

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRAT *Maryam*, 19

The religious growth of man as an individual soul having been explained in S. xvii as beginning with the first principles of moral conduct and in S. xviii as being dependent upon our realisation of the brevity and mystery of this life and the true use of power as in the story of Zul-qarnain, we now pass on to the story of individual Messengers of Allah in their personal relations with their environment,—Yahyā with his father Zakariya, Jesus with his mother Mary; Abraham with his unbelieving father. Moses with his brother Aaron, Ismā'il with his family, and Idrīs in the high station to which he was called. Seeing how these great ones fitted into the scheme of life, man is condemned for his want of faith, or for degrading his faith to superstition, and warned of the Hereafter.

In chronology, it was revealed before the first resort of the batch of Muslims to Abyssinia, say seven years before the Hijrat.

Summary.—Zakariya was anxious to have an heir to carry on Allah's work in a world of unrighteousness, and Yahyā was given to him (xix. 1-15).

Mary the mother of Jesus was maligned by her people, but Jesus comforted her and was good to her (xix. 16-40).

Abraham was persecuted for his Faith by his people, including his unbelieving father, but he withdrew from them, and was blessed; Moses was helped by his brother Aaron; Ismā'il brought up his family in piety; and Idrīs was truthful and pious in a high station: they showed the way; yet men will not learn the good life (xix. 41-65).

Man should not disbelieve in the Hereafter, nor sully his faith by false notions about Allah (xix. 66-98).

Maryam, or Mary.

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.

1. *Kāf. Hā. Yā. 'Ain. Šād.*²⁴⁵⁵
2. (This is) a mention²⁴⁵⁶
Of the Mercy of thy Lord
To His servant Zakariya.
3. Behold! he cried
To his Lord in secret.²⁴⁵⁷
4. Praying: "O my Lord!
Infirm indeed are my bones,
And the hair of my head
Doth glisten with grey:
But never am I unblest,
O my Lord, in my prayer²⁴⁵⁸
To Thee!
5. "Now I fear (what)
My relatives (and colleagues)
(Will do) after me:
But my wife is barren:



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

كَهَيِّعَصَ ①

ذِكْرُ رَحْمَتِ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُ زَكَرِيَّا ②

إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ يَدَّاءَ خَفِيًّا ③

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاسْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ
شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ رَبِّ شَقِيًّا ④

وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِنْ وَرَأْيِ وَكَانَتْ
أَمْرًا قَاسِرًا فَهَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا ⑤

2455. This is the only Sūra which begins with these five Abbreviated Letters, K., H., Y., 'A., Š. For Abbreviated Letters generally, see Appendix I.

2456. The Mercy of Allah to Zakariya was shown in many ways: (1) in the acceptance of his prayer; (2) in bestowing a son like Yahyā; and (3) in the love between father and son, in addition to the work which Yahyā did as Allah's Messenger for the world. Cf. iii. 38-41 and notes. There the public ministry was the point stressed; here the beautiful relations between the son and the father.

2457. *In secret*: because he feared that his own family and relatives were going wrong (xix. 5), and he wanted to keep the lamp of Allah burning bright. He could not very well mention the fear about his colleagues (who were his relations) in public.

2458. This preface shows the fervent faith of Zakariya. Zakariya was a prophet of the Most High Allah. His office was in the Temple, and his relatives were his colleagues. But he found in them no true spirit of the service of Allah and man. He was filled with anxiety as to who would uphold the godly ideas he had in mind, which were strange to his worldly colleagues.

So give me an heir²⁴⁵⁹

As from Thyself,-

6. "(One that) will (truly)
Inherit me, and inherit²⁴⁶⁰
The posterity of Jacob;
And make him, O my Lord!
One with whom Thou art
Well-pleased!"

7. (His prayer was answered):
"O Zakariya! We give thee
Good news of a son:
His name shall be Yahya:
On none by that name
Have We conferred distinction
before."²⁴⁶¹

8. He said: "O my Lord
How shall I have a son,
When my wife is barren
And I have grown quite decrepit
From old age?"

يَرْثِي وَيَرِثُ مِنْ آلٍ يَعْقُوبُ
وَأَجْعَلْهُ رَبِّ رَضِيًّا ﴿٦﴾

يَذْكُرْنَا إِنَّا نَبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَى
لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا ﴿٧﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَكَانَتْ
أُمِّي عَاقِرًا وَقَدْ بَلَغْتُ
مِنَ الْكِبَرِ عِتِيًّا ﴿٨﴾

2459. His was not merely a desire for a son. If it had been, he would have prayed much earlier in his life, when he was a young man. He was too full of true piety to put merely selfish things into his prayers. But here was a public need, in the service of the Lord.

2460. It is true that an heir inherits property, but his higher duty is to represent in everything the personality of him from whom he inherits. It is doubtful whether Zakariya had any worldly property. But he had character and virtue, as a man of God, and this he wanted to transmit to his heir as his most precious possession. It was almost the most precious possession of the posterity of Jacob. The people around him had fallen away from Allah's Message. Could his heir, like him, try and renew it?

2461. This was John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. In accordance with his father's prayer he, and Jesus for whom he prepared the way, renewed the Message of Allah, which had been corrupted and lost among the Israelites. The Arabic form Yahya suggests "Life". The Hebrew form is Johanan, which means "Jehovah has been Gracious". Cf. Hananan in verse 13 below. It does not mean that the name was given for the first time, for we read of a Johanan the son of Carcah in II Kings, xxv. 23, an otherwise obscure man. It means that Allah had, for the first time, called one of His elect by that name.

9. He said: "So (it will be):²⁴⁶²
Thy Lord saith, 'That is
Easy for Me: I did
Indeed create thee before,
When thou hadst been nothing!'"²⁴⁶³

قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَىٰ هَٰئِنَ
وَقَدْ خَلَقْتَنكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَنُفَعِّلَنَّكَ شَيْئًا

10. (Zakariya) said: "O my Lord!
Give me a Sign,"²⁴⁶⁴
"Thy Sign," was the answer,
"Shall be that thou
Shalt speak to no man
For three nights,"²⁴⁶⁵
Although thou art not dumb.

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِّي آيَةً قَالَ آيَتُكَ
أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا

11. So Zakariya came out
To his people
From his chamber:

فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ مِنَ الْمِحْرَابِ فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ
أَن سَبِّحُوا بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا

2462. Who is the "He" in this clause? As I have construed it, following the majority of Commentators, it means the angel who brought the message from Allah. Cf. xix. 21 below. But some Commentators construe it to refer to Zakariya. In that case the meaning will be: Zakariya after a little reflection said (in his wonder) "So!", i.e., "Can it really be so? Can I really have a son in my old age?" "The speech following. "Thy Lord saith," etc., will then be that of the angel-messenger.

2463. Every man was nothing just before he was created, i.e., his personality was called into being by Allah. Even if there are material processes in forming the body, in accordance with the laws of nature, the real creative force is the power of Allah. But here there is a subtler meaning. John was the harbinger of Jesus, preparing the way for him; and this sentence also prepares us for the more wonderful birth of Jesus himself, see verse 21 below. Everything is possible with Allah.

2464. The "Sign", was in order to convince Zakariya that the Lord's promise was true.

2465. Compare this verse with iii. 41. The variations are interesting. Here it is "for three nights": there it is "for three days". The meaning is the same, for a day is a period of 24 hours. But the point of view is different in each case. There it was from the point of view of the Ummat or Congregation, among whom he worked by day; here the point of view is that of his individual soul, which spent the nights in prayer and praise. Notice again that at the end of the next verse, we have here, "In the morning and the evening", and at the end of iii. 41, "In the evening and in the morning"—showing again that the point of view is reversed.

He told them by signs
To celebrate Allah's praises
In the morning
And in the evening.

12. (To his son came the command):²⁴⁶⁶
"O Yahyā! take hold
Of the Book with might":
And We gave him Wisdom²⁴⁶⁷
Even as a youth,

يَتَخَيَّرُ خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ وَأَنبَتَهُ
الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا ﴿١٢﴾

13. And pity (for all creatures)
As from Us, and purity:²⁴⁶⁸
He was devout,

وَحَنَانًا مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَزَكَاةً وَكَانَ تَقِيًّا ﴿١٣﴾

14. And kind to his parents,
And he was not overbearing
Or rebellious.

وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَيْهِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ جَبَّارًا عَصِيًّا ﴿١٤﴾

15. So Peace on him
The day he was born,
The day that he dies,
And the day that he

وَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ
وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿١٥﴾

2466. Time passes. The son is born. In this section of the Sūra the centre of interest is Yahyā, and the instruction is now given to him. 'Keep fast hold of Allah's revelation with all your might': for an unbelieving world had either corrupted or neglected it, and Yahyā (John the Baptist) was to prepare the way for Jesus, who was coming to renew and re-interpret it.

2467. *Hukm*, translated Wisdom, implies something more than Wisdom; it is the Wisdom or Judgment that is entitled to judge and command, as in the matter of denouncing sin.

2468. John the Baptist did not live long. He was imprisoned by Herod, the tetrarch (provincial ruler under the Roman Empire), whom he had reproved for his sins, and eventually beheaded at the instigation of the woman with whom Herod was infatuated. But even in his young life, he was granted (1) wisdom by Allah, for he boldly denounced sin; (2) gentle pity and love for all Allah's creatures, for he moved among the humble and lowly, and despised "soft raiment"; and (3) purity of life, for he renounced the world and lived in the wilderness. All his work he did in his youth. These things showed themselves in his conduct, for he was devout, showing love to Allah and to Allah's creatures, and more particularly to his parents (for we are considering that aspect of his life): this was also shown by the fact that he never used violence, from an attitude of arrogance, nor entertained a spirit of rebellion against divine Law.

Will be raised up
To life (again)!²⁴⁶⁹

SECTION 2.

16. Relate in the Book
(The story of) Mary,²⁴⁷⁰
When she withdrew
From her family
To a place in the East.²⁴⁷¹

17. She placed a screen
(To screen herself) from them:
Then We sent to her
Our angel, and he appeared
Before her as a man
In all respects.

18. She said: "I seek refuge
From thee to (Allah)
Most Gracious: (come not near)
If thou dost fear Allah."

19. He said: "Nay, I am only
A messenger from thy Lord
(To announce) to thee
The gift of a pure son."²⁴⁷²

وَأَذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ انْتَبَذَتْ
مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا ﴿١٦﴾

فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَا
إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا ﴿١٧﴾

قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ نَقِيًّا ﴿١٨﴾

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا
زَكِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾

2469. This is spoken as in the life-time of Yahyā. Peace and Allah's Blessings, were on him when he was born; they continue when he is about to die an unjust death at the hands of a tyrant; and they will be specially manifest at the Day of Judgment.

2470. Cf. the story of Mary as related in iii. 42-51. Here the whole theme is different: it is the personal side of the experiences of the worshippers of Allah in relation to their families or environment.

2471. To a private eastern chamber, perhaps in the Temple. She went into privacy, from her people and from people in general, for prayer and devotion. It was in this state of purity that the angel appeared to her in the shape of a man. She thought it was a man. She was frightened, and she adjured him not to invade her privacy.

2472. Allah had destined her to be the mother of the Prophet Jesus Christ, and now had come the time when this should be announced to her.

20. She said: "How shall I
Have a son, seeing that
No man has touched me,
And I am not unchaste?"

قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ
وَلَمْ أَكُ بِغَيِّيًا ﴿٢٠﴾

21. He said: "So (it will be):
Thy Lord saith, 'That is
Easy for Me: and (We
Wish) to appoint him
As a Sign unto men
And a Mercy from Us':²⁴⁷³
It is a matter
(So) decreed."²⁴⁷⁴

قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَى هَيْنٍ
وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً
مِّنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٢١﴾

22. So she conceived him,
And she retired with him
To a remote place.²⁴⁷⁵

فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا ﴿٢٢﴾

23. And the pains of childbirth
Drove her to the trunk
Of a palm-tree:
She cried (in her anguish):

فَاجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جُذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَلَيْتَنِي
مِثُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا مَّنْسِيًّا ﴿٢٣﴾

2473. The mission of Jesus is announced in two ways (1) he was to be a Sign to men; his wonderful birth and wonderful life were to turn an ungodly world back to Allah; and (2) his mission was similar to that of all prophets of Allah. But the point here is that the Israelites, to whom Jesus was sent, were a hardened race, for whom the message of Jesus was truly a gospel of Mercy.

2474. For anything that Allah wishes to create, He says "Be", and it is (Cf. iii. 47). There is no interval between His decree and its accomplishment, except such as He imposes by His decree. Time may be only a projection of our own minds in this world of relativity.

2475. The annunciation and the conception, we may suppose, took place in Nazareth (of Galilee), say 65 miles north of Jerusalem. The delivery took place in Bethlehem about 6 miles south of Jerusalem. It was a remote place, not only with reference to the distance of 71 miles, but because in Bethlehem itself the birth was in an obscure corner under a palm-tree, from which perhaps the babe was afterwards removed to a manger in a stable.

"Ah! would that I had
Died before this! would that
I had been a thing
Forgotten."²⁴⁷⁶

24. But (a voice) cried to her
From beneath the (palm-tree):
"Grieve not! for thy Lord
Hath provided a rivulet
Beneath thee;

25. "And shake towards thyself
The trunk of the palm-tree:
It will let fall
Fresh ripe dates upon thee."²⁴⁷⁷

26. "So eat and drink
And cool (thine) eye."²⁴⁷⁸
And if thou dost see
Any man, say, 'I have
Vowed a fast to (Allah)
Most Gracious, and this day
Will I enter into no talk
With any human being'"²⁴⁷⁹

27. At length she brought
The (babe) to her people,

فَنَادَاهُمَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ
تَحْتَكَ سَرِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾

وَهَزِي إِلَيْكَ بِجَنْعِ النَّخْلِ تَسْقُطَ عَلَيْكَ
رُطَبًا جَنِيًّا ﴿٢٠﴾

فَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَفَرِّجِي عَيْنَا فِيمَا تَرْضَيْنَ
مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَدِيقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ
صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا ﴿٢١﴾

فَأَتَتْ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُ قَالُوا يَمْرُؤٌ

2476. She was but human, and suffered the pangs of an expectant mother, with no one to attend on her. The circumstances being peculiar, she had got far away from her people.

2477. Unseen Providence had seen that she should not suffer from thirst or from hunger. The rivulet provided her with water also for ablutions.

2478. *Cool thine eye*: An idiom for "comfort thyself and be glad". The literal meaning should not, however, be lost sight of. She was to cool her eyes (perhaps full of tears) with the fresh water of the rivulet and take comfort that a remarkable babe had been born to her. She was also to look around, and if any one came near, she was to decline all conversation. It was quite true: she was under a vow, and could not talk to any one.

2479. She was to decline all conversation with man or woman, on the plea of a vow to Allah. The "fast" here does not mean abstinence literally from eating and drinking. She has just been advised to eat the dates and drink of the stream. It means abstinence from the ordinary household meals, and indeed from human intercourse generally.

Carrying him (in her arms),
They said: "O Mary!
Truly a strange thing
Has thou brought!"²⁴⁸⁰

لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا ﴿٧﴾

28. "O sister of Aaron!"²⁴⁸¹
Thy father was not
A man of evil, nor thy
Mother a woman unchaste!"

يَتَأَخَذَ هَهُنَا مَا كَانَ أَبُوكَ أَمْرًا سَوْءًا وَمَا كَانَتْ
أُمُّكَ بَغِيًّا ﴿٨﴾

29. But she pointed to the babe.²⁴⁸²
They said: "How can we
Talk to one who is
A child in the cradle?"

فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ
مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا ﴿٩﴾

30. He said: "I am indeed
A servant of Allah:
He hath given me
Revelation and made me
A prophet:

قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ءَاتَنِي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا ﴿١٠﴾

31. "And He hath made me
Blessed wheresoever I be,
And hath enjoined on me

وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ
وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ﴿١١﴾

2480. The amazement of the people knew no bounds. In any case they were ready to think the worst of her, as she had disappeared from her kin for some time. But now she comes, shamelessly parading a babe in her arms! How she had disgraced the house of Aaron, the fountain of priesthood! We may suppose that the scene took place in the Temple in Jerusalem, or in Nazareth.

2481. Aaron the brother of Moses was the first in the line of Israelite priesthood. Mary and her cousin Elisabeth (mother of Yahyā) came of a priestly family, and were therefore, "sisters of Aaron" or daughters of 'Imrān (who was Aaron's father). See n. 375 to iii. 35. Mary is reminded of her high lineage and the unexceptionable morals of her father and mother. How, they said, she had fallen, and disgraced the name of her progenitors!

2482. What could Mary do? How could she explain? Would they, in their censorious mood, accept her explanation? All she could do was to point to the child, who, she knew, was no ordinary child. And the child came to her rescue. By a miracle he spoke, defended his mother, and preached—to an unbelieving audience. See iii. 46, and n. 388.

Prayer and zakat as long
As I live;²⁴⁸³

32. "(He hath made me) kind
To my mother, and not
Overbearing or unblest;²⁴⁸⁴

33. "So Peace is on me
The day I was born,
The day that I die,
And the day that I
Shall be raised up
To life (again)"!²⁴⁸⁵

34. Such (was) Jesus the son
Of Mary: (it is) a statement
Of truth, about which
They (vainly) dispute.²⁴⁸⁶

35. It is not befitting
To (the majesty of) Allah
That He should beget

وَبَرَّابِرَالِدِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا ﴿٣٢﴾

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ
وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿٣٣﴾

ذَٰلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْلَ الْكَافِرِ الَّذِي
فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ مِنْ وَلَدٍ سُبْحَانَهُ
إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٣٥﴾

2483. There is a parallelism throughout the accounts of Jesus and Yahyā, with some variations. Both the parallelisms and the variations are interesting. For instance Jesus declares at the very outset that he is a servant of Allah, thus negating the false notion that he was Allah or the son of Allah. The greatness of Yahyā is described in xix. 12-13 in terms that are not applied to Jesus, but the verses xix. 14-15 as applied to Yahyā are in almost identical terms with those applied to Jesus here (xix. 32-33). Devotion in Prayer and Charity is a good description of Christ at its best, and pity, purity, and devotion in Yahyā are a good description of the ways leading to Prayer and Charity, just as John led to Jesus.

2484. Overbearing violence is not only unjust and harmful to those on whom it is practised; it is perhaps even more harmful to the person who practises it, for his soul becomes turbid, unsettled, and ultimately unhappy and wretched,—the state of those in Hell. Here the negative qualities are "not overbearing or miserable." As applied to John they were "not overbearing or rebellious." John bore his punishment from the State without any protest or drawing back.

2485. Cf. xix. 15, and n. 2469. Christ was not crucified (iv. 157).

2486. The disputations about the nature of Jesus Christ were vain, but also persistent and sanguinary. The modern Christian churches have thrown them into the background, but they would do well to abandon irrational dogmas altogether.

A son. Glory be to Him!
When He determines
A matter, He only says
To it, "Be", and it is.²⁴⁸⁷

36. Verily Allah is my Lord
And your Lord: Him
Therefore serve ye: this is
A Way that is straight.²⁴⁸⁸

37. But the sects differ
Among themselves: and woe
To the Unbelievers because
Of the (coming) Judgment²⁴⁸⁹
Of an awful Day!

38. How plainly will they see
And hear, the Day that
They will appear before Us!
But the unjust to-day
Are in error manifest!²⁴⁹⁰

39. But warn them of the Day
Of Distress,²⁴⁹¹ when
The matter will be determined:
For (behold,) they are negligent
And they do not believe!

وَلِإِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ
هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
مِنْ مَّشْهَدٍ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

أَسْمِعْ بِهِمْ وَأَبْصِرْ يَوْمَ يَأْتُونَنَا لَكِنِ الظَّالِمُونَ
الْيَوْمَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ
وَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

2487. Begetting a son is a physical act depending on the needs of men's animal nature. Allah Most High is independent of all needs, and it is derogatory to Him to attribute such an act to Him. It is merely a relic of pagan and anthropomorphic materialist superstitions.

2488. As opposed to the crooked superstitions which take refuge in all sorts of metaphysical sophistries to prove three in one and one in three. In the Qur-ān there is no crookedness (xviii. 1). Christ's teaching was simple, like his life, but the Christians have made it crooked.

2489. *Judgment*: the word in the original is *Mash-had*, which implies many things: (1) the time or place where evidence is taken, as in a Court of Judgment; (2) the time or place where people are produced (to be judged); and (3) the occasion for such production for the taking of evidence. A very expressive phrase for the Day of Judgment.

2490. Cf. l. 22. and that whole passage, where the Resurrection is described.

2491. *Hasrat*: Sighs, sighing, regrets, distress.

40. It is We Who will inherit²⁴⁹²
The earth, and all beings
Thereon: to Us will they
All be returned.

SECTION 3.

41. (Also) mention in the Book
(The story of) Abraham:
He was a man of Truth,
A prophet.
42. Behold, he said to his father:²⁴⁹³
"O my father! why
Worship that which heareth not
And seeth not, and can
Profit thee nothing?"
43. "O my father! to me
Hath come knowledge which
Hath not reached thee:²⁴⁹⁴
So follow me: I will guide
Thee to a Way that
Is even and straight."²⁴⁹⁵

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَرِثُ الْأَرْضَ وَمَنْ عَلَيْهَا وَإِلَيْنَا يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا ﴿٤١﴾

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يَتَّبِعْ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ

وَلَا يُبْصِرُ وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنْكَ شَيْئًا ﴿٤٢﴾

يَتَّبِعْ إِنِّي قَدْ جَاءَنِي مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِكَ

فَاتَّبِعْنِي أَهْدِكَ صِرَاطًا سَوِيًّا ﴿٤٣﴾

2492. Cf. iii. 180. n. 485; xv. 23 n. 1964, Material property passes from one to another: when one dies, another inherits it. Allah gives life and death, and all that survives after physical death goes back to Allah, the original source of all things.

2493. The reference to Abraham here is in relation to his tender solicitude for his father, who had not received the light of Unity, and to whom Abraham wanted to be a guide and friend.

2494. Some are more receptive of Light than others. It is their duty and privilege to guide and point to the right Way.

2495. *Sawiyān*—right, smooth, even; complete, perfect; hence the derived meaning: in xix. 10, in full possession of all the physical senses; in that context, 'not dumb': in xix. 17, when the angel appears in the form of a man, 'completely like' a man, a man 'in all respects.'

44. "O my father! serve not
Satan: for Satan is
A rebel against (Allah)
Most Gracious.²⁴⁹⁶

يَتَّابِتْ لَاتَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ
عَصِيًّا ﴿١١﴾

45. "O my father! I fear
Lest a Chastisement afflict thee²⁴⁹⁷
From (Allah) Most Gracious,
So that thou become
To Satan a friend."

يَتَّابِتْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٌ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ
فَتَكُونَ لِلشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيًّا ﴿١٢﴾

46. (The father) replied:
Art thou shrinking
From my gods, O Abraham?
If thou forbear not, I will
Indeed stone thee:
Now get away from me
For a good long while!"²⁴⁹⁸

قَالَ أَرَأَيْتُ أَنْتَ عَنِ الْهِتَى يَتَّابِرْهُمْ لَيْنَ لَمْ
تَنْتَهِ لَأَرْجُمَنَّكَ وَأَهْجُرَنِي مَلِيًّا ﴿١٣﴾

47. Abraham said: "Peace be
On thee: I will pray
To my Lord for thy forgiveness."²⁴⁹⁹

قَالَ سَلِّمْ عَلَيْكَ سَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ
رَبِّي إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِي حَفِيًّا ﴿١٤﴾

2496. The rebellion is all the more heinous and inexcusable, considering that Allah is Most Just, Most Merciful, Most Gracious.

2497. To entertain a feeling of friendliness, instead of aversion, to Evil, is in itself a degradation of our nature, a Penalty which Allah imposes on our deliberate rejection of the Truth. And the friendliness to Evil also implies the sharing of the outlawry of Evil.

2498. Note the gentle persuasive tone of Abraham in his speeches in xix. 42-45 (for we may suppose those sentences to sum up a long course of arguments) and in xix. 47-48, contrasted with the brusque and repellent tone of the father's reply in this verse. The one was the outcome of the true Light which had come to Abraham from Allah, as the other was the outcome of Pagan arrogance and the worship of brute force. The spiritual lesson from this episode of Abraham's life may be stated in four propositions: (1) the pious son is dutiful to his father and wishes him well in all things, material and spiritual, (2) if the father refuses Allah's Light, the son will do his utmost to bring such Light to the father; (3) having received the Light, the son will never renounce that Light, even if he has to forfeit his father's love and renounce his home; (4) even if the father repels him and turns him out, his answer will be a soft answer, full of love and forgiveness on the one hand, but firmness on behalf of Truth on the other.

2499. Cf. ix. 114. where this promise of Abraham to pray for his father is referred to, and its limitations pointed out.

For He is to me
Most Gracious.

48. "And I will turn away
From you (all) and from those
Whom ye invoke besides Allah:
I will call on my Lord
Perhaps, by my prayer to my Lord,
I shall be not unblest."²⁵⁰⁰

49. When he had turned away
From them and from those
Whom they worshipped besides
Allah, We bestowed on him
Isaac and Jacob, and each one
Of them We made a prophet.²⁵⁰¹

50. And We bestowed
Of Our Mercy on them,
And We granted them
Lofty honour on the tongue²⁵⁰²
Of truth.

وَأَعْتَزِلُكُمْ وَمَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَأَدْعُوا
رَبِّي عَسَىٰ أَلَّا أَكُونَ بِدُعَاءِ رَبِّي شَقِيًّا ﴿٤٨﴾

فَلَمَّا أَتَتْهُمْ وَمَا يَتَّبِعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَهَبْنَا لَهُ
إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ كُلًّا جَعَلْنَا نَبِيًّا ﴿٤٩﴾

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِنَا وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ
عَلِيًّا ﴿٥٠﴾

2500. Abraham left his father and the home of his fathers (Ur of the Chaldees) and never returned. He left because he was turned out, and because it was not possible for him to make any compromise with what was false in religion. In return for abuse, he spoke gentle words. And he expressed his fervent hope that at least he (Abraham) would have Allah's blessing in reply to his prayers. Here was a prefigurement of another Hijrat many centuries later! In both cases the prayer was abundantly fulfilled.

2501. Isaac and Isaac's son Jacob are mentioned here as carrying on one line of Abraham's traditions. The other line was carried on by Ismā'il, who is mentioned independently five verses lower down, as his line got special honour in the Holy Prophet of Islam. That is why his mention comes after that of Moses. Cf. xxi. 72.

2502. Abraham and his son and grandson Isaac and Jacob, and their line, maintained the banner of Allah's truth for many generations, and they won deservedly high praise—the praise of truth—on the tongues of men. Abraham prayed that he should be praised by the tongue of truth among men to come in later ages: xxvi. 84. Ordinary praise may mean nothing: it may be due to selfish flattery on the part of others or artful management by the person praised. Praise on the tongue of sincere truth is praise indeed!

SECTION 4.

51. Also mention in the Book
(The story of) Moses:
For he was specially chosen.
And he was a messenger
And a prophet.²⁵⁰³

وَأَذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ مُوسَى إِنَّهُ كَانَ مُخْلَصًا
وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا ﴿٥١﴾

52. And We called him
From the right side²⁵⁰⁴
Of Mount (Sinai), and made
Him draw near to Us,
For converse in secret

وَنَادَيْنَاهُ مِنْ جَانِبِ الطُّورِ الْأَيْمَنِ وَقَرَّبْنَاهُ نَجِيًّا ﴿٥٢﴾

53. And, out of Our Mercy,²⁵⁰⁵
We gave him his brother
Aaron, (also) a prophet.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ مِنْ رَحْمَتِنَا أَخَاهُ هَارُونَ نَبِيًّا ﴿٥٣﴾

54. Also mention in the Book
(The story of) Ismā'il:

وَأَذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ
صَادِقَ الْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا ﴿٥٤﴾

2503. Moses was (1) especially chosen, and therefore prepared and instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, in order that he might free his people from Egyptian bondage; there may also be a reference to Moses's title of Kalimullāh, the one to whom Allah spoke without the intervention of angels: see iv. 164, and n. 670; (2) he was a prophet (*nabi*), in that he received inspiration; and (3) he was a messenger (*rasūl*) in that he had a Book of Revelation, and an Ummat or organised Community, for which he instituted laws.

2504. The incident here I think refers to the incidents described more fully in xx. 9-36; a reference may also be made to Exod. iii. 1-18 and iv. 1-17. The time is when Moses (with his family) was travelling and grazing the flocks of his father-in-law Jethro, just before he got his commission from Allah. The place is somewhere near Mount Sinai (*Jabal Mūsā*). Moses sees a Fire in the distance, but when he goes there, he hears a voice that tells him it is sacred ground. Allah asked him to put off his shoes and to draw near, and when he went near, great mysteries were revealed to him. He was given his commission, and his brother Aaron was given to him to go with him and aid him. It is after that, that he and Aaron went and faced Pharaoh in Egypt, as narrated in vii. 103-144, etc. The *right side* of the mountain may mean that Moses heard the voice from the right side of the mountain as he faced it; or it may have the figurative meaning of "right" in Arabic, i.e., the side which was blessed or sacred ground.

2505. Moses was diffident, and reluctant to go to Pharaoh as he had an impediment in his tongue, and he asked that his brother Aaron should be associated with him in his mission. Allah in His Mercy granted his request; xx. 25-36.

He was (strictly) true
To what he promised,²⁵⁰⁶
And he was a messenger
(And) a prophet.

55. He used to enjoin
On his people Prayer
And zakat and he was
Most acceptable in the sight
Of his Lord.²⁵⁰⁷

56. Also mention in the Book
Idris:²⁵⁰⁸
He was a man of truth
(And sincerity), (and) a prophet:

57. And We raised him
To a lofty station.

58. Those were some
Of the prophets on whom
Allah did bestow His Grace,—
Of the posterity of Adam,
And of those whom We
Carried (in the Ark)

وَكَانَ بِأَمْرٍ أَهْلَهُ بِالصَّلَاةِ
وَالزَّكَاةِ وَكَانَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ مَرْضِيًّا ﴿٥٥﴾

وَأَذْكُرُ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِدْرِيْسَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا ﴿٥٦﴾

وَرَفَعْنَاهُ مَكَانًا عَلِيًّا ﴿٥٧﴾

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ ذُرِّيَةِ
آدَمَ وَمِمَّنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوحٍ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَإِسْرَءِيلَ وَمِمَّنْ هَدَيْنَا وَاجَبْتِنَا إِذْ أَنْزَلْنَا آلِي عِيسَى

2506. Ismā'il was *Az-zabih* i.e., the chosen sacrifice for Allah in Muslim tradition. When Abraham told him of the sacrifice, he voluntarily offered himself for it, and never flinched from his promise, until the sacrifice was redeemed by the substitution of a ram under Allah's commands. He was the fountain-head of the Arabian Ummat, and in his posterity came the Prophet of Allah. The Ummat and the Book of Islam reflect back the prophethood on Ismā'il.

2507. An acceptable sacrifice: see last note.

2508. Idris is mentioned twice in the Qur-ān, viz.; here and in xxi. 85, where he is mentioned among those who patiently persevered. His identification with the Biblical Enoch, who "walked with God" (Gen. v. 21-24), may or may not be correct. Nor are we justified in interpreting verse 57 here as meaning the same thing as in Gen. v. 24 ("God took him"), that he was taken up without passing through the portals of death. All we are told is that he was a man of truth and sincerity, and a prophet, and that he had a high position among his people. It is this point which brings him in the series of men just mentioned; he kept himself in touch with his people, and was honoured among them. Spiritual progress need not cut us off from our people, for we have to help and guide them. He kept to truth and piety in the highest station.

With Noah, and of
The posterity of Abraham²⁵⁰⁹
And Israel—of those
Whom We guided and chose.
Whenever the Signs
Of (Allah) Most Gracious
Were rehearsed to them,²⁵¹⁰
They would fall down
In prostrate adoration
And in tears.

أَإِنَّمَا لِلرَّحْمَنِ خُرُوعٌ وَسُجُودٌ وَبُكْيَا ۝٥٨

59. But after them there followed
A posterity who missed
Prayers and followed after lusts
Soon, then, will they
Face Destruction,—²⁵¹¹

۞ خَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهَوَاتِ فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غِيَا ۝٥٩

60. Except those who repent
And believe, and work
Righteousness: for these
Will enter the Garden
And will not be wronged
In the least,—

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ
يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا ۝٦٠

61. Gardens of Eternity, those
Which (Allah) Most Gracious
Has promised to His servants
In the Unseen: for His promise
Must (necessarily) come to pass.

جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَنُ عِبَادَهُ
بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ مَأْتِيًا ۝٦١

2509. The earlier generations are grouped into three epochs from a religious point of view: (1) from Adam to Noah, (2) from Noah to Abraham, and (3) from Abraham to an indefinite time, say to the time when the Message of Allah was corrupted and the need arose for the final Messenger of Unity and Truth. Israel is another name for Jacob.

2510 The original is in the Aorist tense, implying that the "Posterity" alluded to includes not only the messengers but their worthy followers who are true to Allah and uphold His standard.

2511. This selfish godless posterity gains the upper hand at certain times, but even then there is always a minority who see the error of their ways, repent and believe, and live righteous lives. They are not penalised in the Hereafter because they were associated with the ungodly in time. They reap the full reward of their faith and righteousness.

62. They will not there hear
Any vain discourse, but
Only salutations of Peace:²⁵¹²
And they will have therein
Their sustenance,²⁵¹³ morning
And evening.
63. Such is the Garden which
We give as an inheritance
To those of Our Servants
Who guard against evil.
64. (The angels say:)²⁵¹⁴
"We descend not but
By command of thy Lord:
To Him belongeth what is
Before us and what is
Behind us, and what is
Between: and thy Lord
Never doth forget,-
65. Lord of the heavens
And of the earth,
And of all that is
Between them: so worship Him,

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا إِلَّا سَلَامًا وَهُمْ فِيهَا رِزْقُهُمْ
فِيهَا بُكْرَةٌ وَعِشَاءٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

ذَٰلِكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي نُورِثُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا مَنْ كَانَ تَقِيًّا ﴿٦٣﴾

وَمَا نُنَزِّلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِينَا
وَمَا خَلْفُنَا وَمَا يَنْبَغُ ذَٰلِكَ
وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا ﴿٦٤﴾

رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَاعْبُدْهُ
وَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ ۚ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَمِيًّا ﴿٦٥﴾

2512. *Salām*, translated "Peace", has a much wide signification. It includes (1) a sense of security and permanence, which is unknown in this life; (2) soundness, freedom from defects, perfection as in the word *salim*; (3) preservation, salvation, deliverance, as in the word *sallama*; (4) salutation, accord with those around us; (5) resignation, in the sense that we are satisfied and not discontented; besides (6) the ordinary meaning of Peace, i.e., freedom from any jarring element. All these shades of meaning are implied in the word *Islām*.

2513. *Rizq*: literally sustenance or means of subsistence, the term covers all the means of perfect satisfaction of body and soul. Morning and evening, i.e., early and late, all the time, always.

2514. We are apt to be impatient of the evils we see around us. We may give of our best service to Allah, and yet see no results. In our human short-sightedness we may complain within ourselves. But we must not be impatient. The angels of Grace come not haphazard, but by command of Allah according to His Universal Will and Purpose. Allah does not forget. If things are delayed, it is in accordance with a wise providence, which cares for all. Our plain duty is to be patient and constant in His service.

And be constant and patient
In His worship: knowest thou
Of any who is worthy
Of the same Name as He?²⁵¹⁵

SECTION 5.

66. Man says: "What!
When I am dead, shall I
Then be raised up alive?"

وَيَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَإِذَا مَاتَ لَسَوْفَ أُخْرَجُ حَيًّا ﴿٦٦﴾

67. But does not man
Call to mind that We
Created him before
Out of nothing?

أَوَلَا يَذْكُرُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ
وَلَمْ يَكُ شَيْئًا ﴿٦٧﴾

68. So, by thy Lord,
Without doubt, We shall gather
Them together, and (also)
Satans (with them),²⁵¹⁶
Then shall We bring them
Forth on their knees
Round about Hell;²⁵¹⁷

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَالشَّيَاطِينَ ثُمَّ
لَنَحْضِرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا ﴿٦٨﴾

69. Then shall We certainly
Drag out from every sect

ثُمَّ لَنَنْزِعَنَّ مِنْ كُلِّ شِيعَةٍ أَيُّهُمْ أَشَدُّ
عَلَى الرَّحْمَنِ عِثًّا ﴿٦٩﴾

2515. The more we taste of the truth and mystery of life, the more do we realise that there is no one to be mentioned in the same breath as Allah. He is above all names. But when we think of His beautiful qualities, and picture them to ourselves by names which give us some idea of Him, we can search the whole wide world of our imagination, and we shall not find another to be compared with Him in name or quality. He is the One: praise be to Him!

2516. The disbelief in a future life is not merely a philosophic doubt, but a warped will, a disingenuous obstinacy in face of our inner spiritual instincts and experiences. We were nothing before. Cannot the same Allah, Who created us out of nothing also continue our personality? But if we refuse to accept His light and guidance, our state will grow worse and worse. We shall be deprived of His grace. We shall be herded with satans. In utter humiliation we shall be faced with all the consequences of our refusal of Truth.

2517. *Round about Hell:* There are many ways leading to evil, and people get to it from all round. Hence the mention of the seven Gates to Hell: see xv. 44. and n. 1977.

All those who were worst
In obstinate rebellion
Against (Allah) Most Gracious.

70. And certainly We know best
Those who are most worthy
Of being burned therein.

71. Not one of you but will²⁵¹⁸
Pass over it: this is,
With thy Lord, a Decree
Which must be accomplished.

72. But We shall save those
Who guarded against evil,
And We shall leave
The wrong-doers therein,
(Humbled) to their knees.

73. When Our Clear Signs
Are rehearsed to them,
The Unbelievers say to those
Who believe, "Which of the two
Sides is best in point of
Position and fairer in assembly²⁵¹⁹

74. But how many (countless)
Generations before them
Have We destroyed,
Who were even better
In equipment and in glitter
To the eye?

ثُمَّ لَنَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِالَّذِينَ هُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِهَا صِلَاتًا ﴿٧٠﴾

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ
حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ
فِيهَا جُنُثًا ﴿٧٢﴾

وَإِذَا نُتِلَّىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا أَيُّ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ خَيْرٌ مَّقَامًا وَأَحْسَنُ نَدِيًّا ﴿٧٣﴾

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَحْسَنُ
أَتْنَادَوْا رَبًّا ﴿٧٤﴾

2518. Three interpretations are possible, (1) The general interpretation is that every person must pass through or by or over the Fire. Those who have had Taqwā (see. n. 26 to ii. 2) will be saved by Allah's Mercy, while unrepentant sinners will suffer the torments in ignominy, (2) If we refer the pronoun "you" to those "in obstinate rebellion" in verse 69 above, both leaders and followers in sin, this verse only applies to the wicked, (3) Some refer this verse to the Bridge over Hell, the Bridge *Ṣirāt*, over which all must pass to their final Destiny. This Bridge is not mentioned in the Qur-ān.

2519. The Unbelievers may, for a time, make a better show in worldly position, or in people's assemblages where things are judged by the counting of heads. But Truth must prevail even in this world, and ultimately the positions must be reversed.

75. Say: "whoever goes
Astray, (Allah) Most Gracious
Extends (the rope) to them,
Until, when they see
The warning of Allah (being
Fulfilled)—either in punishment²⁵²⁰
Or in (the approach of)
The Hour,—they will
At length realise who is
Worst in position, and (who)
Weakest in forces!

قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ مَدًّا
حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا الْعَذَابَ وَإِمَّا السَّاعَةَ
فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرُّ مَكَانًا
وَأَضَعُفُ جُنْدًا ﴿٧٥﴾

76. "And Allah doth increase
In guidance those who seek
Guidance: and the things
That endure, Good Deeds,²⁵²¹
Are best in the sight
Of thy Lord, as rewards,
And best in respect of
(Their) eventual returns."

وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى وَالْبَاقِيَتُ
الصَّالِحَتُ حَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ مَّرَدًّا ﴿٧٦﴾

77. Has thou then seen
The (sort of) man who
Rejects Our Signs, yet

أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي كَفَرْنَا بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتِيَنَّكَ
مَا لَا أُؤْتِيكَ وَلَا وَلَدًا ﴿٧٧﴾

2520. Allah's warning is that every evil deed must have its punishment, and that there will be a Hereafter, the Day of Judgment, or the Hour, as it is frequently called. The punishment of evil often begins in this very life. For instance, over-indulgence and excesses of all kinds bring on their Nemesis quite soon in this very life. But some subtler forms of selfishness and sin will be punished—as every evil will be punished—in its own good time, as the Hour approaches. In either case, the arrogant boasting sinners will realise that their taunt—who is best in position and in forces? (xix. 73)—is turned against themselves.

2521. These lines are the same as in xviii. 46 (second clause), (where see n. 2387), except that the word *maradd* (eventual returns) is here substituted for *amal* (hope). The meaning is practically the same: but "hope" is more appropriate in the passage dealing generally with this world's goods, and "eventual returns" in the passage dealing with the sinner's specific investments and commitments in worldly position and organised cliques.

Says: "I shall certainly
Be given wealth and children?"²⁵²²

78. Has he penetrated to
The Unseen, or has he
Taken a promise with
The Most Gracious?

79. Nay! We shall record
What he says, and We
Shall add and add
To his punishment.²⁵²³

80. To Us shall return²⁵²⁴
All that he talks of,
And he shall appear
Before Us bare and alone.

81. And they have taken
(For worship) gods other than
Allah, to give them
Power and glory!²⁵²⁵

82. Instead, they shall reject
Their worship, and become
Adversaries against them.²⁵²⁶

أَطْلَعَ الْغَيْبَ أَمْ أَخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا ﴿٧٨﴾

كَلَّا سَنَكْتُبُ مَا يَقُولُ وَنَمُدُّ
لَهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ مَدًّا ﴿٧٩﴾

وَنَرِيضُهُ، مَا يَقُولُ وَيَأْتِنَا فَردًا ﴿٨٠﴾

وَأَتَّخِذُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ آلِهَةً
لِّكُونُوا لَهُمْ عِزًّا ﴿٨١﴾

كَلَّا سَيَكْفُرُونَ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ وَيَكُونُونَ
عَلَيْهِمْ ضِدًّا ﴿٨٢﴾

2522. Besides the man who boasts of wealth and power in actual possession, there is a type of man who boasts of getting them in the future and builds his worldly hopes thereon. Is he sure? He denies Allah, and His goodness and Mercy. But all good is in the hands of Allah. Can such a man then bind Allah to bless him when he rejects faith in Allah? Or does he pretend that he has penetrated to the mysteries of the future? For no man can tell what the future holds for him.

2523. Such a man deserves double punishment,—for rejecting Allah, and for his blasphemies with His holy name.

2524. Literally, "We shall inherit", Cf. xix. 40 and n. 2492. Even if the man had property and power, it must go back to the Source of all things, and the man must appear before the Judgment-seat, alone and unaccompanied, stripped of all the things from which he expected so much!

2525. 'Izz=exalted rank, glory, power, might, the ability to impose one's will or to carry out one's will.

2526. Cf. x. 28-30, where the idols deny that they knew anything of their worship, and leave their worshippers in the lurch; and v. 119, where Jesus denies that he asked for worship, and leaves his false worshippers to the punishment of Allah.

SECTION 6.

83. Seest thou not that We
Have set Satans on
Against the Unbelievers,
To incite them with fury?²⁵²⁷

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ
تَوَزُّؤُهُمْ أَرْأَىٰ

84. So make no haste
Against them, for We
But count out to them
A (limited) number (of days).

فَلَا تَعْجَلْ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّمَا نَعِدُّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا

85. The day We shall gather
The righteous to (Allah)
Most Gracious, like a band
(Presented before a king for
honours.)

يَوْمَ نَخْشُرُ الْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ وَفْدًا

86. And We shall drive
The sinners to hell,
(Like thirsty cattle
Driven down to water,-)²⁵²⁸

وَنَسُوقُ الْمَجْرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وَرْدًا

87. None shall have the power
Of intercession, but such a one
As has received permission
(or promise)
From (Allah) Most Gracious.

لَا يَمْلِكُونَ الشَّفْعَةَ إِلَّا مَنِ اخْتَضَعَ عِنْدَ
الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا

88. They say: "The Most Gracious
Has betaken a son!"

وَقَالُوا أَخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا

2527. Under the laws instituted by Allah, when evil reaches a certain stage of rebellion and defiance, it is left to gather momentum and to rush with fury to its own destruction. It is given a certain amount of respite, as a last chance: but failing repentance, its days are numbered. The godly therefore should not worry themselves over the apparent worldly success of evil, but should get on with their own duties in a spirit of trust in Allah.

2528. Note the contrast between the saved and the doomed. The one march with dignity like honoured ones before a king, and the other rush in anguish to their punishment like a herd of cattle driven down by thirst to their watering place. Note the metaphor of the water. They rush madly for water but are plunged into the Fire!

89. Indeed ye have put forth
A thing most monstrous!²⁵²⁹

90. At it the skies are about
To burst, the earth
To split asunder, and
The mountains to fall down
In utter ruin,

91. That they attributed
A son to The Most Gracious.

92. For it is not consonant
With the majesty of The
Most Gracious that He
Should beget a son.²⁵³⁰

93. Not one of the beings
In the heavens and the earth
But must come to The
Most Gracious as a servant.

94. He does take an account
Of them (all), and hath
Numbered them (all) exactly.²⁵³¹

لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئًا إِدًّا ﴿٨٩﴾

نَكَادُ السَّمَوَاتُ يَنْفَطَرْنَ مِنْهُ
وَتَنْشَقُّ الْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ الْجِبَالُ هَدًّا ﴿٩٠﴾

أَنْ دَعَا الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا ﴿٩١﴾

وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّحْمَنِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا ﴿٩٢﴾

إِنْ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي
الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا ﴿٩٣﴾

لَقَدْ أَحْصَيْنَاهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا ﴿٩٤﴾

2529. The belief in Allah begetting a son is not a question merely of words or of speculative thought. It is a stupendous blasphemy against Allah. It lowers Allah to the level of an animal. If combined with the doctrine of vicarious atonement, it amounts to a negation of Allah's justice and man's personal responsibility. It is destructive of all moral and spiritual order, and is condemned in the strongest possible terms.

2530. This basic principle was laid down early in the argument (xix. 35). It was illustrated by a reference to the personal history of many messengers, including Jesus himself, who behaved justly as men to their kith and kin and humbly served Allah. The evil results of such superstitions were pointed out in the case of many previous generations which went to their ruin by dishonouring Allah. And the argument is now rounded off towards the close of the Sūra.

2531. Allah has no sons or favourites or parasites, such as we associate with human beings. On the other hand every creature of His gets His love, and His cherishing care. Everyone of them, however humble, is individually marked before His Throne of Justice and Mercy, and will stand before Him on his own deserts.

95. And everyone of them
Will come to Him singly
On the Day of Judgment.
96. On those who believe
And work deeds of righteousness,
Will The Most Gracious
Bestow Love.²⁵³²
97. So have We made
The (Qur-ān) easy
In thine own tongue,
That with it thou mayest give
Glad tidings to the righteous,
And warnings to people
Given to contention.
98. But how many (countless)
Generations before them²⁵³³
Have We destroyed? Canst thou
Find a single one of them
(Now) or hear (so much
As) a whisper of them?

وَكُلُّهُمْ آتِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ فَرْدًا ﴿٩٥﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
سَيَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ وُدًّا ﴿٩٦﴾

فَإِنَّمَا يَسَّرْنَاهُ بِلِسَانِكَ لِتُبَشِّرَ بِهِ
الْمُتَّقِينَ وَتُنذِرَ بِهِ قَوْمًا لَّدَا ﴿٩٧﴾

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ هَلْ يُحْسِ
مِنْهُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْ تَسْمَعُ لَهُمْ رِكْزًا ﴿٩٨﴾

2532. His own love, and the love of man's fellow-creatures, in this world and in the Hereafter. Goodness breeds love and peace, and sin breeds hatred and contention.

2533. Cf. xix. 74, from which this sentence is brought up as a reminiscence, showing the progress of sin, the Guidance which Allah gives to the good, the degradation of blasphemy, the respite granted, and the final End, when personal responsibility will be enforced.