



وَمَا كَانَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ أَنْ يُفْتَرَىٰ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ



*This Qur'án is not such as can be produced by other than Allah;*

## Quran English Translation & Commentary

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يُونُسَ

### Introduction and Summary

Chronologically this Surah and the five that follow (Surah 11-15) are closely connected, and were revealed in the late Makkan period, as the great event of the Hijrah was gradually approaching down the stream of Time. But their chronology has no particular significance.

On the other hand their arrangement in the gradation of Quranic teaching fits in with the subject matter. Surah 8 and Surah 9 were mainly concerned with the first questions that arose on the formation of the new and organized Community of Islam in its conflict with those who wished to suppress or

destroy it or use force to prevent its growth and the consolidation of its ideals. See Introduction to those Surahs.

The present group leads us to the questions that face us when external hostility has been met, and our relations to Allah have to be considered from a higher standpoint than that of self-preservation.

How does revelation work?

What is the meaning of divine grace and its withdrawal?

How do the Messengers of Allah deliver their Message? How should we receive it?

All these questions revolve around the revelation of the Quran and each Surah of this group except the 13th has the abbreviated Letters Alif, Lam, Ra, attached to it. Surah 13 has the letters, Alif, Lam, Mim, Ra, and we shall discuss this variation when we come to Surah 13.

As shown in Appendix I, the abbreviated Letters are mystic symbols, about whose meaning there is no authoritative explanation. If the theory advanced in n. 25 t0 2:1 has any validity, and the present group, Alif, Lam, Ra, is cognate to the group Alif, Lam, Mim, we have to consider and form some idea in our minds as to the probable meaning of the variation.

- We took Alif, Lam, Mim to be symbol of those Surahs that deal with the beginning, the middle, and the end of man's spiritual history-the origin, the present position, and the things to come in the Last Days (eschatology, to use a theological term).
- We took Alif, Lam, to stand as symbols of the first two, and Mim, of the last.

In the present group of Surahs we find hardly any eschatological matter, and therefore we can understand the absence of Mim, the symbol standing for such matter. In its place comes Ra, which is phonetically allied to Lam. Lam is produced by the impact of the tongue to the front of the palate, and Ra to the middle of the palate. In many language the letters Lam, and Ra are interchangeable; e.g., in Arabic, Al Rahman becomes ar-Rahman, and Ra in imperfect enunciation Lam, in Chinese lallations.

If Lam is symbol of present-day things looking to the future, we may take Ra as a symbol of present-day things looking within, i.e., into the interior of the organization of the Ummah. And this symbolism fits in with the subject matter of the Surahs in question. But no one should be dogmatic in speculation about mystic Symbols.

Let us now consider Surah 10 alone. The central theme is that Allah's wonderful Creation must not be viewed by us as a creation of material things only, once made and finished with. Most wonderful of all is how He reveals Himself to men through Prophets and Scriptures; how prophets are rejected by men, and the Message disbelieved until it is too late for repentance; and how, as in the case of Yunus (Jonah) and his people, even the rejection (when repentance supervenes) does not prevent Allah's grace and mercy from working, and how far that working is beyond man's comprehension.

**Summary-** The wonderful working of the Spirit through man by revelation seems like magic to men; yet they could find Signs and Messages from Him in the sun and the moon and the constantly varying yet regular phenomena of nature, from which men should take a lesson of constancy and Faith (10:1-20, and C. 99).

All the goodness or beauty that man meets in the life around him proceeds from Allah. Yet man is blind and will not understand (10:21-40, and C. 100).

As all things and beings proceed from Allah, so will they return to Him, and He is ever true. Why then does ungrateful man make untrue phantoms for himself instead of rejoicing in the good news which He sends? (10:41-70, and C. 101).

Allah revealed Himself through Noah, but Noah's people rejected him and perished. He spoke through Moses to Pharaoh, but Pharaoh was stiff-necked and arrogant, and when he repented at all, it was too late (10:71-92, and C. 102).

Everywhere want of faith causes people to perish. But the people of Yunus repented, and Allah saved them by His wonderful grace. So Allah will deliver the Believers. When the Truth comes from Allah, follow it and be patient, for Allah is the most righteous of Judges (10:93-109, and C. 103).

## C.99 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(10:1-20)

*Men may wonder that a man  
Like unto them should bring a Message  
From Allah, but Allah's Message shines  
Forth through all nature and Creation.  
He guides the human spirit, if only  
Man will have Faith and put his hope  
In Allah. Wonderful are Allah's relations  
With man, yet man is ungrateful  
And runs to fancies and fanciful gods.  
Glory to the One True Allah, Who made  
Mankind as One, and holds alone  
The secrets of the Unseen in His  
Great and good Universal Plan.*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

الر...

### 1. Alif Lam Ra.

**C1381.** For the Abbreviated Letters generally as mystic Symbols see Appendix I.

For this particular combination see the [Introduction on this Surah](#).

...تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْحَكِيمِ (١)

These are the Ayat of the Book of Wisdom.

**C1382. Ayat:** Signs, or Verses of the Quran.

Here both meanings are to be understood. Each verse is a nugget of wisdom. And in the verses immediately

following, e.g., 10:3-6, examples are given of the wonders of Allah's material Creation. If the starry heavens impress us with their sublimity as signs of Allah's wisdom and power, how much more wonderful is it that He should speak to lowly man through His Messengers, in man's language, so that he can understand?

أَكَانَ لِلنَّاسِ عَجَبًا أَنْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَنْ أَنْذِرِ النَّاسَ...

2. It is a matter of wonderment to men that We have set Our inspiration to a man from among themselves? -- that he should warn mankind (of their danger),

**C1383.** Is it not still more wonderful that the inspired man should be one of ourselves?

The Arabs had known Muhammad in other relations and conditions, and when the mighty Message came through his mouth -the message of Wisdom and Power, such as no man could speak as from himself, least of all a man not instructed in human learning,- they could only in their wonder attribute it to magic and sorcery.

They failed to understand that magic and sorcery were projections of their own mind, while here was solid, enduring Truth from Allah!

...وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنَّ لَهُمْ قَدَمَ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ...

and give the good news to the Believers that they have before their Lord the lofty rank of Truth,

**C1384.** Allah's Message was and is not all smooth and agreeable. The first thing is to convince us of our wrongdoing, and warn us of our danger. If we have Faith, we then learn what a high rank we obtain in the sight of Allah.

According to another view the word "**qadama**" here refers to the fact that the acts of a person precede him to his Lord.

The word **sidq** qualifies these acts with sincerity and genuineness. (R).

...قَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ إِنَّ هَذَا لَسَاحِرٌ مُّبِينٌ (٢)

(but) say the Unbelievers: "This is indeed an evident sorcerer!"

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ...

3. Verily your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days,

**C1385.** See n. 1031 to 7:54.

...ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ ...

then He established Himself on the Throne (of authority),

**C1386. Istawa**, with the preposition *ila* after it, means He turned to or He directed Himself by His will to as in 2:29.

With the preposition *'ala* after it, as here and in 7:54 and elsewhere, the meaning seems to be "to mount or ascend," and to be firmly established, to sit firm and unshaken, beyond question.

The Throne represents many ideas: e.g.,

1. that God is high above all His Creation;
2. that He regulates and governs it, as a king does, whose authority is unquestionably recognised;
3. that He is not, therefore, like the gods of Greece, and paganism, who were imagined to be in a world apart, careless of mankind, or jealous of mankind, but on the contrary.
4. He disposes of their affairs and all affairs continuously and with justice;
5. that the authority of His prophets, ministers, and messengers is derived from Him, and such intercession as they can make is by His will and permission. (R).

... يُدَبِّرُ الْأُمْرَ ...

regulating and governing all things.

...مَا مِنْ شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِ...

No intercessor (can plead with Him) except after His leave (hath been obtained).

...ذَلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ...

This is Allah your Lord; Him therefore serve ye:

...أَفَلَا تُذَكَّرُونَ (٣)

will ye not receive admonition ?

**C1387.** Cf. 6:80.

إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا...

4. To Him will be your return -- of all of you.

...وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا...

The promise of Allah is true and sure.

**C1388. Haqq:** true, right, for just ends, in right proportions, sure and certain:

all these ideas are implied.

...إِنَّهُ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ...

It is He Who beginneth the process of Creation, and repeateth it,

**C1389.** Cf. n. 120 to 2:117.

Allah's creation is not a simple act, once done and finished with. It is continuous, and there are many stages, not the least important of which is the Hereafter, when the fruits of our life will be achieved.

...لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ بِالْقِسْطِ...

that He may reward with justice those who believe and work righteousness,

...وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ وَعَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ (٤)

but those who reject Him will have nothing but draughts of boiling fluids, and a Penalty grievous: because they did reject Him.

**C1390. Hamim:** boiling fluid:

it is associated as in 38:57, with *gassaq*, a dark, murky, or intensely cold fluid; both indicative of the grievous penalty that results from rebellion against Allah.

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا...

5. It is He Who made the sun to be a shining glory and the moon to be a light (of beauty),

**C1391.** The fitting epithet for the sun is **dhia**, "splendour and glory of brightness", and for the moon is "a light" (of beauty), the cool light that illuminates and helps in the darkness of the night.

But the sun and moon also measure time. The simplest observation can keep pace with the true lunar months and lunar years, which are all that is required by a pastoral people.

For agriculture solar years are required, as they indicate the changes of the seasons, but ordinary solar years are never exact; even the solar year of 365<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> days requires correction by advanced astronomical calculation.

...وَقَدَّرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِّينَ وَالْحِسَابَ...

and measured out stages for her: that ye might know the number of years and the count (of time).

...مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ...

Nowise did Allah create this but in truth and righteousness.

**C1392.** Everything in Allah's creation has use and purpose, and fits into a Design. It is true in every sense of the word and it is good and just.

It is not merely a matter of sport or freak (21:16). Though so varied, it proclaims Allah's Unity; though a limited free-will is granted to creatures, the results of evil (which is rebellion) are neutralized and harmony is restored. Cf. 3:191.

...يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ (٥)

(Thus) doth He explain his Signs in detail, for those who understand.

**C1393.** Cf. 9:11.



إِنَّ فِي اخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْتَقُونَ (٦)

6. Verily, in the alternation of the Night and the Day, and in all that Allah hath created, in the heavens and the earth, are Signs for those who fear Him.

**C1394.** Cf. 2:164.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأَنُّوا بِهَا...

7. Those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us, but are pleased and satisfied with the life of the present,

...وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ (٧)

and those who heed not Our Signs --

**C1395.** Those who fall from Grace are described by three epithets:

1. the meeting with Allah is not the object of their hope and earnest desire, but something else, viz.
2. the material good of this world, which not only attracts them but apparently gives them complete satisfaction, so that there is no glow of the Future in their horizon, and
3. they are deaf and dead to the resounding and living Message of Allah,

1 and 2 refer to the extinction of Faith in them, and 3 to their failing a prey to the evils of this world in their conduct.

They are contrasted in 10:9 with the Faith and the Righteousness of those who accept Grace.

أُولَئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمْ النَّارُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ (٨)

8. Their abode is the Fire, because of the (evil) they earned.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ يَهْدِيهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِإِيمَانِهِمْ...

9. Those who believe, and work righteousness, their Lord will guide them because of their faith:

**C1396.** Their Faith is the cause as well as the instrument of their Guidance, -the Kindly Light which leads them as well as the Joy which fills their Soul.

The usual symbols of Gardens and Fire are again contrasted - in each case the result of Good or Evil in Life,

...تَجْرِي مِنَ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ (٩)

beneath them will flow rivers in Gardens of Bliss.

دَعَاؤُهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّاتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَامٌ...

10. (This will be) their cry therein:

"Glory to Thee, O Allah!"

and

"Peace" will be their greeting therein!

...وَأَخْرَجُوا دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (١٠)

And the close of their cry will be:

"Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds!"

**C1397.** A beautiful piece of spiritual melody! They sing and shout with joy, but their joy is in the Glory of Allah! The greetings they receive and the greetings they give are of Peace and Harmony!

From first to last they realise that it is Allah Who cherished them and made them grow, and His rays are their Light.

## Section 2

وَلَوْ يُعَجِّلُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ الشَّرَّ اسْتِعْجَالَهُمْ بِالْخَيْرِ لَفُضِيَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَجْلُهُمْ...

11. If Allah were to hasten for men the ill (they have earned) as they would fain hasten on the good -- then would their respite be settled at once.

**C1398.** Those who have no hope for the Future grasp at any temporary advantage, and in their blindness even mockingly ask for immediate punishment for their sins

(8:32), thus vainly challenging Allah, in Whom they do not believe.

If the beneficent Allah were to take them at their word, they would have no chance at all. Their doom would be sealed. But even the respite they get they use badly. They merely wander about distractedly like blind men, to and fro. Cf. 2:15.

...فَنَدُّرُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ (١١)

But We leave those who rest not their hope of their meeting with Us, in their trespasses, wandering in distraction to and fro.

وَإِذَا مَسَّ الْإِنْسَانَ الضُّرُّ دَعَانَا لِجَنْبِهِ أَوْ قَاعِدًا أَوْ قَائِمًا...

12. When trouble toucheth a man, he crieth unto Us (in all postures) lying down on his side, or sitting, or standing.

**C1399.** Not only do men fail to use their respite: even those who have a superficial belief in Allah call on Him in their trouble but forget Him when He has relieved their trouble.

Their Faith is not strong enough to make them realise that all good proceeds from Allah. But in moments of trouble they use every position, literally and figuratively, to appeal to Him.

...فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُ ضُرَّهُ مَرَّ كَأَن لَّمْ يَدْعُنَا إِلَى ضُرِّ مَسَّهُ...

But when We have solved his trouble, he passeth on his way as if he had never cried to Us for a trouble that touched him!

...كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْمُسْرِفِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (١٢)

Thus do the deeds of transgressors seem fair in their eyes!

**C1400.** Those without Faith are selfish, and are so wrapped up in themselves that they think every good that comes to them is due to their own merits or cleverness. That is itself a cause of their undoing. They do not see their own faults.

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونََ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَمَّا ظَلَمُوا...

13. Generations before you We destroyed when they did wrong:

...وَجَاءَهُمْ رَسُولُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَمَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا...

their Messengers came to them with Clear Signs, but they would not believe!

...كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ (١٣)

Thus do We requite those who sin!

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ خَلَائِفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ لِنَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ (١٤)

14. Then We made you heirs in the land after them, to see how ye would behave!

**C1401.** This is addressed to the Quraish in the first instance, for they had succeeded to the 'Ad and the Thamud heritage.

But the application is universal, and was true to the 'Abbasi Empire in the time of Harun-ar-Rashid, or the Muslim Empire in Spain or the Turkish Empire in its palmiest days, and indeed, apart from political power, to the Muslims and non-Muslims of our own days.

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ...

15. But when Our Clear Signs are rehearsed unto them,

...قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا أَنْتَ بَقْرَانٌ غَيْرٌ هَذَا أَوْ بَدِّلْهُ...

those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us, say:

"Bring us a Reading other than this, or change this."

**C1402. Reading:** in the Arabic, the word is "Quran", which may mean Reading or in the special sense, the Quran.

The duty of Allah's Messenger is to deliver Allah's Message as it is revealed to him, whether it please or displease those who hear it.

Selfish men want to read their own desires or fancies into religious precepts, and thus they are often willing to use Religion for their own ends. Most of the corruptions of Religion are due to this cause. But Religion is not to be so prostituted.

...قُلْ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أُبَدِّلَهُ مِنْ تَلْقَاءِ نَفْسِي...

Say: "It is not for me, of my own accord, to change it:

...إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ...

I follow naught but what is revealed unto me:

...إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ (١٥)

if I were to disobey my Lord, I should myself fear the Penalty of a Great Day (to come)."

قُلْ لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا تَلَوْتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا أَدْرَاكُمْ بِهِ...

16. Say: "If Allah had so willed, I should not have rehearsed it to you, nor would He have made it known to you.

**C1403.** It is in Allah's Plan that He should reveal Himself in certain ways to His creatures, and His Messengers are the instruments that carry out His will.

It is in itself gracious Mercy that He should thus make His Will known. We should be grateful for His guidance instead of carping at it.

فَقَدْ لَبِثْتُ فِيكُمْ عُمُرًا مِّن قَبْلِهِ...

A whole lifetime before this have I tarried amongst you:

...أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ (١٦)

will ye not then understand?"

**C1404.** Muhammad Al-Mustafa had lived his whole life of purity and virtue amongst his people, and they knew and Mustafa acknowledged it before he received his mission.

They knew he loved his nation and was loyal to it. Why should they turn against him when he had to point out under inspiration all their sins and wrong-doing?

It was for their own good. And he had to plead again and again with them:

"Will you not understand, and see what a glorious privilege it is for you to receive true guidance from Allah?"

فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ...

17. Who doth more wrong than such as forge a lie against Allah, or deny His Signs?

...إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ (١٧)

But never will prosper those who sin.

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ...

18. They serve, besides Allah, things that hurt them not nor profit them,

...وَيَقُولُونَ هَؤُلَاءِ شُفَعَاؤُنَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ...

and they say: "These are our intercessors with Allah."

...قُلْ أَنْتَبِّئُونَ اللَّهَ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ...

Say: "Do ye indeed inform Allah of something He knows not in the heavens or on earth? --

**C1405.** When we shut our eyes to Allah's glory and goodness, and go after false gods, we give some plausible excuse to ourselves, such as that they will intercede for us.

But how can stocks and stones intercede for us?

And how can men intercede for us, when they themselves have need of Allah's Mercy?

Even the best and noblest cannot intercede as of right, but only with His permission ([10:3](#)). To pretend that there are other powers than Allah is to invent lies and to teach Allah.

There is nothing in heaven or earth that He does not know, and there is no other like unto Him.

...سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ (١٨)

Glory to Him! and far is He above the partners they ascribe (to Him)!"

وَمَا كَانَ النَّاسُ إِلَّا أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَاخْتَلَفُوا...

19. Mankind was but one nation, but differed (later).

**C1406.** Cf. 2:213.

All mankind was created one, and Allah's Message to mankind is in essence one, the Message of Unity and Truth.

But as selfishness and egotism got hold of man, certain differences sprang up between individuals, races, and nations, and in His infinite Mercy He sent them messengers and messages to suit their varying mentality, to test them by His gifts, and stir them up to emulation in virtue and piety (5:48).

...وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ فِيمَا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ (١٩)

Had it not been for a word that went forth before from thy Lord, their differences would have been settled between them.

**C1407.** Cf. 6:115, 9:40, and 4:171.

**"Word"** is the Decree of Allah, the expression of His Universal Will or Wisdom in a particular case.

When men began to diverge from one another (see [last note](#)). Allah made their very differences subserve the higher ends by increasing their emulation in virtue and piety, and thus pointing back to the ultimate Unity and Reality. (R).

وَيَقُولُونَ لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ...

20. They say: "Why is not a Sign sent down to him from his Lord?"

...قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْعَيْبُ لِلَّهِ فَانْتَظِرُوا إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الْمُنْتَظِرِينَ (٢٠)

Say: "The Unseen is only for Allah (to know). Then wait ye: I too will wait with you."

**C1408.** Their demand for a Sign is disingenuous. All nature and revelation furnishes them with incontestable Signs. What they want is the Book of the Unseen opened out to them like the physical leaves of a book. But they forget that a physical Book is on a wholly different plane from Allah's Mysteries, and that their physical natures cannot apprehend the mysteries.

They must wait. Truth will also wait. But the waiting in the two cases is in quite different senses. Cf. 6:158 and 9:52.

## C.100 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(10:21-40)

*The good, the beautiful, and the useful  
In man's life are derived from Allah;  
Yet man is ungrateful. He runs  
After the ephemeral things of this life;  
Yet they are no better than the green  
Of fields, that lasts for a season  
Ere it perish! Allah's call is to an eternal  
Home of Peace. Will ye not answer it?  
Know ye not that it is He Who sustains  
And cherishes? No partner has He.  
And He speaks to His creatures and guides them  
Through His wonderful Book unmatched.*

### Section 3

وَإِذَا أَذَقْنَا النَّاسَ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ بَعْدِ ضَرَاءٍ مَّسَّتْهُمْ إِذَا لَهُمْ مَكْرٌ فِي آيَاتِنَا...

21. When We make mankind taste of some mercy after adversity hath touched them,

Behold! they take to plotting against our Signs!

...قُلِ اللَّهُ أَسْرَعُ مَكْرًا...

Say: "Swifter to plan is Allah!"

...إِنَّ رُسُلَنَا يَكْتُبُونَ مَا تَمْكُرُونَ (٢١)

Verily, Our Messengers record all the plots that ye make!

**C1409.** Man turns his thoughts in adversity to Allah. But as soon as the trouble is past, he not only forgets Him but actually strives against His cause.

But such people are poor ignorant creatures, not realising that the Universal Plan of Allah is swifter to stop their petty plans, and that though they fail, the record of them remains eternally against them. (R).



هُوَ الَّذِي يُسَيِّرُكُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ...

22. He it is Who enableth you to traverse through land and sea;

...حَتَّىٰ إِذَا كُنْتُمْ فِي الْفُلْكِ وَجَرَيْنَ بِهَمْ بَرِيحٍ طَيِّبَةٍ وَفَرِحُوا بِهَا...

so that ye even board ships --

they sail with them with a favorable wind, and they rejoice thereat;

...جَاءَتْهَا رِيحٌ عَاصِفٌ وَجَاءَهُمُ الْمَوْجُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ

أُحِيطَ بِهِمْ...

then comes a stormy wind and the waves come to them from all sides, and they think they are being overwhelmed:

...دَعَاؤُا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ ...

they cry unto Allah, sincerely offering (their) duty unto Him, saying,

...لَئِنْ أَنْجَيْتَنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ لَنُكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ (٢٢)

"If Thou dost deliver us from this, we shall truly show our gratitude!"

**C1410.** All the great inventions and discoveries on which man prides himself are the fruit of that genius and talent which Allah has freely given of His grace. But the spirit of man remains petty, as is illustrated by the parable from the sea.

How the heart of man rejoices when the ship goes smoothly with favourable winds!

How in adversity it turns, in terror and helplessness, to Allah, and makes vows for deliverance! and how those vows are disregarded as soon as the danger is past!

Cf. 6:63.

فَلَمَّا أَنْجَاهُمْ إِذَا هُمْ يَبْغُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ...

23. But when He delivereth them, Behold! they transgress insolently through the earth in defiance of right!

...يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا بَعَيْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ...

O mankind!

your insolence is against your own souls --

**C1411.** In our insolence and pride we do not see how small and ephemeral is that part of us which is mortal. We shall see it at last when we appear before our Judge. In the meantime our ridiculous pretensions only hurt ourselves.

...مَتَاعَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا...

an enjoyment of the life of the Present:

...ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَنُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (٢٣)

in the end, to Us is your return, and We shall show you the truth of all that you did.

...إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ...

24. The likeness of the life of the present is as the rain which We send down from the skies:

**C1412.** Another beautiful Parable, explaining the nature of our present life.

The rain comes down in drops and mingles with the earth. Through it, by Allah's matchless artistry, the womb of the earth is made fruitful. All kinds of good, useful, and beautiful grains, vegetables, and fruits are produced for men and animals. The earth is covered in its bravery of green and gold and all kinds of colours.

Perhaps the "owner" takes all the credit to himself, and thinks that this will last eternally. A hailstorm or a blast, a frost or a volcanic eruption, comes and destroys it, or it may be even normally, that the time of harvest comes, and the fields and orchards are stripped bare by some blight or disease.

Where is the beauty and bravery of yesterday?

All that is left is dust and ashes!

What more can we get from this physical material life?

... فَأَخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ...

by its mingling arises the produce of the earth -- which provides food for men and animals:

...حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ

قَادِرُونَ عَلَيْهَا...

(it grows) till the earth is clad with its golden ornaments and is decked out (in beauty):

the people to whom it belongs think they have all powers of disposal over it:

...أَتَاهَا أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَاهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ تَعْنِ بِالْأَمْسِ...

there reaches it Our command by night or by day, and We make it like a harvest clean-mown, as if it had not flourished only the day before!

...كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٢٤)

Thus do We explain the Signs in detail for those who reflect.

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَىٰ دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ (٢٥)

25. But Allah doth call to the Home of Peace:

He doth guide whom He pleaseth to a way that is straight.

**C1413.** In contrast with the ephemeral and uncertain pleasures of this material life, there is a higher life to which Allah is always calling.

It is called the Home of Peace. For there is no fear, nor disappointment nor sorrow there. And all are called, and those will be chosen who have sought, not material advantages, but the Good Pleasure of Allah.

**Salam**, Peace, is from the same root as Islam, the Religion of Unity and Harmony.

لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ...

26. To those who do right is a goodly (reward) -- yea, more (than in measure)!

**C1414.** The reward of the righteous will be far more than in proportion to their merits. For they will have the supreme bliss of being near to Allah, and "seeing His face". (R).

... وَلَا يَرَهُقُ وَجُوهَهُمْ قَتْرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ...

No darkness nor shame shall cover their faces!

**C1415.** The face is the symbol of the Personality, the inner and real Self, which is the antithesis of the outer and ephemeral Self.

It will be illuminated with Allah's Light, behind which is no shadow or darkness. All its old shortcomings will be blotted out, with their sense of shame, for there will be Perfection, as in Allah's sight.

...أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٢٦)

They are Companions of the Garden; they will abide therein (for aye)!

وَالَّذِينَ كَسَبُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ جَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ بِمِثْلِهَا ...

27. But those who have earned evil will have a reward of like evil:

**C1416.** Note that the evil reward is for those who have "earned" evil, i.e., brought it on themselves by the deliberate choice of evil.

Further, in the justice of Allah, they will be requited with evil similar to, and not greater in quantity or intensity, than the evil they had done,-unlike the good, who, in Allah's generosity, get a reward far greater than anything they have earned or could possibly earn.

... وَتَرَهُفُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ...

ignominy will cover their (faces):

...مَا لَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ عَاصِمٍ...

no defender will they have from (the wrath of) Allah:

...كَأَنَّمَا أُغْشِيَتْ وَجُوهُهُمْ قِطْعًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ مُظْلِمًا...

their faces will be covered, as it were, with pieces from the depth of the darkness of Night:

**C1417.** Night is the negation of Light and metaphorically of joy and felicity. The intensive is indicated by "the depth of the darkness of Night."

...أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٢٧)

they are Companions of the Fire:

they will abide therein (for aye)!

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ نَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا مَكَانَكُمْ أَنْتُمْ وَشُرَكَائِكُمْ...

28. One Day shall We gather them all together. Then shall We say to those who joined gods (with Us):

"To your place! ye and those ye joined as 'partners.'"

...كُم فَرَيَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ...

We shall separate them,

...وَقَالَ شُرَكَائُهُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ إِلَّا نَا تَعْبُدُونَ (٢٨)

and their "partners" shall say: "It was not us that ye worshipped!"

**C1418.** The false gods are not real: they are only the figments of the imaginations of those who indulged in the false worship.

But the prophets or great or good men whose names were vainly taken in competition with the name of Allah, and the personified Ideas or Idols treated in the same way would themselves protest against their names being used in that way, and show that the worship was paid not to them, but to the ignorance or superstition or selfish lusts of the false worshippers.

فَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ إِنْ كُنَّا عَنْ عِبَادَتِكُمْ لَغَافِلِينَ (٢٩)

29. "Enough is Allah for a witness between us and you: we certainly knew nothing of your worship of us!"

**C1419.** See [last note](#).

They did not even know that they were being falsely worshipped in that way.

هُنَالِكَ تَبْلُو كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا أَسْلَفَتْ...

30. There will every soul prove (the fruits of) the deeds it sent before:

**C1420.** Cf. 2:95, where the verb used is **qaddama**. The verb **aslafa**, used here, is nearly synonymous.

...وَرُدُّوْا إِلَى اللّٰهِ مَوْلَاهُمْ الْحَقَّ...

they will be brought back to Allah their rightful Lord,

...وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ (٣٠)

and their invented falsehoods will leave them in the lurch.

**C1421.** Instead of their false ideas helping them, they will desert them and leave them in the lurch.

Cf. 6:24.

## Section 4

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

31. Say:

"Who is it that sustains you (in life) from the sky and from the earth?

**C1422.** Sustenance may be understood in the sense of all the provision necessary for maintaining physical life as well as mental and spiritual development and well-being.

- Examples of the former are light and rain from heaven and the produce of the earth and facilities of movement on land and sea and in air.
- Examples of the latter are the moral and spiritual influences that come from our fellow-men, and from the great Teachers and Prophets.

...أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ...

Or who is it that has power over hearing and sight?

**C1423.** Just two of our ordinary faculties, hearing and sight, are mentioned, as examples of the rest.

All the gifts of Allah, physical and spiritual, are enjoyed and incorporated by us by means of the faculties and capacities with which He has endowed us.

وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ...

And who is it that brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living?

**C1424.** Cf. 3:27 and n. 371; 6:95 and n. 920 ; and 30:19.

...وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ...

And who is it that rules and regulates all affairs?"

**C1425.** This is the general summing-up of the argument. The government of the whole Creation and its maintenance and sustenance is in the hands of Allah.

How futile then would it be to neglect His true worship and go after false gods?

...فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ...

They will soon say, "Allah."

...فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (٣١)

Say, "Will ye not then show piety (to Him)?"

فَذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ الْحَقُّ فَمَاذَا بَعَدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ...

32. Such is Allah, your real Cherisher and Sustainer:  
apart from Truth, what (remains) but error?

**C1426.** The wonderful handiwork and wisdom of Allah having been referred to, as the real Truth, as against the false worship and false gods that men set up, it follows that to disregard the Truth must lead us into woeful wrong, not only in our beliefs but in our conduct. We shall err and stray and be lost.

How then can we turn away from the Truth?

...فَأَنَّى تُصْرَفُونَ (٣٢)

How then are ye turned away?

كَذَلِكَ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ فَسَقُوا ...

33. Thus is the Word of thy Lord proved true against those who rebel:

**C1427.** Disobedience to Allah brings its own terrible consequences on ourselves. The Law, the Word, the Decree, of Allah must be fulfilled.

If we go to false gods, our Faith will be dimmed, and then extinguished. Our spiritual faculties will be dead.

... أَنَّهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (٣٣)

verily they will not believe.

قُلْ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَائِكُمْ مَن يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ...

34. Say: "Of your 'partners,' can any originate creation and repeat it?"

**C1428.** The argument is now turned in another direction. The false gods can neither create out of nothing nor sustain the creative energy which maintains the world. Nor can they give any guidance which can be of use for the future destiny of mankind: on the contrary they themselves (assuming they were men who were deified) stand in need of such guidance.

Why then follow vain fancies, instead of going to the source of all knowledge, truth, and guidance, and worship, serve, and obey Allah, the One True God?

... قُلْ اللَّهُ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ...

Say: "It is Allah Who originates Creation and repeats it:

... فَأَنَّى تُؤْفَكُونَ (٣٤)

then how are ye deluded away (from the truth)?"

قُلْ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَائِكُمْ مَن يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ...

35. Say: "Of your 'partners' is there any that can give any guidance towards Truth?"

... قُلْ اللَّهُ يَهْدِي لِلْحَقِّ...

Say: "It is Allah Who gives guidance towards Truth.



...أَفَمَنْ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُبْعَ أَمَّنْ لَا يَهْدِي...

Is then He Who gives guidance to Truth more worthy to be followed, or he who finds not guidance (himself) unless he is guided?

...إِلَّا أَنْ يُهْدَىٰ فَمَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ (٣٥)

What then is the matter with you?

How judge ye?"

وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ إِلَّا ظَنًّا إِنَّ الظَّنَّ...

36. But most of them follow nothing but fancy:

...لَا يُعْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا...

truly fancy can be of no avail against Truth.

...إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ (٣٦)

Verily Allah is well aware of all that they do.

وَمَا كَانَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ أَنْ يُفْتَرَىٰ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ...

37. This Qur'án is not such as can be produced by other than Allah;

...وَلَكِنْ تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ...

on the contrary it is a confirmation of (revelations) that went before it,

...وَتَفْصِيلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (٣٧)

and a fuller explanation of the Book -- wherein there is no doubt -- from the Lord of the Worlds.

**C1429. The Book:** Cf. 3:23 and n. 366.

Allah's revelation throughout the ages is one. The Quran confirms, fulfils, completes, and further explains the one true revelation, which has been sent by the One True God in all ages.

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ...

38. Or do they say, "He forged it"?

...قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ...

Say:

"Bring then a Surah like unto it,

...وَادْعُوا مَنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٣٨)

and call (to your aid) anyone you can, besides Allah, if it be ye speak the truth!"

**C1430.** Cf. 2:23 and n. 42.

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِمَا لَمْ يُحِيطُوا بِعِلْمِهِ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِهِمْ تَأْوِيلُهُ...

39. Nay,

they charge with falsehood that whose knowledge they cannot compass, even before the elucidation thereof hath reached them:

**C1431. Taawil:** elucidation, explanation, final fulfilment, Cf., 7:53,

The Message of Allah not only gives us rules for our every-day conduct, but speaks of high matters of religious significance, which require elucidation in two ways:

- by experience from the actual facts of life, and
- by the final fulfilment of the hopes and warnings which we now take on trust through our Faith.

The Unbelievers reject Allah's Message simply because they cannot understand it and without giving it even a chance of elucidation in any of these ways. (R).

...كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ...

thus did those before them make charges of falsehood:

...فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الظَّالِمِينَ (٣٩)

but see what was the end of those who did wrong!

**C1432.** Wrong-doers always came to grief ultimately.

The true course of history shows it from a broad standpoint. But they are so headstrong that they prejudge issues in their ignorance before they are decided.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِهِ...

40. Of them there are some who believe therein, and some who do not:

...وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ (٤٠)

and thy Lord knoweth best those who are out for mischief.

### C.101 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(10:41-70)

*Men but wrong their own souls in shutting out  
The truth of Allah. To Him will be  
Their return. They have been warned  
At all times and among all peoples  
By chosen Prophets of Allah, whom they  
Have flouted. The Day will come  
When they will see the majesty, the glory,  
The goodness, and the justice of Allah.  
But they invent fancies and falsehoods.  
Let not their blasphemies and falsehoods  
Grieve the men of Allah; for falsehoods  
And false ones will never prosper.*

### Section 5

وَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ لِي عَمَلِي وَلَكُمْ عَمَلُكُمْ...

41. If they charge thee with falsehood, say:

"My work to me, and yours to you!

**C1433.** When the Prophet of Allah is rejected and charged with falsehood, he does not give up his work, but continues to teach and preach his Message. He can well say to those who interfere with him:

"Mind your own business: supposing your charge against me is true, you incur no responsibility: I have to answer for it before Allah: and if I do my duty and deliver my Message, your rejection does not make me liable for your wrong-doing: you will have to answer before Allah."

...أَنْتُمْ بَرِيئُونَ مِمَّا أَعْمَلُ وَأَنَا بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ (٤١)

Ye are free from responsibility for what I do, and I for what ye do!"

وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ...

42. Among them are some who (pretend to) listen to thee:

...أَفَأَنْتَ تُسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ وَلَوْ كَانُوا لَا يَعْقِلُونَ (٤٢)

but canst thou make the deaf to hear -- even though they are without understanding?

**C1434.** Cf. 6:25, 36, 39 and notes.

Hypocrites go to hear and see some great Teacher, but they get no profit out of it because they are not sincerely seeking the truth. They are like the blind, or the deaf, or the imbeciles. It is impossible to guide them, because they have not the will to be guided.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْكَ...

43. And among them are some who look at thee:

...أَفَأَنْتَ تَهْدِي الْعُمْيَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا لَا يُبْصِرُونَ (٤٣)

but canst thou guide the blind -- even though they will not see?

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ النَّاسَ شَيْئًا وَلَكِنَّ النَّاسَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ (٤٤)

44. Verily Allah will not deal unjustly with man in aught:

it is man that wrongs his own soul.

**C1435.** Allah cannot be blamed for man's evil, nor will He deal unjustly with man.

He has given him faculties and means of guidance. If man goes wrong, it is because he wrongs himself.

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ كَأَن لَّمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنَ النَّهَارِ ...

45. One day He will gather them together:

(it will be) as if they had tarried but an hour of a day:

**C1436.** In eternity our life on this earth will look as if it had been just a little part of our little day, and so also will appear any interval between our death and the call to Judgment.

... يَتَعَارَفُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ ...

they will recognize each other:

**C1437.** We shall retain some perception of our mutual relations on earth, so that the righteous judgment which will be pronounced will be intelligible to us, and we shall be convinced of its righteousness.

...فَذُ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ (٤٥)

assuredly those will be lost who denied the meeting with Allah and refused to receive true guidance.

وَأَمَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ ...

46. Whether We show thee (realized in thy lifetime) some part of what We promise them -- or We take thy soul (to Our Mercy)

...فَإِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ (٤٦)

(before that) -- in any case, to Us is their return: ultimately Allah is witness to all that they do.

**C1438.** The Prophet is assured that the end of evil is evil, just as the end of good is good. Whether this result is made plain before his very eyes in his own life-time or afterwards, makes no difference.

The wicked should not rejoice if they are given rope and seem to have the upper hand for a time, nor should the righteous lose heart: for Allah's promise is sure and must come to pass.

And in any case, the scales can only be partially, if at all, adjusted in this life. There is the final and complete adjustment on the Day of Judgment. Allah is All-Knowing, and all truth will be before Him.

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولٌ...

47. To every people (was sent) a Messenger:

**C1439.** Every people or generation or nation had its Message or Messenger: Allah revealed Himself to it in some way or another. If that Messenger was ignored or rejected, or his Message was twisted or misused, the Day of Reckoning will come, when perfect justice will be done and the whole Truth revealed.

The Unbelievers mockingly say: "If that is true, pray tell us when that Day will come!" The answer of the Messenger is:

"It will come in good time: no one can either hasten or retard it. If you want me then to save you or if you fear that I shall harm you for your treatment of me, know that this matter is in the hands of Allah alone, Who will do perfect justice. Even in regard to myself, any harm or good that befalls me is by the command and in the power of Allah".

...فَإِذَا جَاءَ رَسُولُهُمْ فَضِيَ بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (٤٧)

when their Messenger comes (before them), the matter will be judged between them with justice, and they will not be wronged.

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٤٨)

48. They say: "When will this promise come to pass -- if ye speak the truth?"

قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ...

49. Say: "I have no power over any harm or profit to myself except as Allah willeth.

**C1440.** Cf. 7:188.

...لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ...

To every People is a term appointed:

**C1441.** This repeats 7:34, but the significance is different in the two contexts.

Here the reply is to the Unbelievers' mocking incredulity (see n. 1439) as to whether there is such a thing as Hereafter: they suggest to the Prophet of Allah that if his claim to inspiration from Allah is true, he should get them punished at once for rejecting him.

In 7:34 the reference is to the punishment of iniquity as described in 7:33: sin is not necessarily punished at once: every People or generation gets a chance-, when their term is fulfilled, the final adjustment is made.

...إِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ فَلَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ (٤٩)

when their term is reached, not an hour can they cause delay,  
nor (an hour) can they advance (it in anticipation).

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُهُ بَيَّاتًا أَوْ نَهَارًا مَّاذَا يَسْتَعْجِلُ مِنْهُ

الْمُجْرِمُونَ (٥٠)

50. Say:

"Do ye see -- if His punishment should come to you by night or by day, what portion of it would the Sinners wish to hasten?"

**C1442.** The mockery of Unbelievers will be turned into panic when the wrath of Allah descends on them. It may do so suddenly, by night or by day, when they ]cast expect it. Will they then say of any bit of it: "Let it be hastened"?

أَتُمَّ إِذَا مَا وَقَعَ آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ...

51. "Would ye then believe in it at last, when it actually cometh to pass?"

...الآنَ وَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ (٥١)

(It will then be said): 'Ah! now?

And ye wanted (aforetime) to hasten it on!"

ثُمَّ قِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْخُلْدِ...

52. "At length will be said to the wrongdoers:

"Taste ye the enduring punishment! Ye get

**C1443.** This will be the final doom, and they will themselves have brought it on themselves!

The psychology of the Unbelievers is here analyzed and exposed. This particular argument begins at 10:47 and ends at 10:53.

It begins with the general statement that every People has had due warning and explanation by means of a Prophet specially sent to them: that Prophet will be a relevant witness at the final Judgment, when the matter will be judged in perfect equity.

Then follows a dialogue. The Unbelievers mock and say, "Why not bring on the Punishment now?" The reply to the Unbelievers is,

"It will come in Allah's good time".

The Believers are told to watch and see how the sinners would take it if the Punishment were to come at once. Would they not think it too sudden? When it actually comes, their panic will be indescribable.

"Is that true?" say the Unbelievers.

"It is the very truth," is the answer, "and nothing can ward it of".

... هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ (٥٢)

but the recompense of what ye earned! "

وَيَسْتَنْبِئُونَكَ أَحَقُّ هُوَ...

53. They seek to be informed by thee: "Is that true?"

... قُلْ إِي وَرَبِّي إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ...

Say: "Aye! by my Lord! It is the very truth!

... وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ (٥٣)

and ye cannot frustrate it!"



## Section 6

وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِلنَّاسِ نَفْسَ ظَلَمَتْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لَافْتَدَتْ بِهِ...

54. Every soul that hath sinned, if it possessed all that is on earth, would fain give it in ransom:

**C1444.** Cf. 3:91.

...وَأَسْرُوا النَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأُوا الْعَذَابَ...

they would declare (their) repentance when they see the Penalty:

**C1445. Declare their repentance:** the verb in the original is *asarru*, which may mean either "declare" or "reveal" or else "conceal" or "hide".

The classical Commentators are divided as to the meaning to be adopted here.

- If the first, which I prefer, the sense would be:

"When the Penalty stares the sinners in the face, they would give anything to escape it, and they would even openly declare their repentance, which would be a source of shame and ignominy to them."

- If the latter meaning be taken, the sense would be:

"They would give anything to escape the Penalty; but the hardest thing of all for them is frankly to confess and repent, and so they conceal their sense of shame and ignominy."

...وَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (٥٤)

but the judgment between them will be with justice,  
and no wrong will be done unto them.

أَلَا إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

55. Is it not (the case) that to Allah belongeth whatever is in the heavens and on earth?

...أَلَا إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (٥٥)

Is it not (the case) that Allah's promise is assuredly true?  
Yet most of them understand not.

هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (٥٦)

56. Is it He Who giveth life and who taketh it, and to Him shall ye all be brought back.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ لِمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ...

57. O mankind!

there hath come to you a direction from your Lord and a healing for the (diseases) in your hearts --

**C1446.** Those who do wrong have a disease in their hearts, which will cause their spiritual death.

Allah in His Mercy declares His Will to them, which should direct their lives and provide a healing for their spiritual disease. If they accept Faith, the remedy acts; they find themselves in right guidance and receive Allah's forgiveness and mercy.

Surely those are far better gifts than material advantages, wealth, or possessions.

...وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (٥٧)

and for those who believe, a Guidance and a Mercy.

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا...

58. Say:

"In the Bounty of Allah, and in His Mercy -- in that let them rejoice":

...هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ (٥٨)

that is better than the (wealth) they hoard.

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ...

59. Say:

"See ye what things Allah hath sent down to you for sustenance?"

**C1447. "Sustenance"** is to be taken in both the literal and the metaphorical sense.

- In the literal sense, what fine and varied things Allah has provided for us on land and in sea and air, in the

vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdoms? Yet narrow minds put artificial barriers against their use.

- In the metaphorical sense, what enchanting fields of knowledge and spiritual endeavour are provided in our individual and social lives?

And who is to say that some are lawful and others forbidden?

Supposing they were so in special circumstances, it is not right to attribute artificial restrictions of that kind to Allah and falsely erect religious sanctions against them.

...فَجَعَلْتُمْ مِنْهُ حَرَامًا وَحَلَالًا...

Yet ye hold forbidden some things thereof and (some things) lawful."

...قُلْ أَلِلَّهِ أَذْنٌ لَكُمْ أَمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ تَفْتَرُونَ (٥٩)

Say:

"Hath Allah indeed permitted you, or do ye invent (things) to attribute to Allah?"

وَمَا ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذِبَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ...

60. And what think those who invent lies against Allah, of the Day of Judgment?

**C1448.** People who lie in Religion or invent false gods, or false worship,-have they any idea of the Day of Judgment, when they will be called to account, and will have to answer for their deeds?

...إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَدُوٌّ فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ (٦٠)

Verily Allah is full of Bounty to mankind, but most of them are ungrateful.

**C1449.** Allah is most kind, and gracious, and generous with His gifts of all kinds, material and spiritual. But men do not understand, and are ungrateful in forgetting the Giver of all and setting up false objects of worship and false standards of pride.

## Section 7

وَمَا تَكُونُ فِي شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُو مِنْهُ مِنْ قُرْآنٍ...

61. In whatever business thou mayest be, and whatever portion thou mayest be reciting from the Qur'án --

...وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ...

and whatever deed ye (mankind) may be doing --

We are Witnesses thereof when ye are deeply engrossed therein.

...وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَبِّكَ مِنْ مِثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ...

Nor is hidden from thy Lord (so much as) the weight of an atom on the earth or in heaven.

...وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ (٦١)

And not the least and not the greatest of these things but are recorded in a clear Record.

**C1450.** There is nothing that men can do but Allah is a witness to it. We may be deeply engrossed in some particular thing and for the time being be quite unconscious of other things. But Allah's knowledge not only comprehends all things, but has all things actively before it.

Nothing is hidden from Him. And His knowledge has another quality which human knowledge has not.

Human knowledge is subject to time, and is obliterated by time. Allah's knowledge is like a Record and endures for ever. And His Record has a further quality which human records have not. The most permanent human record may be quite intelligible to those who make it but may be ambiguous to others and may become unintelligible with the progress of time, as happens almost invariably to the most enduring inscriptions from very ancient times: but in Allah's "Record" or knowledge there is no ambiguity, for it is independent of time, or place, This is the force of **Mubin** ("clear") here.

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (٦٢)

62. Behold!

verily on the friends of Allah there is no fear, nor shall they grieve;

**C1451.** Allah's all-embracing knowledge and constant watchful care over all His creatures, may be a source of fear to sinners, but there is no fear for those whom He honours with His love and friendship,-neither in this world nor in the world to come.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ (٦٣)

63. Those who believe and (constantly) guard against evil --

لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ...

64. For them are Glad Tidings, in the life of the Present and in the Hereafter:

... لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ...

no change can there be in the Words of Allah.

... ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ (٦٤)

This is indeed the supreme Felicity.

وَلَا يَحْزَنكَ قَوْلُهُمْ ...

65. Let not their speech grieve thee:

**C1452.** Sometimes the words of the unrighteous or their reviling hurt or grieve the righteous man, but there is no occasion for either anger or sorrow: they have no power and they can do no real dishonour, for all power and honour are from Allah.

... إِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا...

for all power and honor belong to Allah:

... هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ (٦٥)

it is He Who heareth and knoweth (all things).

أَلَا إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ...

66. Behold!

verily to Allah belong all creatures, in the heavens and on earth.

...وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ...

What do they follow who worship as His "partners" other than Allah?

...إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ (٦٦)

They follow nothing but fancy, and they do nothing but lie.

**C1453.** All creatures are subject to Allah. If, therefore, any false worship is set up, the false gods-so called "partners" are merely creatures of imagination or false inventions.

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ اللَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا...

67. He it is that hath made you the night that ye may rest therein, and the Day to make things visible (to you).

**C1454.** Our physical life -and our higher life in so far as it is linked with the physical- is sustained by the alternation of rest and activity, and the fit environment for this alternation is the succession of Nights and Days in our physical world. The Day makes the things "visible to us-" a beautiful symbol, not only of the physical work for which we go about by day, but of the higher activities which are fitly associated with seeing, perception and enquiry.

Intuition (insight) is a little out of that circle because that may come by night, when our other faculties are resting.

...إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُسْمَعُونَ (٦٧)

Verily in this are Signs for those who listen (to His Message).

قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا...

68. They say, "Allah hath begotten a son!"

...سُبْحَانَهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ...

Glory be to Him!  
He is self-sufficient!

...لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ...

His are all things in the heavens and on earth!

...إِنْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ بِهَذَا...

No warrant have ye for this!

...أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (٦٨)

Say ye about Allah what ye know not?

فَلْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ (٦٩)

69. Say:

"Those who invent a lie against Allah will never prosper."

**C1455.** In Quranic language "prosperity" refers both to our every-day life and to the higher life within us, -to the Present and the Future,- health and strength, opportunities and resources, a spirit of contentment, and the power of influencing others.

Here there seems to be an extra touch of meaning. A liar not only deprives himself of prosperity in all senses, but his "lie" itself against Allah will not succeed: it will and must be found out.

...مَتَاعٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ...

70. A little enjoyment in this world! -- and, then, to Us will be their return.

...ثُمَّ نَذِيفُهُمُ الْعَذَابَ الشَّدِيدَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ (٧٠)

Then shall We make them taste the severest Penalty for their blasphemies.

## C.102 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(10:71-92)

*Allah works in His world-in mercy  
For His servants, and in just punishment  
For those who do wrong. Thus was it  
In Noah's story, for he worked unselfishly  
For his people, though rejected by them.  
So was it with Moses; he preached  
To Pharaoh and the Egyptian; but most  
Of them preferred falsehood and pride  
To the Truth of Allah, and perished. Even  
Pharaoh's confession of Allah at the last  
Was too late, as his life had been spent  
In luxury, pride, and oppression.*

### Section 8

وَآتَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ نُوحٍ ...

71. Relate to them the story of Noah.

**C1456.** The reference to Noah's story here is only incidental, to illustrate a special point. The fuller story will be found in 11:25-48, and in many other passages, e.g., 7:59-64, 23:23-32, 26:105-122, and 37:75-82.

At each place there is a special point in the context.

The special point here is that Noah's very life and preaching among his wicked people was a cause of offence to them. But he feared nothing, trusted in Allah, delivered his message, and was saved from the Flood.

... إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ ...

Behold! he said to his People:



...يَا قَوْمِ إِنْ كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَقَامِي وَتَذْكَيرِي بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَعَلَى اللَّهِ

تَوَكَّلْتُ...

"O my People! if it be hard on your (mind) that I should stay (with you) and commemorate the Signs of Allah -- yet I put my trust in Allah.

...فَأَجْمِعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَاءَكُمْ...

Get ye then an agreement about your plan and among your Partners,

...ثُمَّ لَا يَكُنْ أَمْرُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ غُمَّةً...

so your plan be not to you dark and dubious.

**C1457.** Firm in his sense of Truth from Allah. Noah plainly told his people to condemn him to death if they liked, openly and in concert, so that he should at least know who would listen to his Message and who would not. He wanted them to be frank and direct, for he feared nothing.

...ثُمَّ اقضُوا إِلَيَّ وَلَا تُنظِرُونِ (٧١)

Then pass your sentence on me, and give me no respite.

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَمَا سَأَلْتُكُمْ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ...

72. "But if ye turn back, (consider): no reward have I asked of you:

**C1458.** The Prophet of Allah preaches for the good of his people. But he claims no reward from them, but on the contrary is reviled, persecuted, banished, and often slain.

... إِنْ أَجْرِي إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ...

my reward is only due from Allah,

...وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (٧٢)

and I have been commanded to be of those who submit to Allah's Will (in Islam)."

...فَكَذَّبُوهُ...

73. They rejected him,

...فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلِّ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ خَلَائِفَ...

but We delivered him, and those with him, in the Ark, and We made them inherit (the earth),

...وَأَعْرَفْنَا الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا...

while We overwhelmed in the Flood those who rejected Our Signs.

**C1459.** Cf. 7:64.

...فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُنذَرِينَ (٧٣)

Then see what was the end of those who were warned (but heeded not)!

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ رُسُلًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ...

74. Then after him We sent (many) Messengers to their Peoples:

...فَجَاءُواهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ...

they brought them Clear Signs,

...فَمَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِمَا كَذَّبُوا بِهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ...

but they would not believe what they had already rejected beforehand.

**C1460.** I understand the meaning to be that there is a sort of spiritual an influence descending from generation to generation, among the Unbelievers as among the men of Faith.

In history we find the same problems in many ages, - denial of Allah's grace, defiance of Allah's law, rejection of Allah's Message.

These influences cause the hearts of the contumacious to be sealed and impervious to the Truth Cf. 2:7 and notes.

What they do is to prejudice the issues even before the Prophet explains them.

...كَذَلِكَ نَطْبَعُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِ الْمُعْتَدِينَ (٧٤)

Thus do We seal the hearts of the transgressors.

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِم مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ بِآيَاتِنَا...

75. Then after them sent We Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Our Signs.

**C1461.** The story of Moses, Aaron, and Pharaoh is fully told in 7:103-137, and there are references to it in many places in the Quran.

The incidental reference here is to illustrate a special point, viz., that

- the wicked are arrogant and bound up in their sin, and prefer deception to Truth:
- they do not hesitate to charge the men of Allah, who work unselfishly for them, with mean motives, such as would actuate them in similar circumstances!

...فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُجْرِمِينَ (٧٥)

But they were arrogant: they were a people in sin.

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا قَالُوا إِنَّ هَذَا لَسِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ (٧٦)

76. When the Truth did come to them from Us, they said:

"This is indeed evident sorcery!"

قَالَ مُوسَى أَنْتُمْ لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَكُمْ أُسِحْرٌ هَذَا...

77. Said Moses: "Say ye (this) about the Truth when it hath (actually) reached you?

Is sorcery (like) this?

...وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّاحِرُونَ (٧٧)

But sorcerers will not prosper."

**C1462.** Sorcery is the very opposite of Truth, being deception of plausible shows by the powers of evil. But these cannot succeed or last permanently, and Truth must ultimately prevail.

قَالُوا أَجِئْنَا لِنَتَّوِنَا عَمَّا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا...

78. They said: "Hast thou come to us to turn us a way from the ways We found our fathers following --

...وَتَكُونَنَّ لَكُمْ الْكِبْرِيَاءَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ...

in order that thou and thy brother may have greatness in the land?

**C1463.** Notice how they attribute evil motives to the men of Allah, motives of ambition and lust of power, which the men of Allah had been sent expressly to put down. The same device was used against Al-Mustafa.

... وَمَا نَحْنُ لَكُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ (٧٨)

But not we shall believe in you!"

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ائْتُونِي بِكُلِّ سَاحِرٍ عَلِيمٍ (٧٩)

79. Said Pharaoh: "Bring me every sorcerer well-versed."

فَلَمَّا جَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالَ لَهُمْ مُوسَى أَلْقُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ مُثْفُونَ (٨٠)

80. When the sorcerers came, Moses said to them:

"Throw ye what ye (wish) to throw!"

فَلَمَّا أَلْقَوْا قَالَ مُوسَى ...

81. When they had their throw, Moses said:

**C1464.** When they threw their rods, the rods became snakes by a trick of sorcery, but Moses' miracles were greater than any tricks of sorcery, and had real Truth behind them.

... مَا جِئْتُمْ بِهِ السَّحْرُ ...

"What ye have brought is sorcery:

...إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَيُبْطِلُهُ ...

Allah will surely make it of no effect:

...إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُصْلِحُ عَمَلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ (٨١)

for Allah prospereth not the work of those who make mischief.

وَيُحِقُّ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ (٨٢)

82. "And Allah by His Words doth prove and establish His truth, however much the Sinners may hate it!"

**C1465.** Allah's Words or Commands have real power, while Sorcerers' tricks only seem wonderful by deceiving the eye.

## Section 9

فَمَا آمَنَ لِمُوسَىٰ إِلَّا ذُرِّيَّتُهُ مِّن قَوْمِهِ عَلَىٰ خَوْفٍ...

83. But none believed in Moses except some children of his People, because of the fear

**C1466.** The pronoun "**his**" in "his People" is taken by some Commentators to refer to Pharaoh.

The Majority Of Pharaoh's people refused to believe at the time, but the sorcerers believed (7:120), and so did Pharaoh's wife (66:11), and ultimately Pharaoh himself, though too late (10:90).

If we took "his" to refer to Moses, it would mean that the Israelites were hard-hearted and grumbled (7:129) even when they were being delivered from Egypt, and only a few of them had any real faith in Allah's providence and the working of His Law, and they feared Pharaoh even more than they feared Allah.

...مِّن فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَأَهُمُ أَنْ يَفْتِنَهُمْ...

of Pharaoh and his chiefs, lest they should persecute them;

...وَإِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ لَعَالٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ (٨٣)

and certainly Pharaoh was mighty on the earth and one who transgressed all bounds.

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَا قَوْمِ إِن كُنتُمْ آمَنتُمْ بِاللَّهِ فَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنتُمْ مُسْلِمِينَ (٨٤)

84. Moses said:

"O my People! if ye do (really) believe in Allah, then in Him put your trust if ye submit (your will to His)."

فَقَالُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا...

85. They said:

"In Allah do we put our trust.

...رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ (٨٥)

Our Lord! make us not a trial for those who practice oppression;

**C1467. A trial for those who practice oppression:** the various meanings of **Fitnah** have been explained in n. 1198 to 8:25.

The prayer is that the righteous people, being weak, should be saved from being used as objects of oppression or punishment at the hands of powerful enemies. Weakness tempts Power to practice oppression, and is thus an occasion of trial for the oppressors.

وَنَجِّنَا بِرَحْمَتِكَ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ (٨٦)

86. "And deliver us by Thy Mercy from those who reject (Thee)."

...وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَأَخِيهِ أَنْ تَبَوَّءَ لِقَوْمِكُمَا بِمِصْرَ بُيُوتًا...

87. We inspired Moses and his brother with this message:

"Provide dwellings for your People in Egypt,

**C1468.** This instruction, we may suppose, was given when the sorcerers were brought to faith, and some of the Egyptians believed. Moses was for a little while to remain in Egypt, so that his Message should have time to work, before the Israelites were led out of Egypt.

They were to make their houses into places of prayer (Qiblah), as Pharaoh would not probably allow them to set up public places of prayer. and they were now to be only sojourners in Egypt.

These were the glad tidings (the Gospel) of Islam, which was preached under Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, and completed under Muhammad.

...وَأَجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ...

make your dwellings into places of worship,  
and establish regular prayers:

...وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (٨٧)

and give Glad Tidings to those who believe!"

وَقَالَ مُوسَى...

88. Moses prayed:

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ آتَيْتَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَأَهُ زِينَةً وَأَمْوَالًا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا...

"Our Lord! Thou hast indeed bestowed on Pharaoh and his Chiefs splendor and wealth in the life of the Present,

**C1469.** Moses' prayer, in which Aaron joined, for he was always with him, may be paraphrased thus:

"O Allah!

we understand that the glitter and the wealth of the Egyptians are not to be envied. They are but the ephemeral goods of this life. They are a disadvantage, in that in their pride of possessions the Egyptians mislead themselves and others. Let their pride be their undoing! Turn their wealth into bitterness and their hearts into hardness, for they reject Thee, and they will not believe until they actually see the Punishment of their sins!"

...رَبَّنَا لِيُضِلُّوا عَن سَبِيلِكَ...

and so, our Lord, they mislead (men) from Thy Path.

...رَبَّنَا اطْمِسْ عَلَى أَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاشْدُدْ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوا...

Deface, our Lord, the features of their wealth, and send hardness to their hearts, so they will not believe

**C1470.** A terrible curse! Let their wealth and splendour become so defaced in their features, that instead of being objects of desire, they become objects of loathing!

The heart is the seat of affections and joy: let it be so hardened by their unbelief that it becomes the seat of hatred and grief! It is when they see the Penalty that they will believe!

...حَتَّى يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ (٨٨)

until they see the grievous Penalty."

قَالَ قَدْ أُحِيبَت دَعْوَتُكُمَا...

89. Allah said: "Accepted is your prayer (O Moses and Aaron)!"

...فَاسْتَوِيْمَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعَانَّ سَبِيْلَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ (٨٩)

So stand ye straight, and follow not the path of those who know not."

**C1471.** Be not dazzled by their splendour, but stand out straight for Truth, for that is your salvation!

Addressed in form to Moses and Aaron, in substance it is addressed to the Israelites,

وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيْلَ الْبَحْرَ...

90. We took the Children of Israel across the sea:

...فَاتَّبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ وَجُنُودُهُ بَغْيًا وَعَدُوًّا ...

Pharaoh and his hosts followed them in insolence and spite.

**C1472.** Notice the swiftness of the action in the narrative. The execution of poetic justice could not have been described in fewer words.

...حَتَّى إِذَا أَدْرَكَهُ الْعَرَقُ قَالَ...

At length, when overwhelmed with the flood, he said:

...أَمَنْتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي آمَنْتُ بِهِ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيْلَ...

"I believe that there is no god except Him Whom the Children of Israel believe in:

**C1473.** That is, in the One True God.

This was death-bed repentance, and even so it was forced by the terror of the catastrophe. So it was not accepted (cf. 4:18) in its entirety.

Only the body was saved from the sea, and presumably, according to Egyptian custom, it was embalmed and the mummy was given due rites of the dead. But the story commemorated for ever Allah's working, in mercy for His people, and in just punishment of oppressors.

...وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ (٩٠)

I am of those who submit (to Allah in Islam)."



الآن وَقَدْ عَصَيْتَ قَبْلُ وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ (٩١)

91. (It was said to him): "Ah now! -- but a little while before, wast thou in rebellion! -- and thou didst mischief (and violence)!"

فَالْيَوْمَ نُنَجِّيكَ بِيَدِنَا لَتَكُونَ لِمَنْ خَلَقَكَ آيَةً...

92. "This day shall We save thee in thy body, that thou mayest be a Sign to those who come after thee!"

...وَأِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ عَنِ آيَاتِنَا لَعَافُونَ (٩٢)

But verily, many among mankind are heedless of Our Signs!"

### C.103 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(10:93-109)

*Allah's purpose of Mercy and Forgiveness  
Was shown in the mission of Jonah, when  
Nineveh was pardoned on repentance, and given  
A new lease of life. We must  
Be patient and strive with constancy and purveyance.  
For all suffering and sorrow as well as  
All bounties proceed from Allah, Whose plan  
Is righteous and for the good of His creatures.*

### Section 10

وَلَقَدْ بَوَّأْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مَبُوءًا صِدْقٍ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ...

93. We settled the Children of Israel in a beautiful dwelling-place, and provided for them sustenance of the best:

**C1474.** After many wanderings the Israelites were settled in the land of Canaan, described as "a land flowing with milk and honey" (Exod. 3:8).

They had a prosperous land; and they were supplied with spiritual sustenance by men sent to deliver Allah's Message.

They should have known better than to fall into disputes and schisms, but they did so. This was all the more inexcusable considering what bounties they had received from Allah. The schisms arose from selfish arrogance, and Allah will judge between them on the Day of Judgment.

...فَمَا اخْتَلَفُوا حَتَّى جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ...

it was after knowledge had been granted to them, that they fell into schisms.

...إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَفْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ (٩٣)

Verily Allah will judge between them as to the schisms amongst them, on the Day of Judgment.

فَإِنْ كُنْتَ فِي شكٍّ مِمَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ فَاسْأَلِ الَّذِينَ يُقْرَأُونَ الْكِتَابَ

مِنْ قَبْلِكَ...

94. If thou wert in doubt as to what We have revealed unto thee, then ask those who have been reading the Book from before thee:

**C1475.** Allah's Truth is all one, and even in different forms men sincere in Religion recognise the oneness.

So sincere Jews like 'Abdullah ibn Salam, and sincere Christians like Waraqa or the Nestorian monk Bahira, were ready to recognise the mission of Muhammad Al-Mustafa.

**"The Book"** in this connection is Revelation generally, including pre-Islamic revelations.

...لَقَدْ جَاءَكَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ (٩٤)

the Truth hath indeed come to thee from thy Lord:

so be in nowise of those in doubt.

**C1476.** Cf. 3:60 and n. 399.

وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَتَكُونُوا مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ (٩٥)

95. Nor be of those who reject the Signs of Allah, or thou shalt be of those who perish.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (٩٦)

96. Those against whom the Word of thy Lord hath been verified would not believe --

**C1477.** Allah has given frequent warnings against Evil and want of Faith in all ages, through Signs and through inspiration, -the latter "**the Word**" being even more direct and personal than the former.

Those who did not heed the warning found to their cost that it was true, and they perished. Such contumacy in the rejection of Truth only yields when the actual penalty is in sight. Belief then is induced by irresistible facts: it is not efficacious as Faith, as was proved against Pharaoh, See [10:90](#) and [n. 1473](#).

وَلَوْ جَاءَهُمْ كُلُّ آيَةٍ حَتَّىٰ يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ (٩٧)

97. Even if every Sign was brought unto them -- until they see (for themselves) the Penalty Grievous.

فَلَوْلَا كَانَتْ قَرْيَةٌ قَرِيَّةٌ فَنَفَعَهَا إِيمَانُهَا إِلَّا قَوْمٌ يُونُسَ...

98. Why was there not a single township (among those We warned), which believed -- so its Faith should have profited it -- except the people of Jonah?

**C1478.** Allah in His infinite Mercy points out the contumacy of Sin as a warning, and the exceptional case of Nineveh and its Prophet Jonah is alluded to.

The story of Jonah is told in 37:139-148, which would be an appropriate place for further comments.

Here it is sufficient to note that Nineveh was a very ancient town which is now no longer on the map. Its site is believed to be marked by the two mounds on the left bank of the Tigris, opposite the flourishing city of Mosul on the right bank, about 230 miles north- north-west of Baghdad. One of the mounds bears the name of "the Tomb of Nabi Yunus."

Archeologists have not yet fully explored its antiquities. But it is clear that it was a very old Sumerian town, perhaps older than 3500 B.C. It became the capital of Assyria. The first Assyrian Empire under Shalmaneser 1, about 1300 B.C., became the supreme power in Western Asia.

Babylon, whose tributary Assyria had formerly been, now became tributary to Assyria. The second Assyrian Empire arose about 745 B.C., and Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) beautified the town with many Public Works. It was destroyed by the Scythians (so-called Medes) in 612 B.C. If the date of Jonah were assumed to be about 800 B.C., it would be between the First and the Second Assyrian Empire; when the City was nearly destroyed for its sins, but on account of its repentance was given a new lease of glorious life in the Second Empire.

...لَمَّا آمَنُوا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ عَذَابَ الْخِزْيِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا...

When they believed, We removed from them the Penalty of Ignominy in the life of the Present,

...وَمَتَّعْنَاهُمْ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ (٩٨)

and permitted them to enjoy (their life) for a while.

**C1479.** The point of the allusion here may be thus explained. Nineveh was a great and glorious City. But it became, like Babylon, a city of sin. Allah sent the prophet Yunus (Jonah) to warn it.

Full of iniquities though it was, it listened to the warning, perhaps in the person of a few just men. For their sakes, the All-Merciful Allah spared it, and gave it a new lease of glorious life.

According to the chronology in the last note the new lease would be for about two centuries, after which it perished completely for its sins and abominations.

Note that its new lease of life was for its collective life as a City, the life of the Present, i.e., of this World. It does not mean that individual sinners escaped the spiritual consequences of their sin, unless they individually repented and obtained Allah's mercy and forgiveness.

...وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعًا...

99. If it had been the Lord's Will, they would all have believed -- all who are on earth!

...أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ (٩٩)

Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!

**C1480.** If it had been Allah's Plan or Will not to grant the limited Free-will that He has granted to man, His omnipotence could have made all mankind alike: all would then have had Faith, but that Faith would have reflected no merit on them.

In the actual world as it is, man has been endowed with various faculties and capacities, so that he should strive and explore, and bring himself into harmony with Allah's Will. Hence Faith becomes a moral achievement, and to resist Faith becomes a sin.

As a complementary proposition, men of Faith must not be impatient or angry if they have to contend against Unfaith, and most important of all, they must guard against the temptation of forcing Faith, i.e., imposing it on others by physical compulsion or any other forms of compulsion such as social pressure, or inducements held out by wealth or position, or other adventitious advantages.

Forced faith is no faith. They should strive spiritually and let Allah's Plan work as He wills.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ...

100. No soul can believe, except by the Will of Allah,

**C1481.** To creatures endued with Will, Faith comes out of an active use of that Will. But we must not be so arrogant as to suppose that that is enough. At best man is weak, and is in need of Allah's grace and help.

If we sincerely wish to understand. He will help our Faith; but if not, our doubts and difficulties will only be increased. This follows as a necessary consequence, and in Quranic language all consequences are ascribed to Allah.

...وَيَجْعَلُ الرَّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ (١٠٠)

and He will place Doubt (or obscurity) on those who will not understand.

**C1482. Rijs** (from rajisa, yarjasu, or rajusa, yarjusu) has various meanings: e.g,

- filth, impurity, uncleanness, abomination, as in 9:95;
- hence, filthy deeds, foul conduct, crime, abomination, thus shading off into previous, as in 5:93;
- hence punishment for crime, penalty, as in 6:125;
- a form of such punishment, viz., doubt, obscurity, or unsettlement of mind, anger, indignation, as in 9:125, and here, but perhaps the idea of punishment is also implied here.

فَلْ انظُرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

101. Say: "Behold all that is in the heavens and on earth;"

...وَمَا تُعْزِيهِ الْآيَاتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَنْ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (١٠١)

but neither Signs nor Warners profit those who believe not.

**C1483.** If Faith results from an active exertion of our spiritual faculties or understanding, it follows that if we let these die, Allah's Signs in His Creation or in the spoken Word which comes by inspiration through the mouths of His Messengers will not reach us any more than music reaches a deaf man.

فَهَلْ يَنْتَظِرُونَ إِلَّا مِثْلَ أَيَّامِ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ...

102. Do they then expect (anything) but (what happened in) the days of the men who passed away before them?

...فَلْ فَاَنْتَظِرُوا إِلَيَّ مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الْمُنْتَظِرِينَ (١٠٢)

Say: "Wait ye then: for I too, will wait with you."

**C1484.** Cf. [10:20](#) and [n. 1408](#).

The argument about Allah's revelation of Himself to man was begun in those early sections of this Sura and is being now rounded off towards the end of this Sura with the same formula.

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا...

103. In the end We deliver Our Messengers and those who believe:

...كَذَلِكَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نُنَجِّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (١٠٣)

thus is it fitting on Our part that We should deliver those who believe!

## Section 11

فَلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنْتُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِّن دِينِي فَلَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ  
مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ...

104. Say: "O ye men!

if ye are in doubt as to my religion, (behold!) I worship not what ye worship, other than Allah!

**C1485.** Other people may hesitate, or doubt, or wonder. But the righteous man has no doubt in his own mind, and he declares his Faith clearly and unambiguously to all, as did Al-Mustafa.

...وَلَكِنُ أَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ الَّذِي يَتَوَقَّأَكُم...

But I worship Allah -- Who will take your souls (at death):

**C1486.** The worship of the One and True God is not a fancy worship, to be arrived at merely by reasoning and philosophy. It touches the vital issues of life and death--which are in His hands and His alone.

...وَأَمْرْتُ ...

I am commanded

**C1487.** Nor is the worship of One God an invention of the Prophet. It comes as a direct command through him and to all.

... أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (١٠٤)

to be (in the ranks) of the Believers.

**C1488.** Individual Faith is good, but it is completed and strengthened by joining or forming a Righteous Society, in which the individual can develop and expand.

Islam was never a religion of monks and anchorites. It laid great stress on social duties, which in many ways test and train the individual's character.

وَأَنْ أَقِمَّ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (١٠٥)

105. "And further (thus): 'Set thy face towards Religion with true piety, and never in anywise be of the Unbelievers;

وَلَا تَدْعُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكَ وَلَا يَضُرُّكَ...

106. "Nor call on any, other than Allah -- such will neither profit thee nor hurt thee:

...إِن فَعَلْتَ فَإِنَّكَ إِذَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (١٠٦)

if thou dost, Behold! thou shalt certainly be of those who do wrong."

وَأِنْ يَمَسُّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ...

107. If Allah do touch thee with hurt, there is none can remove it but He:

...وَأِنْ يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ...

if He do design some benefit for thee, there is none can keep back His favor:

...يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ...

He causeth it to reach whomsoever of His servants He pleaseth.

...وَهُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ (١٠٧)

And He is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

**C1489.** Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Even when we suffer under trials and tribulations, it is for our good, and no one can remove them except He, when, in His Plan. He sees it to be best for all concerned.

On the other hand, there is no power that can intercept His blessings and favours, and His bounty flows freely when we are worthy, and often when we are not worthy of it.

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ...

108. Say: "O ye men! now Truth hath reached you from your Lord!

...فَمَنْ اهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ...

Those who receive guidance, do so for the good of their own souls;



...وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَاتِّمَّا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا...

those who stray, do so to their own loss:

(108) وَمَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِوَكَيلٍ (108)

and I am not (set) over you to arrange your affairs."

**C1490.** The Furqan, the Criterion between right and wrong, has been sent to us from Allah. If we accept guidance, it is not as if we confer favours on those who bring us guidance. They suffer unselfishly for us, in order that we may be guided for our own good.

On the other hand, if we reject it, it is our own loss. We have a certain amount of free-will, and the responsibility is ours and cannot be shifted to the Prophets sent by Allah.

وَاتَّبِعْ مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَأَصْبِرْ حَتَّىٰ يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ...

109. Follow thou the inspiration sent unto thee,

and be patient and constant, till Allah doth decide:

(109) وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ (109)

for He is the Best to decide

**C1491.** When, in spite of all the efforts of the Prophets of Allah, people do not accept Truth, and evil seems to flourish for a time, we must wait and be patient, but at the same time we must not give up hope or persevering effort. For thus only can we carry out our part in the Plan of Allah.



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