِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي  
الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ  
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾

**\*88** In this brief sentence Allah has enjoined three most important things on which alone depends the establishment of a sound and healthy society:

The first of these is justice which has two aspects.

To make such arrangements as may enable everyone to get one's due rights without stint. Justice does not, however, mean equal distribution of rights, for that would be absolutely unnatural. In fact, justice means equitable dispensation of rights which in certain cases may mean equality. For example, all citizens should have equal rights of citizenship but in other cases equality in rights would be injustice. For instance, equality in social status and rights between parents and their children will obviously be wrong. Likewise those who render services of superior and inferior types cannot be equal in regard to wages and salaries. What Allah enjoins is that the full rights of everyone should be honestly rendered whether those be moral, social, economic legal or political in accordance with

what one justly deserves.

The second thing enjoined is *ihsan* which has no equivalent in English. This means to be good, generous, sympathetic, tolerant, forgiving, polite, cooperative, selfless, etc. In collective life this is even more important than justice; for justice is the foundation of a sound society but *ihsan* is its perfection. On the one hand, justice protects society from bitterness and violation of rights. On the other hand, *ihsan* makes it sweet and joyful and worth living. It is obvious that no society can flourish if every individual insists on exacting his pound of flesh. At best such a society might be free from conflict but there cannot be love, gratitude, generosity, sacrifice, sincerity, sympathy and such humane qualities as produce sweetness in life and develop high values.

The third thing which has been enjoined is good treatment towards one's relatives which in fact is a specific form of *ihsan*. It means that one should not only treat his relatives well, share their sorrows and pleasures and help them within lawful limits but should also share his wealth with them according to his means and the need of each relative. This enjoins on everyone who possesses ample means to acknowledge the share of his deserving relatives along with the rights of his own person and family. The divine law holds every well to do person in a family to be responsible for fulfilling the needs of all his needy kith and kin. The law considers it a great evil that one person should enjoy the pleasures of life while his own kith and kin are starving. As it considers the family to be an important part of society, it

lays down that the first right of needy individuals is on its well to do members and then on the others. Likewise it is the first duty of the well to do members of the family to fulfill the needs of their own near relatives and then those of others. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has emphasized this fact in many traditions, according to which a person owes rights to his parents, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, other relatives, etc. in accordance with the nearness of their relationships. On the basis of this fundamental principle, Umar made it obligatory on the first cousins of an orphan to support him. In the case of another orphan he declared that if he had no first cousins he would have made it obligatory on distant cousins to support him. Just imagine the happy condition of the society every unit of which supports its every needy individual in this way. Most surely that society will become high and pure economically, socially and morally.

**\*89** In contrast to the above mentioned three virtues, Allah prohibits three vices which ruin individuals and the society as a whole:

(1) The Arabic word *fahsha* applies to all those things that are immodest, immoral or obscene or nasty or dirty or vulgar, not fit to be seen or heard, because they offend against recognized standards of propriety or good taste, e.g. adultery, fornication, homosexuality, nakedness, nudity, theft, robbery, drinking, gambling, begging, abusive language and the like. Likewise it is indecent to indulge in giving publicity to any of these evils and to spread them, e.g. false propaganda, calumny, publicity of crimes,



indecent stories, dramas, films, naked pictures, public appearance of womenfolk with indecent makeup, free mixing of sexes, dancing and the like.

(2) *Munkar* applies to all those evils which have always been universally regarded as evils and have been forbidden by all divine systems of law.

(3) *Baghy* applies to those vices that transgress the proper limits of decency and violate the rights of others, whether those of the Creator or His creation.

**91.** And fulfill the covenant of Allah when you have covenanted, and do not break the oaths after you have confirmed them, and indeed you have appointed Allah as a surety for yourselves. Indeed, Allah knows what you do. <sup>\*90</sup>

وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ  
وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ  
تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ  
عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ  
مَا تَفْعَلُونَ



**\*90** In this verse, Allah has enjoined three kinds of covenants which have been mentioned in the order of their importance. The first of these covenants is the one between man and his Allah which is the most important of all. The second in importance is the covenant between one man or one group of men and another man or another group of men, which is taken with Allah as a witness or in which the name of God has been used. The third covenant is that which has been made without using Allah's name. Though this is third in importance, its fulfillment is as important as

that of the first two and the violation of any of these has been prohibited.

**92.** And do not be like her who unravels her yarn, after it has become strong, into pieces. You take your oaths as (means of) deception among yourselves, lest a nation may be more numerous than (another) nation. Allah only tries you thereby.<sup>\*91</sup> And He will certainly make clear to you, on the Day of Resurrection,<sup>\*92</sup> that wherein you used to differ.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّتِي نَقَضَتْ  
غَزْلَهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنْكَاثًا  
تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلًا  
بَيْنَكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ أُمَّةٌ هِيَ  
أَرْبَىٰ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَبُلُوكُمْ  
اللَّهُ بِهِ ۗ وَلِيَبَيِّنَنَّ لَكُمْ يَوْمَ  
الْقِيَامَةِ مَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ



**\*91** In this connection it should be noted that Allah has rebuked the people for the worst form of violation of treaties which has been creating the greatest disorder in the world. It is a pity that even big people consider it to be a virtue to violate treaties in order to gain advantages for their people in political, economic and religious conflicts. At one time the leader of one nation enters into a treaty with another nation for the interest of his own people but at another time the same leader publicly breaks the very same treaty for the interest of his people, or secretly violates it. It is an irony that such violations are made even by those

people who are honest in their private lives. Moreover, it is regrettable that their own people do not protest against them; nay, they eulogize them for such shameful feats of diplomacy. Therefore, Allah warns that every such treaty is a test of the character of those who enter into it, and of their nations. They might gain some apparent advantage for their people in this way, but they will not escape their consequences on the Day of Judgment.

**\*92** This is to warn that decision about differences and disputes that lead to conflict will be made on the Day of Judgment. Therefore, these should not be made an excuse to break agreements and treaties. Even if one is wholly in the right and the opponent is wholly in the wrong. It is not right for the former to break treaties or make false propaganda or employ other deceitful methods to defeat the other. If one does so, it will go against him on that Day because righteousness demands that one should not only be right in his theories and aims but should also use right methods and employ right means. This warning has especially been given to those religious groups and sects who always suffer from this misunderstanding that they have a right to defeat their opponents because they are on the side of God and their opponents are rebels against Allah. Therefore, there is no obligation on them to stick to their treaties with their opponents. This was what the Arab Jews practiced, declaring: There is no moral obligation on us in regard to the pagan Arabs, and we are rightly entitled to practice dishonesty and deceit that might be of advantage to us and harmful to the disbelievers.

**93.** And if Allah had willed, He could have made you (all) one nation,<sup>\*93</sup> but He sends astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills.<sup>\*94</sup> And you shall certainly be asked of what you used to do.

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً  
وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَلَتُسْأَلُنَّ  
عَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ



**\*93** This further supports the previous warning. It means that it would be wrong for any champion of Allah's religion to arrogate to himself the use of every sort of method and means irrespective of whether they are right or wrong to propagate his own religion (considering it to be Allah's religion) and try to destroy opposite religions. For this would be utterly against the will of Allah. If Allah had willed that there should be no religious differences, He could have deprived mankind of the freedom of choice. In that case, there would have been no need for Allah to get help of any such upholder of His religion, who uses disgraceful means for this purpose. Allah could have created all mankind to be inherent believers and obedient servants by depriving them of the power and option of disbelief and sin. Then there would have been none who could have dared to deviate from belief and obedience.

**\*94** This is to show that Allah Himself has given man the power and freedom to follow any out of the many ways. That is why Allah makes arrangements for the guidance of the one who intends to follow the right way, and let go astray the one who desires to deviate.



**94.** And do not make your oaths as (means of) deception among yourselves, lest a foot may slip after having been firm,<sup>\*95</sup> and you may have to taste the evil (consequences) because of hindering (others) from the path of Allah. And yours should be a great punishment (in Hereafter).

وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلًا  
بَيْنَكُمْ فَتَرِلَّ قَدَمٌ بَعْدَ ثُبُوتِهَا  
وَتَذُوقُوا أَلْسُوَاءَ بِمَا صَدَدْتُمْ  
عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ <sup>ط</sup> وَلَكُمْ عَذَابٌ  
عَظِيمٌ



**\*95** That is, someone who might have been convinced of Islam, seeing your dishonest conduct should become disgusted and hold back from joining the believers. For he might argue like this: As these Muslims are not much different from the disbelievers in their morals and dealings, there is no reason why I should join them.

**95.** And do not barter the covenant<sup>\*96</sup> of Allah for a small gain.<sup>\*97</sup> Indeed, that which is with Allah is better for you, if you only knew.

وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا  
إِنَّمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن  
كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ



**\*96** That is, the covenant that you may make in the name of Allah as a representative of His religion.

**\*97** It does not mean that they should barter away Allah's covenant for some big gain. What it implies is that any worldly gain howsoever great is insignificant as compared with the worth of Allah's covenant. Therefore, it will be a losing bargain to barter that away for any worldly gain,

which is after all paltry.

**96.** Whatever is with you, will be exhausted, and whatever is with Allah will remain. And We will certainly reward those, who are steadfast,<sup>\*98</sup> their recompense according to the best of what they used to do.

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ<sup>ط</sup> وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
بَاقٍ<sup>ق</sup> وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ<sup>ق</sup> الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا  
أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا  
يَعْمَلُونَ



**\*98** Those who practice fortitude are the people who will always stand firm in the struggle between right and truth on one side and greed and lust on the other. They bear every loss for the sake of righteousness and spurn away every gain that they might obtain by adopting unlawful means. They patiently wait for the rewards of their good deeds in the Hereafter.

**97.** Whoever acts righteously, among male or female, while he (or she) is a believer. Then indeed, We will give to him (or her) a good life.<sup>\*99</sup> And We will certainly reward them their recompense to the best of what they used to do.<sup>\*100</sup>

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ  
أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ  
حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً<sup>ط</sup> وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ  
أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا  
يَعْمَلُونَ



**\*99** This verse removes the wrong notions of both the Muslims and the disbelievers who are of the opinion that those who adopt a just honest and pious attitude, are most

surely losers in this world, though they might be gainers in the Hereafter. Allah removes this misunderstanding, as if to say: This presumption of yours is wrong. The righteous attitude not only leads to a happy life in the Hereafter, but it also guarantees, by Allah's grace, a pure and happy life even in this world. And this is a fact that those people who are sincerely righteous, honest, pure and fair in their dealings enjoy a much better life in this world. For they enjoy that confidence and real honor and respect because of their spotless character, which is not enjoyed by those who lack these virtues. They obtain such pure and outstanding success as are denied to those who employ dirty and disgusting ways to win success. Above all, they enjoy, even though they might be living in poor houses, that peace of mind and satisfaction of conscience which is denied to the wicked dwellers of mansions and palaces.

**\*100** That is, their rank in the Hereafter shall be determined according to their best deeds. In other words, if a person has done both small and great virtues, he will be awarded that high rank which he would merit according to his greatest virtues.

**98.** So when you recite the Quran, seek refuge with Allah from Satan the outcast.<sup>\*101</sup>

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ  
بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

**\*101** This does not mean that one should merely repeat the Arabic words: I seek Allah's refuge against the accursed Satan. It means that one should have a sincere desire and do his utmost to guard against Satan's evil suggestions

when one is reciting the Holy Quran and should not allow wrong and irrelevant doubts and suspicions to enter his mind. One should try to see everything contained in the Quran in its true light, and refrain from mixing it up with his self invented theories or ideas foreign to the Quran so as to construe its meaning against the will of Allah. Moreover, one should feel that the most sinister and avowed design of Satan is that the reader should not obtain any guidance from the Quran. This is why Satan tries his utmost to delude the reader and pervert him from getting guidance from it, and mislead him into wrong ways of thinking. Therefore, the reader should be fully on his guard against Satan and seek Allah's refuge for help so that Satan should not be able to deprive him of the benefits froth this source of guidance, for one who fails to get guidance from this source, will never be able to get guidance from anywhere else. Above all, the one who seeks to obtain deviation from this Book is so entangled in deviation that he can never get out of this vicious circle.

The context in which this verse occurs here is to serve as an introduction to the answers to the questions which the mushriks of Makkah were raising against the Quran. They have been warned that they could appreciate the blessing of the Quran only if they would try to see it in its true light by seeking Allah's protection against Satan's misleading suggestions, and not by raising objections against it. Otherwise Satan does not let a man understand the Quran and its teachings.



**99.** Indeed, there is for him no authority over those who believe and put trust in their Lord.

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى  
الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ  
يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

**100.** His authority is only over those who make a friend of him, and those who ascribe partners to Him (Allah).

إِنَّمَا سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ  
يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِهِ  
مُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

**101.** And when We change a revelation in place of (another) revelation, and Allah knows best what He sends down, they say: “You (O Muhammad) are only a fabricator.”\*<sup>102</sup> But most of them do not know.

وَإِذَا بَدَّلْنَا آيَةً مَّكَانَ آيَةٍ  
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنَزِّلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا  
أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا  
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

**\*102** This may also mean: To send down one commandment to elaborate upon the other, for the commandments were sent down piecemeal in the Quran. For instance, the commandments about prohibition and fornication were sent down gradually one after the other during several years. But We hesitate to accept this interpretation because An-Nahl is a Makki Surah and to the best of our information there is no instance to show that commandments were sent down piecemeal at Makkah.

Therefore, we prefer the other interpretation. The Quran has added details of one theme and explained the same with different kinds of illustrations at different places. Likewise it has related a story in different words at different places and presented its different aspects and details at other places. It has put forward one argument at one place to prove a theme and another at another place to prove the same theme. It has related one theme concisely at one place and in detail at the other. That is what the disbelievers of Makkah put forward as proof that Muhammad (peace be upon him) forged the Quran himself. They argued like this: Had the Quran been the Word of Allah, it would have related one thing in full at one place, for Allah's knowledge is not defective that He should have to think out gradually the details of a theme and to give different versions to explain the same thing. In contrast to this, the knowledge of a human being is defective. A man has to think out gradually as has been done in the case of the Quran which is a clear proof that you have forged it yourself.

**102.** Say: "The Holy Spirit (Gabriel) has brought it down from your Lord with truth,<sup>\*103</sup> that it may make firm (the faith of) those who believe,<sup>\*104</sup> and a guidance<sup>\*105</sup> and good tidings for those who submitted (to Allah)."<sup>\*106</sup>

قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقُدُسِ مِنْ  
رَبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ الَّذِينَ  
ءَامَنُوا وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى  
لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ

**\*103** The Holy Spirit: Gibril. Instead of using the name of the angel who brought revelation, his title has been

deliberately mentioned to warn the disbelievers that the Holy Spirit who brought revelation is free from human frailties. He is neither dishonest that he should add something to or take away something from the message he brought, nor is he a liar and forger that he should invent and state something in the name of Allah. Nor does he suffer from any human lust that he should practice a deceit. He is wholly pure and holy and conveys the Word of Allah intact.

**\*104** That is, the fact that Allah sends down His message piecemeal does not mean that Allah's knowledge and wisdom are defective as you consider because of your folly. Allah sends His revelations gradually because human intelligence and capacity to grasp are limited and defective which do not let him understand the whole theme at one and the same time and make it firm in his mind. Therefore, Allah in His wisdom conveyed His revelation piecemeal through the Holy Spirit. He sends a theme gradually and gives its details by and by and uses different methods and ways to make it plain to human beings so that they might grasp it according to their abilities and capabilities and become firm in their faith and knowledge.

**\*105** The second practical wisdom of sending down the Quran piecemeal was that those believers who obediently followed it, should get necessary instructions for the propagation of Islam and the solution of other problems of life at the time when they were actually needed. It is obvious that if those instructions had been sent down before time and at one and the same time they would not

have been useful.

**\*106** The third practical wisdom of not sending down the Quran as a whole at one and the same time was to give good tidings and encouragement to the obedient servants who were suffering from persecution and encountering great obstacles because they needed it over and over again. That is why they were assured of ultimate success time and again to fill them with hope to carry on their mission.

**103.** And certainly, We know that they say: “It is only a human being who teaches him.”<sup>\*107</sup> The tongue of him at whom they falsely hint is foreign, and this (the Quran) is clear Arabic tongue.

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ  
إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ  
الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ  
أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ  
مُبِينٌ



**\*107** In this connection, traditions mention the names of several persons, one of whom is Jabar. According to the disbelievers of Makkah he taught the Prophet (peace be upon him). However, one thing particularly noteworthy about all these persons is that they were non Arab slaves. Whosoever he might be, the fact that he used to recite the Torah and the Gospel and had an acquaintance with the Prophet (peace be upon him). This gave an opportunity to the disbelievers for spreading this false report that it was the particular slave who was the real author of the Holy Quran, but Muhammad (peace be upon him) presented it



as the Word of God. This not only shows that his opponents were very impudent in spreading false accusations against the Prophet (peace be upon him) but also that, in general, people are not just in judging the worth of their contemporaries. They were ill treating like this that great personality who has had no parallel in history. Nevertheless, these people who had become blind in their opposition, preferred to attribute the authorship of the matchless Arabic Quran to a non Arab slave who had a smattering of the Torah and the Gospel. Instead of accepting the claim of the Prophet (peace be upon him), who was an embodiment of truth, they attributed its authorship to an insignificant foreign slave.

**104.** Indeed, those who do not believe in the revelations of Allah, Allah will not guide them, and for them will be a painful punishment.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِعَايَاتِ  
 اللَّهِ لَا يَهْدِيهِمُ اللَّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ  
 أَلِيمٌ

**105.** Only they invent falsehood, who do not believe in Allah's revelations. <sup>\*108</sup> And it is they who are the liars.

إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكَذِبَ الَّذِينَ لَا  
 يُؤْمِنُونَ بِعَايَاتِ اللَّهِ  
 وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ

**\*108** This verse can also be rendered like this: A Prophet does not forge any false thing but those, who do not believe

in the revelations of Allah, invent falsehoods.

**106.** Whoever disbelieves in Allah after his belief, except him who is forced thereto and whose heart is still content with faith. But as for those who open their breasts to disbelief, upon them is wrath from Allah. And for them will be a great punishment.\*109

مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ  
إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ  
مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ  
شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ  
غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ  
عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ



\*109 This verse deals with the case of those Muslims who were being persecuted with cruelty and were being subjected to unbearable torments to force them to give up their faith. They are being told that if at any time they are forced to utter words of disbelief to save their lives, when in fact in their hearts they are secure against disbelief, they will be pardoned. On the other hand, if they accepted unbelief from the core of their hearts, they shall not escape the torment of Allah even if they succeed in saving their lives.

It does not, however, mean that one should utter words of disbelief to save his life. This is merely a permission but not the ideal thing for a believer. According to this permission if one utters such a thing, he shall not be taken to account. In fact, the ideal for a believer is to utter words of truth in any case whether his body is cut into pieces. There are

instances which show that during the period of the Prophet (peace be upon him) some acted upon the ideal while others took advantage of the permission. There was Khabbab bin Art (may Allah be pleased with him) who was made to lie on embers of fire until the fire was extinguished by the melting of his fat, but he remained firm in his faith. Then there was Bilal Habashi who was made to put on an armor and stand in the scorching heat. Then he was dragged on the burning sand but he went on saying, Allah is one. There was another believer, Habib bin Zaid bin Asim, whose limbs were cut one by one by the order of Musailimah, the Liar. Each time his limb was severed it was demanded of him that he should acknowledge the Liar as a prophet but each time he refused to bear witness to his claim of prophethood until he breathed his last. On the other hand, there was the instance of Ammar bin Yasir whose parents were mercilessly butchered before his eyes. After this he himself was put to such unbearable torture that, in order to save his life, he had to utter the same words of unbelief that were demanded of him. Afterwards when he came crying to the Prophet (peace be upon him), he said: O Messenger of Allah, they did not let me go until I spoke evil of you and praised their deities. The Prophet (peace be upon him) asked him: How do you feel about this, in your heart? He replied humbly: My heart is fully convinced of the faith. At this the Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: If they put you to the same torture again, you may utter the same words. May Allah be pleased with them all.

**107.** That is because they love the life of the world over the Hereafter, and that Allah does not guide the people who disbelieve.

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْحَيَاةَ  
الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ  
لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

١٠٧

**108.** They are those, Allah has set a seal upon their hearts, and their hearing (ears), and their sight (eyes). And it is they who are the heedless.

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ  
عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَسَمْعِهِمْ  
وَأَبْصَرِهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ  
الْغَافِلُونَ

١٠٨

**109.** Assuredly, it is they, in the Hereafter, they will be the losers.\*110

لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ هُمُ  
الْخَاسِرُونَ

١٠٩

\*110 These words apply to those people who gave up their faith, when they felt that they could not bear hardships of the right way and so they again joined their unbelieving, mushrik people.

**110.** Then indeed, your Lord, for those who emigrated after that they had been persecuted, and then fought and were

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ  
هَاجَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا فُتِنُوا ثُمَّ



steadfast,<sup>\*111</sup> indeed, your Lord after that is (for them) Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

جَاهِدُوا وَصَبِرُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ  
مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

**\*111 They were those believers who migrated to Habashah.**

**111.** On the Day when every soul will come pleading for itself, and every soul will be repaid in full for what it did, and they will not be wronged.

﴿ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ تُجَادِلُ  
عَنْ نَفْسِهَا وَتُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ  
مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهَمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴾

**112.** And Allah sets forth a parable, a township that was secure, well content, its provision coming to it in abundance from every side, but it denied the bounties of Allah, so Allah made it taste the extreme of hunger and fear because of what they used to do.

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ  
ءَامِنَةً مُطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا  
رَغَدًا مِّن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ  
بِأَنْعَمِ اللَّهِ فَأَذَاقَهَا اللَّهُ لِبَاسَ  
الْجُوعِ وَالْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوا  
يَصْنَعُونَ

**113.** And indeed, there had come to them a messenger from among themselves, but they had denied him, so

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْهُمْ  
فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ

the punishment seized them while they were wrong doers. \*112

وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

\*112 That habitation has not been specified here nor have the commentators definitely pointed out which that habitation was. However, there is a saying of Ibn Abbas (which seems to be correct) that the place referred to is Makkah itself. In that case, hunger and fear will mean the famine which prevailed over the people of Makkah for several years during the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him).

114. Then eat of what Allah has provided you, lawful (and) good. And thank the bounty \*113 of Allah if it is He whom you worship. \*114

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَأَشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

\*113 This shows that the above mentioned famine had come to an end at the time of the revelation of this Surah.

\*114 Here the observation of the lawful and the unlawful has been made the test of worship of Allah. Those who claim to be the servants of Allah will eat what is lawful and pure and show gratitude to Him and will scrupulously refrain from what is forbidden and impure.

115. He has only forbidden to you carrion, and blood, and swine flesh, and that over which has been invoked (a name) other than Allah.

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ

Then him who is obliged (to do so), without disobedience, and not going to excess, then indeed, Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.\*115

لَغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ  
بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ  
رَحِيمٌ

\*115 Please refer also to Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayat 173, Surah Al-Maidah, Ayat 3 and Surah Al-Anaam, Ayat 145.

116. And do not say, about what your own tongues put forth falsely. "This is lawful, and this is forbidden,"\*116 so that you invent against Allah a lie. Indeed, those who invent against Allah a lie will not prosper.

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَا تَصِفُ  
أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ الْكَذِبَ هَذَا  
حَلَالٌ وَهَذَا حَرَامٌ لَتَفْتَرُوا عَلَى  
اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ  
عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ

\*116 This verse clearly shows that none but Allah has the right to declare a thing to be lawful or unlawful. Or, in other words, the right of making laws exclusively rests with Allah. Therefore, any person who will dare to decide about the lawful and the unlawful will transgress his powers. Of course, a person, who acknowledges the divine law as the final authority, may deduce from it whether a certain thing or action is lawful or unlawful. The arrogation of the right of determining the lawful and

the unlawful has been declared to be a falsehood on Allah for two reasons:

(1) Such a person, so to say, claims that what he declares to be lawful or unlawful, disregarding the authority of the divine Book, has been made lawful or unlawful by God.

(2) He means to claim that Allah has given up the authority of making lawful and unlawful and has thus left man free to make his own laws for the conduct of life.

It is obvious that each of these claims will be a falsehood and a false imputation to Allah.

**117.** A brief enjoyment (will be theirs), and they will have a painful punishment.

مَتَّعٌ قَلِيلٌ وَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ



**118.** And to those who are Jews, We have forbidden that which<sup>\*117</sup> We have mentioned to you (O Muhammad) before.<sup>\*118</sup> And We did not wrong them, but they used to wrong themselves.

وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا مَا قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ



**\*117** In this paragraph (Ayats 118-124), answers to the objections raised by the disbelievers of Makkah concerning the commandments contained in Ayats 114-117 have been given. Their first objection was: Besides the above mentioned unlawful things, there are other unlawful things in the Jewish law which have been made lawful by you. If that law was from Allah and yours is also from Allah, why



do they then contradict each other? Their second objection was: You have abrogated the sanctity of the Sabbath of the Israelites. Have you done this of your own accord or by Allah's command? In the latter case then will be an obvious contradiction in the two laws. Or has Allah Himself given two contradictory commandments?

**\*118** This refers to: "And We prohibited all animals with claws to those people who had adopted Judaism." (Surah Al-Anaam, Ayat 146). In this verse (118) Allah has stated that certain things were made unlawful because of the disobedience of the Jews.

Here a question arises. Which of the two Surahs, Al-Anaam or An-Nahl, was first revealed? This is because in verse 118, a reference has been made to verse 146 of Al-Anaam. Also in verse 119 of Al-Anaam: "And why should you not eat that thing over which Allah's name has been mentioned, when He has already given you a detail of those things that have been declared to be unlawful for you except in case of extremity?" a reference has been made to verse 115 of An-Nahl.

This is because these are the only two Makki Surahs in which details of unlawful things have been given. As regards to the question, we are of the opinion that An-Nahl was revealed earlier than Al-Anaam, for verse 119 of the latter contains a reference to verse 115 of the former. It appears that after the revelation of Surah Al-Anaam, the disbelievers raised objections in regard to these verses of An-Nahl. So they were referred to verse 146 of Al-Anaam in which a few things were made unlawful, especially for

the Jews. As this answer concerned An-Nahl, so verse 118, though it was revealed after the revelation of Al-Anaam, was inserted as a parenthetical clause in An-Nahl.

**119.** Then indeed, your Lord, for those who do evil in ignorance, then repent after that and do righteous deeds, indeed your Lord, thereafter, is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا  
الْسُّوءَ بِجَهْلَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ  
ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ  
بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١١٩﴾

**120.** Indeed, Abraham was a whole community (by himself),<sup>\*119</sup> obedient to Allah, exclusively devoted. And he was not of those who associated (others with Allah).

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ  
حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

**\*119** “Abraham was a whole community by himself” for at that time he was the only Muslim in the whole world who was upholding the banner of Islam, while the rest of the world was upholding the banner of unbelief. As that servant of Allah performed the mission which is ordinarily carried out by a whole community, he was not one person but an institution in himself.

**121.** Thankful for His bounties. He (Allah) chose him, and He guided him to a straight path.

شَاكِرًا لِأَنْعُمِهِ ۚ اجْتَبَاهُ  
وَهَدَاهُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٢١﴾

**122.** And We gave him good in the world. And certainly, in the Hereafter, he shall be among the righteous.

وَأَتَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً <sup>ط</sup> وَإِنهٗ  
فِي الآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

**123.** Then, We inspired you (O Muhammad, saying) that: “Follow the religion of Abraham, exclusively devoted. And he was not of those who associated (others with Allah).<sup>\*120</sup>

ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنْ اتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ  
إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا <sup>ط</sup> وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ  
الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

**\*120** This is the complete answer to the first objection (E.N. 117) raised by the disbelievers. This has two parts.


(1) There is no contradiction in the divine law as you seem to presume on the apparent variance in the Jewish and the Islamic Law. As a matter of fact a few things had been made unlawful especially for the Jews as punishment to them because of their disobedience; therefore, there was no reason why others should be deprived of those good things.

(2) Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was commanded to follow the way of Abraham and not the way of the Jews, and they themselves knew that these things were not unlawful in the law of Abraham. For instance, the Jews did not eat the flesh of camel but this was lawful according to Abraham. Likewise, ostrich, hare, duck, etc. were unlawful in the Jewish law, but they were lawful according to Abraham. Incidentally the disbelievers of Makkah have been warned that neither they nor the Jews had any relationship with Prophet Abraham for he was not

a mushrik while both of them were practicing shirk. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his followers were the only true followers of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) for there was no tinge of shirk in their creed or in their practice.

**124.** The Sabbath was only prescribed for those who differed in it.\*<sup>121</sup> And indeed, your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they used to differ.

إِنَّمَا جُعِلَ السَّبْتُ عَلَى  
الَّذِينَ اٰخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ ۗ وَإِنَّ  
رَبَّكَ لَيَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ  
الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ  
يَخْتَلِفُونَ



**\*121** This is the answer to their second objection. Obviously, there was no need to state that the restrictions about the Sabbath applied only to the Jews and had nothing to do with the law of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), because they themselves knew it. The restrictions were imposed upon the Jews because of their mischief and violations of the law. In order to understand fully the significance of this reference one is requested to read those passages of the Bible in which commandments about the Sabbath have been stated, e.g., Exodus 20: 8-11, 23: 12-13, 31: 1-17, 35: 23, and Numbers 15: 32-36. Besides this, one should also be acquainted with the impudent violations of the Sabbath. See Jeremiah: 17: 21-27 and Ezekiel. 10: 18-24.



**125.** Call (O Muhammad) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction,<sup>\*122</sup> and argue with them in a way that is better.<sup>\*123</sup> Indeed your Lord, He knows best of him who has gone astray from His way, and He is best Aware of those who are guided.

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ  
وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَدِلْهُمْ  
بِأَتَى هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ  
أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ  
وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ



**\*122** This instruction is very important for those who are engaged in the propagation of Islam. They should always keep in view two things, wisdom and excellent admonition. Wisdom implies that one should use discretion in the work of propagation and should not do this blindly like foolish people. Wisdom demands that one should keep in view the intelligence, capability and circumstances of the addressees and convey the message in accordance with the requirements of the occasion. Moreover, one should refrain from applying one and the same method to each and every person or group but should first diagnose the real disease of the addressee and then cure it by appealing to his mind and intellect.

Excellent admonition implies two things:

(1) One should not be content with convincing the addressee with arguments alone but should also appeal to his feelings. Likewise one should not confine himself merely to arguments in condemning evils and deviations but should try to convince the other of their repugnance that

lies embedded in the human nature. One should also warn of the worst consequences of those evils. Besides, one should not only try to convince the addressee rationally of the soundness and excellence of guidance and righteous deeds but should also create in him interest and love for them.

(2) Admonition should be administered in such a manner as to show sincere concern for and the welfare of the addressee. Nothing should be said or done to create the impression that the admonisher is looking down upon him and taking pleasure in his own feeling of superiority. On the contrary, he should feel that the admonisher is filled with the strong desire for his reform and welfare.

\*123 “In a way that is better” implies that one should have a sweet tongue, show noble character and give reasonable and appealing arguments, and refrain from indulging in polemics, argumentation and controversies. The one who discusses things with people in the best manner, does not resort to accusations, crooked arguments, taunts, nor makes fun of the opponent in order to defeat him and to win applause for his own superiority in argument. For these things will produce obduracy and obstinacy. In contrast to this, he will try to convince the other in a simple and humble way, and when he feels that the other person has come down to crooked arguments, he will leave him alone lest the other should go further and further astray in his deviation.

126. And if you punish, then punish with the like of that wherewith you were afflicted.

وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا  
عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ ۖ وَإِنَّ صَبْرَكُمْ لَهْوٌ

And if you endure patiently, that is indeed the best for those who are patient.

خَيْرٌ لِلصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

**127.** And endure you patiently (O Muhammad), and your patience is not but from Allah. And do not grieve over them, and be not in distress because of what they plot.

وَأَصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُ فِي ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

**128.** Indeed, Allah is with those who fear (Him) and those who do good.<sup>\*124</sup>

إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

**\*124** “Allah is with those who fear Him” because they scrupulously refrain from evil ways and always adopt the righteous attitude, for they know that their actions and deeds are not determined by the evils others do to them but by their own sense of righteousness; so they return good for evil.

