



Al-Anbia الأَنْبِيَاءُ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Name

The name of this Surah has not been taken from any verse but it has been called *Al-Anbiya* because it contains a continuous account of many Anbiyaa (Prophets). Nevertheless, it is a symbolic name and not a title.

Period of Revelation

Both the subject matter and the style of the Surah indicate that it was revealed in the third stage of the life of the Prophet (peace be upon him) at Makkah. (See introduction to Surah Al-Anaam).

Subject and Topics

This Surah discusses the conflict between the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the chiefs of Makkah, which was rampant at the time of its revelation and answers those objections and doubts which were being put forward concerning his Prophethood and the doctrines of Tauhid and the Hereafter. The chiefs of Makkah have also been rebuked for their machinations against the Prophet (peace be upon him) and warned of the evil consequences of their wicked activities. They have been admonished to give up their indifference and heedlessness that they were showing

about the message. At the end of the Surah, they have been told that the person whom they considered to be a distress and affliction had in reality come to them as a blessing.

Main Themes

In Ayats 1-47, the following themes have been discussed in particular.

1. The objection of the disbelievers that a human being could not be a Messenger and therefore they could not accept Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a Prophet, has been refuted.
2. They have been taken to task for raising multifarious and contradictory objections against the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Quran.
3. Their wrong conception of life has been proved to be false because it was responsible for their indifferent and heedless attitude towards the message of the Prophet (peace be upon him). They believed that life was merely a sport and pastime and had no purpose behind or before it and there was no accountability or reward or punishment.
4. The main cause of the conflict between the disbelievers and the Prophet (peace be upon him) was their insistence on the doctrine of shirk and antagonism to the doctrine of Tauhid. So the doctrine of shirk has been refuted and the doctrine of Tauhid reinforced by weighty and impressive though brief arguments.
5. Arguments and admonitions have been used to remove another misunderstanding of theirs. They presumed that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a false prophet and his warnings of a scourge from God were empty threats,

just because no scourge was visiting them in spite of their persistent rejection of the Prophet.

In Ayats 48-91, instances have been cited from the important events of the life stories of the Prophets to show that all the Prophets, who were sent by God, were human beings and had all the characteristics of a man except those which were exclusive to Prophethood. They had no share in Godhead and they had to implore Allah to fulfill each and every necessity of theirs.

Along with these two other things have also been mentioned.

1. All the Prophets had to pass through distress and affliction; their opponents did their best to thwart their mission, but in spite of it they came out successful by the extraordinary succor from Allah.

2. All the Prophets had one and the same way of life, the same as was being presented by Muhammad (peace be upon him), and that was the only right way of life and all other ways invented and introduced by mischievous people were utterly wrong.

In Ayats 92-106, it has been declared that only those who follow the right way, will come out successful in the final judgment of God and those who discard it shall meet with the worst consequences.

In Ayats 107-112, the people have been told that it is a great favor of Allah that He has sent His Messenger to inform them beforehand of this reality and that those, who consider his coming to be an affliction instead of a blessing, are foolish people.

1. Draws near for mankind their reckoning,^{*1} while they in heedlessness turn away.^{*2}

أَقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿١﴾

***1** “Draws near for mankind their reckoning”: the time of Resurrection. This is to warn the people that the time of Resurrection when they will have to appear before their Lord to render their accounts is not far. This was because the coming of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was a sign and a clear evidence of the fact that mankind had entered into the last stage of its history. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has himself explained it by holding out two of his adjoining fingers and said: I have been sent at a time which joins to the time of Resurrection just as these two fingers adjoin. By this he meant to say: No other Prophet is coming between me and the Resurrection. Therefore mend your ways now, for after me no guide is coming with good news and warning.

***2** That is, they do not pay heed to any warning nor reflect on their end nor listen to the admonition of the Messenger.

2. There does not come to them any admonition from their Lord as a new (revelation)^{*3} except they listen to it while they play.^{*4}

مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ مُّحَدَّثٍ إِلَّا اسْتَمَعُوهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٢﴾

***3** “New revelation”: A new Surah of the Quran.

***4** The words of the original text may also be interpreted as: They do not take life seriously but treat it as a sport and

a joke.

3. Their hearts distracted.
And they confer in secret.
Those who do wrong (say):
“Is this (Muhammad) other
than a man like you. Will you
then submit to magic while
you see (it).”^{*5}

لَا هِيَ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَأَسْرُوا النَّجْوَى
الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا هَلْ هَذَا إِلَّا بَشْرٌ
مِثْلُكُمْ أَفَتَأْتُونَ السِّحْرَ
وَأَنْتُمْ تَبْصِرُونَ



^{*5} This may also be translated as: What, are you then being ensnared by his magic?

The disbelievers, who were the chiefs of Makkah, whispered to one another to this effect: Anyhow this man cannot be a Prophet because he is a human being like us and eats and drinks and has wife and children like us. We see nothing unusual about him that might distinguish him from us and make him worthy of the office of Prophethood. We, however, admit that there is some magic in his talk and personality. That is why anyone who listens to him or goes near Him is charmed. Therefore, the best thing for you is not to listen to him at all, nor go near him, for listening to him or going near him will only be involving yourselves intentionally in his snare.

The reason why they accused the Prophet (peace be upon him) of practicing magic was that even his antagonists were charmed by his personality when they met him. Muhammad bin Ishaq (152 A.H.) says: Once Utbah bin Rabiah, the father-in-law of Abu Sufyan, said to the chiefs that he wanted to see Muhammad and give him counsel.

They said: We have full confidence in you. You may go and have a talk with him. Accordingly, he went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said: Dear nephew, you know that you were held in great honor here before this and you belong to a noble family. Why have you then brought this affliction to your people? You have caused discard among them. You consider your people to be fools. You speak ill of their religion and deities, and you declare their deceased forefathers to be disbelievers. My dear nephew, if your object is to become a rich man, we can give you so much wealth that you will become the richest man among us. If you are seeking a high rank, we will make you our chief, even our king, if you so like. But if you are suffering from a mental illness which makes you see illusions, we will have you treated by the best physicians. He went on talking in this strain and the Prophet (peace be upon him) remained silent. When he was done talking, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Abul Walid, have you had your say or do you want to say anything more? He replied that he had said what he had to say. Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Now listen to me. And he began to recite Surah Ha-Mim-Sajdah after Bismillah and Utbah listened to him as if he had been charmed. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) came to Ayat 38, he fell down in prostration. Then raising his head, he said: O Abul Walid, I have said whatever I had to say, and you have heard it. Now I have nothing more to say. After this Utbah walked back towards the chiefs who perceived him to be a changed man and remarked: By God, his face shows that he is not the same

man that he was when he went from here. When he came to them, they asked: What has been the result of your mission? He answered: By God, today I have heard a thing the like of which I had never heard before. By Allah! It is not poetry nor sorcery nor divination. O people of Quraish, I advise you to leave him to himself. From what I have heard from him, I conclude that his message is going to bring about a great revolution here. If the Arabs overcome him, you will stand absolved from the charge of murdering your own brother, and if he overpowers the Arabs, his sovereignty will be your own sovereignty and his honor your own honor. The people answered: By God, you too, O Abul Walid, have been charmed by him. To this he replied: I have expressed my opinion. Now it is for you to accept or reject it. (Ibn Hisham, Vol. I, pp. 313-314). Baihaqi, in his narration of the above event, makes this addition: When the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited Ayat 13: If they turn away from your message, say to them, I have warned you of the coming of a thunderbolt like the thunderbolt that visited the Aad and the Thamud, Utbah placed his hand on the mouth of the Prophet (peace be upon him), saying: For God's sake, have mercy on your own people.

In this connection, ibn Ishaq has cited another event. Once a man from the clan of Arash came to Makkah with some camels and Abu Jahl bought them. When he demanded their price, he put him off by lame excuses. At last the man came to the Sanctuary of the Kabah and began to bewail publicly the dishonesty of Abu Jahl. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was also sitting in a corner of the Sanctuary. The

chiefs of the Quraish said to the man: We cannot help you in any way in this matter; look, there is a man sitting: go to him and he will get you your money. Accordingly, the Arashi went towards the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the chiefs began to whisper jokingly: Today there will be great fun. When the man expressed his complaint before the Prophet (peace be upon him), he at once stood up and accompanied him to the house of Abu Jahl, followed by an informer of the chiefs. The Prophet (peace be upon him) knocked at Abu Jahl's door, who asked from inside: Who is there? He answered: Muhammad. Hearing this, he at once came out and the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him: Pay this man his dues. Abu Jahl went in without uttering a word, brought the price of the camels and paid the man. At this the informer ran back to the Quraish and told them the whole story and said: By God, today I have seen something which I had never seen before. When Abu Jahl came out, Muhammad asked him to pay the dues, and he obeyed him as if he were spell bound. (Ibn Hisham, Vol. II, pp. 29-30). It was this charm of the personality, character and words of the Prophet (peace be upon him) which these people considered to be the effects of charm and warned the people not to go near him for fear of his magic.

4. He (Muhammad) said: "My Lord knows whatever is said in the heavens and the earth. And He is the All Hearer, the All Knower."*6


قَالَ رَبِّي يَعْلَمُ الْقَوْلَ فِي السَّمَاءِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ



*6 This was the answer of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to their false propaganda and whispering campaign. Instead of giving a tit for tat answer, he said: My Lord will deal with you for He hears everything and knows everything.

5. But they say: “(The revelations are but) mixed up dreams. Rather, he has invented it. Rather, he is a poet.*7 Let him then bring to us a sign like the ones that were sent to (the prophets) of old.”

بَلْ قَالُوا أَضْغَتْ أَحْلَمَ بَلِ
أَفْتَرَهُ بَلْ هُوَ شَاعِرٌ فَلْيَأْتِنَا
بِآيَةٍ كَمَا أُرْسِلَ الْأَوَّلُونَ



*7 The background of this verse is this: When the message of the Prophet (peace be upon him) started gaining adherents, the chiefs of Makkah decided among themselves to start a propaganda campaign to counteract it. For this purpose they decided that every visitor to Makkah for pilgrimage should be approached and his mind so poisoned against the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he does not even go near and listen to him. Though this campaign continued throughout the year, in the pilgrimage season specially a large number of men were deputed to go to the tents of the pilgrims to warn them to beware of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Different sorts of things were said against the Prophet (peace be upon him) during these talks. Sometimes it was said that he was a sorcerer or that he had fabricated the Quran by himself but attributed it to Allah. Some would say that his revelations were the words

of an insane person and a bundle of incoherent ideas. Others would say that these were ordinary poetic ideas which were being dubbed as the words of Allah. All they wanted to do was to poison the minds of the visitors irrespective of the correctness of their own versions. They had no considered and definite opinion in the matter.

This false propaganda, however, had just the opposite effect. The name of the Prophet (peace be upon him) became known throughout the country through the nefarious activities of the chiefs of Makkah. A positive kind of approach from the Muslims would not have achieved the same publicity in years as was achieved so rapidly through this negative campaign of the Quraish. It made everybody thinking: After all, who is this man against whom such a campaign of vilification has been started? The serious type among them rather came to the conclusion that they must hear to the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself and said to themselves: After all we are not children who can be easily enticed away.

For instance, Ibn Ishaq has related in detail the story of Tufail-bin-Amr Dausi in his own words: I was a poet of the clan of Daus. Once I went to Makkah and was, on my arrival there, surrounded by some people of the Quraish who told me all sorts of things against the Prophet (peace be upon him). So I grew suspicious and tried to avoid him as much as possible. The very next day, when I went to visit the Sanctuary, I saw him saying his prayer. I heard a few sentences and felt that what he was reciting were excellent words. I said to myself: I am a poet and a sensible young

man and no child who cannot discriminate between the right and the wrong. Why should I not therefore meet him and inquire what he is reciting? Accordingly, I followed him to his house and said: The people had so much poisoned me against you that I had actually put cotton into my ears lest I should hear your voice, but what I have heard today from you was so appealing that I feel urged to inquire into your message rather in detail. At this the Prophet (peace be upon him) recited a passage of the Quran. As a result of which I embraced Islam there and then. On my return home I induced my father and wife to become Muslims, which they did, and then invited the people of my clan to embrace Islam with the result that by time of the battle of the Trench, as many as eighty families from my clan had entered the fold of Islam. (Ibn Hisham, Vol. II, pp. 22-24).

According to another tradition cited by Ibn Ishaq, the chiefs of the Quraish confessed in their private meetings that all their charges against the Prophet (peace be upon him) were false. According to him, addressing a meeting, Nadr bin Harith once said: You cannot overcome Muhammad by the methods you are adopting against him. When he was a young man you regarded him as your best-mannered person and looked upon him as your most truthful and honest man. Now that he has attained advanced age, you say, he is a sorcerer, he is a soothsayer, he is a poet, he is insane. By God, he is not a sorcerer, for we very well know what kind of people the sorcerers are and what kind of tricks they resort to. By God, he is not a

soothsayer, for we are fully aware of the guess works of the soothsayers. By God, he is not a poet for we know what poetry is and can judge that his words cannot be classified under poetry in any sense. By God, he is not insane, for we all know what nonsensical things the insane people utter. Therefore, O chiefs of the Quraish, let us think of some other plan to defeat him. After this, he himself proposed that stories from Persia like those of Rustam and Asfandyar should be given publicity to divert the people's attention from the Quran. Accordingly, they put this scheme into practice and Nadr himself began to relate such stories before the people. (Ibn Hisham, Vol. 1, pp. 320-321).

6. Not any township which We destroyed believed before them. Will they then believe.*8

مَا ءَامَنْتَ قَبْلَهُمْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا أَفَهُمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ

*8 This contains a concise answer to the demand for a sign in the previous verse.

(1) You ask for signs like the ones which were shown by the former Messengers but you forget that those obdurate people did not believe in spite of the signs shown to them.

(2) While demanding a sign, you fail to realize that the people, who disbelieved even after seeing a sign, were inevitably destroyed.

(3) It is indeed a favor of Allah that He is not showing the sign as demanded by you. Therefore, the best course for you would be to believe without seeing a sign. Otherwise, you will meet the same doom that the former communities met, when they did not believe even after seeing the signs.

7. And We did not send before you (O Muhammad) except men, to whom We revealed (the message).^{*9} So ask the people of the reminder if you do not know.^{*10}

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا
نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ
الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ



***9** This is the answer to their objection: This man is no more than a human being like yourselves, and therefore, cannot be a Messenger of God. They have been told that the former Prophets, too, whom you also recognize as Prophets, were human beings and were blessed with revelations from Allah.

***10** That is, you may have it testified by the Jews, who are the enemies of Islam like you, and are teaching you the ways to oppose it, that all the Messengers including Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) were human beings.

8. And We did not give them bodies that would not eat food, nor were they immortals.

وَمَا جَعَلْنَاهُمْ جَسَدًا لَا
يَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ وَمَا كَانُوا
خَالِدِينَ



9. Then We fulfilled the promise to them. So We saved them and those whom We willed, and We destroyed those who transgressed beyond bounds.^{*11}

ثُمَّ صَدَقْنَاهُمُ الْوَعْدَ فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُمْ
وَمَنْ نَشَاءُ وَأَهْلَكْنَا الْمُسْرِفِينَ



***11** History not only tells us that the former Messengers were human beings but it also contains a lesson that they all received Allah's succor as promised by Him and their enemies were completely destroyed. Therefore you should seriously consider the goal for which you are heading.

10. Indeed, We have sent down to you the Book (the Quran), wherein is your reminder. Will you not then understand.^{*12}

لَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ كِتَابًا فِيهِ
ذِكْرُكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

***12** This is a comprehensive answer to the various objections which were being raised in desperation by the disbelievers of Makkah against the Quran and the Prophet (peace be upon him), as if to say: What is there in this Book that you cannot understand? Why don't you consider it in the right spirit? There is nothing contradictory in it. It discusses you and your own problems and affairs of life. It describes your own nature, origin and end. It discriminates between good and evil and presents high moral qualities which your own consciences endorse and confirm. Why don't you, then, use your minds to understand this simple and easy thing?

11. And how many among township have We destroyed that were wrong doers, and We raised up after them another people.

وَكَمَ قَصَمْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ كَانَتْ
ظَالِمَةً وَأَنْشَأْنَا بَعْدَهَا قَوْمًا
ءَاخِرِينَ

12. Then, when they perceived Our punishment,^{*13} behold, they (tried to) flee from it.

فَلَمَّا أَحْسَبُوا بِأَسْنَاءِ إِذَا هُمْ مِنْهَا
يَرْكُضُونَ

***13** That is, when they realized that Allah's scourge was actually coming.

13. "Flee not, and return to that wherein you lived a luxurious life, and (to) your dwellings, perhaps you will be questioned."^{*14}

لَا تَرْكُضُوا وَأَرْجِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَا
أُتْرِفْتُمْ فِيهِ وَمَسْكِنِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُسْأَلُونَ

***14** This is a very meaningful sentence. It may mean:
(1) Examine this scourge minutely so that if someone asks you about it, you may be able to give an accurate account of it.
(2) Hold your grand meetings as usual. Perhaps your servants may come with folded hands before you to receive orders.
(3) Hold your councils as before, perhaps people may still come to ask for your wise counsels.

14. They said: "O woe to us, indeed we were wrongdoers."

قَالُوا يَوَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ

15. So that crying of theirs did not cease, until We made them as a field

فَمَا زَالَتْ تِلْكَ دَعْوَتُهُمْ حَتَّىٰ
جَعَلْنَاهُمْ حَصِيدًا خَامِدِينَ

that is reaped, extinct.



16. And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them for a play.^{*15}

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ
وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَعِبِينَ

***15** This was to refute their entire conception of life which was based on the assumption that man was free to do whatever he liked, and there was none to call him to account or take him to task: that there was no life in the Hereafter where one's good deeds would be rewarded and evil deeds punished. In other words, this meant that the whole universe had been created without any serious purpose and therefore there was no need to pay any heed to the message of the Prophet.

17. If We had intended that We take a pastime, We could surely have taken it in Our presence, if We were going to do (that).^{*16}

لَوْ أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نَتَّخِذَ هَوًا
لَأَتَّخِذْنَاهُ مِنْ لَدُنَّا إِنْ كُنَّا
فَاعِلِينَ

***16** That is, this world has been created with a definite purpose and not as a plaything. For, if We had wanted to enjoy a sport, We would have done so without creating a sentient, rational and responsible creature like you. Far be it from Us to put man to trial and conflict for the sake of mere fun.

18. But We fling the truth against the falsehood, so it

بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى الْبَاطِلِ

crushes it, then behold, it is vanished. And woe to you for that (lie) which you ascribe.*17

فَيَدْمَغُهُ فَإِذَا هُوَ زَاهِقٌ وَلَكُمْ
الْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

*17 That is, the object for which this world has been created is to stage a conflict between the truth and falsehood. And you yourselves know that in this conflict falsehood has always been defeated and destroyed. You should, therefore, consider this reality seriously. For, if you build the system of your life on the false presumption that it is mere fun, you will meet with the same consequences as the former people did, who presumed that the world was a mere show and pastime. Therefore you should reconsider your whole attitude towards the message which has come to you. Instead of making fun of it and scoffing at the Messenger, you should take a warning from the fate of the former peoples.

19. And to Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth.*18 And those who are with Him (angels)*19 are not too proud to worship Him, nor are they weary (of His worship).*20

وَلَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ
عِبَادَتِهِ وَلَا يَسْتَحْسِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

*18 From here begins the discourse on the confirmation of Tauhid and the refutation of shirk for these were the actual bases of the conflict between the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the disbelievers of Makkah. The line of argument is this: The whole system of the universe is a clear proof

that there is One Allah Who is its Creator, Sovereign, Ruler, and Lord and it is a falsehood that there are many gods who are partners in His Kingdom and Sovereignty, or that there is a Supreme God Who has under Him some minor gods to conduct the affairs of His Kingdom. This proof is also based on the preceding verses in which it has been stated that the universe has not been created as a pastime or a plaything, but for a serious purpose and that there has always been a conflict between the truth and falsehood, and falsehood has always been defeated and destroyed.

*19 That is, the angels whom the mushriks of Arabia believed to be the children of God and worshiped them as partners in Godhead.

*20 That is, they are engaged in His service day and night without grumbling or ever feeling wearied.

20. They glorify His praises night and day, they do not slacken (to do so).

يُسَبِّحُونَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ

21. Or have they taken gods from the earth who can resurrect (the dead).^{*21}

أَمْ آتَّخَذُوا ءِالِهَةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ هُمْ يُنْشِرُونَ

*21 This question has been posed to bring home to the disbelievers that when they themselves believed that there is no being other than Allah who can give life to inanimate matter, why do they then acknowledge other deities besides Allah?

22. If there were therein gods besides Allah, then they both (the heavens and earth) would have been ruined.*²² So glorified be Allah, the Lord of the Throne,*²³ from what they ascribe (to Him).

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهَا إِلَهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
لَفَسَدَتَا ۗ فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

***22** This concise sentence contains two arguments:

(1) The obviously simple argument is that no institution, no household, not to speak of the vast universe containing multitudes of countless distant stars, can function smoothly and properly, if it has two masters.

(2) The deeper argument is that the system of the whole universe, including that of the earth, is functioning according to a universal law. It could not work so even for a moment, if there had been no proper proportion, balance, harmony and coordination between the different powers and countless things. This is a clear proof that there is a universal and all powerful law and system which binds and forces these powers and things to cooperate and coordinate between themselves with a perfect proportion and harmony and this could not have happened if there had been different independent rulers. The existence of such a system is itself a clear proof that there must be One All Powerful Manager and Administrator governing and ruling the entire universe. For further details, please see E. N. 47 of Surah Bani-Israil.

***23** That is, The Sovereign of the whole universe.

23. He will not be questioned as to what He does, and they will be questioned.

لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ



24. Or have they taken besides Him gods. Say (O Muhammad): “Bring your proof. This (Quran) is the admonition for those with me and admonition (in scriptures) for those before me.”^{*24} But most of them do not know the truth, so they have turned away.^{*25}

أَمْ آتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ ءِآلِهَةً قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ هَذَا ذِكْرٌ مَن مَّعِيَ وَذِكْرٌ مِّن قَبْلِي بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْحَقَّ فَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ



***24** The first two were rational arguments and this is a historical one. This means that the study of all the former Scriptures shows that the Creator of the universe is One Allah and He alone is worthy of service and worship, while your religion is neither supported by rational arguments nor by historical evidence.

***25** It is their lack of the knowledge of the reality which has created this indifference towards the message of the Prophet, and the same has made them heedless of the message.

25. And We did not send before you any messenger except that We revealed to him that, “There is no god

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيْ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا

except Me, so worship Me.”

إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾

26. And they say: “The Beneficent has taken a son.” Be He glorified. But they are honored slaves. *26

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا
سُبْحٰنَهُ ۗ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

*26 Here it refers to the angels as is clear from Ayat 28. The disbelievers of Arabia believed that the angels were the daughters of God.

27. They do not precede Him in speech, and they act by His command.

لَا يَسْبِقُونَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ
بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28. He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot intercede except for him whom He is pleased with. And they, for fear of Him stand in awe. *27

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ
وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنْ
أَرْتَضَىٰ وَهُمْ مِّنْ خَشْيَتِهِ
مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

*27 These two verses refute the two reasons for which the mushriks had made the angels their deities:

- (1) They took them for the offspring of Allah.
- (2) They thought that if they worshiped the angels, they would be so pleased that they would intercede with Allah on their behalf. (See Surah Yunus, Ayat 18; Surah Az-

Zumur, Ayat 3).

In this connection, it should also be noted that the Quran refutes the doctrine of intercession of the mushriks, saying, that their so called intercessors are not qualified to intercede for anyone. This is so because they have no knowledge of the hidden things, whereas Allah knows all that is hidden from or open to them. Therefore, the angels or Prophets or saints shall be allowed intercession only with the prior permission of Allah. As Allah alone has the power to hear or accept intercession, none else is entitled to divine worship or rights. For further details, please see Surah TaaHa, E. Ns 85-86.

29. And whoever of them should say: "Indeed I am a god other than Him." Then such a one We shall recompense with Hell. Thus do We recompense the wrongdoers.

وَمَنْ يَقُلْ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّي إِلَهٌ مِّنْ دُونِهِ فَذَلِكَ نَجْزِيهِ جَهَنَّمَ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30. And have those, who disbelieved, not seen that the heavens and the earth were joined together, then We parted them.^{*28} And We made from water every living thing.^{*29} Will they not then believe.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا^ط وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ^ط أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

***28** From the wording of the text, it appears that at first the whole universe was a single mass of matter; then it was split into different parts and the earth and the other heavenly bodies were formed. For more details, please see Surah HaMim, E.Ns 13-15.

***29** From the wording of the text, it appears that Allah made water the cause and origin of life. See also Surah An-Nur, Ayat 45.

31. And We have placed in the earth firm mountains lest it should shake with them,^{*30} and We have made therein broad highways to pass through,^{*31} that they may be guided.^{*32}

وَجَعَلْنَا فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ
تَمِيدَ بِهِمْ وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا فِجَاجًا
سُبُلًا لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ

***30** For explanation, see E. N. 12 of Surah An-Nahl.

***31** “Broad highways” are the passes between high mountains and the valleys and ravines made by the rivers in the mountainous regions and other natural ways that connect different regions on the earth.

***32** This is a very meaningful sentence. It may mean that the people may find paths for traveling on the earth, and it may also mean that the wisdom that underlies the skill and the system of their creation may guide them to the reality.

32. And We have made the heaven a secure canopy,^{*33} and yet they turn away from its signs.^{*34}

وَجَعَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ سَقْفًا مَّحْفُوظًا
وَهُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهَا مُعْرِضُونَ

***33** For explanation, see Surah Al-Hijr, E. Ns 8 and 10-12.

***34** That is, those signs which are in the sky.

33. And He it is who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. Each in an orbit floating.^{*35}

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ
وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ^ط كُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ
يَسْبَحُونَ

***35** The use of the words *kullun* (all) and *yasbahun* (float) in the plural (for more than two) indicates that not only the sun and the moon but all the heavenly bodies are floating in their own separate orbits and none of them is fixed or stationary. These verses (30-33) are capable of being interpreted in the modern scientific terms in accordance with the present day conceptions of Physics, Biology and Astronomy.

Here it should also be noted that verses 19-23 refute shirk while verses 30-33 present positive proofs of Tauhid. They imply that the creation and regular functioning of the universe clearly show that it is the work of One All-Powerful Creator, and no sensible person can say that it has been created as a mere pastime for the sake of fun. When the fact is this and you see proofs of the doctrine of Tauhid all around you, in the earth and heavens, why do you reject the message of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and demand other signs from him.

34. And^{*36} We did not grant to any human being immortality before you (O Muhammad), then if you

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا لِبَشَرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ
الْخُلْدَ^ط أَفَأَيْنَ مَتَّ فَهُمْ

die, would they live forever.

الْحٰلِدُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

***36** From here the same theme of the conflict between the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the disbelievers, that was interrupted by verses 19-33, has been resumed.

35. Every soul must taste death.^{*37} And We test you by evil and by good as a trial.^{*38} And unto Us you will be returned.

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ
وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً
وَالَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

***37** This is a brief answer to all those warnings and curses with which the Prophet (peace be upon him) was being threatened and the conspiracies which the Quraish were hatching against him day and night. On the one hand, the women of the Quraish cursed him because according to them he had ruined their home life by enticing away their kith and kits. While on the other hand, the chiefs of the Quraish threatened him with horrible consequences for the propagation of Islam. After the emigration to Habash especially, which almost affected every home of Makkah, these curses and threats increased all the more. This verse is meant to comfort and console the Prophet (peace be upon him) as well so that he should continue his mission without any fear of their threats.

***38** That is, Allah is always putting human beings to test and trial both through adversity and affluence. This is to judge whether prosperity makes them proud, cruel and slaves of their lusts or they become grateful to Allah. On

the other hand, He inflicts adversity upon them in order to see whether they remain within the prescribed and lawful limits or become low-spirited and down-hearted. A sensible person therefore should not be deluded by prosperity and adversity, but should keep their trial element in view and try to pass through it gracefully.

36. And when those who disbelieve see you (Muhammad), they take you not except for mockery (saying): “Is this he who talks about your gods.”^{*39} While they, at the mention of the Beneficent, they disbelieve.^{*40}

وَإِذَا رَأَىكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ
يَتَّخِذُونَكَ إِلَّا هُزُوءًا أَهْدَا
الَّذِي يَذْكُرُ ءَالِهَتَكُمْ وَهُمْ
بِذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ هُمْ
كَافِرُونَ



***39** It should be noted that this sentence contains only the reason why they scoffed at him, but does not refer to the expression of scoff itself. Obviously, the disbelievers must have been using some other words or expressions of derision to avenge themselves on the Prophet (peace be upon him) for his rejecting their self-made deities.

***40** This is to rebuke the disbelievers as if to say: You cherish so much love of your self-made idols and false gods that you cannot tolerate anything against them. So much so, that you scoff at the Messenger of Allah, and you are not ashamed when you hear the name of the Merciful and discard His mention with disdain.

37. Man is created of haste.^{*41} I shall soon show

خُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ مِنْ عَجَلٍ

you My signs, so ask Me
not to hasten.*42

سَأُورِيكُمْ
آيَاتِي فَلَا
تَسْتَعْجِلُونِ

*41 This is not the literal translation of the text; its purport according to the Arabic usage is: Man is a hasty and impatient creature by his very nature. The same thing has been stated in Surah Al-Isra, Ayat 11: Man is very hasty and impatient.

*42 From the succeeding sentences it is obvious that signs here stands for the things that have been mentioned therein, the threat of the scourge of Allah, Resurrection and Hell. They made fun of these, as if to say: This man threatens us with the scourge of Allah and the torment of the Day of Resurrection if we deny him and that we shall become fuel of Hell, but nothing of the sort has befallen us. We are as strong as ever and nothing seems to be happening.

38. And they say: “When
will this promise be
(fulfilled), if you are
truthful.”

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

39. If those who
disbelieved only knew the
time when they will not
be able to drive off the
fire from their faces, nor
from their backs, nor will
they be helped.

لَوْ يَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا حِينَ لَا
يَكْفُونِ عَنْ وُجُوهِهِمُ النَّارَ
وَلَا عَنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يُنصَرُونَ

40. But it will come upon them unexpectedly and will perplex them, then they will not be able to repel it, neither will they be reprieved.

بَلْ تَأْتِيهِمْ بَغْتَةً فَتَبْهَتُهُمْ فَلَا
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ رَدَّهَا وَلَا هُمْ
يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41. And indeed, messengers were ridiculed before you, so those who mocked them (the messengers) were surrounded by that (punishment) which they used to ridicule.

وَلَقَدْ اسْتَهْزِئُ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن
قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا
مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

42. Say: “Who can protect you at the night and the day from the Beneficent.”*43 But they are turning away from the remembrance of their Lord.

قُلْ مَن يَكْلُؤُكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ
وَالنَّهَارِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَنِ بَلْ هُمْ
عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

*43 That is to say, who is there to protect and save you from the scourge of Allah if you are suddenly visited by it any time during the night or day.

43. Or do they have gods who can guard them against Us. They have no power to help themselves,

أَمْ لَهُمْ ءَالِهَةٌ تَمْنَعُهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِنَا
لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَ

nor can they be protected from Us.

أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ مِّنَّا
يُصْحَبُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44. But We gave the luxuries of this life to these and their fathers until life prolonged for them.^{*44} Then do they not see that We gradually reduce the land from its outlying borders.^{*45} Is it then they who will overcome.^{*46}

بَلْ مَتَّعْنَا هَؤُلَاءِ وِءَابَاءَهُمْ
حَتَّىٰ طَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْعُمُرُ أَفَلَا
يَرَوْنَ أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ
نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا أَفَهُمْ
الْغَالِبُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

***44** In other words it means: These people have been deluded by Our favor and Our provisions. They think they are enjoying prosperity and good life as their personal right and there is none to take it away from them. They have forgotten that there is God above them Who is able to make or mar their fortune.

***45** In this connection, see Surah Ar-Raad, Ayat 41 and E.N. 60 thereof. Here it bears an additional meaning also: Do they not see that an All-Powerful Being is showing His signs every now and then everywhere on the earth in the form of famines, epidemics, floods, earthquakes and other calamities. Millions of people are killed, habitations and harvests are destroyed and other damages are caused, which frustrate all human designs?

***46** It means: When they know that all the resources and

provisions of life are in Our hands and that We can increase or decrease them as We will, do they have the power and strength to defend themselves against Our punishment? Can they not see from these signs that their power, prosperity and luxury are not everlasting and that there is an All-Powerful Allah to seize and punish them.

45. Say (O Muhammad): “I warn you only by the revelation.” And the deaf do not hear the call whenever they are warned.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أُنذِرُكُمْ بِالْوَحْيِ
وَلَا يَسْمَعُ الصُّمُّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا مَا
يُنذَرُونَ

46. And if a breath of your Lord’s punishment were to touch them,^{*47} they assuredly would say: “O woe to us, indeed we have been wrongdoers.”

وَلِئِنْ مَسَّتْهُمُ نَفْحَةٌ مِّنْ عَذَابِ
رَبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ يَوَيْلَنَا إِنَّا
كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ

*47 That is, the same scourge which they are demanding to be hastened and of which they are making fun.

47. And We shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, so not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it forth. And sufficient are We as Reckoners.^{*48}

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ
الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا
وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ
خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَى بِنَا
حَسِيبِينَ

***48** See also verses 8-9 and E.Ns 8-9 of Surah Al-Aaraf. It is difficult for us to understand the exact nature of the balance. Anyhow, it is clear that the balance will weigh accurately all the human moral deeds instead of material things, and will help judge whether a man is virtuous or wicked and how much. The Quran has used this word to make mankind understand that every deed, good or bad, will be weighed and judged according to merit.

48. And surely,^{*49} We gave Moses and Aaron the criterion and a light and a reminder^{*50} for the righteous.^{*51}

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ
الْفُرْقَانَ وَضِيَاءً وَذِكْرًا
لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ



***49** From here begin the stories of the Prophets. If we consider these stories in the context in which they occur, it becomes clear that these have been related to impress the following themes.

(1) All the former Prophets were human beings. Therefore there is nothing strange or unusual that a human being like Muhammad (peace be upon him) has been sent as a Messenger.

(2) The mission and teachings of this Prophet are the same as of those who were sent before him.

(3) All the Prophets had been granted a privileged position by Allah, Who blessed them with special favors. For instance, though they were made to suffer from hardships and persecutions for years, ultimately Allah heard their prayers and helped them in miraculous ways against their

enemies and persecutors.

(4) In spite of Allah's special favors on them they were no more than His humble servants and human beings and had no share whatever in Godhead. So much so that sometimes they committed errors of judgment, fell ill, were put to trials and even committed faults, for which they were called to account by Allah.

***50** All the three words have been used in praise of the Torah:

(1) *Alfurqan*: A criterion which distinguished the truth from falsehood.

(2) *Dhiaun*: A light which showed the right way of life.

(3) *Zikrun*: An admonition, which reminded the erring descendants of Adam to remember the lesson they had forgotten.

***51** Though it was sent for the good of all human beings, only the pious people, having these characteristics, could benefit from it.

49. Those who fear their Lord in unseen, and they are afraid of the Hour. ^{*52}

الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ
وَهُمْ مِنْ
السَّاعَةِ
مُشْفِقُونَ

***52** The Hour of Resurrection.

50. And this is a blessed reminder (the Quran) which We have sent down. Will you then reject it.

وَهَذَا ذِكْرٌ مُبَارَكٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ أَفَأَنْتُمْ
لَهُ مُنْكَرُونَ

51. And indeed, We gave Abraham his guidance before, and We were well acquainted with him.*53

﴿ وَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ رُشْدَهُ
مِنْ قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا بِهِ عَالِمِينَ ﴾

*53 The Arabic word *rushd* is very comprehensive and means righteousness as well.

We had blessed Abraham with discretion: The discretion he showed in discriminating between the right and the wrong etc. was not of his own acquirement but had been bestowed on him by Us.

We knew him well: We knew that he was worthy of Prophethood, therefore We appointed him as such. According to Surah Al-Anaam, Ayat 124: Allah knows best whom to entrust with His Mission. It contains a subtle answer to the objection raised by the chiefs of the Quraish: Why has Allah appointed this man, the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the office of Prophethood, when he is in no way superior to us. This objection has been answered, as if to say: The same objection might even have been raised against Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) by his people, but We knew his capabilities. Therefore We selected him for Prophethood.

In this connection, please also see Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayats 124-141, 258-260: Surah Al-Anaam, Ayats 74-84: Surah At-Tauba, Ayat 114: Surah Houd, Ayats 69-76: Surah Ibrahim, Ayats 35-41: Surah Al-Hijr, Ayats 51-58 and Surah An-Nahal, Ayats 120-122 and the E.Ns thereof.

52. When^{*54} he said to his father and his

﴿ إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا هَذِهِ ﴾

people: “What are these images, those to which you are devoted.”

الْتَّمَاثِيلُ الَّتِي أَنْتُمْ هَاهَا
عَبِكُفُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

***54** Before proceeding further, it should be kept in mind that the incident from the history of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) has been cited here to refute the erroneous creeds of the Quraish. This was meant to hit them hard for they were the descendants of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) and were proud of their relationship with him. It was he who had built the Kabah which had become the center of the entire Arabia and they, being its keepers, were its most important clan. Therefore, they could not remain indifferent to this answer.

53. They said: “We found our fathers worshipping of them.”

قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا ءَابَاءَنَا هَاهَا
عَبِدِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54. He said: “Indeed you have been, you and your fathers, in manifest error.”

قَالَ لَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ
وَءَابَاؤُكُمْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

55. They said: “Have you brought us the truth, or are you of those who jest.”^{*55}

قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا بِالْحَقِّ أَمْ أَنْتَ مِنَ
الِّلَّعِينِ ﴿٥٥﴾

***55** The literal translation will be: Are you presenting the truth before us, or just playing with us? They were so sure of the truth of their creed that they could never imagine

that anyone could be serious in declaring it to be false.

56. He said: “But your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, He who created them. And I am, to that, among those who testify.”

قَالَ بَلْ رَبُّكُمْ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ الَّذِي فَطَرَهُنَّ وَأَنَا
عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ



57. “And by Allah, I certainly have a plan (against) your idols after that you have turned (and) gone away.”*56

وَتَاللَّهِ لَأَكِيدَنَّ أَصْنَامَكُمْ
بَعْدَ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا مُدْبِرِينَ



*56 That is, if you do not understand this by argument, I will present a practical proof that these idols are helpless and have no powers. Therefore, it is wrong to make them your deities.

58. So he reduced them into pieces,*57 except the biggest of them, that they might turn to it.*58

فَجَعَلَهُمْ جُذَاذًا إِلَّا كَبِيرًا
لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ يَرْجِعُونَ



*57 This was that practical proof. In the absence of the priests and attendants, Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) entered their central Temple and broke all the idols to pieces.

*58 The pronoun in the original text may be translated into

it or him. In the former case, it will refer to the chief idol and in the latter to Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). In the first case, it will imply a subtle sarcasm in order to make them realize that their creed of idol worship was foolish, for obviously the chief idol could not break the minor idols. In the second case, it will refer to Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), who thought that they might turn to him about the incident and he might get an opportunity to have a frank talk with them about their absurd creed.

59. They said: “Who has done this to our gods. Indeed, he is surely of the wrongdoers.”

قَالُوا مَنْ فَعَلَ هَذَا بِإِلٰهِنَا
 إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

60. They said: “We heard a young man mentioning of them, who is called Abraham.”

قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا فَتًى يَذُكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ
 لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ

61. They said: “Then bring him before the eyes of the people that they may testify.”^{*59}

قَالُوا فَآتُوا بِهِ عَلَىٰ أَعْيُنِ
 النَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْهَدُونَ

***59** This was exactly what Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) expected to happen. He wished that the matter should not remain confined to the priests and the attendants but the common people also should be present there to witness that their deities were helpless and their priests were deluding them about their powers. The priests committed the same folly as was later committed by

Pharaoh when he arranged an encounter between Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) and the magicians in the open in front of the multitudes of the common people, and the former got an opportunity to show publicly the miracle of the staff which shattered the illusory, magical tricks of the magicians.

62. They said: “Is it you who has done this to our gods, O Abraham.”

قَالُوا ءَأَنْتَ فَعَلْتَ هَذَا بِءِآلِهَتِنَا

يَتَّبِرْهِيمُ ﴿٢٣﴾

63. He said: “But this has done it, biggest of them, this one. So ask them, if they can speak.”^{*60}

قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُ كَبِيرُهُمْ هَذَا
فَسْأَلُوهُمْ إِنْ كَانُوا

يَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

^{*60} The very sentence, “So ask them, if they can speak”, is a clear proof that it was not a lie when Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) said: “But this has done it, biggest of them, this one”. What he intended by this was to make them realize and confess that their idols were helpless because they could do nothing to protect themselves and could not even speak. It is clear that when a person poses an unreal question for the sake of argument in order to bring home the fact that the position taken by the other party is untenable, it cannot be considered as a lie; firstly, because the speaker himself never intended it to be a lie, and secondly, because the addressees also knew that it was not a lie.

The foregoing remarks have been necessitated because of a tradition that Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) told three lies in his life, of which one is the above mentioned event. The second lie is contained in SURah As-Saffaat, Ayat 89: I am indisposed, and the third lie is not contained in the Quran but in the Bible that he declared his wife to be his sister. (Gen. 12:12,13, 18;19). It is a pity that this tradition has given rise to two divergent opinions. The orthodox traditionalists actually believe that Prophet Abraham told these lies just because an authentic tradition says so. They do not consider that it is far better to discard the tradition according to which a Prophet is accused of being a liar. On the other hand, those who are against the traditions, discard all of them just because this solitary tradition, which has been reported as authentic by Bukhari and Muslim, is unreliable on the very face of it. Obviously it needs no elaborate arguments to prove that all the traditions cannot be discarded just because one or a few of them are unreliable. As regards the upholders of the first opinion, they have gone to the other extreme and think that a tradition can be discarded in spite of the authenticity of its reporters for cogent reasons. They do this without reference to the contents of the tradition itself. But if the text of the tradition itself clearly shows that such a thing could not have been said by the Prophet (peace be upon him), there is no reason to insist that it should be accepted as authentic merely because its reporters are authentic.

This, tradition is unreliable for other reasons also. As has already been shown, the first lie is no lie at all. As regards

the second lie, “I am indisposed”; it cannot be considered as a lie unless it is proved beyond doubt that Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) was perfectly healthy at that time, and the text does not testify this. As regards the third lie, the event stated in the Bible in chapter 12 of Genesis is absurd on the face of it. When Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) went to Egypt with his wife Sarah, he was, according to the Bible itself, 75 years old and his wife was 65. Therefore the very age of Sarah is a clear proof that she could not be a fair woman to look upon to force Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) to pose that she was his sister in order to save his life. The tradition under discussion, which accuses Prophet Abraham to be guilty of telling a lie, has accordingly no basis at all and cannot be taken as reliable in spite of its authentic reporters.

64. So they turned to themselves and said: “Indeed you, yourselves are the wrongdoers.”

فَرَجَعُوا إِلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ فَقَالُوا
إِنَّكُمْ أَنْتُمْ الظَّالِمُونَ

65. Then their minds tuned upside down,^{*61} (and they said): “Indeed, you know well that these do not speak.”

ثُمَّ نَكَسُوا عَلَىٰ رُءُوسِهِمْ لَقَدْ
عَلِمْتَ مَا هَؤُلَاءِ يَنْطِقُونَ

*61 Literally the original text means: They were turned down upon their heads. Some commentators have interpreted it to mean: They hung down their heads with shame. But this does not fit in the context and the wording

of the text. The right interpretation would be: When they considered the answer of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), they realized that they themselves were in the wrong, because they had set up helpless idols as deities, which could not even speak a word as to who had broken them. But soon after this, they were overpowered by obduracy and ignorance which perverted their minds and they again relapsed into crookedness.

66. He said: “Do you then worship other than Allah that which does not benefit you at all, nor harm you.”

قَالَ أَفَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ
اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا
يَضُرُّكُمْ

67. “Fie upon you, and to what you worship other than Allah. Have you then no sense.”

أَفِ لَكُمْ وَلِمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن
دُونِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

68. They said: “Burn him and help your gods, if you will be doing.”

قَالُوا حَرِّقُوهُ وَانصُرُوا
ءَالِهَتَكُمْ
إِن كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ

69. We (Allah) said: “O fire, be coolness and peace upon Abraham.”*62

قُلْنَا يَنَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا
وَسَلَامًا
عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

*62 Though this is one of those miracles which have been clearly stated in the Quran, there are people who try to prove that there was no such miracle at all. According to

this passage (Ayats 68-70), Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) was actually threatened to be burnt alive and he was accordingly thrown into the burning fire, but Allah ordered the fire to become cool and harmless for him. In the face of the clear words of the Quran, these people deny this miracle because according to them it is impossible even for Allah to go beyond the routine of the physical laws. They say that miracles cannot appeal to the rationalists of the modern age, and therefore these should be interpreted in accordance with physical laws. They forget that according to the Quran, Allah is able to do everything, and He does extraordinary and unusual things which cannot be explained by science. Therefore they should accept the Quran as it is or discard it, but they should not twist it to suit their so called rationalism.

70. And they intended for him a plan, so We made them the worst losers.

وَأَرَادُوا بِهِ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ
الْأَخْسَرِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71. And We delivered him and Lot to the land,^{*63} that whereupon We had bestowed blessing for the nations.^{*64}

وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي
بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

***63** According to the Bible, Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) had two brothers, Nahor and Haran; Prophet Lot was the son of Haran (Gen. 11:26), and he was the only person to believe in Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). (Surah Al-Ankaboot, Ayat 26).

***64** The blessed land refers to Syria and Palestine, which

contains both material and spiritual blessings. It is one of the most fertile regions in the world. Moreover, it was blessed for two thousand years with more Prophets than any other region of the world.

72. And We bestowed upon him Isaac, and Jacob in addition.*65 And each We made righteous.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ
نَافِلَةً ۗ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَالِحِينَ



*65 That is, We made his son a Prophet and his grandson too.

73. And We made them leaders, guiding by Our command, and We inspired to them to do good deeds, and to establish prayers, and to give charity. And they were worshippers of Us.*66

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أئِمَّةً يَهْتَدُونَ
بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ
الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ
الزَّكَاةِ ۗ وَكَانُوا لَنَا عَابِدِينَ



*66 This important event of the life of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) has found no mention whatever in the Bible. In fact nothing about his life in Iraq, his conflict with Nimrod, his father and the community at large, his efforts to eradicate idolatry, the incident of his being cast into the fire, which ultimately led to his forced exile from the country, is mentioned anywhere in the Bible. The Bible merely mentions his migration, and that too, in a manner as

if a family was migrating from one country to another in search of livelihood. There is another interesting difference between the Quran and the Bible. According to the Quran, the father of Abraham, who was a mushrik, was foremost in tyrannizing over his son, but the Bible gives a different account, which is as follows.

Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah. But Sarai was barren; she had no child. And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and settled there. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran. (Gen. 11:27-32).

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Gen. 12: 1-3).

The Talmud, however, gives quite a few details about the life of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) about the

period of his stay in Iraq, which are generally the same as given in the Quran, but there is a glaring discrepancy in some of the important events. In fact, one can clearly feel that the account given in the Talmud is full of heterogeneous and hypothetical things while the one given in the Quran is most clear and contains nothing unworthy of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). We reproduce below the account as given in the Talmud so that the reader may know the difference between the Quranic and Jewish versions. This will also remove the misunderstanding of those who think that the Quran has borrowed stories from the Bible or Jewish literature.

According to the Talmud: The wise men saw a large star in the sky on the night Abram was born and they advised Nimrod to kill the child born in the house of Terah. The King decided to kill the child but Terah hid his child and had a servant's son killed in exchange. Terah thereupon hid his wife and child in a cave where they lived for ten years. In the 11th year Abram was taken by Terah to Noah, where he lived under the guidance of Noah and his son Shem for 39 years. During the same period Abram married his niece Sarai, who was 42 years his junior. (The Bible does not mention that Sarai was the niece of Abram; moreover, the difference in their ages is mentioned as ten years). (Gen. 11: 29, 17: 17).

The Talmud then says: Abram left Noah at the age of 50 and came back to his father. Here he found that his father was an idolatry and had twelve idols in the house according to the twelve months of the year. He tried to preach to his

father against idolatry but when the latter did not listen to him, Abram one day broke all the idols in the house. Seeing this Terah went straight to Nimrod and complained that the son who was born in his house 50 years ago had misbehaved and broken the idols. He wanted the King's verdict on this. Nimrod summoned Abram for interrogation, but the replies given by Abram were straight, terse and clear. Nimrod sent him to jail and then referred the matter to the council for a decision. The council decided that Abram should be burnt to death. A fire was accordingly prepared and Abram was cast into it. His brother and father-in-law Haran was also similarly cast into the fire. Haran was punished because Nimrod enquired of Terah as to why he had another child killed in place of Abram when he wanted to kill Abram on the day of his birth. Terah replied that this was done at the instigation of Haran. Nimrod accordingly let off Terah but threw Haran into the fire along with Abram. Haran was burnt to death instantly but people saw that Abram was walking unhurt through the flames. When Nimrod was informed of it, he witnessed it with his own eyes and cried out: O man of the God of Heaven, come out of the fire and stand before me. Thereupon, Abram came out and Nimrod became one of his believers and gave him many costly presents. After this, according to the Talmud, Abram stayed in Iraq for two more years when Nimrod saw a dreadful dream and the astrologers told him that the destruction of his empire would come through Abram and that he should, therefore, put him to death. Nimrod sent

people to kill Abram but Abram came to know of the plot before hand through Eleazar, a slave presented to him by Nimrod himself. Abram accordingly fled and took refuge with Noah where Terah also met him off and on secretly. The father and the son at last decided to leave the country and Noah and his son Shem also approved of their plan. Accordingly, Terah along with his son Abram and his grandson Lot and his granddaughter and son's wife Sarai, left Ur and went to Haran. (H. Polano: The Talmud Selections, London, pp. 30-42).

Can a reasonable person after reading this account of the Talmud ever imagine that this could be a source book for the story as given in the Quran?

74. And Lot, We gave him judgment and knowledge,^{*67} and We saved him from the town which was committing abominations. Indeed, they were a wicked people, exceedingly disobedient.

وَلُوطًا ءَاتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا
وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي
كَانَتْ تَعْمَلُ الْخَبَائِثَ إِنَّهُمْ
كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوِّءٍ فَسِقِينَ

*67 The original Arabic word *hukm* is very comprehensive. It means judgment, wisdom and discretion, and authority from Allah. *Ilm* stands for the revealed knowledge of the truth. Thus, We bestowed hukm and ilm on Lot. We appointed Lot as a Prophet. (For the story of Lot, see Surah Al-Aaraf, Ayats 80-84; Suran Yunus, Ayats 70-83; Surah Al-Hijr, Ayats 57-74 and the E.Ns there of).

75. And We admitted him into Our mercy. Indeed, he was of the righteous.

وَأَدْخَلْنَاهُ فِي رَحْمَتِنَا إِنَّهُ مِنَ
الصَّالِحِينَ

76. And Noah, when he called upon (Us) before.*68 So We responded to him. Then We saved him and his household from the great affliction.*69

وَنُوحًا إِذْ نَادَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ
فَأَسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ
مِنَ الْكُرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ

*68 This refers to Prophet Noah's (peace be upon him) prayer which he at last made after having tried his utmost to reform his people: Lord, help me for I have been overpowered. (Surah Al-Qamar, Ayat 10), and Lord, do not leave even a single disbeliever on the earth. (Surah Nooh, Ayat 26).

*69 "Great affliction" may either refer to living a miserable life among the wicked people, or to the flood. (For the story of Prophet Noah, see Surah Al-Aaraf, Ayats: 59-64; Surah Yunus, Ayats 72-74; Surah Houd, Ayats 25-48, and Surah Al-Isra, Ayat 3 and the E.N.s thereof).

77. And We helped him against the people, those who denied Our revelations. Indeed, they were an evil people, So We drowned them, all together.

وَنَصَرْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

78. And David and Solomon, when they judged regarding the field. When (at night) the sheep of certain people had pastured in it. And We were witnesses to their judgment.

وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ
فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَسَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ
الْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ
شَاهِدِينَ



79. And We gave understanding of it to Solomon, and to each (of them) We gave judgment and knowledge.^{*70} And We subjected along with David the mountains to praise (Us), and (also) the birds.^{*71} And We were the doers.

فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ وَكُلًّا
ءَاتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَسَخَّرْنَا
مَعَ دَاوُدَ آلِجَبَالِ يُسَبِّحْنَ
وَالطَّيْرِ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ



***70** There is no mention of this event in the Bible, nor in the Jewish literature. According to the Muslim commentators, it happened like this: The goats of one person entered into the field of another person at night. The latter brought his complaint to Prophet David who decided that the strayed goats should be given to the owner of the field. Prophet Solomon, however, differed with this and opined that the goats should remain with the owner of the field up to the time that the former tilled and prepared the field as before. In regard to this Allah says: We led Solomon to the right decision. As regards the legal aspect of the matter, we cannot say with certainty what is the Islamic law in such a

case nor is there any tradition of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to explain or support it. That is why the jurists have differed about it.

It should, however, be noted that in this context, the incident has been cited to show that the Prophets were after all human beings in spite of their God given powers and abilities. In this case, Prophet David committed an error of judgment because he was not guided by Allah as was Prophet Solomon, though both of them were Prophets. In the succeeding passage the wonderful powers of both have been mentioned to show that they were God given and did not make anyone a god.

Incidentally, we learn from this verse that if two judges give different decisions about one and the same case, both of them will be regarded as righteous, though the decision of only one of them will be correct, provided that both are duly qualified for sitting in judgment on the case. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has stated the same principle more elaborately. In a tradition of Bukhari, he is reported by Amar bin Aas to have said: If a judge does his very best to arrive at the right decision, he will get a double reward in case of a right judgment and a single reward if his judgment is wrong. According to another tradition, cited by Abu Daud and Ibn Majah, on the authority of Buraidah, he is reported to have said: Judges are of three kinds and only one of them will go to Paradise: the one who recognizes the truth and decides according to it. On the other hand, the one who recognizes the truth but gives his decision against it, will go to Hell, and he too, who sits in judgment on a case

without the necessary knowledge (and competence).

***71** From the wording of the text, it is clear that the mountains and the birds were subjected to join Prophet David (peace be upon him) with him in glorifying Allah. This is also supported by Surah Suad, Ayat 19: We had subdued the mountains by Our command so that they praised Us with him (David) in the morning and evening, and the birds too, which gathered together and repeated Our praise with him. And, according to Surah Saba, Ayat 10: We commanded the mountains to repeat Our praise with him and also the birds to do the same. We are of the opinion that it means this: When Prophet David (peace be upon him) sang hymns of Allah's praise and glory, in his rich and sweet voice, the mountains echoed back his melodies and the birds gathered round him and the whole scene became charming. Our interpretation is supported by this tradition.

Once when Abu Musa Ashari, who had an extremely sweet voice, was reciting the Quran, the Prophet (peace be upon him) who was passing by, stood and listened to him for a long time. When he finished the recital, the Prophet (peace be upon him) remarked: This man has been granted a portion of the melody of David.

80. And We taught him the art of making the coats of armor for you to protect you in your fighting (against your enemy).^{*72} Will you then be grateful.^{*73}

وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ صَنْعَةَ لَبُوسٍ لَّكُمْ
لِتَحْصِنَكُمْ مِنْ بَأْسِكُمْ فَهَلْ
أَنْتُمْ شَاكِرُونَ



***72** According to Surah Saba, Ayats 10-11, it was like this: And We made the iron soft for him (and commanded him): Make coats of mail complete in every way, and arrange the plates properly. This shows that Allah had made Prophet David an expert in the use of iron, and had especially taught him the art of an armorer for defense purposes. This fact is confirmed by archaeological and historical researches, for according to these the iron age in the world started between 1200 and 1000 BC and this was precisely the period of Prophet David. At first the Hittites in Syria and Asia Minor, who flourished between 2000 and 1200 BC, discovered a method of melting and molding iron, but they guarded it as a close secret from the world, and it could not be put to common use. Later on, the Philistines came to know of it, but they too guarded it as a secret. The incessant defeats suffered by the Israelites at the hands of the Hittites and the Philistines before King Saul, were due mainly to the use of chariots of iron in their wars by the latter. (Joshua, 17:16; Judges, 1: 19, 4: 2-3). In 1020 BC when Saul became ruler over the Israelites by Allah's command, he subdued the Canaanites and recaptured most of Palestine. After him Prophet David (1004-965 BC) not only annexed the whole of Palestine and Jordan to the Israeli kingdom but a major portion of Syria as well. This was the time when the secret of armor making closely guarded by the Hittites and the Philistines, became well known and cheaper articles of daily use began to be made. The recent archaeological excavations conducted in Edom, to the south of Palestine, which is rich in iron ore, have

brought to light furnaces for melting and molding iron. The furnace excavated near Ezion-geber, a port on the Gulf of Aqabah, in the time of Prophet Solomon, seems to have been built on the principles which are used in the modern blast furnaces. It is therefore natural that Prophet David must have first of all utilized this discovery for war purposes, because a little earlier the hostile Canaanites around his kingdom had made life really difficult for his people. The Bible also says that Prophet David was an expert in the art of melting and using iron for war purposes. (See Joshua, 17: 16; Judges, 1:19 and 4: 2-3).

***73** For further details about Prophet David, please see Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayat 251 and Sura Al-Isra, Ayat 55 and the E.Ns thereof.

81. And (We subjected) for Solomon the raging wind, which blew at his command towards the land, that whereupon We had bestowed blessing.^{*74} And We are All Knower of every thing.

وَلَسَلِّمَنَّ الَّرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِي
بِأَمْرِهِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا
فِيهَا وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَالِمِينَ



***74** This is also explained in Surah Saba, Ayat 12: And for Solomon We had subjected the wind which covered a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening, and in Surah Suad, Ayat 36: So We subjected the wind to him. It blew softly at his bidding wherever he wanted it to blow. Thus it is clear that the wind was so subjected to Prophet Solomon that the voyages to places at

one month's sea journey could be performed conveniently, because a favorable wind was always blowing for his ships to and from those places.

It is confirmed by the Bible that Prophet Solomon had developed sea trade on a large scale. (I Kings, 10: 22). On the one side, his trade ships sailed from Ezion-geber, through the Red Sea, towards Yaman and other southern and eastern lands, and on the other, his naval fleet called Thar-shish, sailed on the Mediterranean to the western countries. The great furnace which he had built at Ezion-geber for melting and molding ores extracted from the copper and iron mines in the Arabah in Edom, has been confirmed by modern archaeological researches as well. This molten iron and copper was used in building ships besides being put to other uses. The Quran refers to this when it says: And We made a fountain of molten copper to flow for him (Solomon). (Surah Saba, Ayat 12).

As regards to the subjection of the wind, it may mean that Allah, by His special favor, had so arranged that the wind, and sea voyages in those days depended entirely on wind, was always favorable for Prophet Solomon's fleet. But if we take the literal meaning of verse 81: It blew at his command, there will be no harm, for Allah is able to give such powers to any of His servants He pleases.

82. And of the devils were those who dived (into the sea) for him, and carried out (other) jobs besides that. And We were

وَمِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ مَنْ
يَغُوصُونَ لَهُ وَيَعْمَلُونَ
عَمَلًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ

guardian over them.^{*75}

***75** The subjection of satans has been explained in Surah Saba, Ayats 12-13. Incidentally, these verses of the Quran clearly show that the satans and jinns who worked for Prophet Solomon belonged to quite a different genus from human beings. Therefore, it is wrong to pervert the Quran to prove that they were human beings as some modernist commentators have tried to do. It is obvious from the wording of the Quran and the context in which the story of the jinns has been related, that they were not human beings. Had they been so this would have been no special favor to Solomon, because human beings had already built the gigantic monuments like the pyramids of Egypt.

83. And Job,^{*76} when he called to his Lord, (saying): “Indeed adversity has afflicted me, and You are the Most Merciful of those who are merciful.”^{*77}

﴿ وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴾

***76** There is a wide divergence of opinion concerning the personality, period and nationality of Prophet Job. Some commentators opine that he was an Israelite, while others think that he was an Egyptian or an Arab who lived before Prophet Moses, or during the time of Prophets David and Solomon (peace be upon them all). As all these conjectures are based on the Book of Job, which is self-contradictory and against the Quran. Nothing can be said about him with certainty, but in the light of the Book of Isaiah (8th century

BC) and the Book of Ezekiel (6th century BC), which are more trustworthy works, he lived in the 9th century BC or even earlier. As regards to his nationality, the context in which his name occurs in Surah An-Nisa, Ayat 163 and Surah Al-Anaam, Ayat 84, it may be assumed that he was an Israelite. According to a saying of Wahb bin Munabbih, he might have been from the offspring of Esau, a son of Prophet Isaac.

*77 The words of the prayer are note-worthy. Prophet Job mentions his distress but does not say anything more to his Lord except: You are the most Merciful. This is a great proof of his fortitude, noble and contented nature.

84. So We responded to him, and We removed what was on him, of the adversity.*78 And We gave him (back) his household and the like thereof along with them, a mercy from Us, and a reminder for the worshippers.*79

فَأَسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِ
 مِنْ ضُرٍّ^ط وَأَتَيْنَاهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُمْ
 مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِنْ عِنْدِنَا
 وَذِكْرَى لِلْعَابِدِينَ



*78 How his disease was cured has been explained in Surah Suad, Ayat 42: Stamp the ground with your foot: here is cool water for you to wash with and to drink. From this it appears that no sooner did he stamp the ground than a spring gushed forth. He took bath and drank the water and was cured of his disease. The nature of the treatment hints that he was suffering from a skin disease. This is confirmed by the Bible as well. Satan smote Job with sore boils from

the sole of his foot unto his crown. (Job, 2:7).

***79** It will be worthwhile to compare the high character of Prophet Job as given in the Quran with that in the Book of Job in the Bible. The Quran presents him as a veritable picture of patience and fortitude and an excellent model for the worshippers of Allah, but his general picture presented in the Book of Job is that of a man who is full of grievance against God: Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived. Let them curse (the night) that curse the day. Because it shut not the doors of my mother's womb, nor did sorrow from mine eyes. Why died I not from the womb? (Chapter 3). Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balance together, the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me. (Chapter 6) I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself? And why dost thou not pardon my transgressions, and take away my iniquity? (Chapter 7: 20-21).

His three friends try to console him and counsel patience, but in vain. He says: My soul is weary of my life. I will speak in the bitterness of my soul (10:1). I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all. (16:2). So these three men ceased to answer Job. Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu against Job, because he justified himself rather than God." (32:1-3), but he also failed to console him. Then the Lord himself came down and condemned the

three friends and Elihu and rebuked Job and then forgave him, accepted him and blessed him. (Chapters 41, 42). It should be noted that in the first two chapters of this Book, Prophet Job is presented as a perfect and upright man who feared God, but in the following chapters he becomes an embodiment of grievance against God, as though the estimate of Satan about him was correct and that of God incorrect. Thus this Book itself is a clear evidence that it is neither the word of God nor of Prophet Job but had been written afterwards by some literary man and incorporated in the Bible as a scripture.

85. And Ishmael, and Idris,^{*80} and Dhul Kifl.^{*81}
All were of the steadfast.

وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِدْرِيسَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ
كُلٌّ مِّنَ الصَّابِرِينَ

*80 For explanation, see Surah Maryam E. N. 33.

*81 Zul-Kifl is not the name but the title of a righteous man, which literally means a man of luck. Here it does not refer to worldly prosperity but to his high character and ranks in the Hereafter. He has also been mentioned by this title in Surah Suad, Ayat 48. There are different opinions about his identity and nationality. Some have regarded him as Zacharias (but this is not correct because Zacharias has been mentioned separately in verse 89). Others say that he was Elias, or Joshua, son of Nun, or Elisha, but this again is incorrect, because in Surah Suad, Ayat 49 Elisha and Zul-Kifl have been mentioned as separate personalities. Some others say that he was Prophet Job's son, named Bishr, who succeeded him as Prophet.

Allamah Alusi says: The Jews claim that he was Ezekiel who was appointed to Prophethood during the captivity (597 BC) of the Israelites and he performed his mission in a habitation by the side of the Chebar canal.

These conflicting opinions indeed confirm nothing. The modern commentators, however, are inclined to believe that he was Ezekiel, though there is no convincing argument about it. This opinion is sound because his description in this verse that he was a patient and righteous man and was blessed by God is fully confirmed by the Book of Ezekiel. He was one of those people who had been taken prisoner by Nebuchadnezzar at the downfall of Jerusalem, who settled the Israeli exiles at Tel-abib by the river Chebar in Iraq. Here, in 594 BC, Ezekiel was raised to Prophethood when he was hardly 30, and he continued preaching the message of God to the exiled Israelites as well as to the iniquitous people and rulers of Jerusalem for full 22 years. In the 9th year of his mission, his wife whom he called the desire of his eyes died, but when the people came to mourn her death, he warned them of the wrath of God and the impending disaster. (Chapter 24: 15-21). The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel in the Bible is one of those scriptures which appear to be genuine and divinely inspired.

86. And We admitted them into Our mercy. Indeed, they were among the righteous.

وَأَدْخَلْنَاهُمْ فِي رَحْمَتِنَا إِنَّهُمْ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

87. And Dhun Nun (Jonah),*82 when he went

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغْضِبًا

off in anger,^{*83} then he thought that We had no power over him.^{*84} Then he called out in the darkness,^{*85} (saying) that: “There is no god except You. Be You glorified. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers.”

فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى
فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ
سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ
الظَّالِمِينَ



***82** That is, Jonah, literally Dhun-Nun means the man of the fish. He was called so because he was devoured by a fish by the command of Allah. (Also See Surah As-Saffaat, Ayat 142 and Surah Yunus, Ayat 98 and its E.Ns 98-100).

***83** Prophet Jonah left his people before he received Allah’s command for migration.

***84** He presumed that he should leave, the place which was going to be visited by the scourge of Allah. This was not by itself an offence but it was an offence for a Prophet to leave the place of his mission without the permission of Allah.

***85** “Darkness”: the darkness in the belly of the fish and the darkness of the sea over and above it.

88. So We responded to him, and We saved him from the anguish. And thus do We save the believers.

فَأَسْتَجِبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الغَمِّ
وَكَذَلِكَ نُجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ



89. And Zachariah, when he called to his Lord: “My Lord, do not leave me

وَزَكَرِيَّا إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ رَبِّ
لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ

alone (without heir), and You are the best of the inheritors.”

الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

90. So We responded to him, and We bestowed upon him John, and We cured his wife for him.*86

فَأَسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ
يَحْيَىٰ وَأَصْلَحْنَا لَهُ زَوْجَهُ^ج

Indeed, they used to hasten in doing good deeds, and they used to call on Us with hope and fear. And they used to humble themselves before Us.*87

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسْرِعُونَ فِي
الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا
وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

***86** “Cured his wife”: We cured his wife of sterility. As “You are the best of the Inheritors”, I shall have no grief even if You do not give me any child. (For further details, please see Surah Aal-Imran, Ayats 37-41 and Surah Maryam, Ayats 2-14 and the E.Ns thereof).

***87** It will be worthwhile to reiterate the reasons why the stories of the Prophets have been cited in this Surah.

(1) The story of Prophet Zacharias has been cited to impress on the minds that all the Prophets were human beings and servants of Allah and had no tinge of Godhead in them. They had no power to bestow children upon others because they themselves had to pray to Allah for children for themselves.

(2) The story of Prophet Jonah has been cited to show that even a great Prophet like him did not go unnoticed when he committed an error in regard to Allah’s message. But when

he repented, Allah, by His grace, delivered him alive from the belly of the fish.

(3) The mention of Prophet Job has been made to show that even Prophets were put to hard trials and afflictions and even they had to beg Allah to restore them to health, not to speak of curing others of diseases.

Along with these, the other important thing which is meant to be impressed is that all the Prophets believed in the doctrine of Tauhid. That is why they begged and prayed to One Allah alone to fulfill their needs and requirements. Though they met with trials, Allah helped them and granted their prayers in supernatural and miraculous ways.

91. And she (Mary) who guarded her chastity,^{*88} so We breathed into her through Our Spirit (angel),^{*89} and We made her and her son a sign for peoples.^{*90}

وَالَّتِي أَحْصَتَ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا
فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَاهَا
وَأَبْنَاهَا آيَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ

*88 That is, Mary (peace be upon her).

*89 It should be noted that the incident of the birth of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was not different from that of Prophet Adam, because the wording of the Arabic text in the two cases is almost identical: (See Surah Suad, Ayats 71-72). Besides this in verse 91, almost similar words have been used in regard to the birth of Jesus (peace be upon him). (See also Surah An-Nisa, Ayat 171 and Surah At-Tahrim, Ayat 12). Allah Himself has stated that the birth of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was just like the

birth of Prophet Adam: In the sight of Allah, the case of the birth of Jesus is like that of Adam, whom He created out of dust and said, Be, and he was. (Surah Aal-Imran, Ayat 59). In the light of these verses, we may conclude that Allah uses words like: We breathed into him or her of Our spirit for miraculous births. (For details please see Suran An-Nisa E.Ns 212-213).

*90 That is, The mother and the son were not partners of God nor had any share whatsoever in Godhead, but were a sign from among the signs of God. (See Surah Maryam, E.N. 21).

92. Indeed, this your religion, is one religion, and I am your Lord, so worship Me.

إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً
وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِ

93. And they have divided their affair (religion, into factions) among themselves.*91 They shall all return to Us.

وَتَقَطَّعُوا أَمْرَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ كُلٌّ
إِلَيْنَا رَاجِعُونَ

*91 In this verse, the addressees are the entire mankind. It means: O mankind, in reality all of you belonged to one community and had one and the same religion and all the Prophets brought one and the same creed which was this: Allah alone is the Lord of all mankind, therefore they should worship Him alone. But afterwards the people corrupted this creed and invented and adopted the things they liked and mixed their own theories, whims and practices in it. This brought into being countless

communities and religions. Thus it is absolutely wrong to say that a particular Prophet was the founder of a particular religion and another of another, and so on. The very fact that different religions came into being at different periods of time, does not prove that the Prophets created these differences. It is obvious that the Prophets of God could not found different religions nor could they teach their followers to worship any beings other than Allah.

94. So whoever does of righteous deeds and he is a believer, then there will be no rejection of his effort. And indeed, We record (it) for him.

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ
وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا كُفْرَانَ
لِسَعْيِهِ وَإِنَّا لَهُ كَاتِبُونَ



95. And there is a prohibition upon (people of) a town, which We have destroyed. Certainly, they shall not return. (to this world).^{*92}

وَحَرَامٌ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا أَنَّهُمْ
لَا يَرْجِعُونَ



***92** The Arabic text of verse 95 may be interpreted in three ways.

- (1) The community which is once destroyed by the scourge of Allah can never have a second or new life.
- (2) After its destruction, its people are not given a second chance for their test, then they shall be presented in the

court of Allah for final judgment.

(3) When a community transgresses the last limits in its wickedness, injustices and disobedience, and Allah ordains to destroy it, no other chance of repentance is given to it because it becomes incapable of turning back to right guidance.

96. Until, when Gog and Magog are let loose, and they descend from every mound.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فُتِحَتْ يَأْجُوجُ
وَمَاْجُوجُ وَهُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ
حَدَبٍ يَنْسِلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

97. And the true promise shall draw near.^{*93}

Then behold, these eyes of those who disbelieved will stare in horror. (They will say): “O woe to us, indeed we were in heedlessness of this, but we were wrongdoers.”^{*94}

وَاقْتَرَبَ الْوَعْدُ الْحَقُّ فَإِذَا
هِيَ شَخِصَةٌ أَبْصَرُ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا يَوِيلَ لَنَا قَدْ كُنَّا فِي
غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا بَلْ كُنَّا
ظَالِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

***93** For the details about Gog and Magog, see E.Ns 62 and 69 of Surah Al-Kahf. They will be let loose in the sense that they will swoop down on the regions of the earth like a beast of prey which is set free from its cage suddenly. The time of the fulfillment of the true promise will come on the eve of Resurrection and the appearance of Gog and Magog will be a sign of it. In a tradition related in Muslim, by Huzaifah bin Asid Ghifari, the Prophet (peace be upon

him) said: Resurrection will not take place until ten signs appear:

- (1) The smoke.
- (2) Dajjal.
- (3) Daabat-ul-Ard.
- (4) Rising of the sun from the west.
- (5) Coming down of Jesus, son of Mary.
- (6) Sudden attack of Gog and Magog.
- (7-9) Three land slides, one in the east, the second in the west and the third in Arabia.
- (10) The flare up of a great fire from Yaman which will drive the people to the Plain of Resurrection.

In another tradition the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated that after the swoop of Gog and Magog, Resurrection will be so near that it may take place at any moment just as a pregnant woman might deliver the child at any moment, in the day or night, after her term has expired. But the reference to the appearance of Gog and Magog in the Quran and Hadith does not indicate that they will swoop on mankind jointly. It may be that they will clash against each other near the time of Resurrection and their mutual conflict might result in a universal catastrophe and destruction.

*94 “We were in heedlessness” contains a kind of excuse in it, as if to say: The Prophets warned us of the Day of Resurrection but we were wrongdoers and paid no heed to their warning.

98. Indeed, you (disbelievers)
and that which you

إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ

worship other than Allah
are fuel for Hell. You will
(surely) come to it.*95

ذُوبِ اللَّهِ حَصْبُ جَهَنَّمَ
أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَارِدُونَ

*95 We learn from traditions that Abdullah bin Azzaara raised an objection in this connection, saying: According to this not only our deities but Prophets Jesus and Uzair (peace be upon them) and the Angels also will become fuel for Hell because they are also worshiped. The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: Yes, everyone who would approve of his own worship instead of Allah's will go to Hell along with those who worshiped him. He meant to say: There is no reason why Prophets Jesus and Uzair (peace be upon them) and the Angels should go to Hell because they never approved that they should be worshiped instead of Allah, and were not responsible for this. On the other hand, they taught people to worship Allah alone. Of course, those who tried to become deities and became partners in the shirk of others will certainly go to Hell along with their worshipers. Likewise those, who induced others to take deities other than Allah, will go to Hell. Satan comes under this category for he induces others to make deities. Thus it is Satan who is made the real deity whom they obey and commit shirk. Besides this, idols of stone and wood and other accessories of shirk will also be thrown into Hell along with the mushriks so that the latter should see that their deities were becoming a cause of the intensity of their torture of fire instead of becoming their intercessors.

99. If these (idols) had been gods, they would not have come there, and all will abide therein.

لَوْ كَانَتْ هَتُؤَلَاءِ ءِالِهَةً مَّا
وَرَدُّوهَا وَكُلٌّ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ



100. For them, therein, will be wailing.*⁹⁶ And they, therein, will not hear (anything else).

لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا
يَسْمَعُونَ



***96** The Arabic word *zafeer* means hard breathing because of excessive heat, hard work and weariness.

101. Indeed, those to whom kindness has gone forth before from Us, they will be far removed from it (Hell).^{*97}

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا
الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ



***97** These will be the people who practiced virtue and righteousness in this world. Allah has already promised that they will be kept safe from the torture and will be granted salvation.

102. They will not hear the slightest sound of it (Hell). And they will be in that which their selves desire, abiding forever.

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا وَهُمْ
فِي مَا أَشْتَهَتْ أَنفُسُهُمْ
خَالِدُونَ



103. They will not be grieved by the greatest

لَا تَحْزَنُهُمُ الَّلَفْزُ الْأَكْبَرُ

horror,^{*98} and the angels will meet them, (saying): “This is your Day which you have been promised.”

وَتَتَلَقَّهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ هَذَا يَوْمُكُمْ الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

***98** That is, the time of mustering and going before Allah will be very dreadful for the common people but the righteous people will have full peace of mind because everything will be happening according to their expectations. Their faith and the righteous deeds they did in the world, will help console them by the grace of Allah and, instead of grief and sorrow, they will be filled with the hope that they are going to get their promised rewards.

104. The Day when We shall fold the heaven as a recorder folds up a written scroll. As We began the first creation, We shall repeat it. (That is) a promise (binding) upon Us. Indeed, We shall do it.

يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّ السِّجِلِّ لِلْكُتُبِ كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُعِيدُهُ وَعَدَّا عَلَيْهَا إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

105. And indeed, We have written in the Scripture, after the Reminder, that the earth shall be inherited by My righteous slaves.^{*99}

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ

***99** The interpretation of this verse has given rise to a great

misunderstanding. Some people have tried to interpret it in a way, which is entirely opposed to the ideology of the Quran. They interpret it to mean: The inheritance of the kingdom and the resources of the earth are given to the righteous people alone in this worldly life, and upon them alone Allah showers His favors and blessings. Then they apply this formula conversely and conclude that the gift of this inheritance of the earth is the sole criterion between the righteous and the unrighteous men. The righteous is the one who inherits the sovereignty of the earth and the unrighteous the one who is deprived of this inheritance. But when they apply their formula in the historical perspective, they find that most of those nations which have inherited the earth in the past and are inheriting it today, have been and are mostly disbelieving, mushriks, atheists and immoral, and that these are not the characteristics of the righteous people when judged by the criterion put forward by the Quran. From Nimrod and Pharaoh to the present day communist despots, who have been inheriting the earth, were and are unbelievers and the enemies of God and therefore could not be considered righteous, according to the Quranic formula. Faced with this situation, they start arguing that there must be some error in the conception of the righteous which should be such as would fit all the inheritors of the earth whether they were Caliphs like Abu Bakr Siddiq and Umar Farooq or Chingez and Halaku. This research leads them to the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest and they assume fitness to be a synonym of righteousness.

According to this new conception or definition of righteousness, the proposition would plainly mean: Any person, or a group of persons, who is capable of conquering and subduing countries by military force and has the ability to exploit the resources of the earth successfully is a righteous servant of Allah and his achievement is a criterion and message of righteousness and worship for other human beings to follow. Consequently, if they fail to achieve the inheritance of the earth, they will neither be regarded among the righteous nor among the servants of Allah. As a result of this interpretation of the verse, and this conception of righteousness and service, they were confronted with the interpretation of some basic and fundamental articles of the Islamic faith. For instance, according to the Quran, no deed, howsoever good, could be regarded as righteous without belief in Allah, the Hereafter, the Prophets and the Books. Moreover, the invitation of the Prophet to accept the moral and legal systems of Islam would become meaningless. Then these people could not reconcile their interpretation with the teachings of the Quran that obedience to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the commandments of Allah was absolutely essential for a righteous man and that the lack of this would make a person a disbeliever and a transgressor who deserved the wrath of Allah. If they had faced this problem boldly and honestly, they would have realized that their interpretation was wrong, but instead of this, they very impudently changed the universally accepted conception of faith, Islam, Tauhid, Prophethood and the

Hereafter in order to make these basic articles of the faith fit in with their interpretation of this verse. Thus, they turned all the teachings of the Quran upside down and tampered with its meaning without the least hesitation. Now let us consider their interpretation and point out its errors.

(1) Their interpretation contradicts the teachings of the Quran as a whole, for according to these virtue, piety and goodness do not comprise material progress and ability to rule over the land. Moreover, if the Quranic word *Salih* (virtuous, good) is regarded as synonymous with *Sahib Salahiyyat* (i.e. possessor of fitness and competence), this one verse will clash with the whole of the Quran.

(2) They isolate this verse from its context and ascribe to it whatever meaning they like; otherwise, they would have seen that the inheritance referred to in the context is the promise to the believers which is to be fulfilled in the Hereafter, and thus has nothing to do with inheritance in this world.

If this verse is interpreted in the context in which it occurs, it becomes very plain from the preceding verses that this promise to the righteous people holds good for the life in the Hereafter. This thing has been made more explicit in Surah Az-Zumur, Ayats 73-74. According to this passage (which is definitely about life in the Hereafter), when the pious people will enter into Paradise, they will say: God be praised, Who has fulfilled His promise and made us heirs to the land.

Now let us consider this matter in the light of the Psalms

(whether the Book of Psalms in the Bible is genuine or tampered with, because the real Psalms of Prophet David are nowhere available) to which this verse refers. According to 37:9-29: Evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace...and their inheritance shall be forever...The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever. Thus the Psalms also confirm word for word verse 105. It is obvious that (They shall) dwell therein forever refers to the life in the Hereafter.

As regards to the inheritance of the earth in this worldly life, Allah gives it as a heritage to those of His servants whom He pleases (Surah Al-Anfaal, Ayat 128), irrespective of whether they are believers or disbelievers, righteous or wicked, not as a reward but for their trial. Your Lord will make you rulers on the earth, and then He will see how you conduct yourselves. (Surah Al-Anfaal, Ayat 129). The heritage of the earth in this worldly life is neither permanent nor everlasting. It is merely bestowed as a trial for different communities. On the other hand, the heritage of the land referred to in verse 105 is permanent and forever and, according to the Quran, it will be bestowed on the basis of this formula: The land belongs to Allah and He will make only His righteous servants heirs to it not for their test but as a permanent reward for the righteous

attitude they adopted in this worldly life.

106. Indeed, in this (Quran) there is a plain message for a people who worship (Allah).

إِنَّ فِي هَذَا لَبَلَاغًا لِّقَوْمٍ
عَبِيدِينَ

107. And We have not sent you except as a mercy for all the worlds.^{*100}

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً
لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

***100** This verse can also be translated as: We have sent you only as a blessing for the people of the world. In both cases it will mean that the appointment of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is indeed a blessing and mercy of Allah to the whole world. This is because he aroused the neglectful world from its heedlessness and gave it the knowledge of the criterion between truth and falsehood, and warned it very clearly of both the ways of salvation and ruin. This fact has been stated here to tell the disbelievers of Makkah that they were quite wrong in their estimate of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he was an affliction and distress for them because they said: This man has sown seeds of discord among our clans and separated near relatives from each other. They have been told here: O people, you are wrong to presume that he is an affliction for you; but he is in reality a blessing and mercy of Allah for you.

108. Say: "It is only revealed to me that your god is only one God. Will

قُلْ إِنَّمَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا
إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌُ وَاحِدٌ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ

you then surrender.”

مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

109. So, if they turn away, then say: “I have announced to you all alike. And I do not know, whether it is near or far that which you are promised.”*101

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ ءَاذَنْتُكُمْ عَلَىٰ
سَوَاءٍ وَإِنْ أَدْرِي أَقْرِبُ أَمْ
بَعِيدٌ مَّا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

*101 That is, I do not know the time and the form of the punishment of Allah for your rejection of the message. It may come at any time in any shape.

110. Indeed, He knows of that which is said loudly, and He knows what you conceal.*102

إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

*102 This refers to their secret schemes, plots and their whispering campaign which have been mentioned in verse 3. There, too, the Prophet (peace be upon him) had said: My Lord has the knowledge of everything that is said in the heavens or the earth for He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (verse 4). This was to warn them that they would be taken to task for these things, too.

111. “And I do not know, perhaps this may be a trial for you*103 and an enjoyment for a fixed time.”

وَإِنْ أَدْرِي لَعَلَّهُ فِتْنَةٌ لَّكُمْ
وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿١١١﴾

*103 This was a trial because the delay in the punishment was deluding them into believing: All the things put forward by the Prophet are false. Had he been a true

Prophet of Allah, we would have been punished long before this for our disbelief. They did not realize that the reason for the delay was that Allah willed to give them respite for mending their ways.

112. He (Muhammad) said: “My Lord, judge with truth. And our Lord is the Beneficent, whose help is sought against that which you ascribe.”

قَالَ رَبِّ أَحْكُم بِالْحَقِّ وَرَبُّنَا
الرَّحْمَنُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَى مَا
تَصِفُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

