



إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ



Verily it is thy Lord that knoweth best, which (among men) hath strayed from His Path: and He knoweth best those who receive (True) Guidance.

Quran English Translation & Commentary

By

Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Al Qalam



Introduction and Summary

This is very early Makkan revelation. The general opinion of Muslim Commentary is that a great part of it was second in order of revelation, the first being Surah 96 (Iqra) verses 1-5.

The last Surah having defined the true Reality in contrast with the false standards set up by men, this illustrates the theme by an actual historical example. Our Holy Prophet was the sanest and wisest of men: those who could not understand him called

him mad or possessed. So, in every age, it is the habit of the world to call Truth Falsehood and Wisdom Madness, and, on the other hand, to each Selfishness as Planning, and Arrogance as Power. The contrast is shown up between the two kinds of men and their real inner worth.

Summery- Let the good carry on their work, in spite of abuse of Companions of Evil: let all remember Allah, before Whom all men are on trial (68:1-33), and and C. 247).

True Judgement comes from Allah, and not from the false standards of men (68:34-52) and C248).

C.247 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(68:1-33)

*The Pen is the symbol of the permanent Record,
The written Decree, the perfect Order
In the government of the world. And by that token,
The man of Allah comes with a Plan
And Guidance that must win against
All destruction. Truth is high above Slander,
But men must be tried against selfishness
And overweening confidence in themselves
Such as would lead them to forget Allah
And His providence---like the brothers who built
Castles in the air about their garden
And found in desolate in one night's storm.
But repentance brought them forgiveness;
Thus work the Wrath and the Mercy of Allah.*

ن ...

1. Nun.

C5592. **Nun** is an Abbreviated Letter: see [Appendix I](#) at the end of Surah 2.

Nun may mean a fish, or an ink-holder, or it may be just the Arabic letter of the alphabet, N. In the last case, it may refer to either or both of the other meanings.

Note also that the Arabic rhyme in this Sura ends in N. The reference to ink would be an appropriate link with the Pen in verse 1. The reference to the fish would be appropriate with reference to the story of Jonah in verses 48-50. Jonah's title is "the Companion of the Fish", (Dhu al Nun, 21:87), as he was, in the story, swallowed by the Fish.

... وَالْقَلَمِ ...

By the Pen ...

C5593. The Pen and the Record are the symbolical foundations of the Revelation to man. The adjuration by the Pen disposes of the flippant charge that Allah's Messenger was mad or possessed. For he spoke words of power, not incoherent, but full of meaning, and through the Record of the Pen, that meaning unfolds itself, in innumerable aspects to countless generations. Muhammad was the living Grace and Mercy of Allah, and his very nature exalted him above abuse and persecution. (R).

... وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ (١)

... and by the (Record) which (men) write --

مَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ (٢)

2. Thou art not, by the grace of thy Lord, mad or possessed.

C5594. People usually call any one mad whose standards are different from their own. And madness is

believed to be due to demoniacal possession, an idea distinctly in the minds of the New Testament writers: for Luke speaks of a man from whom the "devils" were cast out, as being then "clothed, and in his right mind" (Luke, 8:35). (R).

وَإِنَّ لَكَ لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُونٍ (٣)

3. Nay, verily for thee is a Reward unfailing:

C5595. Instead of being out of his right mind, the Prophet of Allah had been raised to a great spiritual dignity, a reward that was not like an earthly reward that passes away, but one that was in the very core of his being, and would never fail him in any circumstances. He was really granted a nature and character far above the shafts of grief or suffering, slander or persecution.

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ (٤)

4. And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character.

فَسَتُبْصِرُ ...

5. Soon wilt thou see ...

C5596. Though Al-Mustafa's nature raised him above the petty spite of his contemporaries, an appeal is made to their reason and to the logic of events. Was it not his accusers that were really mad? What happened to Walid ibn Mugaira, or Abu Jahl, or Abu Lahab? -and to Allah's Messenger and those who followed his guidance? The world's history gives the answer. And the appeal is not only to his contemporaries, but for all time.

... وَيُبْصِرُونَ (٥)

... and they will see,

بِأَيِّكُمْ الْمَقْتُونُ (٦)

6. Which of you is afflicted with madness.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ...

7. Verily it is thy Lord that knoweth best, which (among men) hath strayed from His Path:

... وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ (٧)

and He knoweth best those who receive (True) Guidance.

C5597. Men set up false standards of judgment. The right standard is that of Allah. For His knowledge is complete and all-embracing; He reads hidden motives as well as things that appear before men's sight; and He knows the past history in which the roots of present actions are embedded, as well as the future consequences of present actions.

فَلَا تُطِيعِ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ (٨)

8. So hearken not to those who deny (the Truth).

C5598. The enemies of Allah's truth are sometimes self-deceived. But quite often they have a glimmering of the truth in spite of their desire to shut their eyes. Then they compromise, and they would like the preachers of inconvenient truths to compromise with them. On those terms there would be mutual laudation. This easy path of making the best of both worlds is a real danger or temptation to the best of us, and we must be on our guard against it if we would really enter into the company of the Righteous who submit their wills to the Will of Allah. Abu Jahl freely offered impossible compromises to the holy Prophet.

وَدُّوا لَوْ تُدْهِنُ فَيُدْهِنُونَ (٩)

9. Their desire is that thou shouldst be pliant; so would thy be pliant.

وَلَا تُطِيعِ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ (١٠)

10. Heed not the type of despicable man -- ready with oaths.

C5599. The type of each of these hateful qualities is not uncommon, though the combination of all in one man makes him peculiarly despicable, as was Walid ibn Mugaira, who was a ringleader in calumniating our Prophet and who came to an evil end not long after the battle of Badr, in which he received injuries.

C5600. It is only liars who swear on all occasions, small or great, because their word is not believed in. The true man's word, according to the proverb, is as good as his bond.

هَمَّازٌ مَّشَاءَ بَنَمِيمٍ (١١)

11. A slanderer, going about with calumnies.

مَنَاعٌ لِلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ (١٢)

12. (Habitually) hindering (all) good, transgressing beyond bounds, deep in sin.

عُتْلٌ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ زَنِيمٍ (١٣)

13. **Violent** (and cruel) -- with all that, base-born --

C5601. Besides the self-deceiver and the easy-going man, there is a third type, even more degraded. He has no idea of truth or sincerity. He is ready to swear friendship with every one and fidelity to every cause. But at the same moment he will slander and backbite, and cause mischief even between good but credulous persons. Evil seems to be his goal, and good his evil. He will not only pursue evil courses himself but prevent other people from doing right. When checked, he resorts to violence. In any case, he will intrude where he has no right, claiming relationship or power or consideration in circles which would gladly disown him. He is vain of his wealth or because he has a large following at his beck and call. Religion is to him merely old-fashioned superstition.

أَنْ كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ وَبَنِينَ (١٤)

14. **Because** he possesses wealth and (numerous) sons.

C5602. "**Because** may connect with heed not" in verse 10, or with "violent and cruel" in verse 13.

In the former case, we construe: 'Pay no attention to despicable men of the character described, simply because they happen to have wealth or influence, or much backing in man-power.'

In the latter case, we construe: the fellow is violent and cruel, he is puffed up with his wealth or riches or backing in man-power'.

In the eyes of Allah such a man is in any case branded and marked out as a sinner.

إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا ...

15. When to him are rehearsed Our Signs,

C5603. Allah's Signs, by which He calls us, are everywhere-in nature and in our very heart and soul. In Revelation, every verse is a Sign, for it stands symbolically for far more than it says. "Sign" (Ayat) thus becomes a technical term for a verse of the Quran.

... قَالَ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ (١٥)

"Tales of the Ancients," he cries.

C5604. Cf. 6:25.

سَنَسِمُهُ عَلَى الْخُرْطُومِ (١٦)

16. Soon shall We brand (the beast) on the snout!

C5605. literally, proboscis, the most sensitive limb of the elephant. The sinner makes himself a beast and can only be controlled by his snout.

إِنَّا بَلَوْنَاهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ ...

17. Verily We have tried them as We tried the people of the Garden

C5606. "Why do the wicked flourish?" is a question asked in all ages. The answer is not simple. It must refer to

- the choice left to man's will,
- his moral responsibility,
- the need of his tuning his will to Allah's Will,
- the patience of Allah, which allows the widest possible chance for the operation of

- His Mercy, and
- in the last resort, to the nature of the Punishment, which is not a merely abrupt or arbitrary act, but a long, gradual process, in which there is room for repentance at every stage.

All these points are illustrated in the remarkable Parable of the People of the Garden, which also illustrates the greed, selfishness, and heedlessness of man, as well as his tendency to throw the blame on others if he can but think of a scapegoat.

All these foibles are shown, but the Mercy of Allah is boundless, and even after the worst sins and punishments, there may be hope of an even better orchard than the one lost, if only the repentance is true, and there is complete surrender to Allah's Will. But if, in spite of all this, there is no surrender of the will, then, indeed, the punishment in the Hereafter is something incomparably greater than the little calamities in the Parable.

... إِذْ أَقْسَمُوا لَيَصْرُمُنَّهَا مُصْبِحِينَ (١٧)

when they resolved to gather the fruits of the (garden) in the morning.

وَلَا يَسْتَنْتُونَ (١٨)

18. But made no reservation, ("If it be Allah's Will").

C5607. We must always remember, in all our plans, that they depend for their success on how far they accord with Allah's Will and Plan. His universal Will is supreme over all affairs.

These foolish men had a secret plan to defraud the poor of their just rights, but they were put into a position where they could not do so. In trying to frustrate others, they were themselves frustrated.

فَطَافَ عَلَيْهَا طَائِفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ ...

19. So there came, on the (garden) a visitation from thy Lord,

C5608. It was a terrible storm that blew down and destroyed the fruits and the trees. The whole place was changed out of all recognition.

... وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ (١٩)

(which swept away) all around, while they were asleep.

فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَالصَّرِيمِ (٢٠)

20. So the (garden) became, by the morning, like a dark and desolate spot, (whose fruit had been gathered).

فَتَنَادَوْا مُصْبِحِينَ (٢١)

21. As the morning broke, they called out, one to another --

أَنْ اْعُدُّوا عَلَىٰ حَرْثِكُمْ ...

22. "Go ye to your tilth (betimes) in morning,

C5609. Awaking from sleep, they were not aware that the garden had been destroyed by the storm overnight. They were in their own selfish dreams: by going very early, they thought they could cheat the poor of their share. See next note.

... إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَارِمِينَ (٢٢)

.. if ye would gather the fruits."

فَانْطَلَفُوا وَهُمْ يَخْفَوْنَ (٢٣)

23. So they departed, conversing in secret low tones, (saying) --

أَنْ لَا يَدْخُلَهَا الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَسْكِينٌ (٢٤)

24. "Let not a **single indigent person** break in upon you into the (garden) this day."

C5610. The poor man has a right in the harvest-whether as a gleaner or as an artisan or a menial in an Eastern village. The rich owners of the orchard in the Parable wanted to steal a march at an early hour and defeat this right, but their greed was punished, so that it led to a greater loss to themselves. They wanted to cheat but

had not the courage to face those they cheated, and by being in the field before any one was up they wanted to make it appear to the world that they were unconscious of any rights they were trampling on.

وَعَدُوا عَلَىٰ حَرْدٍ قَادِرِينَ (٢٥)

25. And they opened the morning, strong in an (unjust) resolve.

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهَا قَالُوا إِنَّا لَضَالُّونَ (٢٦)

26. But when they saw the (garden), they said:

"We have surely lost our way:

C5611. Their fond dreams were dispelled when they found that the garden had been changed out of all recognition. It was as if they had come to some place other than their own smiling garden. Where they had expected to reap a rich harvest, there was only a howling wilderness. They reflected. Their first thought was of their own personal loss, the loss of their labour and the loss of their capital. They had plotted to keep out others from the fruits: now, as it happened, the loss was their own.

بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ (٢٧)

27. "Indeed we are shut out (of the fruits of our labor)!"

C5612. Cf. 56:67. Also see last note.

قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ ...

28. Said one of them, more just (than the rest):

C5613. This was not necessarily a righteous man, but there are degrees in guilt. He had warned them, but he had joined in their unjust design.

... أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَّكُمْ لَوْ نَا تُسَبِّحُونَ (٢٨)

"Did I not say to you, 'Why not glorify (Allah)?' "

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ (٢٩)

29. They said:

"Glory to our Lord! Verily we have been doing wrong!"

فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ يَتَلَاوَمُونَ (٣٠)

30. Then they turned, one against another, in reproach.

C5614. When greed or injustice is punished people are ready to throw the blame on others. In this case, one particular individual may have seen the moral guilt of defying the Will of Allah and the right of man, but if he shared in the enterprise in the hope of profit, he could not get out of all responsibility.

قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا طَاغِينَ (٣١)

31. They said:

"Alas for us! We have indeed transgressed!

عَسَى رَبَّنَا أَنْ يُبدِلَنَا خَيْرًا مِّمَّا إِنَّا إِلَى رَبَّنَا رَاغِبُونَ (٣٢)

32. "It may be that our Lord will give us in exchange a better (garden) than this:

for we do turn to Him (in repentance)!"

C5615. If the repentance was true, there was hope. For Allah often turns a great evil to our good. If not true, they only added hypocrisy to their other sins.

The Parable presupposes that the garden came into the possession of selfish men, who were so puffed up with their good fortune that they forgot Allah. That meant that they also became harsh to their fellow-creatures. In their arrogance they plotted to get up early and defeat the claims of the poor at harvest time. They found their garden destroyed by a storm. Some reproached others, but those who sincerely repented obtained mercy.

The "**better garden**" may have been the same garden, flourishing in a future season under Allah's gift of abundance.

كَذَلِكَ الْعَذَابُ ...

33. Such is the Punishment (in this life);

... وَلِْعَذَابِ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ...

but greater is the Punishment in the Hereafter --

C5616. Even in this life the punishment for heedless or selfish arrogance and sin comes suddenly when we least expect it. But there is always room for Allah's Mercy if we sincerely repent. If the Punishment in this life seems to us so stupefying, how much worse will it be in the Hereafter, when the Punishment will not be only for a limited time, and the time for repentance will have passed?

... لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ (٣٣)

if only they knew!

C.248 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(68:34-52)

*To evil and good there can never be the same
End: no authority can the unjust produce
For their false imaginings. In shame
Will they realise this on the Day when all
Illusion will vanish and they find that the time
For repentance is pass. The good man should wait
And should never lose patience, even though
Things go dead against him. Jonah suffered
In agony, but his sincere repentance
Brought him the grace of his Lord, and he
Joined the company of the Righteous;
For Truth is firm and unshaken, is calm
And works good, through all Allah's Creation.*

Section 2

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٍ اللَّعِيمِ (٣٤)

34. Verily, for the righteous are Gardens of Delight, in the Presence of their Lord.

C5617. The Garden is a joy, but the joy of this Garden is the sense of nearness to Allah. (R).

أَفَنَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ (٣٥)

35. Shall We then treat the People of Faith like the People of Sin?

C5618. The spiritual arrogance which rejects faith in Allah is perhaps the worst Sin, because it makes itself impervious to the Mercy of Allah, as a bed of clay is impervious to the absorption of water. It sets up its own standards and its own will, but how can it measure or bind the Will of Allah?

It sets up its own fetishes,-idols, priests, gods, or godlings. The fetishes may be even God-given gifts or faculties.

Intellect or Science, if pushed up to the position of idols. If they are made rivals to Allah, question them:

Will they solve Allah's mysteries, or even the mysteries of Life and Soul?

مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ (٣٦)

36. What is the matter with you? How judge ye?

أَمْ لَكُمْ كِتَابٌ فِيهِ تَدْرُسُونَ (٣٧)

37. Or have ye a Book through which ye learn --

إِنَّ لَكُمْ فِيهِ لَمَا يَخَيَّرُونَ (٣٨)

38. That ye shall have through it whatever ye choose?

C5619. It is clearly against both logic and justice that men of righteousness should have the same End as men of sin. Even in this life, man cannot command whatever he chooses though he is allowed a limited freedom of choice. How can he expect such a thing under a reign of perfect Justice and Truth?

أَمْ لَكُمْ أَيْمَانٌ عَلَيْنَا بَالِغَةٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ لَكُمْ لَمَا تَحْكُمُونَ (٣٩)

39. Or have ye Covenants with Us on oath, reaching to the Day of Judgment (providing) that ye shall have whatever ye shall demand?

C5620. Nor can the Pagans plead that they have any special Covenants with Allah which give them a favoured position above other mortals.

The 'Chosen Race' idea of the Jews is also condemned. It is quite true that a certain race or group, on account of special aptitude may be chosen by Allah to uphold His truth and preach it. But this is conditional on their following Allah's Law. As soon as they become arrogant and selfish, they lose that position. They cannot have a perpetual and unconditional lease till the Day of Judgment.

سَلِّمْهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ بِذَلِكَ زَعِيمٌ (٤٠)

40. Ask thou of them, which of them will stand surety of that!

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ ...

41. Or have they some "Partners" (in Godhead)?

C5621. "Partners" in Godhead. as in the doctrine of the Trinity, or indeed in any form of polytheism. Such a doctrine destroys the cardinal doctrine of the Unity of Allah.

... فَلْيَأْتُوا بِشُرَكَائِهِمْ إِنْ كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ (٤١)

Then let them produce their "partners," if they are truthful!

يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَنْ سَاقٍ ...

42. The Day that the shin shall be laid bare,

C5622. -The Day that the Shin shall be laid bair", that is, when men are confronted with the stark reality of the Day of Judgment. On that occasion men will be summoned to adoration, not necessarily in words, but by the logic of facts, when the Reality will be fully manifest:

the Glory will be too dazzling for the Unbelievers, whose past deliberate refusal, when they had freedom to choose and yet rejected, will stand in way. (R).

... وَيُذْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ (٤٢)

and they shall be summoned to bow in adoration, but they shall not be able --

خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهُفُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ ...

43. **Their eyes will be** cast down -- ignominy will cover them;

C5623. Their past memories, combined with their present position, will then fill them with a sense of the deepest dismay and humiliation.

See last note.

... وَقَدْ كَانُوا يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ وَهُمْ سَالِمُونَ (٤٣)

seeing that they had been summoned aforetime to bow in adoration, **while they were whole**, (and had refused).

C5624. Salimun: whole, in full possession of the power of judgment and win; not constrained, as they now will be, by the Punishment staring them full in the face.

فَذَرْنِي وَمَنْ يُكَدِّبُ بِهِذَا الْحَدِيثِ ...

44. **Then leave Me** alone with such as reject this message:

C5625. Notice, the transition between "Me" and "We" in this verse, and again to "I" and "My" in the next verse. The first person plural ordinarily used in the holy Quran as Allah's Word, is the plural of respect.

In Royal decrees the first person plural is always used. When the first person singular is used, it marks some special personal relation, either of Mercy or favours (as in 2:38 or 2:150) or of punishment, as here. (Cf. n. 56. to 2:38).

... سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (٤٤)

by degrees shall We punish them from directions they perceive not.

C5626. Cf. 7:182. and n. 1154a.

We must not be impatient if we see the wicked flourish. It may be that the very appearance of flourishing here may be a part of the Punishment. There may be an eventual punishment by a sort of Cataclysm; but evolutionary punishment is gradual and sure.

Allah may punish wicked people by granting them respite and providing them worldly benefits in abundance, which

encourages them in sin and transgression. So when they are finally seized by the Wrath of Allah they are caught suddenly and utterly unprepared, as it were, red handed while engrossed in disbelief, a life of impiety and open revolt against their Lord! (R).

وَأْمَلِي لَهُمْ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ (٤٥)

45. A (long) respite will I grant them:
truly powerful is My plan.

أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ أَجْرًا ...

46. Or is it that thou dost ask them for a reward,

C5627. Cf. 52:40, n.5074.

It costs the Unbelievers nothing to hear the Prophet, for the Prophet asks for no reward, and indeed suffers for their benefit.

Al-Mustafa is addressed in the first instance, but there is always a universal interpretation. The righteous man asks for no reward for his preaching or example: if he did, the value would be too great for the world to pay for. The Unbelievers behave as if they had the secret of the Unseen, but they are empty triflers, for, if they only tried to formulate spiritual laws, they would fail.

... فَهُمْ مِّنْ مَّعْرَمٍ مُّثْقَلُونَ (٤٦)

so that they are burdened with a load of debt? --

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُونَ (٤٧)

47. Or that they Unseen is in their hands, so that they can write it down?

C5628. Cf. 52:41, n. 5075.

The Unseen is certainly not within their knowledge or control. If it were, they could clearly write it down for their own guidance or the guidance of others. They should listen to the words of inspiration, sent by the Knower of all things.

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ ...

48. So wait with patience for the command of thy Lord,

... وَلَا تُكُنْ كَصَاحِبِ الْحُوتِ إِذْ نَادَى وَهُوَ مَكْظُومٌ (٤٨)

and be not like the Companion of the Fish -- when he cried out in agony.

C5629. This was Dhu al Nun, or Jonah, for whom see n. 2744 to 21:87-88. Cf. also 37:139-148 and the notes there.

Jonah was asked to preach to the people of Nineveh, a wicked city. He met with hostility and persecution, fled from his enemies, and took a boat. He was caught in a storm and thrown into the sea, He was swallowed by a fish or whale, but he repented in his living prison, and was forgiven. But the people of Nineveh were also forgiven, for they, too, repented.

Here is a double allegory of Allah's mercy and forgiveness, and a command to patience, and complete and joyful submission to the Will of Allah.

لَوْلَا أَنْ تَدَارَكَهُ نِعْمَةٌ مِّنْ رَبِّهِ لُنُبِدَ بِالْعُرَاءِ وَهُوَ مَذْمُومٌ (٤٩)

49. Had not Grace from His Lord reached him, he would indeed have been **cast off on the naked shore**, in disgrace.

C5630. Cf. 37:145-146, and n. 4126.

فَاجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ ...

50. **Thus did his Lord choose him ...**

C5631. Jonah was chosen by Allah's Grace and Mercy to be Allah's Prophet to Nineveh. If in his human frailty he lost a little patience, he suffered his punishment, but his true and sincere repentance and recognition of Allah's goodness and mercy restored him from his physical. and mental distress, and from the obscuration of the spiritual Light in him.

... فَجَعَلَهُ مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ (٥٠)

... and make him of the company of the Righteous.

C5632. Cf. 4:69, n. 586.

In the beautiful Company of the Righteous there is room for all, of every grade of spiritual advancement, from the

highest to the most ordinary. But as in democratic politics every citizen's rights and status have complete recognition, so, in this Company, the badge of Righteousness is the bond, even though there may be higher degrees of knowledge or experience.

وَأِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُزِلُّوكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ ...

51. And the Unbelievers would almost trip thee up with their eyes

C5633. The eyes of evil men look at a good man as if they would "eat him up", or trip him up, or disturb him from his position of stability or firmness. They use all sorts of terms of abuse-"madman" or "one possessed by an evil spirit", and so on.

Cf. 68:2 above, and n. 5594.

But the good man is unmoved, and takes his even course. The Message of Allah is true and will endure; and it is a Message to all Creation.

... لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ (٥١)

when they hear the message; and they say:

"Surely he is possessed!"

وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ (٥٢)

52. But it is nothing less than a Message to all the world

C5634. This is the extreme antithesis to madness or demoniacal possession. So far from the holy Prophet uttering words disjointed or likely to harm people, he was bringing the Message of true Reality, which was to be the cure of all evil, in every kind of world. For the different kinds of worlds see n. 20 to 1:2.



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Zahid Javed Rana, Abid Javed Rana

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