



الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ



*Praise be to Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, and made the darkness and the light.*

## Quran English Translation & Commentary

By

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*An'am*

الْأَنْعَامِ

### Introduction and Summary

This is a Surah of the late Makkan period. The greater part of it was revealed entire. Its place in the traditional order of arrangement is justified by logical considerations. We have already had the spiritual history of mankind, a discussion of the earlier revelations and how they were lost or corrupted, the regulations for the outer life of the new community, and the points in which the Jews and Christians failed to maintain the central doctrine of Islam-the unity of Allah. The next step now taken is to expound this doctrine in relation to Pagan Arabia.

**Summary-** The nature of Allah and the method by which He reveals Himself are first expounded, and the weakness of Paganism is exposed (6:1-30, and C. 76).

The emptiness of this world's life is contrasted with the evidence of Allah's wonderful handiwork in all Creation. It is He who holds the keys of the Unseen and secrets of all that we see (6:32-60, and C. 77).

Allah's working in His world and His constant care and guidance should give a clue to His unity as it did to Abraham when he argued with those who worshipped false gods (6:61-82, and C. 78).

The succession of prophets after Abraham kept Allah's truth alive, and led up to the Quran. How can man fail to understand the majesty and goodness of Allah, when he contemplates Allah's creation and the Messages to mankind? (6:83-110, and C. 79).

The obstinate and the rebellious are deceived; they should be avoided. Though they turn for assistance to each other, they will receive due punishment (6:111-129, and C. 80).

Allah's decree will come to pass, in spite of all the crimes and superstitions of the ungodly (6:130-150, and C. 81).

The better course is to follow the straight Way, the Way of Allah, as directed in the Quran, with unity and the full dedication of our lives (6:151-165, and C. 82). (R).

## **C.76 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)**

**(6:1-30)**

*Allah did separate Light and Darkness;  
He reigns not only in heaven but also  
On earth; Mercy is His Law;  
To Him shall we all return*

*At the end of all things. How can we  
Then depart from truth and forge lies  
Against Him? It is folly to say that there is  
Nothing beyond this our present life.*

## بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ...

1. Praise be to Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, and made the darkness and the light.

...ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ (١)

Yet those who reject Faith hold (others) as equal with their Guardian-Lord.

**C834. Adia** has various meanings:

1. to hold something as equal to something else, as here; to balance nicely;
2. to deal justly, as between one party and another, 42:15;
3. to give compensation or reparation, or something as equivalent to something else, 6:70;
4. to turn the balance the right way, to give a right disposition, to give a just bias or proportion, 82:7;
5. to turn the balance the wrong way, to swerve, to show bias, 4:135.

**C835.** The argument is threefold:

1. Allah created everything you see and know: how can you then set up any of His own creatures as equal to Him?
2. He is your own Guardian-Lord; He cherishes and loves you: how can you be so ungrateful as to run after something else?

3. Darkness and Light are to help you to distinguish between the true from the false: how then can you confound the true God with your false ideas and superstitions?

There may also be a repudiation of the Duality of old Persian theology; Light and Darkness are not conflicting Powers; they are both creatures of Allah.

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ ...

2. He it is who created you from clay,

**C836.** After the general argument, the argument comes to man personally.

Can such a miserable creature, created from clay, put himself in opposition to his Creator?

And can man forget or doubt that his is here only for a short term of probation?

And then, after a period, comes the Day of Account before Allah.

... ثُمَّ قَضَىٰ أَجَلًا ...

and then decreed a stated term (for you).

**C837.** This life is a period of probation. The other term leads up to Judgement.

... وَأَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى عِنْدَهُ ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ تَمْتَرُونَ (٢)

And there is in His presence another determined term; yet ye doubt within yourselves!

وَهُوَ اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ ...

3. And He is Allah in the heavens and on earth.

... يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ وَجَهْرَكُمْ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُونَ (٣)

He knoweth what ye hide, and what ye reveal,

and He knoweth the (recompense) which ye earn (by your deeds).

**C838.** It is folly to suppose that God only reigns in the heavens. He also reigns on earth. He knows all our secret thoughts and motives, and the real worth of all that is behind what we care to show.

It is by our deeds that He judges us; for our deeds, whether good or evil we shall get due recompense in due time.

وَمَا تَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ آيَةٍ مِّنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ (٤)

4. But never did a single one of the Signs of their Lord reach them, but they turned away therefrom.

فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ...

5. And now they reject the truth when it reaches them:

...فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِيهِمْ أَنْبَاءُ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِؤُونَ (٥)

but soon shall they learn the reality of what they used to mock at.

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ...

6. See they not how many of those before them We did destroy?

**C839.** Now comes the argument from history, looking backwards and forwards.

If we are so short-sighted or arrogant as to suppose that we are firmly established on this earth, secure in our privileges, we are reminded of much greater nations in the past, who failed in their duty and ere wiped out. In their fate we must read our own fate, if we fail likewise! But those without faith, instead of facing facts squarely "turn away therefrom."

... مِّنْ قَرْنٍ مَّكَّانَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَّكُمْ ...

Generations We had established on the earth, in strength such as We have not given to you,

وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِدْرَارًا وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَنْهَارَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ...

for whom We poured out rain from the skies in abundance, and gave (fertile) streams flowing beneath their (feet):

... فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ بِدُنُوبِهِمْ ...

yet for their sins We destroyed them,

...وَأَنْشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ (٦)

and raised in their wake fresh generations (to succeed them).

... وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ كِتَابًا فِي قِرْطَاسٍ ...

7. If We had sent unto thee a written (Message) on parchment,

**C839a. Qirtas:** in the Prophet's life, could only mean "parchment," which was commonly used as writing material in Western Asia from the 2nd century B.C.

The word was derived from the Greek, Charta (Cf. Latin, "Charta:"). Paper, as we know it, made from rags, was first used by the Arabs after the conquest of Samarqand in 751 A.D.

The Chinese had used it by the 2nd century B.C. The Arabs introduced it into Europe it was; used in Greece in the 11th and 12th century, and in Spain through Sicily in the 12th century.

The Papyrus, made from an Egyptian reed, was in Egypt as early as 2500 B.C. It gave place to paper in Egypt in the 10th century.

... فَلَمَسُوهُ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ لِقَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ...

so that they could touch it with their hands, the unbelievers would have been sure to say:

...إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ (٧)

"This is nothing but obvious magic!"

**C840.** The materialists want to see actual physical material things before them, but if such a thing came from an unusual source or expressed things they cannot understand, they give it some name like magic, or superstition, or whatever name is in fashion, and they are not helped at all in attaining faith, because their "hearts are diseased" (2:10)

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ ...

8. They say: "Why is not an angel sent down to him?"

... وَلَوْ أُنزِلْنَا مَلَكًا لَفُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ ثُمَّ لَا يُنظَرُونَ (٨)

If We did send down an angel, the matter would be settled at once, and no respite would be granted them.

**C841.** Cf. 2::210.

An angel is a heavenly being, a manifestation of Allah's glory, invisible to men who live gross material lives; Such men are given plenty of respite in which to turn in repentance to Allah and make themselves worthy of His light.

But if their prayer to see an angel were granted, it would do them no good, for they would be destroyed as darkness is destroyed by light.

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ مَلَكًا لَجَعَلْنَاهُ رَجُلًا وَلَلَبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَا يَلْبَسُونَ (٩)

9. If We had made it an angel, We should have sent him as a man, and We should certainly have caused them confusion in a matter which they have already covered with confusion.

**C842.** Supposing an angel should appear to their grosser senses, he could only do it in human form. In that case their present confused notions about spiritual life would be still more confounded.

They would say: "We wanted to see an angel, and we have only seen a man!"

وَلَقَدْ اسْتَهْزَىءَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ ...

10. Mocked were (many) Messengers before thee;

...فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِؤُونَ (١٠)

but the scoffers were hemmed in by the thing that they mocked.

**C843.** "The scoffers were mocked by the thing that they mocked" would express epigrammatically part of the sense, but not the whole.

"**Hemmed in**" implies that the logic of events turned the tables, and as a man might be besieged and

surrounded by an enemy in war, and would be forced to surrender, so these mockers will find that events would justify Truth, not them.

The mockers of Jesus, - where were they when Titus destroyed Jerusalem?

The mockers who drove out Muhammad from Makkah, - what was their plight when Muhammad came back in triumph and they sued for mercy, - and he gave it to them!

According to the Latin proverb, Great is Truth, and must prevail.

## Section 2

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ انظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ (١١)

11. Say: "Travel through the earth and see what was the end of those who rejected truth."

قُلْ لِمَنْ مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ...

12. Say: "To whom belongeth all that is in the heavens and on earth?"

قُلْ لِلَّهِ ...

Say:

"To Allah.

كَتَبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ...

He hath inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy

**C844.** History, travel, human experience, all proves the Mercy of Allah and the law that without it those who reject Truth tend to lose their own souls and destroy themselves.

... لِيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ...

that He will gather you together for the Day of Judgment, there is no doubt whatever.



...الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (١٢)

It is they who have lost their own souls, that will not believe.

وَلَهُ مَا سَكَنَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ ...

13. "To Him belongeth all that dwelleth (or lurketh) in the night and the day.

**C845. Sakan:**

- to dwell;
- to rest, to be still, to stop (moving), to lurk;
- to be quiescent, as a letter which is not moved with a vowel.

If we imagine Night and Day to be places, and each to have (dwelling in them) things that are open and things that are concealed, things that move and things that are still, things that are sounded and things that are quiescent, we get some idea of the imagery implied.

The mystery of Time (which seems more abstract than Space) is thus explained and illustrated by the idea of Place or Space, which also is a notion and not a concrete thing.

But He Who has control of all these things is the one true Allah.

... وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ (١٣)

For He is the One Who heareth and knoweth all things.

**C846.** Throughout this section we have a sort of implied dialogue, of which one part is understood from the other part, which is expressed.

In verse 11, we might have an imagery objector saying: "Why go back to the past?"

The answer is:

"Well, travel through the world, and see whether it is not true that virtue and godliness exalt a nation, and the opposite are causes of ruin. Both the past and the present prove this."

In verse 12 the objector may say: "But you speak of God's power?"

The man of God replies:

"Yes, but Mercy is Allah's own attribute and knowledge and wisdom beyond what man can conceive."

فَلْ أَعْيَرَ اللَّهَ أَتَّخِذُ وَلِيًّا ...

14. Say:

"Shall I take for my protector any other than Allah,

فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ يُطْعَمُ وَلَا يُطْعَمُ ...

the Maker of the heavens and the earth?

And He is that feedeth but is not fed."

**C847. Feedeth but is not fed:** true both literally and figuratively.

To God we owe the satisfaction of all needs, but He is independent of all needs.

...فَلْ إِنِّي أَمَرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (١٤)

Say:

"Nay! but I am commanded to be the first of those who bow to Allah (in Islam), and be not thou of the company of those who join gods with Allah."

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

15. Say:

"I would, if I disobeyed my Lord, indeed have fear of the penalty of a Mighty Day.

مَنْ يُصْرَفْ عَنْهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمَهُ وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِينُ (١٦)

16. "On that day, if the penalty is averted from any, it is due to Allah's Mercy;

and that would be (Salvation), the obvious fulfillment of all desire.

**C848.** We continue the implied dialogue suggested in [n 846](#).

In [verse 14](#), the objector might say: "But we have other interests in life than religion and Allah."

"No," says the man of God,

"My Creator is the one and only Power whose protection I seek; and I strive to be first in the race."

In [verse 15](#), the objector suggests: "enjoy the good things of this life; it is short."

The answer is:

"The Hereafter is more real to me, and promises the true fulfilment of all desire; happiness or affliction comes not from the fleeting pettinesses or illusions of this life, but from the power and wisdom of Allah."

In [verse 19](#), the objector makes his final splash: "What evidence is there for all this?"

The reply is:

"I know it is true, for Allah's voice is within me, and my living Teacher awakens that voice; and there is the Book of Inspiration. Allah is one, and there is none other besides."

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

17. "If Allah touch thee with affliction, none can remove it but He;

وَإِن يَمَسُّكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (١٧)

if He touch thee with happiness, He hath power over all things.

**C849.** The vulgar worship of false gods out of fear that they would harm them or hope that they would confer some benefit on them. These false gods can do neither.

All power, all goodness is in the hands of Allah. All else is pretence or illusion.

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ (١٨)

18. "He is the Irresistible, (watching) from above over His worshippers;  
and He is the Wise, acquainted with all things."

قُلْ أَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَكْبَرُ شَهَادَةً...

19. Say: "What thing is most weighty in evidence?"

... قُلِ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ ...

Say: "Allah is Witness between me and you:

... وَأَوْحِيَ إِلَيَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ لِأُنذِرَكُمْ بِهِ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ...

this Qur'an hath been revealed to me by inspiration that I may warn you and all whom it reaches.

... أَأَنْتُمْ لَتَشْهَدُونَ أَنَّ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهَةً أُخْرَى...

Can ye possibly bear witness that besides Allah there is another god?"

... قُلْ لَا أَشْهَدُ ...

Say: "Nay! I cannot bear witness!"

... قُلْ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ وَإِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ (١٩)

Say: "But in truth He is the One Allah, and I truly am innocent of (your blasphemy of) joining others with Him.

### Section 3

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ...

20. Those to whom We have given the Book know this as they know their own sons.

**C850.** Cf. 2:146 and n. 151.

In both passages the pronoun translated "this" may mean "him" and refer to Muhammad the Messenger of Allah, as some commentators think.

...الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (٢٠)

Those who have lost their own souls refuse therefore to believe.

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ...

21. Who doth more wrong than he who inventeth a lie against Allah or rejecteth His Signs?

...إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ (٢١)

But verily the wrongdoers never shall prosper.

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ نَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا ...

22. One day shall We gather them all together: We shall say to those who ascribed partners (to Us):

... أَيْنَ شُرَكَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ (٢٢)

"Where are the partners whom ye (invented and) talked about?"

ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُنْ فِتْنَتُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا ...

23. There will then be (left) no subterfuge for them but to say:

**C851. Fitnah** has various meanings, from the root idea of "to try , to test, to tempt;" e.g.

- a trial or temptation, as in 2:102;
- trouble, tumult, oppression, persecution, as in 2:191, 193, 217;
- discord, as in 3:7;
- subterfuge, an answer that amounts to a sedition, and excuse founded on a falsehood, as here.

Other shades of meaning will be noticed as they occur.

Those who blasphemed Allah in imagining false gods will now see the vanity of their imaginations for themselves.

What answer can they give now?

In their perversity they will deny that they ever entertained the notion of false gods.

... وَاللّٰهُ رَبَّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِيْنَ (٢٣)

"By Allah, Our Lord, we were not those who joined gods with Allah."

انظُرْ كَيْفَ كَذَّبُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوْا يَفْتَرُوْنَ (٢٤)

24. Behold! how they lie against their own souls!

But the (lie) which they invented will leave them in the lurch.

**C852.** The lies which they used to tell have now "wandered" from the channels which they use to occupy, and left the liars in the lurch. In denying the indubitable fact that they took false gods, they admit the falsity of their notions and thus are practically convicted out of their own mouths.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَّسْتَمِعُ اِلَيْكَ...

25. Of them there are some who (pretend to) listen to thee;

... وَجَعَلْنَا عَلٰٓى قُلُوْبِهِمْ اَكِنَّةً اَنْ يَّفْقَهُوْهُ وَفِيْ اٰذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا...

but We have thrown veils on their hearts, so they understand it not, and deafness in their ears;

**C852a. It:** The Quran.

...وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كُلَّ آيَةٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوْا بِهَا...

if they saw every one of the Signs, not they will believe in them;

...حَتّٰى اِذَا جَاؤُوكَ يُجَادِلُوْنَكَ يَفُوْلُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا اِنْ هٰذَا اِلَّا اَسَاطِيْرُ

الْاَوَّلِيْنَ (٢٥)

in so much that when they come to thee, they (but) dispute with thee;

the unbelievers say: "These are nothing but tales of the ancients."

وَهُمْ يَبْتَهِوْنَ عَنْهُ وَيَتَاوَنَ عَنْهُ ...

26. Others they keep away from it, and themselves they keep away;

...وَأَن يُهْلِكُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ (٢٦)

but they only destroy their own souls, and they perceive it not.

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ وَقَفُوا عَلَى النَّارِ فَقَالُوا...

27. If thou couldst but see when they are confronted with the fire!  
They will say:

...يَا لَيْتَنَا نُرَدُّ وَلَا نُكَذِّبُ بآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا وَنَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (٢٧)

"Would that we were but sent back! then would we not reject the  
Signs of our Lord,

but would be amongst those who believe!

بَلْ بَدَأَ لَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُخْفُونَ مِن قَبْلُ...

28. Yea, in their own (eyes) will become manifest what before they  
concealed,

...وَلَوْ رُدُّوا لَعَادُوا لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ (٢٨)

but if they were returned, they would certainly relapse to the  
things they were forbidden, for they are indeed liars.

**C853.** Their falsity was not due to want of knowledge, but to perversity and selfishness. In their heart was a disease (2:10): therefore neither their understanding, nor their ears, nor their eyes do their proper work. They twist what they see, hear, or are taught, and go deeper and deeper into the mire.

The deceptions which they used to practice on other people will, before the Seat of Judgement, become clear in their own eyes.

وَقَالُوا إِن هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ (٢٩)

29. And they (sometimes) say:

"There is nothing except our life on this earth, and never shall we  
be raised up again."

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ وَقَفُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ...

30. If thou couldst but see when they are confronted with their Lord!

...قَالَ أَلَيْسَ هَذَا بِالْحَقِّ...

He will say: "Is not this the truth?"

...قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّنَا...

They will say: "Yea, by our Lord!"

...قَالَ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ (٣٠)

He will say: "Taste ye then the penalty, because ye rejected faith."

### C.77 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(6:31-60)

*The life of this world is but empty;  
What is serious is the life hereafter.  
The teacher of Allah's truth is not baulked  
By frivolous objections or insults  
Or persecution. The wicked will be  
Cut off to the last remnant. Allah's wisdom  
Pervades the whole of His Creation,  
And in His hands are the keys of the Unseen,  
And the secrets of all that we see.*

## Section 4

فَذُحِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِإِلْقَاءِ اللَّهِ...

31. Lost indeed are they who treat it as a falsehood that they must meet Allah,

...حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُمُ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً قَالُوا يَا حَسْرَتَنَا عَلَىٰ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِيهَا...

until on a sudden the hour is on them, and they say: "Ah! woe unto us that we took no thought of it;"



...وَهُمْ يَحْمِلُونَ أَوْزَارَهُمْ عَلَى ظُهُورِهِمْ ...

for they bear their burdens on their backs;

**C854.** Grievous is the burden of sins which the wicked will bear on their backs when they become conscious of them.

Some commentators personify Sins as ugly Demons riding on the backs of men, while the men's Good Deeds become the strong and patient mounts which will carry the men on their backs. If the Good Deeds are few and the Sins many, the man and his Good Deeds will be crushed under the load of the Evil which they carry.

...أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَزُرُونَ (٣١)

and evil indeed are the burdens that they bear!

وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ...

32. What is the life of this world but play and amusement?

**C855.** Play and amusement are for preparing our minds for the serious things of life: in themselves they are not serious.

So this life is a preparation for the Eternal Home to which we are going, which is far more important than the ephemeral pleasures which may possibly seduce us in this life.

...وَاللَّذَارُ الْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ (٣٢)

But best is the home in the Hereafter, for those who are righteous.

Will ye not then understand?

قَدْ نَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُ لِيَحْزُنُكَ الَّذِي يَقُولُونَ...

33. We know indeed the grief which their words do cause thee:

...فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يُكَذِّبُونَكَ وَلَكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ (٣٣)

it is not thee they reject: it is the Signs of Allah, which the wicked condemn.

وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوا عَلَىٰ مَا كُذِّبُوا وَأَوْدُوا حَتَّىٰ أَنزَلْنَاهُمْ  
نَصْرُنَا...

34. Rejected were the Messengers before thee:

with patience and constancy they bore their rejection and their wrongs, until Our aid did reach them:

...وَلَا مُبَدَّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكَ مِن نَّبِيِّ الْمُرْسَلِينَ (٣٤)

there is none that can alter the Words (and Decrees) of Allah.

Already hast thou received some account of those Messengers.

وَأِن كَانَ كَبِيرَ عَلَيْكَ إِعْرَاضُهُمْ...

35. If their spurning is hard on thy mind,

...فَإِنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَبْنِعِيَ نَقْفًا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ سُلْمًا فِي السَّمَاءِ فَتَأْتِيَهُمْ بَآيَةٌ...

yet if thou wert able to seek a tunnel in the ground or a ladder to the skies and bring them a Sign, (what good?).

**C856.** There were many signs of a divine Mission in the Prophet's life and in the Message which he delivered. If these did not convince the Unbelievers, was it not vain to seek a miraculous Sign from the bowels of the earth or by a visible ascent to the skies?

If in the Prophet's eagerness to get all to accept his Message he was hurt at their callousness, active opposition, and persecution of him, he is told that a full knowledge of the working of Allah's Plan would convince him that impatience was misplaced. This was in the days of persecution before the Hijrah. The history in Madinah and after shows how Allah's truth was ultimately and triumphantly vindicated. Who among the sincere devotees of Muhammad can fail to read [6:33-35](#) without tears in his eyes?

...وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ (٣٥)

If it were Allah's will, He could gather them together unto true guidance:

so be not thou amongst those who are swayed by ignorance (and impatience)!

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ ...

36. Those who listen (in truth), be sure, will accept:

**C857.** There is a double meaning here.

- If people listen to truth sincerely and earnestly, they must believe; even if the spiritual faculty is dead, Allah will by His grace revive it and they will come to Him, if they really try earnestly to understand.
- The sincere will believe; but those whose hearts are dead will not listen, yet they cannot escape being brought to the Judgement Seat before Him.

... وَالْمَوْتَى يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ (٣٦)

as to the dead, Allah will raise them up: then will they be turned unto Him.

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ...

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

...قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَادِرٌ عَلَى أَنْ يُنَزِّلَ آيَةً وَلَكِنْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (٣٧)

Say: "Allah hath certainly power to send down a Sign: but most of them understand not."

**C858.** Signs are all around them, but they do not understand. If they want a particular Sign to suit their gross ignorance, they will not be humored, for they can always pick holes in anything that descends to their level.

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَّمٌ أُمَّتَالِكُمْ ...

38. There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you.

**C859. "Animals living on the earth"** include those living in the water-fishes, reptiles, crustaceans, insects, as well as four-footed beasts. Life on the wing is separately mentioned.

**"Tair,"** which is ordinarily translated as "bird," is anything that flies, including mammals like bats.

In our pride we may exclude animals from our purview, but they live a life, social and individual, like ourselves, and all life is subject to the Plan and Will of Allah.

In 6:59 we are told that not a leaf falls but by His Will, and things dry and green are recorded in His Book. In other words they all obey His archetypal Plan, the Book which is also mentioned here.

They are all answerable in their several degrees to His Plan ("shall be gathered to their Lord in the end"). This is not Pantheism: it is ascribing all life, activity, and existence to the Will and Plan of Allah.

...مَّا قَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ...

Nothing have We omitted from the Book,

...ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ (٣٨)

and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end.

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا صُمُّ وَبُكْمٌ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ...

39. Those who reject Our Signs are deaf and dumb, in the midst of darkness profound:

**C860.** The limited free will of man makes a little difference. If he sees the Signs but shuts his ears to the true Message, and refuses (like a dumb thing) to speak out the Message which all Nature proclaims, then according to the Plan ( of his limited free-will) he must suffer and wander, just as, in the opposite case, he will receive grace and salvation.

...مَنْ يَشَأِ اللَّهُ يُضِلَّهُ وَمَنْ يَشَأِ يُجْعَلْهُ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ (٣٩)

whom Allah willeth, He leaveth to wander,

whom He willeth, He placeth on the way that is straight.

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَتَتْكُمُ السَّاعَةُ...

40. Say: "Think ye to yourselves, if there come upon you the wrath of Allah, or the hour (that ye dread),

...أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَدْعُونَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٤٠)

would ye then call upon other than Allah?

(Reply) if ye are truthful!"

بَلْ إِيَّاهُ تَدْعُونَ فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ إِنْ شَاءَ...

41. "Nay, On Him would ye call, and if it be His Will, He would remove (the distress) which occasioned your call upon Him,

...وَتَنْسَوْنَ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ (٤١)

and ye would forget (the false gods) which ye join with Him!"

## Section 5

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَى أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ ...

42. Before thee We sent (Messengers) to many nations

...فَأَخَذْنَا هُمْ بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَضَرَّعُونَ (٤٢)

and We afflicted the nations with suffering and adversity, that they might learn humility.

فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا...

43. When the suffering reached them from Us, why then did they not learn humility?

**C861.** Sorrow and suffering may (if we take them rightly) turn out to be the best gifts of Allah to us. According to the Psalms (94:12), "Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord!"

Through suffering we learn humility, the antidote to many vices and the fountain of many virtues. But if we take them the wrong way, we grumble and complain: we become faint-hearted; and Satan gets his opportunity to exploit us by putting forward the alluring pleasures of his Vanity Fair.

...وَلَكِنْ فَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (٤٣)

On the contrary their hearts became hardened, and Satan made their (sinful) acts seem alluring to them.

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا دُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ...

44. But when they forget the warning they had received, We opened to them the gates of all (good) things,

**C862.** Learning the inner truth of ourselves and the world presupposes a certain advanced stage of sensitiveness and spiritual development. There is a shallower stage, at which prosperity and the good things of life may teach us sympathy and goodness and cheerfulness like that of Mr. Cheeribyles in Dickens. In such cases the Message takes root. But there is another type of character which is puffed up in prosperity.

For them prosperity is a trial or even a punishment from the higher point of view. They go deeper and deeper into sin, until they are pulled up of a sudden, and then instead of being contrite they merely become desperate.

...حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ (٤٤)

until, in the midst of their enjoyment of Our gifts, on a sudden, We called them to account, when lo! they were plunged in despair!

فَقُطِعَ دَابِرُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا...

45. Of the wrongdoers the last remnant was cut off.

...وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (٤٥)

Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds.

**C863.** Allah's punishment of wrong-doers is a measure of justice, to protect the true and righteous from their depredations and maintain His righteous decrees. It is an aspect of His character which is emphasised by the epithet "Cherisher of the Worlds".

فَلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ سَمْعَكُمْ وَأَبْصَارَكُمْ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُمْ ...

46. Say:

"Think ye, if Allah took away your hearing and your sight, and sealed up your hearts,

**C864.** Cf. 2:7 and notes.

...مَنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِهِ ...

who -- a god other than Allah -- could restore them to you?"

...انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ هُمْ يَصْدِفُونَ (٤٦)

See how We explain the Signs by various (symbols):

Yet they turn aside.

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ بَعَثَهُ أَوْ جَهْرَةً هَلْ يُهْلِكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ  
الظَّالِمُونَ (٤٧)

47. Say: "Think ye, if the punishment of Allah comes to you, whether suddenly or openly, will any be destroyed except those who do wrong?"

**C865. Suddenly:** without warning.

**Openly:** with many warnings, even to the sinners, though they heed them not.

As to those who understand and read the signs of God, they could always tell that all wrong-doing must eventually have its punishment. But it will affect the wrong-doers, not the righteous. It is justice, not revenge.

وَمَا نُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ...

48. We send the Messengers only to give good news and to warn:

**C866.** The Prophets are not sent to cancel man's limited free-will. They are sent to preach and teach,

- to preach hope to the repentant ("good news"), and
- to warn the rebellious of the Wrath to come.

...فَمَنْ آمَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (٤٨)

so those who believe and mend (their lives), upon them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَمَسُّهُمُ الْعَذَابُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ (٤٩)

49. But those who reject Our Signs, them shall our punishment touch, for that they ceased not from transgressing.

قُلْ لَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ ...

50. Say: "I tell you not that with me are the treasures of Allah,

**C867.** Literally it might mean that the men of God are not like vulgar soothsayers, who pretend to reveal hidden treasures, or peer into future, or claim to be something of a different nature from men. But the meaning is wider:

- They deal out Allah's great treasures of truth, but the treasures are not theirs, but Allah's;
- they have greater insight into the higher things, but that insight is not due to their own wisdom, but to Allah's inspiration,;
- they are of the same flesh and blood with us, and the sublimity of their words and teaching arises through Allah's grace- to them and to those who hear them.

... وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ ...

nor do I know what is hidden,

... وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ ...

nor do I tell you I am an angel.

...إِنْ أَتَّبِعْ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ...

I but follow what is revealed to me."

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ ...

Say: "Can the blind be held equal to the seeing?"

**C868.** Therefore compare not the men of God ("the seeing") with ordinary men ("the blind").

The men of God, although they be but men, have the higher light with them; therefore do not exact of them petty ephemeral services. Though they are men, they are not as other men, and are entitled to reverence.

... أَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٥٠)

Will ye then consider not?



## Section 6

وَأَنْذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْ يُحْشَرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ...

51. Give the warning to those in whose (hearts) is the fear that they will be brought (to judgment) before their Lord:

**C869.** There are some men - sinners - who yet believe in Judgement; let them be warned of their personal responsibility to guard against evil; let them not rely upon protectors or intercessors before Allah; their sins can only be forgiven by Allah's own Mercy.

...لَيْسَ لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ (٥١)

except from Him they will have no protector nor intercessor: that they may guard (against evil).

وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ...

52. Send not away those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face.

**C870. Face: wajh:** see 2:112 and n. 114.

...مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ...

Naught have they to gain from thee, and naught hast thou to gain from them,

**C871.** Some of the rich and influential Quraish thought it beneath their dignity to listen to Muhammad's teaching in company with the lowly disciples, who were gathered round him. But he refused to send away these lowly disciples, who were sincere seekers after Allah.

From a worldly point of view they had nothing to gain from them as they had no influence. But that was no reason for turning them away; indeed their true sincerity entitled them to precedence over worldly men in the kingdom of God, whose justice was vindicated in Muhammad's daily life in this as in other things. If their sincerity was in any way doubtful, it involved no responsibility for the Preacher.

...فَتَطْرُدْهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ (٥٢)

that thou shouldst turn them away, and thus be (one) of the unjust.

وَكَذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لِيَقُولُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا ...

53. Thus did We try some of them by comparison with others, that they should say:

"Is it these then that Allah hath favored from amongst us?"

**C872.** Pursue the argument of the last note.

The influential people, who were not given precedence over the poor and humble but sincere disciples, were on their trial as to their spiritual insight. Their temptation was to say (and they said it in scorn):

"We are much greater than they: has Allah then selected these lowly people for His teaching?"

But that was so. And Allah knew best those who were grateful to Him for His guidance.

...أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشَّاكِرِينَ (٥٣)

"Is it these then that Allah hath favored from amongst us?"

وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ...

54. When those come to thee who believe in Our Signs, say:

"Peace be on you:

**C873.** The humble who had sincere faith, were not only not sent away to humour the wealthy: they were honoured and were given a special salutation, which has become the characteristic salutation in Islam: "Peace be on you,"

- the word peace, "salam" having special affinity with the word "Islam".

In words they are given the salutation; in life they are promised Mercy by the special grace of Allah.

... كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ...

your Lord had inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy:

**C874.** Cf. [6:12](#).

... أَنَّهُ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ سُوءًا بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ ...

verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented and amended (his conduct),

... فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (٥٤)

lo! He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

وَكَذَلِكَ نَفَصَلُ الْآيَاتِ وَلِتَسْتَبِينَ سَبِيلُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ (٥٥)

55. Thus do We explain the Signs in detail: that the way of the sinners may be shown up.

**C875.** If the way of the sinners (in jealousy and worldly pride) is shown up, and details are given how to honour the truly sincere, it forms the best illustration of the teaching of Allah.

## Section 7

قُلْ إِنِّي نُهِيتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ...

56. Say: "I am forbidden to worship those, other than Allah, whom ye call upon."

**C876.** There are a number of arguments now put forward against the Makkans who refused to believe in Allah's Message. Each argument is introduced with the word "**Say**".

Here are the first four:

1. I have received Light and will follow it;
2. I prefer my Light to your vain desires
3. your challenge -"if there is a God, why does He not finish the blasphemers at once?" - it is not for me to take up; punishment rests with God;

4. if it rested with me, it would be for me to take up your challenge; all I know is that God is not unacquainted with the existence of folly and wickedness, and many other things besides, that no mortal can know; you can see little glimpses of His Plan, and you can be sure that He will not be tardy in calling you to account.

...قُلْ لَا أَتَّبِعُ أَهْوَاءَكُمْ قَدْ ضَلَلْتُ إِذَا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ (٥٦)

Say:

"I will not follow your vain desires:

if I did, I would stray from the path, and be not of the company of those who receive guidance."

قُلْ إِنِّي عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّي وَكَذَّبْتُمْ بِهِ...

57. Say:

"For me, I (work) on a clear Sign from my Lord, but ye reject Him.

...مَا عِنْدِي مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِهِ...

What ye would see hastened is not in my power.

**C877.** What ye would see hastened: what ye, deniers of God, are so impatient about: the punishment which ye mockingly say does not come to you.

Cf. 13:6.

...إِن الْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ يَفْصِلُ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْفَاصِلِينَ (٥٧)

The Command rests with none but Allah:

He declares the truth, and He is the best of Judges."

قُلْ لَوْ أَنَّ عِنْدِي مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِهِ لَفُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ ...

58. Say:

"If what ye would see hastened were in my power, the matter would be settled at once between you and me.

**C878.** The Messenger of Allah is not here to settle scores with the wicked. It is not a matter between them and him. It is a matter between them and Allah; he is only a warner against sin, and a declarer of the gospel of salvation.

...وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِالظَّالِمِينَ (٥٨)

But Allah knoweth best those who do wrong."

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ...

59. With Him are the **keys** of the Unseen, the treasures that none knoweth but He.

**C879. Mafatih:** Plural of either miflah, a key, or maftah, a treasure.

Both meanings are implied, and I have accordingly put both in my translation.

...وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ...

He knoweth whatever there is on the earth and in the sea.

...وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظِلْمَاتِ الْأَرْضِ...

Not a leaf doth fall but with His knowledge:

there is not a grain in the darkness (or depths) of the earth,

...وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ (٥٩)

nor anything fresh or dry (green or withered),

but is (inscribed) in a Record Clear (to those who can read).

**C880.** This is the mystic Record, the archetypal Plan, the Eternal Law, according to which everything seen and unseen is ordered and regulated.

The simplest things in Nature are subject to His Law. The fresh and the withered, the living and the lifeless-nothing is outside the Plan of His Creation. (R).

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِالنَّهَارِ...

60. It is He Who doth take your souls by night, and hath knowledge of all that ye have done by day.

... ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ...

By day doth He raise you up again; that a term appointed be fulfilled;

...ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (٦٠)

in the end unto Him will be your return, then will He show you the truth of all that ye did.

**C881.** As the rest of His Creation is subject to His Law and Plan, so is man's life in every particular and at every moment, awake or asleep.

The mystery of Sleep -"the twin brother of death"- is called the taking of our soul by Him, with the record of all we have done in our waking moments, and this record sometimes appears to us in confused glimpses in dreams. By day we awaken again to our activities, and so it goes on until we fulfil the term of our life appointed for this earth.

Then comes the other Sleep (death), with the longer record of our Day (Life); and then, in the end comes the Resurrection and Judgment, at which we see everything clearly and not as in dreams, for that is the final Reality.

### **C.78 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)**

**(6:61-82)**

*Allah's loving care doth encompass  
Us round throughout life,  
And delivers us from dangers  
By land and sea. He is the only  
Protector; how can we then  
Forget Him or run after things  
That are mere creatures of His,  
And shall perish-while He  
Is the Eternal God, adored  
By Abraham and all the prophets?*

## Section 8

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ ...

61. He is the Irresistible, (watching) from above over his worshippers,

... وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً ...

and He sets guardians over you.

**C882. Guardians:** most commentators understand this to mean guardian angels. The idea of guardianship is expressed in a general term.

Allah watches over us and guards us, and provides all kinds of agencies, material, moral, and spiritual, to help our growth and development, keep us from harm, and bring us nearer to our Destiny.

...حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا...

At length, when death approaches one of you, Our angels take his soul,

**C883. Angel:** the word used is **rusul**, the Sent Ones, - the same word as for human Messengers sent by Allah to teach mankind.

The agents who come to take our souls at death are accurate in the performance of their duty. They come neither before nor after their appointed time, nor do they do it in any manner other than that fixed by the Command of Allah.

...وَهُمْ لَا يُفْرِطُونَ (٦١)

and they never fail in their duty.

ثُمَّ رُدُّوْا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَاهُمْ الْحَقَّ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا لَهُ الْحُكْمُ ...

62. Then are men returned unto Allah, their True Protector, the (only) reality:

Surely His is the Command?

**C884. The only Reality:** al-haqq, the Truth, the only True One.

The point is that our illusions of the life of this lower world now vanish, when we are rendered back to Allah, from Whom we came. And now we find that so far from the results of our actions being delayed, they follow more swiftly than we can express in terms of Time.

Here is the answer to the taunt of those who were impatient of the working of Allah's Plans (6:57-58). (R).

... وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ الْحَاسِبِينَ (٦٢)

And He is the swiftest in taking account.

فَلْ مَنْ يُجِيبُكُمْ مِّنْ ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ...

63. Say:

"Who is it that delivereth you from the dark recesses of land and sea,

**C885.** In continuation of the four heads of argument referred to in n. 876, we have three more heads here in 6:63-65:

1. your calling upon Him in times of danger shows that in the depths of your hearts you feel His need;
2. Allah's Providence saves you, and yet you ungratefully run after false gods;
3. it is not only physical calamities that you have to fear; your mutual discords and vengeance are even more destructive, and only faith in God can save you from them.

**C886. Zulumat:** dark recesses, terrible lurking dangers, as in deserts or mountains, or forests, or seas.

... تَدْعُوهُ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً ...

when ye call upon Him in humility and silent terror:

**C887.** There are two readings, but they both ultimately yield the same meaning.

- **Khufyatan;** silently, secretly. from the depth of your inner heart, suggesting unspeakable terror.



- **Khfatan;** out of terror or fear or reverence, as in 7:205.

...لئن أنجانا من هذه لنكوننَّ من الشَّاكرينَ (٦٣)

'if He only delivers us from these (dangers), (we vow) we shall truly show our gratitude.'?"

قُلِ اللّٰهُ يُنَجِّبُكُم مِّنْهَا وَمِنْ كُلِّ كَرْبٍ ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ تُشْرِكُونَ (٦٤)

64. Say:

"It is Allah that delivereth you from these and all (other) distresses: and yet ye worship false gods!"

...قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ ...

65. Say:

"He hath power to send calamities on you, from above and below,

**C888. Calamities from above and below:** such as;

- storms and blizzards, torrential rain, etc., or
- earthquakes, floods, landslides, etc.

...أَوْ يَلِيْسَكُمُ شَيْعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُم بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ...

or to cover you with confusion in party strife giving you a taste of mutual vengeance -- each from the other."

...انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ (٦٥)

See how We explain the Signs by various (symbols), that they may understand.

**C889.** Cf. 6:46, where this refrain commences the argument now drawing to a close.

وَكَذَّبَ بِهِ قَوْمُكَ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ...

66. But thy people reject this, though it is the truth.

...قُلْ لَسْتُ بِرَسُولٍ لِّكَ بَلْ أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَخْتَفُونَ عَلَيْكَ الْغَيْبَ إِذْ يُلَاقُونَكَ يَتَسَاءَلُونَكَ وَالْمُتَسَاءَلِينَ يُنَادُونَكَ بِالْحَقِّ أَلْحَقَ... (٦٦)

Say:

"Not mine is the responsibility for arranging your affairs;

**C890.** At the date of this revelation, the Messenger's people had as a body not only rejected Allah's truth, but were persecuting it. The Messenger's duty was to deliver his Message, which he did. He was not responsible for their conduct.

But he told them plainly that all warnings from Allah had their time limit, as they would soon find out, within a very few years. For the leaders of the resistance came to an evil end, and their whole system of fraud and selfishness was destroyed, to make room for the purer Faith of Islam.

Apart from that particular application, there is the more general application, for the present time and for all time.

لِكُلِّ نَبَأٍ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ (٦٧)

67. "For every Message is a limit of time, and soon shall ye know it."

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِي آيَاتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ...

68. When thou seest men engaged in vain discourse about Our Signs, turn away from them

...حَتَّى يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ...

unless they turn to a different theme.

**C891.** Cf. 4:140.

If in any gathering truth is ridiculed, we must not sit in such company. If we find ourselves in it, as soon as we realize it, we must show our disapproval by leaving.

...وَأِمَّا يُنَسِيَنَّكَ الشَّيْطَانُ فَلَا تَعُدَّ بَعْدَ الذِّكْرَى مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ (٦٨)

If Satan ever makes thee forget, then after recollection, sit not thou in the company of the ungodly.

وَمَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ...

69. On their account no responsibility falls on the righteous,

**C892.** Every man is responsible for his own conduct. But the righteous have two duties:

- to protect themselves from infection, and

- to proclaim God's truth, for even in the most unlikely circumstances, it is possible that it may have some effect. (R).

...وَلَكِنْ ذَكَّرَىٰ لَهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ (٦٩)

but (their duty) is to remind them, that they may (learn to) fear Allah.

وَدَّرَ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَعِبًا وَلَهْوًا وَغَرَّتْهُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا...

70. Leave alone those who take their religion to be mere play and amusement, and are deceived by the life of this world.

**C893.** Cf. 6:32, where we are told that the life of this world is mere play and amusement, and Religion and the Hereafter are the serious things that require our attention.

Worldly people reverse this because they are deceived by the allurements of this life. But their own acts will find them out.

...وَدَكَّرَ بِهِ أَنْ تُبْسَلَ نَفْسٌ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ...

But proclaim (to them) this (truth): that every soul delivers itself to ruin by its own acts:

**C894.** We must never forget our own personal responsibility for all we do, or deceive ourselves by the illusion of vicarious atonement.

...لَيْسَ لَهَا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ...

it will find for itself no protector or intercessor except Allah:

... وَإِنْ تَعْدَلَ كُلَّ عَدْلٍ لَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا...

if it offered every ransom (or reparation), none will be accepted:

...أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ أُبْسِلُوا بِمَا كَسَبُوا...

such is (the end of) those who deliver themselves to ruin by their own acts:

...لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ وَعَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ (٧٠)

they will have for drink (only) boiling water, and for punishment, one most grievous: for they persisted in rejecting Allah.

## Section 9

فَلْ أَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا...

71. Say:

"Shall we indeed call on others besides Allah, things that can do us neither good nor harm,

**C895.** In continuation of the seven heads of argument referred to in notes. 876 and 885, we have here the final two heads:

8. who would, after receiving guidance from the living, eternal God, turn to lifeless idols? to do so would indeed show that we were made into fools, wandering to a precipice;
9. therefore accept the only true guidance, the guidance of God, and obey his Law, for we shall have to answer before His judgment-seat.

...وَتُرَدُّ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ...

and turn on our heels after receiving guidance from Allah?

...كَالَّذِي اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ فِي الْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ لَهُ أَصْحَابٌ يَدْعُونَهُ إِلَىٰ

الْهُدَىٰ انْتِنَا...

-- like one whom the evil ones have made into a fool, wandering bewildered through the earth, his friends calling 'Come to us', (vainly) guiding him to the Path."

...فَلْ إِنْ هَدَىٰ اللَّهُ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ وَأَمْرُنَا لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (٧١)

Say:

"Allah's guidance is the (only) guidance, and we have been directed to submit ourselves to the Lord of the worlds;

وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّقُوا...

72. "To establish regular prayers and to fear Allah;

...وَهُوَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ نُحْشَرُونَ (٧٢)

for it is to him that we shall be gathered together."

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ...

73. It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in true (proportions):

**C896.** The argument mounts up here, leading to the great insight of Abraham the true in faith, who did not stop short at the wonders of nature, but penetrated "from nature up to nature's God."

Allah not only created the heavens and the earth: with every increase of knowledge we see in what true and perfect proportions all Creation is held together.

Creatures are subject to Time, but the Creator is not; His word is the key that opens the door of existence. It is not only the starting point of existence, but the whole measure and standard of Truth and Right. there may possibly be, to our sight in this great world, aberrations of human or other wills, but the moment the trumpet sounds for the last day, His Judgement seat will, with perfect justice, restore the dominion of Right and Reality. For His knowledge and wisdom cover all reality.

...وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُن فَيَكُونُ...

the day He saith, "Be," Behold! it is.

...قَوْلُهُ الْحَقُّ وَلَهُ الْمُلْكُ يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ...

His Word is the truth.

His will be the dominion the day the trumpet will be blown.

...عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ (٧٣)

He knoweth the Unseen as well as that which is open.

For He is the Wise, well acquainted (with all things).

وَاِذْ قَالَ اِبْرَاهِيْمُ لَآبِيهِ اَزْرَا اَتَّخِذُ اَصْنَامًا اِلٰهَةً ...

74. Lo! Abraham said to his father Azar:

"Takest thou idols for gods?"

...إِنِّي أَرَاكَ وَقَوْمَكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ (٧٤)

for I see thee and thy people in manifest error."

وَكَذَلِكَ نُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ

الْمُوقِنِينَ (٧٥)

75. So also did We show Abraham the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, that he might (with understanding) have certitude.

**C897.** Now comes the story of Abraham.

He lived among the Chaldeans, who had great knowledge of the stars and heavenly bodies. But he got beyond that physical world, and saw the spiritual world behind. His ancestral idols meant nothing to him.

That was the first step. But Allah took him many degrees higher. Allah showed him with certitude the spiritual glories behind the magnificent powers and laws of the physical universe.

فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا...

76. When the night covered him over, he saw a star:

...قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي...

he said: "This is my Lord."

...فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْآفِلِينَ (٧٦)

But when it set, he said: "I love not those that set."

**C898.** This allegory shows stages of Abraham's spiritual enlightenment. It should not be supposed that he literally worshipped stars or heavenly bodies. Having seen through the folly of ancestral idol worship, he began to see the futility of worshipping distant beautiful things that shine, which the vulgar endue with a power which does not reside in them. a type of such is a star shining in the darkness of the night.

Superstition might read fortunes in it, but truer knowledge shows that it rises and sets according to laws

whose author is Allah. And its light is extinguished in the broader light of day. Its worship is therefore futile. It is not a Power, much less the Supreme Power.

According to some commentators the whole thrust of Abraham's reasoning in verses 76-78 is directed against the superstitious belief of his people and demonstrates the folly of worshiping stars and other heavenly bodies. As such his statement may be seen as premises of his arguments against Polytheism rather than as stages in his spiritual enlightenment. (R).

فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ بَازِعًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي...

77. When he saw the moon rising in splendor, He said: "This is my Lord."

...فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ (٧٧)

but when the moon set, he said:

"Unless my Lord guide me, I shall surely be among those who go astray."

**C899.** The moon, though she looks bigger and brighter than the star, turns out on closer knowledge, not only to set like the star, but to change her shape from hour to hour, and even to depend for her light on some other body!

How deceptive are appearances! This is not Allah! At that stage you begin to search for something more reliable than appearances to the eye in the darkness of the night. You ask for guidance from Allah. (R).

فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازِعَةً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي هَذَا أَكْبَرُ...

78. When he saw the sun rising in splendor, he said:

"This is my Lord; this is the greatest (of all)."

...فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ (٧٨)

But when the sun set, he said:

"O my people! I am (now) free from your (guilt) of giving partners to Allah.

**C900.** The next stage in the allegory is the sun. You are in the open light of Day. Now you have the right clue. You see the biggest object in the heavens.

But is it the biggest?

There are thousands of stars in the universe bigger than the sun. And every day the sun appears and disappears from your sight. such is not the god who created you and all these wonderful works of His.

What folly to worship creatures, when we might turn to the true God?

Let us abjure all these follies and proclaim the one true God.

إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا...

79. "For me, I have set my face, firmly and truly, toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth,

وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (٧٩)...

and never shall I give partners to Allah."

وَحَاجَّهُ قَوْمُهُ...

80. His people disputed with him.

**C901.** The story of Abraham is highly instructive for all men in quest of truth.

If spiritual enlightenment go so far as to take a man beyond his ancestral worship, people will continue to dispute with him. They will frighten him with the dire consequences of his dissent.

What does he care? He has found the truth. He is free from superstitious fears, for has he not found the true God, without Whose Will nothing can happen?

On the contrary he knows that it is the godless who have just grounds for fear. And he offers admonition to them, and the arguments that should bring them the clearness of truth instead of the vagueness and mystery of superstition, -the security of Faith instead of the haunting fear of those who have no clear guidance. (R).



... قَالَ أُنْحَاوْنِي فِي اللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَانِ ...

He said:

"(Come) ye to dispute with me, about Allah, when He (Himself) hath guided me?

... وَلَا أَخَافُ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ بِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ رَبِّي شَيْئًا...

I fear not (the beings) ye associate with Allah: unless my Lord willeth, (nothing can happen).

... وَسِعَ رَبِّي كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ (٨٠)

My Lord comprehendeth in His knowledge all things: will ye not (yourselves) be admonished?

وَكَيْفَ أَخَافُ مَا أَشْرَكْتُمْ ...

81. "How should I fear (the beings) ye associate with Allah,

... وَلَا تَخَافُونَ أَنْتُمْ أَشْرَكْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا...

when ye fear not to give partners to Allah without any warrant having been given to you?

... فَأَيُّ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ أَحَقُّ بِالْأَمْنِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (٨١)

Which of (us) two parties hath more right to security? (Tell me) if ye know.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ ...

82. "It is those who believe and confuse not their beliefs with wrong -- that are (truly) in security,

**C901a.** The word "wrong" here refers to ascribing partners to Allah as has been stated by the Prophet (peace be on him) in his explanation of the verse. [Eds]

... وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ (٨٢)

for they are on (right) guidance."

## C.79 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(6:83-110)

*The good men and true, who succeeded  
Abraham, received the gifts  
Of revelation and guidance, and kept  
Alive Allah's Message, which now  
Is proclaimed in the Quran,  
In which is blessing and confirmation  
Of all that went before. In the daily  
Pageants of Nature-the dawn  
And the restful night, the sun,  
The moon, the stars, the guide  
The mariner in distant seas,  
The rain-clouds pouring abundance,  
And the fruits that delight the heart  
Of man-can ye not read  
Signs of Allah? No vision can  
Comprehend Him, yet He  
Knoweth and comprehendeth all.*

### Section 10

وَتِلْكَ حُجَّتُنَا آتَيْنَاهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ...

83. That was the reasoning about Us, which We gave to Abraham (to use) against his people:

**C902.** The spiritual education of Abraham raised him many degrees above his contemporaries, and he as expected to use that knowledge and dignity for preaching the truth among his own people.

...نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مِّنْ نَّشَاءٍ...

We raise whom We will, degree after degree:

...إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ (٨٣)

for thy Lord is full of wisdom and knowledge.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا...

84. We gave him Isaac and Jacob: all (three) We guided:

**C903.** We have now a list of eighteen Prophets in four groups, covering the great Teachers accepted among the three great religions based on Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad.

The first group to be mentioned is that of Abraham, his son Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob.

Abraham was the first to have a Book. His Book is mentioned in 87:19, though it is now lost. They were therefore the first to receive Guidance in the sense of a Book.

...وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ...

and before him, We guided Noah,

**C904.** In the second group, we have the great founders of families, apart from Abraham, viz., Noah of the time of the Flood;

- David and Solomon, the real establishers of the Jewish monarchy;
- Job, who lived 140 years, saw four generations of descendants, and was blessed at the end of his life with large pastoral wealth (Job 42:16,12);
- Joseph, who as Minister of State did great things in Egypt and was the progenitor of two Tribes; and
- Moses and Aaron, the leaders of the Exodus from Egypt. They led active lives and called "doers of good."

...وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَى وَهَارُونَ...

and among his progeny, David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron:

...وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ (٨٤)

thus do We reward those who do good:

وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَإِلْيَاسَ ...

85. And Zakariya and John, and Jesus and Elias:

**C905.** The third group consists not of men of action, but Preachers of Truth, who led solitary lives. Their epithet is: "the Righteous."

They form a connected group round Jesus. Zakariya was the father of John the Baptist as Elias, which was for to come" ([Matt 11:14](#)); and Elias is said to have been present and talked to Jesus at the Transfiguration on the Mount ([Matt. 17:3](#)).

Elias is the same as Elijah. (R).

... كُلُّ مَنْ الصَّالِحِينَ (٨٥)

all in the ranks of the righteous:

وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَيُونُسَ وَلُوطًا ...

86. And Isma'il and Elisha, and Jonahs, and Lut:

**C906.** This is the last group, described as those "favoured above the nations."

It consists of four men who had all great misfortunes to contend with, and were concerned in the clash of nations, but they kept in the path of Allah, and came through above the clash of nations.

- Ismail was the eldest son of Abraham; when he was a baby, he and his mother had nearly died of thirst in the desert round Makkah; but they were saved by the well of Zamzam, and became the founder of the new Arab nation.
- Elisha (Al-Yasa) succeeded to the mantle of the Prophet Elijah (same as Elias, [see last note](#)); he lived in troublous times for both the Jewish kingdoms (of Judah and Israel); there were wicked kings, and other nations were pressing in on them; but he

performed many miracles, and some check was given to the enemies under his advice.

- The story of Jonah (Yunus) is well-known: he was swallowed by a fish or whale, but was saved by God's mercy: through his preaching, his city (Nineveh) was saved (10:98).
- Lut was a contemporary and nephew of Abraham: when the city of Sodom was destroyed for its wickedness, he was saved as a just man (7:80-84).

...وَكُلًّا فَضَّلْنَا عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ (٨٦)

and to all We gave favor above the nations:

وَمِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَإِخْوَانِهِمْ...

87. (To them) and to their fathers, and progeny and brethren:

**C907.** I take verse 87 to refer back to all the four groups just mentioned.

...وَأَجْتَبَيْنَاهُمْ وَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ (٨٧)

We chose them.

And We guided them to a straight way.

ذَٰلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ...

88. This is the guidance of Allah:

He giveth that guidance to whom He pleaseth, of His worshippers.

...وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (٨٨)

If they were to join other gods with Him, all that they did would be vain for them.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ أَنْتَابْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ...

89. These were the men to whom We gave the Book, and authority, and prophethood:

...فَإِنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهَا هَؤُلَاءِ فَقَدْ وَكَلْنَا بِهَا قَوْمًا لَيَسُوْا بِهَا بِكَافِرِينَ (٨٩)

if these (their descendants) reject them, behold! We shall entrust their charge to a new People who reject them not.

**C908. Them**, i.e., the Book, and authority and Prophethood. They were taken away from the other People of the Book and entrusted to the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his People.

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهِدَاهُمْ اِقْتَدِهِ...

90. Those were the (prophets) who received Allah's guidance:  
copy the guidance they received;

...فَلْ لَّا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا...

Say:

"No reward for this do I ask of you:

...إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرَى لِلْعَالَمِينَ (٩٠)

this is no less than a Message for the nations."

## Section 11

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَى بَشَرٍ مِّن شَيْءٍ...

91. No just estimate of Allah do they make when they say: "Nothing doth Allah send down to man (by way of revelation)":

**C909. Qadara:** to weight, judge, or estimate the value or capacity of anything; to have power so to do.

Cf. Qadir in 4:149 and n. 655.

The Jews who denied the inspiration of Muhammad had a good answer in their own books about the inspiration of Moses.

To those who do not believe in Moses, the answer is more general:

is it a just estimate of Allah to think either that He has not the power or the will to guide mankind, seeing that He is Omnipotent and the Source of all good?

If you say that guidance comes, not through an inspired book or man, but through our general intelligence, we point to the spiritual ignorance of 'you and your

ancestors' the sad spiritual darkness of men and nations high in the intellectual scale.

...قُلْ مَنْ أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي جَاءَ بِهِ مُوسَى نُورًا وَهُدًى لِلنَّاسِ...

Say: "Who then sent down the Book which Moses brought? a light and guidance to man:

**C910.** Cf. 5:47 and n. 750, and 5:49.

In those passages Guidance (in practical conduct) is put before Light (or spiritual insight), as they refer to ordinary or average men.

Here Light (or spiritual insight) is put first as the question is: does God send inspiration?

...تَجْعَلُونَهُ قُرْآنًا مُمْتَلِئًا بِمَا تُرِيدُونَ أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ وَتُنْفِقُونَ فِي حَبْلِ الْإِسْلَامِ كَثِيرًا...

but ye make it into (separate) sheets for show, while ye conceal much (of its contents):

**C911.** The Message to Moses had unity: it was one Book.

The present Old Testament is a collection of books ("sheets") of various kinds: see Appendix II. end of Surah 5. In this way you can make a show, but there is no unity, and much of the spirit is lost or concealed or overlaid.

The same applies to the New Testament:

see [Appendix III](#), after [Appendix II](#).

...وَعَلَّمْتُمْ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنْتُمْ وَلَا آبَاؤُكُمْ...

therein were ye taught that which ye knew not -- neither ye nor your fathers."

...قُلْ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ الْقُرْآنَ فِي سَبْعِينَ آيَةً وَأَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَأَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْمُبِينِ (٩١)

Say: "Allah (sent it down)":

then leave them to plunge in vain discourse and trifling.

...وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ...

92. And this is a Book which We have revealed, bringing blessings, and confirming (the revelations) which came before it:

**C912. Muharak:** blessed, as having received Allah's blessing; bringer of blessings to others, as having been blessed by Allah.

Allah's highest blessing is the Guidance and Light which the Book brings to us, and which brings us nearer to Him.

...وَلِيُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَى وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا...

that thou mayest warn the Mother of Cities and all around her.

**C913. Mother of Cities:** Makkah, now the Qiblah and Centre of Islam.

If this verse was (like the greater part of the Chapter) revealed in Makkah before the Hijrah, and before Makkah was made the Qiblah of Islam, Makkah was nonetheless the Mother of Cities, being traditionally associated with Abraham and with Adam and Eve (see 2:125, and n. 217 to 2:197).

All round Makkah: would mean, the whole world if we took upon Mecca as the centre.

...وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ...

Those who believe in the Hereafter believe in this (Book),

...وَهُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ (٩٢)

and they are constant in guarding their prayers.

**C914.** An earnest study of the Quran is true worship; so is Prayer, and so are all deeds of goodness and charity.

...وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا...

93. Who can be more wicked than one who inventeth a lie against Allah,

...أَوْ قَالَ أَوْحِيَ إِلَيَّ وَلَمْ يُوحَ إِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ...

or saith, "I have received inspiration," when he hath received none,



...وَمَنْ قَالَ سَأُنزِلُ مِثْلَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ...

or (again) who saith, "I can reveal the like of what Allah hath revealed?"

...وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي غَمْرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ...

If thou couldst but see how the wicked (do fare) in the flood of confusion at death! --

...وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُو أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرَجُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ...

the angels stretch forth their hands, (saying), "Yield up your souls.

**C915. Yield up your souls:** or "get your souls to come out of your bodies."

The wicked, we may suppose, are not anxious to part with the material existence in their bodies for the "reward" which in irony is stated to be there to welcome them.

...الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ...

This day shall ye receive your reward, a penalty of shame, for that ye used to tell lies against Allah,

...وَكُنْتُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ (٩٣)

and scornfully to reject of His Signs!"

وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فُرَادَىٰ كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ...

94. "And behold! ye come to Us bare and alone as We created you for the first time:

**C916.** Some of the various ideas connected with "creation" are noted in n. 120 to 2:117.

In the matter of creation of man there are various processes. If his body was created out of clay, i.e. earthy matter, there was an earlier process of the creation of such earthy matter.

Here the body is left behind, and the soul is being addressed. The soul underwent various processes of

fashioning and adapting to its various functions in its various surroundings (32:7-9). But each individual soul, after release from the body, comes back as it was created, with nothing more than its history, "the deeds which it has earned," which are really a part of it. Any exterior things given to help in its development, "the favours which we bestowed on you," it must necessarily leave behind, however it may have been proud of them.

These exterior things may be material things, e.g. wealth, property, signs of power, influence and pride such as sons, relatives, and friends, etc., or they may be intangible things, like talents, intellect, social gifts, etc.

...وَتَرَكْتُمْ مَا خَوَّلْنَاكُمْ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ...

Ye have left behind you all (the favours) which We bestowed on you:

...وَمَا نَرَىٰ مَعَكُمْ شُفَعَاءَكُمُ الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّهُمْ فِيكُمْ شُرَكَاء...

We see not with you your intercessors whom ye thought to be partners in your affairs:

...لَقَدْ تَقَطَّعَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْكُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ (٩٤)

so now all relations between you have been cut off, and your (pet) fancies have left you in the lurch!"

**C917.** The false ideas of intercessors, demi-gods, gods, saviours, etc., now vanish like unsubstantial visions, "leaving not a wrack behind."

Now the soul is face to face with reality. Its personal responsibility is brought home to it.

## Section 12

إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَالِقُ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوَى...

95. It is Allah Who causeth the seed-grain and the date-stone to split and sprout.

**C918.** Another beautiful nature passage, referring to Allah's wonderful artistry in His Creation.

In how few and how simple words, the whole pageant of Creation is placed before us. Beginning from our humble animal needs and dependence on the vegetable world, we are asked to contemplate the interaction of the living and the dead. Here is mystic teaching, referring not only to physical life but to the higher life above the physical plane, -not only to individual life but to the collective life of nations.

Then we take a peep into the daily miracle of morning, noon, and night, and pass on to the stars that guide the distant mariner. We rise still higher to the mystery of the countless individuals from the one human soul, -their sojourn and their destiny. So we get back to the heavens: the description of the luscious fruits which the "gentle rain from heaven" produces, leaves us to contemplate the spiritual fruits which faith will provide for us, with the aid of the showers of God's mercy.

**C919.** The seed-grain and the date-stone are selected as types in the vegetable kingdom, showing how our physical life depends on it.

The fruits mentioned later (in 6:99) start another allegory which we shall notice later.

Botanists will notice that the seed-grain includes the cereals (such as wheat, barley, rice, millet, etc.) which are monocotyledons, as well as the pulses (such as beans, peas, gram, etc.) and other seeds which are dicotyledons.

These two represent the most important classes of food-grains, while the date-palm a monocotyledon, represents for Arabia both food, fruit, confectionery, thatch and pillars for houses, shady groves in oases, and a standard measure of wealth and well being.

**"Split and sprout":** both ideas are included in the root falaqa, and a third is expressed by the word "cleave" in the next verse, for the action of evolving day-break from the dark. I might almost have used the word "churn," familiar to students of Hindu lore in the Hindu allegory of the "churning of the ocean." For vegetables, "split and sprout" represents a double process:

- the seed divides, and
- one part shoots up, seeking the light, and forming leaves and the visible parts of the future tree, and the other part digs down into the dark, forming the roots and seeking just that sustenance from the soil, which is adapted for the particular plant.

This is just one small instance of the "Judgement and ordering" of God, referred to in the next verse.

...يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَمُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتِ مِنَ الْحَيِّ...

He causeth the living to issue from the dead, and He is the one to cause the dead to issue from the living.

**C920.** This does not mean that in physical nature there are no limits between life and non-life, between the organic and the non-organic. In fact physicists are baffled at the barrier between them and frankly confess that they cannot solve the mystery of Life.

If there is such a barrier in physical nature, is it not all the more wonderful that Allah can create Life out of nothing? He has but to say, "Be," and it is. He can bring Life from non-Life and annihilate Life.

But there are two other senses in which we can contemplate the contrast between the living and the dead.

- We have just been speaking of the botanical world. Take it as a whole, and see the contrast between the winter of death, the spring of revivification, the summer of growth, and the autumn of decay, leading back to the death of winter. Here is a cycle of living for dead, and dead from living.
- Take our spiritual life, individual or collective. We rise from the darkness of spiritual nothingness to the light of spiritual life. And if we do not follow the spiritual laws, Allah will take away that life and we shall be again as dead. We may die many deaths. The keys of life and death are in Allah's hands. Neither Life nor Death are fortuitous things. Behind them both is the Cause of Causes, -and only He.

...ذَلِكُمْ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّى تُؤْفَكُونَ (٩٥)

That is Allah;

then how are ye deluded away from the truth?

فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا...

96. He it is that cleaveth the daybreak (from the dark):

He makes the night for rest and tranquility, and the sun and moon for the reckoning (of time):

...ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ (٩٦)

such is the judgment and ordering of (Him), the Exalted in Power, the Omniscient.

**C921.** The night, the day, the sun, the moon, -the great astronomical universe of Allah. How far, and yet how near to us!

Allah's universe is boundless, and we can barely comprehend even its relations to us. But this last we must try to do if we want to be numbered with "the people who know".

**Taqdir:** Cf. [6:91](#) and [n. 909](#), and [4:149](#) and [n. 655](#).

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا بِهَا فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ...

97. It is He Who maketh the stars (as beacons) for you, that ye may guide yourselves, with their help, through the dark spaces of land and sea:

**C922.** See [the last note](#).

At sea, or in the deserts or forests, or "in fairy scenes forlorn," -whenever we sweep over wide spaces, it is the stars that act as our guides, just as the sun and moon have already been mentioned as our measures of time

...قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ (٩٧)

We detail Our Signs for people who know.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ...

98. It is He who hath produced you from a single person:

**C923. Produced:** ansha'a = made you grow, increase, develop, reach maturity: another of the processes of creation. This supplements n. 120 to 2:117 and n.916 to 6:94.

It is one of the wonders of Allah's Creation, that from one person we have grown to be so many, and each individual has so many faculties and capacities, and yet we are all one.

In the next verse we have the allegory of grapes and other fruits: all grapes may be similar to look at, yet each variety has a distinctive flavour and other distinctive qualities, and each individual grape may have its own special qualities. So for man.

... فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٌ ...

here is a place of sojourn and a place of departure:

**C924.** In the sojourn of this life we must respond to Allah's hand in fashioning us, by making full use of all our faculties, and we must get ready for our departure into the Life that will be eternal.

... قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَفْقَهُونَ (٩٨)

We detail Our signs for people who understand.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً ...

99. It is He who sendeth down rain from the skies:

**C925.** Our allegory now brings us to maturity, the fruit, the harvest, the vintage.

Through the seed we came up from nothingness to life; we lived our daily life of rest and work and passed the mile-stones of time; we had the spiritual experience of traversing through vast spaces in the spiritual world, guiding our course through the star of Faith; we grew; and now for the harvest or the vintage!

How satisfied the grower must be when the golden grain is harvested in heaps or in vintage gathered! So will man if he has produced the fruits of Faith!

...فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ...

with it We produce vegetation of all kinds:

...فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ خَضِرًا نُخْرَجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مُتْرَاكِبًا...

from some We produce green (crops), out of which We produce grain, heaped up (at harvest);

...وَمِنَ النَّخْلِ مِنَ طَلْعِهَا قِنْوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ...

out of the date-palm and its sheaths (or spathes) (come) clusters of dates hanging low and near:

...وَجَنَّاتٍ مِّنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَّانَ مُشْتَبِهًا وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ...

and (then there are) gardens of grapes, and olives, and pomegranates,

each similar (in kind) yet different (in variety):

**C926.** Each fruit- whether it is grapes, or olives, or pomegranates, -looks alike in its species, and yet each variety may be different in flavour, consistency, shape, size, colour, juice or oil contents, proportion of seed to fruit, etc. In each variety, individuals may be different and yet equally valuable!

...انظُرُوا إِلَى ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِ...

when they begin to bear fruit, and the ripeness thereof.

**C927.** And so we finish this wonderful allegory.

Search through the world's literature, and see if you can find another such song or hymn, -so fruity in its literary flavour, so profound in its spiritual meaning!

...إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ (٩٩)

Behold! in these things there are signs for people who believe.

**C928.** There is a refrain in this song, which is subtly varied. In verse 97 it is:

"We detail our Signs for people who know."

So far we were speaking of the things we see around us every day Knowledge is the appropriate instrument for these things.

In verse 98 we read:

"We detail Our Signs for people who understand."

Understanding is a higher faculty than knowledge, and is necessary for seeing the mystery and meaning of this life.

At the end of verse 99 we have:

"In these things there are Signs for people who believe."

Here we are speaking of the real fruits of spiritual Life. For them Faith is necessary, as bringing us nearer to Allah.

وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ...

100. Yet they make the Jinns equals with Allah, though Allah did create the Jinns;

**C929. Jinns:** who are they?

In 18:50 we are told that Iblis was one of the Jinns, and it is suggested that that was why he disobeyed the Command of Allah.

But in that passage and other similar passages, we are told that Allah commanded the angels to bow down to Adam, and they obeyed except Iblis. That implies that Iblis had been of the company of angels.

In many passages Jinns and men are spoken of together. In 55:14-15, man is stated to have been created from clay, while Jinns from a flame of fire.

The root meaning of junna, yujannu, is "to be covered or hidden," and janna yajunnu, in the active voice, "to cover or hide," as in [6:76](#).

- Some people say that jinn therefore means the hidden qualities or capacities in man;



- others that it means wild or jungle folk hidden in the hills or forests.

I do not wish to be dogmatic, but I think, from a collation and study of the Quranic passages, that the meaning is;

- simply "a spirit," or
- an invisible or hidden force.

In folk-lore stories and romances like the Arabian Nights they become personified into fantastic forms, but with them we are not concerned here.

Both the Quran and the Hadith describe the Jinn as a definite species of living beings. They are created out of fire and are like man, may believe or disbelieve, accept or reject guidance. The authoritative Islamic texts show that they are not merely a hidden force, or a spirit. They are personalized beings who enjoy a certain amount of free will and thus will be called to account. (Eds.).

...وَحَرَفُوا لَهُ بَنِينَ وَبَنَاتٍ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ...

and they falsely, having no knowledge, attribute to Him sons and daughters.

...سُبْحَانَہُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا یَصِفُونَ (۱۰۰)

Praise and glory be to Him! (for He is) above what they attribute to Him!

## Section 13

بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

101. To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth:

**C930.** Cf. n. 120 to 2:117.

...أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةً...

how can He have a son when He hath no consort?

...وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ (۱۰۱)

He created all things, and He hath full knowledge of all things.

دَلِّكُمْ اللّٰهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوهُ...

102. That is Allah your Lord!

there is no god but He,  
the Creator of all things: then worship ye Him:

...وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ (١٠٢)

and He hath power to dispose of all affairs.

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ...

103. No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision:

...وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ (١٠٣)

He is above all comprehension, yet is acquainted with all things.

### **C931. latif:**

- fine, subtle, so fine and subtle as to be invisible to the physical eye;

- so fine as to be imperceptible to the senses;

figuratively, so pure as to be above the mental or spiritual vision of ordinary men.

The active meaning should also be understood: 'One who understands the finest mysteries':

Cf. 22:63, and n. 2844.

فَإِذَا جَاءَكُمْ بِبَصَائِرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ...

104. "Now have come to you, from your Lord, proofs to open your eyes:

...فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلَيْهَا...

if any will see, it will be for (the good of) his own soul;

if any will be blind, it will be to his own (harm):

...وَمَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِحَفِيظٍ (١٠٤)

I am not (here) to watch over your doings."

**C932.** I understand "Say" to be understood in the beginning of this verse. The words would then be the words of the Prophet, as in fact is suggested in verse 107 below. That is why I have enclosed them in inverted commas.

وَكَذَلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ...

105. Thus do We explain the Signs by various (symbols):

**C933.** Cf. 6:65, and n. 889.

...وَلِيَقُولُوا دَرَسْتَ وَإِنِّيِّنَهُ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ (١٠٥)

that they may say "Thou hast taught us diligently,"

and that We may make the matter clear to those who know.

**C934.** The teaching in the Quran explains things by various symbols, parables, narratives, and appeals to nature. Each time, a new phase of the question is presented to our minds. This is what a diligent and earnest teacher would do, such as was Muhammad Mustafa.

Those who were in search of knowledge and had thus acquired some knowledge of spiritual things were greatly helped to understand more clearly the things of which, before the varied explanations, they had only one-sided knowledge.

اتَّبِعْ مَا أَوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ...

106. Follow what thou art taught by inspiration from thy Lord:

...لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (١٠٦)

there is no god but He: and turn aside from those who join gods with Allah.

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكُوا...

107. If it had been Allah's Plan, they would not have taken false gods:

**C935.** Allah's Plan is to use the human will to co-operate in understanding Him and His relations to us. This is the answer to an objector who might say: "If He is All-powered, why does sin or evil exist in the world? Can He not destroy it?"

He can, but His Plan is different, and in any case it is not for a Teacher to force any one to accept the truths which he is inspired to preach and proclaim.

...وَمَا جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا وَمَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيلٍ (١٠٧)

but We made thee not one to watch over their doings,  
nor art thou set over them to dispose of their affairs.

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ...

108. Revile not ye those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance.

...كَذَلِكَ زَيَّنَّا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ...

Thus have We made alluring to each people its own doings.

**C936.** A man's actual personal religion depends upon many things,

- his personal psychology,
- the background of his life,
- his hidden or repressed feelings,
- tendencies, or history (which psychoanalysis tries to unravel),
- his hereditary dispositions or antipathies, and
- all the subtle influences of his education and his environment.

The task before the man of Allah is:

1. to use any of these which can subserve the higher ends,
2. to purify such as have been misused,
3. to introduce new ideas and modes of looking at things, and
4. to combat what is wrong and cannot be mended:

all for the purpose of leading to the truth and gradually letting in spiritual light where there was darkness before.

If that is not done with discretion and the skill of a spiritual Teacher, there may be not only a reaction of

obstinacy, but an unseemly show of dishonour to the true God and His Truth, and doubts would spread among the weaker brethren whose faith is shallow and infirm.

What happens to individuals is true collectively of nations or groups of people. They think in their self-obsession that their own ideas are right. Allah in His infinite compassion bears with them, and asks those who have purer ideas of faith not to vilify the weaknesses of their neighbors, lest the neighbors in their turn vilify the real truth and make matters even worse than before.

In so far as there is active evil, He will deal with it in His own way. Of course the righteous man must not hide his light under a bushel, or compromise with evil, or refuse to establish right living where he has the power to do so.

...ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (١٠٨)

In the end will they return to their Lord, and We shall then tell them the truth of all that they did.

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِن جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ لَّيُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهَا...

109. They swear their strongest oaths by Allah that if a (special) sign came to them, by it they would believe.

...فَلْإِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ أَنَّهَا إِذَا جَاءَتْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (١٠٩)

Say:

"Certainly (all) signs are in the power of Allah:

but what will make you (Muslims) realize that even if a (special) sign comes, they will not believe."

**C937.** If the Unbelievers are merely obstinate, nothing will convince them. There is no story more full of miracles than the story of Jesus. Yet in that same story we are told that Jesus said:

"A wicked adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas":

Matt, 16:4.

There are Signs given by Allah every day -understood by those who believe. A mere insistence upon some

particular or special Sign meant mere contumacy and misunderstanding of the spiritual world.

وَنَقَلَبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ...

110. We (too) shall turn to (confusion) their hearts and their eyes, even as they refused to believe in the first instance:

**C938.** Where there is sheer obstinacy and ridicule of faith, the result will be that such a sinner's heart will be hardened and his eyes will be sealed, so that he cannot even see the things visible to ordinary mortals.

The sinner gathers impetus in his descent towards wrong.

...وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ (١١٠)

We shall leave them in their trespasses, to wander in distraction.

**C939.** Cf. 2:15.

Allah's grace is always ready to help human weakness or ignorance and to accept repentance and give forgiveness.

But where the sinner is in actual rebellion, he will be given none, and it will be his own fault if he wanders about distractedly, without any certain hope or refuge.

## **C.80 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)**

**(6:111-130)**

*Those in obstinate rebellion  
Against Allah are merely deceived  
And deceive each other. Leave them  
Alone, but trust and obey Allah  
Openly and in the inmost recess  
Of your heart. The plots of the wicked  
Are but plots against their own souls.*

## Section 14

وَلَوْ أَنَّنَا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتَى وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ

شَيْءٍ...

111. Even if We did send unto them angels, and the dead did speak unto them, and We gathered together all things before their very eyes,

**C940.** The most stupendous miracles even according to their ideas would not have convinced them. If the whole pageant of the spiritual world were brought before them, they would not have believed, because they -of their own choice and will - refuse knowledge and faith.

... فَبَلَاءٌ مَّا كَانُوا لِلْيُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ...

they are not the ones to believe, unless it is in Allah's Plan:

... وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَجْهَلُونَ (١١١)

but most of them ignore (the truth).

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ...

112. Likewise did We make for every Messenger an enemy, evil ones among men and Jinns,

**C941.** What happened in the history of the Holy Prophet happens in the history of all righteous men who have a Message from Allah. The spirit of evil is ever active and uses men to practice deception by means of highly embellished words and plausible excuses and objections.

Allah permits these things in His Plans. It is not for us to complain. Our faith is tested, and we must stand the test steadfastly.

... يُؤْحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا...

inspiring each other with flowery discourses by way of deception.

... وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ قَدَرَهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ (١١٢)

If thy Lord had so planned, they would not have done it:

so leave them and their inventions alone.

وَلِتَصْعَىٰ إِلَيْهِ أَفِيدَةُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ...

113. To such (deceit) let the hearts of those incline, who have no faith in the Hereafter:

...وَلِيَرْضَوْهُ وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوا مَا هُمْ مُقْتَرِفُونَ (١١٣)

let them delight in it, and let them earn from it what they may.

**C942.** People who have no faith in the future destiny of man may listen to and be taken in by the deceit of evil.

If they take a delight in it, let them. See what they gain by it. Their gains will be as deceitful as their delight. For the end of evil must be evil.

أَفَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْتَغِي حَكْمًا وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكِتَابَ مُفَصَّلًا...

114. Say:

"Shall I seek for judge other than Allah?

when He it is Who hath sent unto you the Book, explained in detail."

**C943.** The righteous man seeks no other standard of Judgement but Allah's Will. How can he, when Allah in His grace has explained His Will in the Quran, with details which men of every capacity can understand?

The humblest can learn lessons of right conduct in daily life, and the most advanced can find the highest wisdom in its spiritual teaching, enriched as it is with all kinds of beautiful illustrations from nature and the story of man.

...وَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ مُنَزَّلٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ ...

They know full well, to whom We have given the Book, that it hath been sent down from thy Lord in truth.

...فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ (١١٤)

Never be then of those who doubt.

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا لَا مُبَدَّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ...

115. The Word of thy Lord doth find its fulfillment in truth and in justice:

none can change His Words:



...وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ (١١٥)

for He is the one who heareth and knoweth all.

وَأِنْ نَطِعْ أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ...

116. Wert thou to follow the common run of those on earth, they will lead thee away from the Way of Allah.

...إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ (١١٦)

They follow nothing but conjecture:

they do nothing but lie.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ مَنْ يَضِلُّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ...

117. Thy Lord knoweth best who strayeth from His Way.

...وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ (١١٧)

He knoweth best who they are that receive His guidance.

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ (١١٨)

118. So eat of (meats) on which Allah's name hath been pronounced, if ye have faith in His Signs.

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ...

119. Why should ye not eat of (meats) on which Allah's name hath been pronounced,

...وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُمْ مَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا اضْطُررْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ...

when He hath explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you -  
- except under compulsion of necessity?

**C944.** Cf. 5:4.

When a clear law has explained what is lawful and unlawful in food, it is wrong to raise fresh scruples and mislead the ignorant.

...وَأِنَّ كَثِيرًا لَيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَاءِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ...

But many do mislead (men) by their appetites unchecked by knowledge.

...إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِينَ (١١٩)

Thy Lord knoweth best those who transgress.

وَدَرُّوا ظَاهِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُ...

120. Eschew all sin, open or secret:

...إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْسِبُونَ الْإِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ (١٢٠)

those who earn sin, will get due recompense for their "earnings."

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ...

121. Eat not of (meats) on which Allah's name hath not been pronounced: that would be impiety.

...وَإِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ لِيُوحُونَ إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَآئِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ...

But the evil ones ever inspire their friends to contend with you;

...وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ (١٢١)

if ye were to obey them, ye would indeed be pagans.

## Section 15

أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ...

122. Can he who was dead, to whom We gave life, and a Light whereby he can walk amongst men,

**C945.** Here is an allegory of the good man with his divine mission and the evil man with his mission of evil.

- The former, before he got his spiritual life, was like one dead. It was Allah's grace that gave him spiritual life, with a Light by which he could walk and guide his own footsteps as well as the footsteps of those who are willing to follow God's light.
- The opposite type is that which hates Allah's light, which lives in the depths of darkness, and which plots and burrows against all that is good. But the plots of evil recoil on itself, although it thinks that they will hurt the good.

Can these two types be for a moment compared with each other? Perhaps the lead in every centre of population is taken by the men of evil. But the good men should not be discouraged. They should work in righteousness and fulfil their mission.

...كَمَنْ مَتَّئِلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا...

be like him who is in the depths of darkness, from which he can never come out?

...كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (١٢٢)

Thus to those without faith their own deeds seem pleasing.

...وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ أَكْبَرًا مُّجْرِمِيهَا لِيَمْكُرُوا فِيهَا...

123. Thus have We placed leaders in every town, its wicked men, to plot (and burrow) therein:

...وَمَا يَمْكُرُونَ إِلَّا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ (١٢٣)

but they only plot against their own souls, and they perceive it not.

...وَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ قَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ حَتَّى نُؤْتَىٰ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ رُسُلَ اللَّهِ...

124. When there comes to them a Sign (from Allah), they say:

"We shall not believe until we receive one (exactly) like those received by Allah's messengers."

**C946.** Besides the teaching in Allah's Word, and the teaching in Allah's world, of nature and history and human contacts, many Signs also come to the ungodly, in the shape of warnings or otherwise, which the ungodly either do not heed, or deliberately reject.

The Signs in the two cases are not the same, and that becomes one of their perverse arguments against Faith. But Allah's working will be according to His own Will and Plan, and not according to the wishes whims of the ungodly.

...اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ...

Allah knoweth best where (and how) to carry out His mission.

...سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا صَغَارٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَعَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا كَانُوا

يَمْكُرُونَ (١٢٤)

Soon will the wicked be overtaken by humiliation before Allah, and a severe punishment, for all their plots.

فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ...

125. Those whom Allah (in His Plan) willeth to guide, He openeth their breast to Islam;

**C947.** Allah's Universal Plan is the *Qadha wa Qadr*, which is so much misunderstood. That Plan is unalterable, and that is His Will.

It means that in the spiritual world, as in the physical world, there are laws of justice, mercy, grace, penalty, etc., which work as surely as anything we know.

If, then, a man refuses Faith, becomes a rebel, with each step he goes further and further down, and his pace will be accelerated; he will scarcely be able to take spiritual breath, and his recovery -in spite of Allah's mercy which he has rejected-will be as difficult as if he had to climb up to the skies.

On the other hand, the godly will find, with each step, the next step easier. Jesus expressed this truth paradoxically:

"He that hath, to him shall be given; but he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath": Mark, 4:25.

John (6:65) make Jesus say: "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."

...وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأْتَمًا يَصْعَدُ فِي

السَّمَاءِ...

those whom He willeth to leave straying, He maketh their breast close and constricted, as if they had to climb up to the skies:

...كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرَّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (١٢٥)

thus doth Allah (**heap**) the penalty on those who refuse to believe.

وَهَذَا صِرَاطٌ رَبِّكَ مُسْتَقِيمًا...

126. This is the way of thy Lord, leading straight:

...قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَدَّكُرُونَ (١٢٦)

We have detailed the Signs for those who receive admonition.

لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلَامِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (١٢٧)

127. For them will be a Home of Peace in the presence of their Lord:  
He will be their Friend, because they practiced (**righteousness**).

**C948.** Cf. 10;25.

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ قَدِ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ...

128. One day will He gather them all together, (**and say**):

"O ye assembly of Jinns! much (**toll**) did ye take of men."

**C949.** Jinns are spirits -here evil spirits.

See [6:100, n. 929](#).

...وَقَالَ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ ...

Their friends amongst men will say:

... رَبَّنَا اسْتَمْتَعَ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَبَلَغْنَا أَجَلَنَا الَّذِي أَجَّلْتَ لَنَا ...

"Our Lord! we made profit from each other: but (**alas!**) we reached our term -- which Thou didst appoint for us."

**C950.** It is common experience that the forces of evil make an alliance with each other, and seem thus to make a **profit** by their mutual log-rolling.

But this is only in this material world. When the limited term expires, their unholy bargains will be exposed, and there will be nothing but regrets.

...قَالَ النَّارُ مَثْوَاكُمْ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ...

He will say:

"The fire be your dwelling-place you will dwell therein for ever, except as Allah willeth."

**C951.** Eternity and infinity are abstract terms. They have no precise meaning in our human experience.

The qualification, "except as Allah willeth," makes it more intelligible, as we can form some idea -however inadequate- of a Will and Plan, and we know Allah by His attribute of Mercy as well as of Justice.

...إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ (١٢٨)

For thy Lord is full of wisdom and knowledge.

وَكَذَلِكَ نُؤَلِّي بَعْضَ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ (١٢٩)

129. Thus do We make the wrongdoers turn to each other, because of what they earn.

**C952.** See [n. 950](#) above.

Evil consorts with evil because of their mutual bargains. But in doing so they save the righteous from further temptation.

## **C.81 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)**

**(6:130-150)**

*Allah punishes not mere shortcoming  
There are degrees in good and evil  
Deeds. Allah is Merciful, but  
His Plan is sure and none  
Can stand in its way. We must  
Avoid all superstition, and all excess  
And humbly ask for His guidance.*

## Section 16

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ ...

130. O ye assembly of Jinns and men! came there not unto you messenger from amongst you,

### **C953. "Messenger from amongst you."**

This is addressed to the whole gathering of men and Jinns. (R).

...يَفْصُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا...

setting forth unto you of the meeting of this day of yours?"

...قَالُوا شَهِدْنَا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِنَا...

They will say: "We bear witness against ourselves."

...وَعَرَّتْهُمْ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَشَهِدُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ (١٣٠)

It was the life of this world that deceived them.

So against themselves will they bear witness that they rejected Faith.

ذَلِكَ أَن لَّمْ يَكُن رَّبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْفَرَىٰ بظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلُهَا غَافِلُونَ (١٣١)

131. (The messengers were sent) thus, for thy Lord would not destroy for their wrongdoing men's habitations whilst their occupants were unwarned.

وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَاتٍ مَّمَّا عَمِلُوا ...

132. To all are degrees (or ranks) according to their deeds:

**C954.** On good and evil there are infinite degrees, in our deeds and motives: so will there be degrees in our spiritual position.

For everything is known to Allah, better than it is to ourselves.

... وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ (١٣٢)

for thy Lord is not unmindful of anything that they do.

وَرَبُّكَ الْغَنِيُّ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ...

133. Thy Lord is Self-sufficient, full of Mercy:

**C955.** Allah is not dependent on our prayer or service. It is out of His Mercy that He desires our own good.

Any race or people to whom He gives chances should understand that its failure does not affect Allah. He could create others in their place, as He did in times past, and is doing in our own day, if only we had the wit to see it.

...إِنْ يَشَاءُ يُدْهِبْكُمْ وَيَسْتَخْلِفْ مِنْ بَعْدِكُمْ مَا يَشَاءُ...

if it were His Will, He could destroy you, and in your place appoint whom He will as your successors,

...كَمَا أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّةِ قَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ (١٣٣)

even as he raised you up from the posterity of other people.

...إِنَّ مَا تُوعَدُونَ لَآتٍ...

134. All that hath been promised unto you will come to pass:

**C956.** Both the good news and the warning which Allah's messengers came to give will be fulfilled. Nothing can stop Allah's Universal Plan.

See [n. 947 to 6:125](#).

...وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ (١٣٤)

nor can ye frustrate it (in the least bit).

قُلْ يَا قَوْمِ اعْمَلُوا عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنِّي عَامِلٌ...

135. Say:

"O my people! do whatever ye can: I will do (my part):

**C957.** In so far as this is addressed to the Unbelievers it is a challenge:

"Do your utmost; nothing will deter me from my duty: we shall see who wins in the end."

Passing from the particular occasion, we can understand it in a more general sense, which is true for all time. Let



the evil ones do their worst. Let those who believe do all they can, according to their opportunities and abilities.

The individual must do the straight duty that lies before him. In the end Allah will judge, and His Judgement is always true and just.

...فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ تَكُونُ لَهُ عَاقِبَةُ الدَّارِ...

soon will ye know who it is whose end will be (best) in the Hereafter:

...إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ (١٣٥)

certain it is that the wrongdoers will not prosper."

وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ مِمَّا ذَرَأَ مِنَ الْحَرْثِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ نَصِيبًا...

136. Out of what Allah hath produced in abundance in tilth and in cattle, they assigned Him a share:

...فَقَالُوا هَذَا لِلَّهِ بِزَعْمِهِمْ وَهَذَا لِشُرَكَائِنَا...

they say, according to their fancies: "This is for Allah, and this for our 'partners'!"

**C958.** There is scathing sarcasm here, which some of the Commentators have missed.

The Pagans have generally a big Pantheon, though above it they have a vague idea of a Supreme God. But the material benefits go to the godlings, the fancied "partners" of Allah; for they have temples, priests, dedications, etc., while the true and supreme God has only lip-worship, or at best a share with numerous "partners". This was so in Arabia also.

The shares assigned to the "partners", went to the priests and hangers-on of the "partners", who were many and clamorous for their rights. The share assigned to Allah went to the poor, but more probably went to the priests who had the cult of the "partners", for the Supreme God had no separate priests of His own.

It is also said that when heaps were thus laid out, if any portion of Allah's heap fell into the heaps of the

"partners", the priests greedily and promptly appropriated it, while in the contrary case, the "partners" priests were careful to reclaim any portion from what they called "Allah's heap".

The absurdity of the whole thing is ridiculed. Allah created everything: how can He have a share?

...فَمَا كَانَ لِشُرَكَائِهِمْ فَلَا يَصِلُ إِلَى اللَّهِ...

But the share of their 'partners' reacheth not Allah,

...وَمَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ فَهُوَ يَصِلُ إِلَى شُرَكَائِهِمْ ...

whilst the share of Allah reacheth their 'partners'!

...سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ (١٣٦)

Evil (and unjust) is their assignment!

وَكَذَلِكَ زَيْنَ لِكَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ قَتَلَ أَوْلَادِهِمْ شُرَكَاؤُهُمْ...

137. Even so, in the eyes of most of the Pagans, their 'partners' made alluring the slaughter of their children,

**C959.** The false gods and idols -among many nations, including the Arabs- were supposed to require human sacrifices. Ordinarily such sacrifices are revolting to man, but they are made "alluring" -a sacred rite- by Pagan custom, which falsely arrogates to itself the name of religion.

Such customs, if allowed, would do nothing but destroy the people who practice them, and make their religion but a confused bundle of revolting superstitions.

...لِيُرْدُوهُمْ وَلِيَلْبِسُوا عَلَيْهِمْ دِينَهُمْ ...

in order to lead them to their own destruction, and cause confusion in their religion.

...وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا فَعَلُوهُ قَدَرَهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ (١٣٧)

If Allah had willed, they would not have done so:

but leave alone them and their inventions.

وَقَالُوا هَذِهِ أُنْعَامٌ وَحَرَّتْ حَجْرٌ لَّا يَطْعَمُهَا إِلَّا مَنْ نَشَاءُ بَزَعْمِهِمْ...

138. And they say that such and such cattle and crops are taboo, and none should eat of them except those whom -- so they say -- We wish;

**C960.** A taboo of certain foods is sometimes a device of the priesthood to get special things for itself. It has to be enforced by pretending that the prohibition for others is by the Will of Allah. It is a lie or invention against Allah. Most superstitions are.

...وَأَنْعَامٌ حُرِّمَتْ ظُهُورُهَا ...

further, there are cattle forbidden to yoke or burden,

**C961.** Cattle dedicated to heathen gods may be reserved from all useful work; in that case they are a dead loss to the community, and they may, besides, do a great deal of damage to fields and crops.

... وَأَنْعَامٌ لَّا يَذْكُرُونَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا افْتِرَاءَ عَلَيْهِ...

and cattle on which (at slaughter), the name of Allah is not pronounced;

inventions against Allah's name:

**C962.** If meat is killed in the name of heathen gods, it would naturally not be killed by the solemn rite in Allah's name, by which alone the killing can be justified for food.

See 698 to 5:4.

...سَيَجْزِيهِمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ (١٣٨)

soon will He requite them for their inventions.

وَقَالُوا مَا فِي بُطُونِ هَذِهِ الْأَنْعَامِ خَالِصَةٌ لِّذُكُورِنَا وَمُحَرَّمٌ عَلَىٰ أَرْوَاجِنَا...

139. They say:

"What is in the wombs of such and such cattle is specially reserved (for food) for our men, and forbidden to our women;

...وَأِنْ يَكُنْ مَيِّتَةً فَهُمْ فِيهِ شُرَكَاءُ...

but if it is still-born then all have shares therein.

**C963.** These are further Pagan superstitions about cattle. Some have already been noted in [6:136](#), which may be consulted with the notes.

...سَيَجْزِيهِمْ وَصَفَهُمْ إِنَّهُ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ (١٣٩)

For their (false) attribution (of superstitions to Allah): He will soon punish them:

for He is full of Wisdom and Knowledge.

قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا أَوْلَادَهُمْ سَفَهًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ...

140. Lost are those who slay their children, from folly, without knowledge,

...وَحَرَّمُوا مَا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ افْتِرَاءً عَلَى اللَّهِ...

and forbid food which Allah hath provided for them, inventing (lies) against Allah.

...قَدْ ضَلُّوا وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ (١٤٠)

They have indeed gone astray and heeded no guidance.

## Section 17

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَ جَنَّاتٍ مَّعْرُوشَاتٍ وَغَيْرَ مَعْرُوشَاتٍ...

141. It is He who produceth gardens, with trellises and without,

**C964. Ansha'a:** see [6:98](#), n. 923.

...وَالنَّخْلَ وَالزَّرْعَ مُخْتَلِفًا أَكْلُهُ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَانَ مُمْتَسَايَهَا وَغَيْرَ مُمْتَسَايِهِ...

and dates, and tilth with produce of all kinds,

and olives and pomegranates, similar (in kind) and different (in variety):

**C965.** A beautiful passage, with music to match the meaning.

Cf. [6:99](#) and notes.

... كُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَآتُوا حَقَّهُ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِ ...

eat of their fruit in their season, but render the dues that are proper on the day that the harvest is gathered.

... وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا...

But waste not by excess:

**C966.** "Waste not, want not," says the English proverb.

Here the same wisdom is preached from a higher motive. See what magnificent means Allah provides in nature for the sustenance of all His creatures, because He loves them all. Enjoy them in moderation and be grateful.

But commit no excess, and commit no waste: the two things are the same from different angles of vision. If you do, you take away something from other creatures and Allah would not like your selfishness.

...إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ (١٤١)

for Allah loveth not the wasters.

وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ حَمُولَةٌ وَفَرَسَاتٌ...

142. Of the cattle are some for burden and some for meat.

**C967.** Superstition kills true religion. We come back to the Arab Pagan superstitions about cattle for food.

The horse is not mentioned, because horse flesh was not an article of diet and there were no superstitions about it.

Sheep and goats, camels and oxen were the usual sources of meat. Sheep and goats were not used as beasts of burden, but camels (of both sexes) were used for carrying burdens, and oxen for the plough, though cows were mainly used for milk and meat.

The words "some for burden and some for meat" so not differentiate whole species, except that they give you the first two and the last two categories.

...كُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ...

Eat what Allah hath provided for you,

...وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ (١٤٢)

and follow not the footsteps of Satan: for he is to you an avowed enemy.

تَمَانِيَةَ أَزْوَاجٍ ...

143. (Take) eight (head of cattle) in (four) pairs:

**C968.** The superstitions referred to in vi. 139 and v. 106 are further ridiculed in this verse, and the next.

... مِّنَ الضَّأْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْمَعْرِ اثْنَيْنِ ...

of sheep a pair,  
and of goats a pair;

... قُلْ الذَّكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ أَمِ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ أَمَا اشْتَمَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ ...

say, hath He forbidden the two males, or the two females, or (the young) which the wombs of the two females enclose?

... نَبِّؤُونِي بِعِلْمٍ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (١٤٣)

Tell me with knowledge if ye are truthful.

وَمِنَ الْإِبِلِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ ...

144. Of camels a pair, and of oxen a pair;

... قُلْ الذَّكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ أَمِ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ أَمَا اشْتَمَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ ...

say, hath He forbidden the two males, or the two females,  
or the (the young) which the wombs of the two females enclose?

... أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ وَصَّاكُمْ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا ...

Were ye present when Allah ordered you such a thing?

... فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا لِيُضِلَّ النَّاسَ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ...

But who doth more wrong than one who invents a lie against Allah, to lead astray men without knowledge?

... إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ (١٤٤)

For Allah guideth not people who do wrong.

## Section 18

قُلْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا...

145. Say:

"I find not in the Message received by me by inspiration any (meat) forbidden to be eaten by one who wishes to eat it, unless

... أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنْزِيرٍ فَإِنَّهُ رِجْسٌ ...

- it be dead meat,
- or blood poured forth,
- or the flesh of swine, for it is an abomination,

**C969. Blood poured forth:** as distinguished from blood adhering to flesh, or the liver, or such other internal organs purifying the blood.

... أَوْ فَسَقًا أَهْلَ لَعْنٍ لَعِنَ اللَّهُ بِهِ ...

- or, what is impious, (meat) on which a name has been invoked, other than Allah's."

... فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (١٤٥)

But (even so), if a person is forced by necessity, without wilful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, thy Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا كُلَّ ذِي ظُفْرٍ ...

146. For those who followed the Jewish Law, We forbade every (animal) with undivided hoof,

**C970. Zufur** may mean claw or hoof;

it is in the singular number; but as no animal has a single claw, and there is no point in a division of claws, we must look to a hoof for the correct interpretation.

In the Jewish Law (Leviticus, 11:3-6), "Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is cloven-footed, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts" was lawful as food, but the

camel, the coney (rabbit), and the hare were not lawful, because they do not "divide the hoof".

"Undivided hoof" therefore is the correct interpretation.

These three animals, unlawful to the Jews, are lawful in Islam.

Cf. 4:160.

...وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ وَالْغَنَمِ حَرَّمَنا عَلَيْهِمْ شَحُومَهُمَا...

and We forbade them the fat of the ox and the sheep,

**C971.** In Leviticus (7:23) it is laid down that "ye shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep or of goat."

As regard the exceptions, it is to be noticed that priests were enjoined (Leviticus, 7:6) to eat of the fat in the trespass of offering, which was considered holy, viz., "the rump" (back and bone) "and the fat that covereth the inwards" (entrails), (Leviticus, 7:3).

...إِلَّا مَا حَمَلَتْ ظُهُورُهُمَا أَوْ الْحَوَايَا أَوْ مَا اخْتَلَطَ بِعَظْمٍ...

except what adheres to their backs or their entrails, or is mixed up with a bone:

...ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُنا لَهُمْ بِبَعْثِهِمْ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ (١٤٦)

this in recompense for their wilful disobedience:

for We are True (in Our ordinances).

فَإِن كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ رَبُّكُمْ ذُو رَحْمَةٍ وَاسِعَةٍ...

147. If they accuse thee of falsehood, say:

"Your Lord is full of Mercy All-embracing;

...وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأْسُهُ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ (١٤٧)

but from people in guilt never will His wrath be turned back.

سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا...

148. Those who give partners to Allah will say,

"If Allah had wished, we should not have given partners to Him, nor would our father;



... وَلَا حَرَمًا مِنْ شَيْءٍ... ..

nor should we have had any taboos."

**C972.** As used by the Pagans, the argument is false, for it implies;

- a. that men have no personal responsibility,
- b. that they are the victims of a Determinism against which they are helpless, and
- c. that they might therefore go on doing just what they liked.

It is also inconsistent, for if (b) is true, (c) cannot be true. Nor is it meant to be taken seriously.

...كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ ذَاقُوا بَأْسَنَا...

So did their ancestors argue falsely, until they tasted of Our wrath.

...قُلْ هَلْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِّنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوهُ لَنَا...

Say:

"Have ye any (certain) Knowledge?

If so, produce it before us.

...إِنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا تَخْرُصُونَ (١٤٨)

Ye follow nothing but conjecture:

Ye do nothing but lie."

... قُلْ فَلِلَّهِ الْحُجَّةُ الْبَالِغَةُ ...

149. Say:

"With Allah is the argument that reaches home:

**C973.** On the other hand, the argument cuts true and deep, as from Allah to His creatures.

Allah is Omnipotent, and can do all that we can conceive. But He, in His Plan, has given man some responsibility, and some choice in order to train man's will. If man fails, he is helped in various ways by Allah's mercy and grace. But man cannot go on sinning, and in a state of sin, expect Allah to be pleased with him (6:147).

... فَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (١٤٩)

if it had been his will, he could indeed have guided you all."

فَلْ هَلَمْ شُهَدَاءُكُمْ الَّذِينَ يَشْهَدُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ هَذَا...

150. Say:

"Bring forward your witnesses to prove that Allah did forbid so and so."

...فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَلَا تَشْهَدْ مَعَهُمْ...

If they bring such witnesses, be not thou amongst them:

**C974.** The Pagan superstitions were of course baseless, and in many cases harmful and debasing. If Allah's name was taken as supporting them, no true man of God could be taken in, or join in support simply because Allah's name was taken in vain.

...وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا...

nor follow thou the vain desires of such as treat Our Signs as falsehoods,

...وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَهُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ (١٥٠)

and such as believe not in the Hereafter:

for they hold others as equal with their Guardian-Lord.

**C975.** Cf. 6:1.

Allah, who created and who cherishes and cares for all, should have the first claim on our attention. Those who set up false gods fail to understand Allah's true governance of their own true destiny.

## C.82 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(6:151-165)

*Allah's commands are not irrational  
Taboos, but based on the moral law,  
And conformable to reason. His Way  
Is the straight Way, of justice and truth.*

*In unity and faith must we dedicate  
All our life to His service, and His  
Alone, to Whom we shall return.*

## Section 19

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ عَلَيْكُمْ ...

151. Say:

"Come, I will rehearse what Allah hath (really) prohibited you from":

**C976.** Instead of following Pagan superstitions, and being in constant terror of imaginary taboos and prohibitions, we should study the true moral law, whose sanction is Allah's Law.

The first step is that we should recognise that He is the One and Only Lord and Cherisher. The mention of goodness to parents immediately afterwards suggests:

- that Allah's love of us and care for us may -on an infinitely higher plane- be understood by our ideal of parental love, which is purely unselfish;
- that our first duty among our fellow creatures is to our father and mother, whose love leads us to the conception of divine love.

Arising from that is the conception of our converse duties to our children. Allah provides sustenance (material and spiritual) not only for us, but for them; hence any custom like the Pagan custom of sacrificing children of Moloch stands condemned.

Then come the moral prohibitions against lewdness and all unseemly acts, relating to sex or otherwise, open or secret. This is followed by the prohibition of killing or fighting.

All these things are conformable to our own interests, and therefore true wisdom from our own point of view.

...أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا...

- join not anything as equal with Him;

...وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا...

- be good to your parents:

...وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِّنْ إِمْلَاقٍ تَحْنُ نَرُزِقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ...

- kill not your children on a plea of want; -- We provide sustenance for you and for them; --

...وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ...

- come not nigh to shameful deeds, whether open or secret;

...وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ...

- take not life, which Allah hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law:

**C977.** For the comprehensive word **haqq** I have used the two words "justice and law"; other significations implied are:

right, truth, what is becoming, etc.

It is not only that human life is sacred, but all life is sacred. Even in killing animals for food, a dedicatory formula "in the name of Allah" has to be employed, to make it lawful:

see 698 to 5:4, and [n. 962 to 6:138](#).

...ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (١٥١)

thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom.

...وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ...

152. - And come not nigh to the orphan's property, except to improve it, until he attain the age of full strength;

...وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ...

- give measure and weight with (full) justice;

... لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ...

no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear;

... وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَى...

- whenever ye speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned;

... وَيَعْهَدِ اللَّهُ أَوْفُوا...

- and fulfil the Covenant of Allah:

**C978.** Cf. 5:1, and n. 682.

... ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ (١٥٢)

thus doth He command you, that ye may remember.

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ...

153. Verily, this is My Way, leading straight: follow it:

... وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ...

follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from His (great) path:

... ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (١٥٣)

thus doth He command you that ye may be righteous.

**C979.** Note again the triple refrain with variations, in 6:151, 152, and 153.

- In verse 151, we have the moral law, which it is for our own good to follow: "Thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom."
- In verse 152, we have to deal justly and rightly with others; we are apt to thing too much of ourselves and forget others: "Thus doth He command you, that ye may remember."
- In verse 153 our attention is called to the Straight Way, the Way of Allah, the only Way that leads to righteousness: "Thus doth He command you, that ye may be righteous."

ثُمَّ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ تَمَامًا عَلَى الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ...

154. Moreover, We gave Moses the Book, completing (Our favor) to those who would do right, and explaining all things in detail,

**C980.** The revelation to Moses went into the details of people's lives, and thus served as a practical guide to the Jews and after them to the Christians.

Admittedly the Message delivered by Christ dealt with general principles only and in no way with details.

The message of Islam as in the Quran is the next complete guide in point of time after that of Moses.

...وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّعَلَّهُمْ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ (١٥٤)

and a guide and a mercy, that they might believe in the meeting with their Lord.

## Section 20

وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ (١٥٥)

155. And this is a Book which We have revealed as a blessing: so follow it and be righteous, that ye may receive mercy:

أَنْ تَقُولُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابُ عَلَى طَائِفَتَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا...

156. Lest ye should say:

"The Book was sent down to two peoples before us,

...وَإِنْ كُنَّا عَنْ دِرَاسَتِهِمْ لَغَافِلِينَ (١٥٦)

and for our part, we remained unacquainted with all that they learned by assiduous study."

**C981.** Because the diligent studies of the earlier People of the Book were in languages foreign to the new People of Islam, or because they were meant for circumstances different from those of the new world after Islam.

أَوْ تَقُولُوا لَوْ أَنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْنَا الْكِتَابُ لَكُنَّا أَهْدَى مِنْهُمْ...

157. Or lest ye should say:

"If the Book had only been sent down to us, we should have followed its guidance better than they."

...فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ...

Now then hath come unto you a Clear (sign) from your Lord, and a guide and a mercy:

**C982.** The Quran and the life and the teaching of Muhammad the Messenger of Allah.

...فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن كَذَّبَ بآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَصَدَفَ عَنْهَا...

then who could do more wrong than one who rejecteth Allah's signs, and turneth away therefrom?

...سَنَجْزِي الَّذِينَ يَصْدِفُونَ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْدِفُونَ (١٥٧)

In good time shall We requite those who turn away from Our Signs, with a dreadful penalty, for their turning away.

...هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ رَبُّكَ...

158. Are they waiting to see if the angels come to them, or thy Lord (Himself), or certain of the signs of thy Lord!

...أَوْ يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا...

the day that certain of the signs of thy Lord do come, no good will it do to a soul to believe in them then,

**C983.** There is no merit in faith in things that you are compelled to acknowledge when they actually happen.

Faith is belief in things which you do not see with your own eyes but you understand with your spiritual sense: if your whole will consents to it, it results in deeds of righteousness, which are the evidence of your faith.

...لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيمَانِهَا خَيْرًا...

if it believed not before nor earned righteousness through its Faith.

...قُلْ إِنِّي مُنْتَظِرُونَ إِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُونَ (١٥٨)

Say: "Wait ye: we too are waiting."

**C984.** The waiting in the two cases is in quite different senses:

- the foolish man without faith is waiting for things which will not happen, and is surprised by the real things which do happen;
- the righteous man of faith is waiting for the fruits of righteousness, of which he has an assured hope; in a higher state of spiritual elevation, even the fruits have no personal meaning to him, for Allah is to him in all: 6:162.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا لَسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ...

159. As for those who divide their religion and break up into sects, thou hast no part in them in the least:

**C985. Divide their religion:** farraqu: i.e.,

1. make a distinction between one part of it and another, take the part which suits them and reject the rest; or
2. have religion one day of the week and the world the rest of the six days; or
3. keep "religion in its right place," as if it did not claim to govern the whole life; make a sharp distinction between the secular and the religious; or
4. show a sectarian bias, seek differences in views, so as to break up the unity of Islam.

...إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ (١٥٩)

their affair is with Allah:

He will in the end tell them the truth of all that they did.

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا...

160. He that doeth good shall have ten times as much to his credit:

...وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا ...

he that doeth evil shall only be recompensed according to his evil.

**C986.** Allah is just as well as generous.

To the good the reward is multiplied ten times (i.e., far above the merits) on account of His generosity.



To the evil, the punishment is no more than commensurate with their sin, and even so the door of mercy is always open to those who sincerely repent and show it by their conduct.

... وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (١٦٠)

No wrong shall be done unto (any of) them.

فَلْإِنِّي هَدَانِي رَبِّي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيمًا مِّلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا...

161. Say:

"Verily, my Lord hath guided me to a way that is straight, a religion of right, the path (trod) by Abraham the true in faith,

...وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (١٦١)

and he (certainly) joined not gods with Allah."

فَلْإِن صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (١٦٢)

162. Say:

"Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds:

لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ...

163. No partner hath He:

...وَبِذَلِكَ أَمَرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ (١٦٣)

this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who bow to His Will.

فَلْأَعْبُدِ اللَّهَ أَبْغِي رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ...

164. Say:

"Shall I seek for (my) Cherisher other than Allah, when He is the Cherisher of all things (that exist)?"

...وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْهَا...

Every soul draws the meed of its acts on none but itself:

**C987.** The doctrine of personal responsibility again. We are fully responsible for our acts ourselves: we cannot transfer the consequences to someone else. Nor can any one vicariously atone for our sins.

If people have honest doubts or differences about important questions of religion, they should not start futile disputes. All will be clear in the end.

Our duty here is to maintain unity and discipline, and do the duty that comes to us.

...وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى...

no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another.

...ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ (١٦٤)

Your goal in the end is toward Allah:

He will tell you the truth of the things wherein ye disputed.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ الْأَرْضِ...

165. It is He who hath made you (His) agents, inheritors of the earth:

**C988.** Cf. 2:30 and note, where I have translated "**Khalifah**" as "Vicegerent", it being Allah's Plan to make Adam (as representing mankind) His vicegerent on earth.

In C.1 I have construed the same word by the word "Agent."

Another idea implied in "**Khalifah**" is that of "successor, heir, or inheritor," i.e., one who has the ultimate ownership after the present possessors, to whom a life-tenancy has been given by the owner, have passed away.

In 15:23 occurs the striking word "heirs" (**warithun**) as applied to Allah: "We give life and death, and We are the Heirs (of Inheritors)."

The same idea occurs in 3:180, where see n. 485.

The translation here attempts to express both the ideas which I understand from the original.

...وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِيُبْلِغَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ...

He hath raised you in ranks, some above others: that he may try you in the gifts He hath given you:

...إِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (١٦٥)

for thy Lord is quick in punishment:

yet He is indeed Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful



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