

### INTRODUCTION TO SŪRAT *Ṣād*, 38.

For the place of this Sūra in the series of six, dealing with some aspects of the spiritual world, see Introduction to S. xxxiv.

This Sūra, both in chronology and subject-matter, is cognate to S. xxxvii., and carries forward the same argument. But here the emphasis is laid on the working of earthly power when combined with spiritual power, and it is pointed out how much more significant (and real) spiritual power is. For this reason the illustrative stories are mainly those of David and Solomon who were kings as well as prophets, and a parallel is suggested with the unfolding public life of our holy Prophet.

*Summary.*—Worldly and evil men are surprised at the renewal of Truth and Righteousness; but righteousness has more power than worldly strength, as is seen in the story of kings like David, who had both (xxxviii. 1-26).

So also Solomon loved the Lord more than worldly power, which may be good but may be misused by evil men; so also Job and other men of power and insight, chose the path of final bliss rather than final misery (xxxviii. 27-64).

So also in the case of the final Messenger: his Gospel of Unity must triumph over all Jealousy and Arrogance in God's good time (xxxviii. 65-88).

***Ṣād* (being one of the Abbreviated Letters).**

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

1. **Ṣād:**<sup>4146</sup>  
By the Qur-ān,  
Full of Admonition:<sup>4147</sup>  
(This is the Truth).
2. But the Unbelievers  
(Are steeped) in Self-glory<sup>4148</sup>  
And opposition.
3. How many generations  
Before them did We destroy?  
In the end they cried<sup>4149</sup>  
(For mercy)—when  
There was no longer time  
For being saved!



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

ص وَالْقُرْءَانِ ذِي الذِّكْرِ

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي عِزَّةٍ وَشِقَاقٍ ﴿٢﴾

كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ فَنَادَ أُوْلَاتُ

حَیْنَ مَنَاصِ

4146. Šād is a letter of the Arabic alphabet. It is used here as an Abbreviated Letter, for which see Appendix I (at the end of Sūra ii.). See also the second para, of n. 989 to vii. 1 for this particular letter. No dogmatism is permissible in trying to interpret Abbreviated Letters. This Sūra is concerned mainly with the stories of David and Solomon as illustrative of the relative positions of spiritual and worldly power. Sale's note: "it may stand for Solomon": is a real howler: for in Arabic the letter *Šād* does not occur at all in the name of Solomon.

4147. *Full of admonition:* the word *zīkr* is far more comprehensive than any single word or phrase that I can think of in English: it implies (1) remembrance in a spirit of reverence; (2) recital, celebrating the praises of Allah; (3) teaching, admonition, warning; (4) Message, Revelation, as in *Ah-luḏ-ḏīkr*, “those who possess the Message” (xvi. 43, and n. 2069). Devotional exercises are also called *zīkr*, with reference to meaning (2) above.

4148. The great root of Evil and Unbelief is Self-glory or Arrogance, as is pointed out in several places with regard to Satan; cf. below, xxxviii. 74-76. This leads to Envy and opposition or a desire to start a peculiar doctrine or sect of one's own, instead of a desire to find common grounds of belief and life, which lead to the Religion of Unity of Allah. This teaching of Unity was what the Pagans objected to in the holy Prophet (verse 5 below)!

4149. Teaching, Warning, Signs have been given by Allah to all nations and at all times, and yet nations have rebelled and gone wrong and suffered destruction. If only later generations could learn that wrong-doing results in self-destruction! For the justice of Allah merely carries out the result of their own choice and actions. At any time during =

4. So they wonder  
That a Warner has come  
To them from among themselves!<sup>4150</sup>  
And the Unbelievers say,  
"This is a sorcerer  
Telling lies!
5. "Has he made gods<sup>4151</sup>  
(All) into one God?  
Truly this is  
A strange thing!"
6. And the leaders among them  
Go away (impatiently), (saying),<sup>4152</sup>  
"Walk ye away, and remain  
Constant to your gods!  
For this is truly  
A thing designed (against you)!"

وَيَعْجَبُونَ أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ  
هَذَا سِحْرٌ كَذَابٌ ﴿٤﴾

أَجَعَلَ الْآلِهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عُجَابٌ ﴿٥﴾

وَأَنطَقُوا لَمَلًا مِنْهُمْ أَنْ أَمْشُوا وَأَصْبِرُوا عَلَىٰ آلِهَتِهِمْ  
إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ يُرَادُ ﴿٦﴾

= their probation they could repent and obtain mercy, but their "Self-glory and Separatism" stand in the way. Ultimately they do cry for a way of escape, but it is then too late.

4150. Their wonder is only stimulated. They are full of envy and spite against one of themselves who has been chosen by Allah to be His Messenger, and they vent their spite by making all sorts of false accusations. The man who was pre-eminent for truth and conscientious consideration, they call "a sorcerer and a liar"!

4151. And what is the offence of the Messenger of Unity? That he has made all their fantastic gods disappear; that in place of chaos he has brought harmony; that in place of conflict he brings peace! It is a wonderful thing, but not in the sarcastic sense in which the Unbelievers scoff at it!

4152. When the message of Islam was being preached in its infancy, and the Preacher and his followers were being persecuted by the Pagans, one of the devices adopted by the Pagan leaders was to get the Prophet's uncle Abū Ṭālib to denounce or renounce his beloved nephew. A conference was held with Abū Ṭālib for this purpose. On its failure the leaders walked away, and began to discredit the great movement by falsely giving out that it was designed against their personal influence, and to throw power into the hands of the Prophet. Hadhrat 'Umar's conversion occurred in the sixth year of the Mission (seventh year before the Hijrat). The circumstances connected with it (see Introduction to S. xx.) greatly alarmed the Quraish chiefs, who, greedy of autocracy themselves, confused the issue by accusing the righteous Preacher of plotting against their power.

7. "We never heard (the like)  
Of this in the last religion<sup>4153</sup>  
This is nothing but  
A made-up tale!"
8. "What! Has the Message  
Been sent to him<sup>4154</sup>  
(Of all persons) among us?...  
But they are in doubt  
Concerning My (own) Message!<sup>4155</sup>  
Nay, they have not yet  
Tasted My Punishment!
9. Or have they the Treasures  
Of the Mercy of thy Lord,<sup>4156</sup>  
The Exalted in Power,  
The Grantor of Bounties  
Without measure?
10. Or have they the dominion  
Of the heavens and the earth  
And all between? If so,  
Let them mount up<sup>4157</sup>

مَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَذَا فِي الْمِلَّةِ الْآخِرَةِ إِنْ هَذَا  
إِلَّا اخْتِلَافٌ ﴿٧﴾

أَمْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ  
مِنْ ذِكْرِي بَلْ لَمَّا يَذُوقُوا عَذَابِ ﴿٨﴾

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّكَ الْعَزِيزِ الْوَهَّابِ ﴿٩﴾

أَمْ لَهُمْ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَلْيَرْتَقُوا  
فِي الْأَسْبَابِ ﴿١٠﴾

4153. 'Whatever may have been the case in the past', they said, 'our own immediate ancestors worshipped these idols in Makkah and why should we give them up?' Self-complacency was stronger with them than Truth; and so they call Truth "a made-up tale"! Some Commentators interpret *millat ākhirat* to refer to the last religion preached before Islam, viz. Christianity, which had itself departed from Monotheism to Trinity.

4154. Here comes in envy. 'If a Message had to come, why should it come to him, the orphan son of 'Abdullāh, and not to one of our own great men?'

4155. They have no clear idea of how Allah's Message comes! It is not a worldly thing to be given to any one. It is a divine thing requiring spiritual preparation. If they close their eyes to it now, it will be brought home to them when they taste the consequences of their folly!

4156. If they set themselves to judge Allah, have they anything to show comparable to Allah's Mercy and Power! He has both in infinite measure. Who are they to question the grant of His Mercy and Revelation to His own Chosen One?

4157. Weak and puny creatures though they are, they dare to raise their heads against the Omnipotent, as if they had dominion over Creation and not He! If they had any power, let them mount up to heaven and use all the means they have to that end, and see how they can frustrate Allah's Purpose!

With the ropes and means  
(To reach that end)!

11. They are but  
A host of confederates  
And they will be  
Put to flight.<sup>4158</sup>
12. Before them (were many  
Who) rejected messengers,—<sup>4159</sup>  
The People of Noah,  
And 'Ād, and Pharaoh  
The Lord of Stakes,<sup>4160</sup>
13. And Thamūd, and the People  
Of Lūt, and the Companions!<sup>4161</sup>  
Of the Wood;—such were  
The Confederates.<sup>4162</sup>
14. Not one (of them) but  
Rejected the messengers,  
But My Punishment  
Came justly and inevitably<sup>4163</sup>  
(On them).

جُنْدٌ مَاهَنَالِكَ مَهْرُومٌ مِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ ﴿١١﴾

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَعَادٌ وَفِرْعَوْنُ ذُو الْأَوْنَادِ ﴿١٢﴾

وَتَمُودُ وَقَوْمُ لُوطٍ وَأَصْحَابُ لَيْكَةِ

أُولَئِكَ الْأَحْزَابُ ﴿١٣﴾

إِنْ كُلُّ إِلَّا كَذَّبَ الرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ عِقَابِ ﴿١٤﴾

4158. Of course they cannot frustrate Allah's Purpose. In that world—they will be ignominiously routed, even if they form the strongest confederacy of the Powers of Evil that ever could combine. Cf. the last clause of verse 13 below.

4159. In their day, Noah's contemporaries, or the 'Ād and the Thamūd, so frequently mentioned, or Pharaoh the mighty king of Egypt, or the people to whom Lot was sent (cf. xxxvii. 75-82; vii. 65-73; vii. 103-137; vii. 80-84) were examples of arrogance and rebellion against Allah: they rejected the divine Message brought by their messengers, and they all came to an evil end. Will not their posterity learn their lesson?

4160. The title of Pharaoh, "Lord of the Stakes", denotes power and arrogance, in all or any of the following ways: (1) the stake makes a tent firm and stable, and is a symbol of firmness and stability; (2) many stakes mean a large camp and a numerous army to fight; (3) impaling with stakes was a cruel punishment resorted to by the Pharaohs in arrogant pride of power.

4161. *Companions of the Wood*; see xv. 78, and n. 2000.

4162. Cf. above, verse 11, and n. 4158.

4163. Cf. xv. 64, n. 1990; and xxii. 18.

## SECTION 2.

15. These (to-day) only wait  
For a single mighty Blast,<sup>4164</sup>  
Which (when it comes)  
Will brook no delay.<sup>4165</sup>

وَمَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا الصَّيْحَةَ وَجِدَّةً مَّا لَهَا  
مِنْ فَوْاقٍ ﴿١٥﴾

16. They say: "Our Lord!  
Hasten to us our sentence<sup>4166</sup>  
(Even) before the Day  
Of Account!"

وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا اجْعَلْ لَنَا قِطْنَ قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ ﴿١٦﴾

17. Have patience at what they  
Say, and remember Our Servant  
David, the man of strength.<sup>4167</sup>  
For he ever turned (in repentance  
to Allah).

اصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُدَ  
ذَا الْأَيْدِ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18. It was We that made  
The hills declare,<sup>4168</sup>

إِنَّا سَخَّرْنَا الْجِبَالَ مَعَهُ يُسَبِّحْنَ بِالْعِشِيِّ  
وَالْأَشْرَاقِ ﴿١٨﴾

4164. Cf. xxxvi. 29, n. 3973.

4165. *Fawāq*: delay, the interval between one milking of a she-camel, and another, either to give her a breathing space or to give her young time to suck,—or perhaps the milker to adjust his fingers. Such interval will be quite short. The derived meaning is that when the inevitable just punishment for sin arrives, it will not tarry, but do its work without delay.

4166. Cf. xxvi. 204 and n. 3230. Those who do not believe in the Hereafter say ironically: "Let us have our punishment and sentence now: why delay it?" The last verse and the next verse supply the commentary. As to those who mock, they will find out the truth soon enough, when it is too late for repentance or mercy. As to the prophets of Allah, who are mocked, they must wait patiently for Allah to fulfil His Plan: even men who had worldly strength and power, like David had to exercise infinite patience when mocked by their contemporaries.

4167. David was a man of exceptional strength, for even as a raw youth, he slew the Philistine giant Goliath. See ii. 249-252, and notes 286-87. Before that fight, he was mocked by his enemies and chidden even by his own elder brother. But he relied upon Allah, and won through, and afterwards became king.

4168. See n. 2733 to xxi. 79. All nature sings in unison and celebrates the praises of Allah. David was given the gift of music and psalmody, and therefore the hills and birds are expressed as singing Allah's praises in unison with him. The special hours when the hills and groves echo the songs of birds are in the evening and at dawn, when also the birds gather together, for those are respectively their roosting hours and the hours of their concerted flight for the day.

In unison with him,  
Our Praises, at eventide  
And at break of day,

19. And the birds gathered  
(In assemblies): all with him  
Did turn (to Allah).<sup>4169</sup>

وَالطَّيْرِ تَحْشُرُهُ كُلُّهُ وَأَوَابٌ ﴿١٩﴾

20. We strengthened his kingdom,  
And gave him wisdom  
And sound judgment.<sup>4170</sup>  
In speech and decision.

وَشَدَدْنَا مُلْكَهُ وَوَعَيْنَتْهُ الْحِكْمَةَ

وَفَصَّلَ الْخُطَابِ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. Has the Story of  
The Disputants reached thee?<sup>4171</sup>  
Behold, they climbed over  
The wall of the private chamber;

وَهَلْ أَتَاكَ نَبَأُ الْخَصْمِ إِذْ سَوَّرُوا

الْمِحْرَابِ ﴿٢١﴾

22. When they entered  
To David,<sup>4172</sup>  
And he was terrified  
Of them, they said:  
"Fear not: we are two  
Disputants, one of whom  
Has wronged the other:  
Decide now between us  
With truth, and treat us not

إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَى دَاوُدَ فَفَزِعَ مِنْهُمْ قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ

خَصَمَانِ بَيْنَ بَعْضِنَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ

وَلَا تَسْطِطْ وَاهْدِنَا إِلَى سَوَاءِ الصِّرَاطِ ﴿٢٢﴾

4169. Note the mutual echo between this verse and verse 17 above. The Arabic *awwāb* is common to both, and it furnishes the rhyme or rhythm of the greater part of the Sūra, thus echoing the main theme: 'Turn to Allah in Prayer and Praise, for that is more than any worldly power or wisdom.'

4170. Cf. n. 2732 to xxi. 79 for David's sound judgment in decisions; he could also express himself aptly.

4171. This story or Parable is not found in the Bible, unless the vision here described be considered as equivalent to Nathan's parable in II Samuel, xi, and xii. Baiḥāwī would seem to favour that view, but other Commentators reject it. David was a pious man, and he had a well-guarded private chamber (*mihṛāb*) for Prayer and Praise.

4172. David used to retire to his private chamber at stated times for his devotions. One day, suddenly, his privacy was invaded by two men, who had obtained access by climbing over a wall. David was frightened at the apparition. But they said: "We have come to seek thy justice as king: we are brothers, and we have a quarrel, which we wish thee to decide."

With injustice, but guide us  
To the even Path

23. "This man is my brother:<sup>4173</sup>  
He has nine and ninety  
Ewes, and I have (but) one:  
Yet he says, 'Commit her  
To my care,' and he overcame me  
In the argument.

24. (David) said: "He has  
Undoubtedly wronged thee<sup>4174</sup>  
In demanding thy (single) ewe  
To be added to his (flock  
Of) ewes: truly many  
Are the Partners (in business)<sup>4175</sup>  
Who wrong each other:  
Not so do those who believe  
And work deeds of righteousness,  
And how few are they?"...  
And David gathered that We  
Had tried him: he asked

إِنَّ هَذَا أَخِي لَهُ تِسْعٌ وَتِسْعُونَ نَعْجَةً وَلِيَ نَعْجَةً وَاحِدَةً  
فَقَالَ أَكْفَلْنِيهَا وَعَزَّنِي فِي الْخِطَابِ ﴿٢٣﴾

قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعْجَتِكَ إِلَى نِعَاجِهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا  
مِّنَ الْخُلَطَاءِ لِيَبْغِيَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا  
وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَقَلِيلٌ مَّا هُمْ وَظَنَّ دَاوُدُ  
أَنَّمَا فَتَنَّاهُ فَاسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهُ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ﴿٢٤﴾

4173. The brother who was most aggrieved said: "This my brother has a flock of ninety-nine sheep, and I have but one; yet he wants me to give up my one sheep to his keeping; and moreover he is not even fair-spoken. He talks like one meditating mischief, and he has not even the grace to ask as an equal, or one sharing in a business or an inheritance. What shall I do?"

4174. The circumstances were mysterious; the accusation was noval; it was not clear why the unjust brother should also have come with the complainant, risking his life in climbing the wall to evade the guard, and he certainly said nothing. David took them literally, and began to preach about the falsehood and the fraud of men, who should be content with what they have, but who always covet more.

4175. Especially, said David, is it wrong for brothers or men in partnership to take advantage of each other; but how few are the men who are righteous? He had in his mind his own devotion and justice. But lo and behold! the men disappeared as mysteriously as they had come. It was then that David realised that the incident had been a trial or temptation—a test of his moral or spiritual fibre! Great though he was as a king, and just though he was as a judge, the moment that he thought of these things in self-pride, his merit vanished. In himself he was as other men: it was Allah's grace that gave him wisdom and justice, and he should have been humble in the sight of Allah.



Forgiveness of his Lord,<sup>4176</sup>  
 Fell down, bowing  
 (In prostration), and turned  
 (To Allah in repentance).<sup>4176.A</sup>

25. So We forgave him  
 This (lapse): he enjoyed,  
 Indeed, a Near Approach to Us,  
 And a beautiful Place  
 Of (final) Return.

فَغَفَرْنَا لَهُ، ذَلِكَ وَإِنْ لَهُ، عِنْدَنَا لَزُلْفَى  
 وَحُسْن مَقَابٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

26. O David! We did indeed  
 Make thee a vicegerent<sup>4177</sup>  
 On earth: so judge thou  
 Between men in truth (and justice):  
 Nor follow thou the lust  
 (Of thy heart), for it will  
 Mislead thee from the Path<sup>4178</sup>

يَدَاوُدُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ فَاحْكُم  
 بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ  
 اللَّهِ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ  
 شَدِيدٌ بِمَا نَسُوا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٦﴾

4176. Judged by ordinary standards, David had done no wrong; he was a good and just king. Judged by the highest standard of those nearest to Allah (*Muqarrabūn*, lvi. 11), the thought of self-pride and self-righteousness had to be washed off from him by his own act of self-realisation and repentance. This was freely accepted by Allah, as the next verse shows.

4176-A. Some commentators say that David's fault here was his hastiness in judging before hearing the case of the other party. When he realised his lapse, he fell down in repentance.

4177. Cf. ii. 30, and n. 47. David's kingly power, and the gifts of wisdom, justice, psalmody, and prophethood were bestowed on him as a trust. These great gifts were not to be a matter of self-glory.

4178. As stated in n. 1471 above, this vision and its moral are nowhere to be found in the Bible. Those who think they see a resemblance to the Parable of the prophet Nathan (2 Samuel, xii. 1-12) have nothing to go upon but the mention of the "one ewe" here and the "one little ewe-lamb" in Nathan's Parable. The whole story is here different, and the whole atmosphere is different. The Biblical title given to David, "a man after God's own heart" is refuted by the Bible itself in the scandalous tale of heinous crimes attributed to David in chapters xi and xii. of 2 Samuel, viz., adultery, fraudulent dealing with one of his own servants, and the contriving of his murder. Further, in chapter xiii, we have the story of rapes, incest, and fratricide in David's own household! The fact is that passages like those are mere *chroniques scandaleuses*, i.e., narratives of scandalous crimes of the grossest character. The Muslim idea of David is that of a man just and upright, endowed with all the virtues, in whom even the least thought of self-elation has to be washed off by repentance and forgiveness.

Of Allah: for those who  
Wander astray from the Path  
Of Allah, is a Chastisement  
Grievous,

For that they forget  
The Day of Account.

### SECTION 3.

27. Not without purpose did We<sup>4179</sup>  
Create heaven and earth  
And all between! That  
Were the thought of Unbelievers!  
But woe to the Unbelievers  
Because of the Fire (of Hell)!

28. Shall We treat those  
Who believe and work deeds<sup>4180</sup>  
Of righteousness, the same  
As those who do mischief  
On earth? Shall We treat  
Those who guard against evil,  
The same as those who  
Turn aside from the right?

29. (Here is) a Book which  
We have sent down

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَطْلًا ذَٰلِكَ ظَنُّ  
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قَوْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ النَّارِ ﴿٣٧﴾

أَمْ يَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ يَجْعَلُ  
الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ ﴿٣٨﴾

كَتَبْنَا أَرْزَاقَهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبْرَكٌ لِّدَبْرُوَاءِ آيَاتِهِ وَلَسْتَ ذَكَرَ  
أُولَٰئِكَ إِلَّا بَيِّنٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

4179. Cf. iii. 191. Unbelief is the subjective negation of a belief in Order, Beauty, Purpose, and Eternal Life. Unbelief is to Faith as Chaos is to Cosmos, as the Fire of Misery is to the Garden of Bliss.

4180. The reference to the Hereafter at the end of verse 26 above is of a piece with the whole tenor of this Sūra, which deals with the superiority of the spiritual kingdom and the Hereafter. If there were no Hereafter, how could you reconcile the inequalities of this world? Would not the Unbelievers be right in acting as if all Creation and all life were futile? But there is a Hereafter and Allah will not treat the Good and Evil alike. He is just and will fully restore the balance disturbed in this life.

Unto thee, full of blessings,<sup>4181</sup>  
That they may meditate  
On its Signs, and that  
Men of understanding may  
Receive admonition.

30. To David We bestowed  
Solomon (for a son),<sup>4182</sup>  
How excellent is the servant!  
Ever did he turn (to Us in  
repentance)!

31. Behold, there were brought<sup>4183</sup>  
Before him, at eventide,  
Coursers of the highest breeding,<sup>4184</sup>  
And swift of foot;

32. And he said, "Truly  
Do I prefer wealth<sup>4185</sup>

وَوَهَبْنَا لِذَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ نِعَمَ الْعَبْدِ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٣٠﴾

إِذْ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِ بِالْعَشِيِّ الصَّافِنَاتُ الْخِيَادُ ﴿٣١﴾

فَقَالَ إِنِّي أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ الْخَيْرِ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّي  
حَتَّى تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ ﴿٣٢﴾

4181. Revelation is not a mere chance or haphazard thing. It is a real blessing—among the greatest that Allah has bestowed on man. By meditation on it in an earnest spirit man may learn of himself, and his relation to nature around him and to Allah the Author of all. Men of understanding may, by its help, resolve all genuine doubts that there may be in their minds, and learn the true lessons of spiritual life.

4182. The greatest in this life have yet need of this spiritual blessing: without it all worldly good is futile. Referring back to the story of David, we are now introduced to Solomon, who was a great king but greater still because he served Allah and turned to Him. The Qur-ān, unlike the old Testament, represents Solomon as a righteous king, not as an idolater, doing "evil in the sight of the Lord" (1 Kings. xi. 6).

4183. The passages about David and Solomon have been variously interpreted by the Commentators. The versions which I have suggested have good authority behind them, though I have followed my own judgment in filling in the details.

4184. *Ṣāfināt*: literally, horses that stand, when at ease, on three legs, firmly planted, with the hoof of the fourth leg resting lightly on the ground. This would imply breeding and a steady temper, to match with their quality of swiftness mentioned in the next clause.

4185. The story is not found in the Old Testament. I interpret it to mean that, like his father David, Solomon was also most meticulous in not allowing the least motive of self to be mixed up with his spiritual virtues. He was fond of horses; he had great armies and wealth; but he used them all in Allah's service. Cf. xxvii. 19. n. 3259; xxvii. 40. n. 3276, etc. His battles were not fought for lust of blood, but as *Jihāds* in the cause of =

To the remembrance of my Lord.”  
Until (the sun) was hidden  
In the veil (of Night):<sup>4186</sup>

33. “Bring them back to me.”  
Then began he to pass<sup>4187</sup>  
His hand over (their) legs  
And their necks.

34. And We did try<sup>4188</sup>  
Solomon: We placed  
On his throne a body<sup>4189</sup>  
But he did turn  
(To Us in true devotion):

رُدُّوْهَا عَلٰى فُطْفِقٍ مَّسْحٰى اِلْسُوْفِ وَالْاَغْنَاقِ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمٰنَ وَالْقَيْنَ اَعْلٰى كُرْسِيِّهٖ

جَسَدًا اِمَّا اَنَّا بَ ﴿٣٤﴾

= righteousness. His love of horses was not like that of a mere race-goer or of a warrior: there was a spiritual element in it. He loved by a kind of love which was spiritual,—the love of the highest Good.

Some commentators interpret this verse saying that Solomon, peace be upon him, was so engrossed in the inspection of his fine horses that he completely forgot to say his ‘Asr prayer before the sunset’.

4186. His review of his fine horses was interrupted by his evening devotions, but he resumed it after his devotions.

4187. Like all lovers of horses, he patted them on their necks and passed his hands over their fore-legs and was proud of having them—not as vanities but as a “lover of Good”.

4188. What was the trial of Solomon? All the power, wealth, and glory, which were given to him were a spiritual trial to him. They might have turned another man’s head, but he was staunch and true, and while he enjoyed and used all the power he had—over the jinns, men, and the forces of nature, (see below), he kept his mind steady to the service of Allah. Cf. viii. 28, where “your possessions and your progeny” are declared to be “but a trial”.

4189. “*The body on his throne* has been variously interpreted. The interpretation that appeals more is the following:

Sulaiman was at his utmost height of power and glory. Allah Ta’ala tested him with a severe illness during which he was no more than a lifeless body on his throne. He came to realize how weak and powerless he was in the eyes of Allah. In this state of weakness and misery he turned to Allah with humility and humbleness.

35. He said, "O my Lord!  
 Forgive me,<sup>4190</sup> and grant me<sup>4191</sup>  
 A Kingdom which,  
 Will not belong to  
 Another after me:  
 For Thou art the Grantor<sup>4192</sup>  
 Of Bounties (without measure).

قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَهَبْ لِي مُلْكًا  
 لَا يَبْتَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِنْ بَعْدِي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ﴿٣٥﴾

36. Then We subjected the Wind<sup>4193</sup>  
 To his power, to flow  
 Gently to his order,  
 Whithersoever he willed,-

فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ الرِّيحَ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِ رُوحَاءِ حَيْثُ أَصَابَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37. As also the Satans,<sup>4194</sup>  
 (Including) every kind  
 Of builder and diver,-

وَالشَّيَاطِينَ كُلَّ بَنَّاءٍ وَعَوَّاصٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

38. As also others bound<sup>4195</sup>  
 Together in fetters.

وَالْآخَرِينَ مُقَرَّنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾

39. "Such are Our Bounties:  
 Whether thou bestow them<sup>4196</sup>  
 (On others) or withhold them,  
 No account will be asked."

هَذَا عَطَاؤُنَا فَامْنُنْ أَوْ أَمْسِكْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

4190, The seeking of worldly Power, even if intended to be used for Allah's service, has a little of Self in it. It may be quite legitimate and even meritorious in ordinary men, but even the thought of it in a Prophet is to be apologised for. See a similar idea in the case of David explained in n. 4176 to xxxviii. 24 above.

4191. He asked for a Power that he would not misuse, though others might not be able to refrain from misusing it,—such as power over forces of nature or forces of violence (see the next three verses).

4192. Cf. xxxviii. 9 above.

4193. Cf. xxi. 81, and n. 2736.

4194. Cf. xxi. 82, and n. 2738. Cf. also xxxiv. 12-13 and notes there: in the latter passage the spirits mentioned are called Jinns. The divers were probably those employed in pearl-fisheries.

4195. Cf. xiv. 49, where the same expression "bound together in fetters" is applied to Sinners on the Day of Judgment.

4196. Allah bestowed such abundant powers and bounties on Solomon that they could not be counted or measured: and he was free to give away anything he liked or keep anything he liked. In this was great temptation for an ordinary man. Solomon as =

40. And he enjoyed, indeed,<sup>4197</sup>

A Near Approach to Us,  
And a beautiful Place  
Of (final) Return.

وَأَنَّ لَهُ، عِنْدَنَا الزُّفَى وَحُسْنَ مَقَابٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

#### SECTION 4.

41. Commemorate Our Servant Job,<sup>4198</sup>

Behold he cried to his Lord:

"Satan has afflicted

Me with distress<sup>4199</sup> and suffering!"

وَأَذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا أَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الشَّيْطَانُ

بِضُصٍّ وَعَدَابٍ ﴿٤١﴾

42. "Strike with thy foot:<sup>4200</sup>

Here is (water) wherein

To wash, cool and refreshing,

And (water) to drink."

أَرْكُضْ بِرِجْلِكَ هَذَا مُغْتَسَلٌ بَارِدٌ وَشَرَابٌ ﴿٤٢﴾

43. And We gave him (back)

His people and doubled

Their number,—as a Grace<sup>4201</sup>

From Us, and a thing

For commemoration, for all

Who have Understanding.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُم مَّعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَذِكْرَىٰ

لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٤٣﴾

= a prophet withstood it and asked to be forgiven for power and such a kingdom as others might not be able to use lawfully. His earthly kingdom went to pieces after his death. But his name and fame endure. And what is more, he obtained a place among the Nearest Ones to Allah. See next verse.

4197. The same words are used of David in xxxviii. 25 above, thus symmetrically closing the argument about the two greatest kings in Israel.

4198. For this passage, verses 41-44, Cf. xxi. 83-84.

4199. The distress was of many kinds. See n. 2739 to xxi. 83. He suffered from loathsome sores; he lost his home, his possessions, and his family; and almost his balance of mind. But he did not lose Faith but turned to Allah (see verse 44 below), and the recuperative process began.

4200. The recuperative process having begun, he was commanded to strike the earth or a rock with his foot, and a fountain or fountains gushed forth,—to give him a bath and clean his body; to refresh his spirits; and to give him drink and rest. This is a fresh touch, not mentioned in S. xxi. or in the Book of Job, but adding beautifully to our realisation of the picture.

4201. Cf. xxi. 84, and notes 2739-2740.

44. "And take in thy hand  
A little grass, and strike<sup>4202</sup>  
Therewith: and break not  
(Thy oath)." Truly We found  
Him full of patience and constancy.  
How excellent is the servant!<sup>4203</sup>  
Ever did he turn (to Us)!

وَحَذِّبْدِكَ ضِعْفًا فَأَضْرِبْ بِهِ وَلَا تَحْنُتْ  
إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا نِعَمَ الْعَبْدِ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

45. And commemorate Our Servants  
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,  
Possessors of Power and Vision.<sup>4204</sup>

وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ  
أُولَى الْأَيْدِي وَالْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٤٥﴾

46. Verily We did choose them  
For a special (purpose)–  
The remembrance  
Of the Hereafter.

إِنَّا أَخْلَصْنَاهُمْ بِخَالِصَةٍ ذَكَرْنَا الدَّارَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47. They were, in Our sight,  
Truly, of the company  
Of the Elect and the Good.

وَأِنَّهُمْ عِنْدَنَا لَمِنَ الْمُصْطَفَيْنَ الْأَخْيَارِ ﴿٤٧﴾

4202. In his worst distress Job was patient and constant in faith, but apparently his wife was not. According to the Book of Job (ii. 9-10), "Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." He must have said in his haste to the woman that he would beat her: he is asked now to correct her with only a wisp of grass, to show that he was gentle and humble as well as patient and constant.

4203. Cf. xxxviii. 30 above, where similar words are spoken of Solomon. Patience and constancy are also a form of service, if our attitude is due to an *active* faith in Allah, and not mere passivity. So Milton in his Sonnet: "They also serve who only stand and wait."

4204. In the last Sūra (xxxvii. 83-113). Abraham and Isaac (and by implication Jacob) were mentioned as resisting Evil and winning through. Here they are mentioned as men with spiritual power and vision. Israelite patriarchs, who bore witness to the Gospel of the Hereafter, and were therefore a blessing to their people, for they taught the Truth.

48. And commemorate Ismā'il,<sup>4205</sup>  
Elisha, and Zūl-Kifl:  
Each of them was  
Of the company of the Good.

وَأَذْكُرْ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ  
وَكُلٌّ مِنَ الْأَخْيَارِ ﴿١٨﴾

49. This is a Message  
(Of admonition): and verily,  
For the Righteous,<sup>4206</sup>  
Is a beautiful place  
Of (final) Return,-

هَذَا ذِكْرٌ وَإِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ لَحُسْنَ مَآبٍ ﴿١٩﴾

50. Gardens of Eternity,  
Whose doors will (ever)  
Be open to them,<sup>4207</sup>

جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ مُمْنَحَةٌ لَهُمُ الْأَبْوَابُ ﴿٢٠﴾

51. Therein will they  
Recline (at ease);  
Therein can they  
Call (at pleasure)  
For fruit in abundance,<sup>4208</sup>  
And (delicious) drink;

مُتَّكِنِينَ فِيهَا يُدْعُونَ فِيهَا بِغْنَاهُمْ  
كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ شَرَابٍ ﴿٢١﴾

52. And beside them will be  
Chaste women restraining<sup>4209</sup>

وَعِنْدَهُمْ قَصِيرَاتُ الْطَّرْفِ أُنْزَابٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

4205. Ismā'il, the Patriarch of the Arab race, was also mentioned (xxxvii. 101-107) as a pattern of self-sacrifice; now he is mentioned in the company of the Good, i.e., of those who were a blessing to their people. Here he is bracketed with Elisha (for whom see n. 906 to vi. 86), and Zūl-Kifl (for whom see n. 2743 to xxi. 85). All these three were examples of constancy and patience under suffering.

4206. Some of the pre-eminent examples of the Elect and the Good having been mentioned, we have now a reference to the Righteous as a body (rank and file as well as leaders) and their future in the Hereafter as won by victory over Evil.

4207. The Final Bliss will not be a hole-and-corner thing, a pale reflection of some Palace or Retreat, where mystery reigns behind closed doors. Its doors will be open, and its inmates will be free to go in and out as they will, because their wills will be purified and brought into accord with the Universal Law.

4208. See n. 4003 to xxxvi. 57.

4209. Cf. xxxvii. 48 and n. 4064, and xxxvi. 56, n. 4002. As we conceive happiness in this life, it is not complete if it is only solitary. How we hanker after some one who can share in our highest joy! That feeling is also figured here.



Their glances, (companions)  
Of equal age.<sup>4210</sup>

53. Such is the Promise  
Made to you  
For the Day of Account!

هَذَا مَا تُوْعَدُونَ لِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٥٣﴾

54. Truly such will be  
Our Bounty (to you);  
It will never fail;-

إِنَّ هَذَا الرِّزْقُ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ تَفَادٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

55. Yea, such! But-  
For the wrong-doers  
Will be an evil place<sup>4211</sup>  
Of (final) Return!-

هَذَا أَوَّلُ الْبُؤْسِ لِلظَّالِمِينَ لَشَرِّ مَآبٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

56. Hell!-they will burn  
Therein,-an evil bed  
(Indeed, to lie on)!-<sup>4212</sup>

جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا فَيْسَ لِلْهَادِئِ ﴿٥٦﴾

57. Yea, such!-Then  
Shall they taste it,-  
A boiling fluid, and a fluid<sup>4213</sup>  
Dark, murky, intensely cold!-

هَذَا فَلْيَذُوقُوهُ حَمِيمٌ وَغَسَّاقٌ ﴿٥٧﴾

58. And other Penalties  
Of a similar kind,  
To match them!

وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْ شَكْلِهِ أَزْوَاجَ ﴿٥٨﴾

4210. To make the social happiness complete, we want companionship of equal age. Age and youth cannot be happy together. It is not suggested that in the Timeless state figured here, there will be old age; but if it is possible to conceive of temperamental differences then, the company will be so arranged that it will be congenial. Or we can accept the type of youth and freshness as common to all in that happy state.

4211. This is in parallel contrast to the state of the Blessed in xxxviii. 49 above.

4212. Cf. xiv. 29. This continues the parallel contrast to the state of the Blessed already described.

4213. Cf. x. 4, and n. 1390. The conjunction of the boiling fluid with the dark, murky, intensely cold fluid heightenes the effect of the Penalty. In place of harmony, there is the discord of extreme opposites. And the discord is not confined to this: it runs through the whole idea of Hell. See the next verse.

59. Here is a troop  
Rushing headlong with you!<sup>4214</sup>  
No welcome for them!  
Truly, they shall burn  
In the Fire!

هَذَا فَوْجٌ مُّقْتَحِمٌ مَّعَكُمْ لَا مَرْجَا بِهِمْ إِنَّهُمْ  
صَالُوا النَّارِ ﴿٥٩﴾

60. (The followers shall cry  
To the misleaders:)  
"Nay, ye (too)! No welcome  
For you! It is ye who  
Have brought this upon us!<sup>4215</sup>  
Now evil is (this) place  
To stay in!"

قَالُوا بَلْ أَنْتُمْ لَا مَرْجَاءَ بِكُمْ أَنْتُمْ قَدْ مَتَمُّوهُ لَنَا فَيْسَ  
الْقَرَارُ ﴿٦٠﴾

61. They will say: "Our Lord!  
Whoever brought this upon us,-  
Add to him a double<sup>4216</sup>  
Chastisement in the Fire!"

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا مَنْ قَدَّمَ لَنَا هَذَا فَزِدْهُ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا  
فِي النَّارِ ﴿٦١﴾

62. And they will say:  
How is it with us  
That we see not men  
Who we used to number  
Among the bad ones?<sup>4217</sup>

وَقَالُوا مَا لَنَا لَنَرِي رِجَالًا كُنَّا نَعُدُّهُمْ مِنَ الْأَشْرَارِ ﴿٦٢﴾

63. "Did we treat them  
(As such) in ridicule,

أَتَخَذْنَاهُمْ سِخْرِيًا أَمْ زَاغَتْ عَنْهُمْ الْأَبْصَارُ ﴿٦٣﴾

4214. The wonder is that so many people should embrace Evil, and in so much hurry and eagerness! Here they may be welcomed by the leaders of Evil, but in the final state it will be the opposite of welcome. They will be followed with reproaches and curses.

4215. It is the nature of Evil to shift the blame on to others. The followers will reproach the leaders, but none can escape personal responsibility for his own acts and deeds!

4216. Cf. vii. 38, and n. 1019. See also xi. 20. The evil ones now vent their spite on others. Here they ask for a double penalty for their misleaders, but they forget their own personal responsibility. In the next verse, they express their surprise that others have escaped the torments, which they themselves have earned!

4217. *The bad ones: i.e., the ones whom they (evil ones) ridiculed as fools sure to come to an evil end, because they refused to join in with the evil ones in their plots. The values are now reversed. The good ones are among the Blessed, and are not to be seen in the "Bed of Misery". The ridicule is now against the evil ones.*

Or have (our) eyes  
Failed to perceive them?"

64. That is true,<sup>4218</sup>  
The mutual recriminations  
Of the People of the Fire!

إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَحَقُّ تَخَاصُّمِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ ﴿٦٤﴾

#### SECTION 5.

65. Say: "Truly am I  
A Warner: no god  
Is there but Allah,  
The One, Supreme and  
Irresistible,<sup>4219</sup>

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مُنذِرٌ وَمَا مِن إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ﴿٦٥﴾

66. "The Lord of the heavens  
And the earth, and all  
Between,—Exalted in Might,<sup>4220</sup>  
Ever-Forgiving.<sup>4221</sup>

رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ ﴿٦٦﴾

67. Say: "That is a Tremendous  
Tidings.

قُلْ هُوَ نَبَأٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦٧﴾

68. "From which ye  
Do turn away!<sup>4222</sup>

أَنْتُمْ عَنْهُ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

4218. The mutual recriminations and spite are themselves a part of the Penalty, for such feelings increase their unhappiness.

4219. Cf. xii. 39, where Joseph preaches to the men in prison. The one supreme Message of importance to mankind was (and is) the Unity of Allah: that He is the Creator and Sustainer of all: that His Will is supreme; that He can carry out His Will without question, and no powers of Evil can defeat it; and that He forgives by His grace again and again. This Message the holy Prophet came to deliver, and he delivered it.

4220. In n. 2818 to xxii. 40, I have explained the full import of 'Azîz as a title applied to Allah, and I have expressed two of the leading ideas involved, in the two lines here. The argument in this Sûra turns upon the contrast between earthly Power and the Divine Power: the one is impotent and the other is supreme.

4221. *Ġaffâr* is the emphatic intensive form, and I have accordingly translated it as "forgiving again and again". Cf. xx. 82.

4222. The Message which is of supreme import to mankind,—from that they turn away. Instead of profiting by it, they turn away to side issues, or unprofitable speculation: such as: what is the origin of Evil; when will Judgment come? etc.

69. "No knowledge have I  
Of the Exalted Chiefs,  
When they discuss  
(Matters) among themselves."<sup>4223</sup>
70. "Only this has been revealed  
To me: that I am  
To give warning  
Plainly and publicly."<sup>4224</sup>
71. Behold, thy Lord said<sup>4225</sup>  
To the angels: "I am  
About to create man  
From clay."<sup>4226</sup>
72. "When I have fashioned him  
And breathed  
Into him of My spirit,<sup>4227</sup>  
Fall ye down in prostration  
Unto him."
73. So the angels prostrated themselves,  
All of them together:

مَا كَانَ لِي مِنْ عِلْمٍ بِالْمَلَأِ الْأَعْلَى إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

إِنْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَىٰ إِلَّا أَنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ مُبِينٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَأِكَةِ إِنِّي خَلَقْتُ بَشَرًا مِنْ طِينٍ ﴿٧١﴾

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا  
لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَأِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

4223. The hierarchy of angels in Heaven, discuss questions of high import in the Universe. Those are not necessarily revealed to men, except in so far as it is good for men to know, as in verses 71-85 below. But the chief thing for man is to know that Allah is Most Merciful, that He forgives again and again, and that Evil has no power over those who trust in Allah.

4224. Two things are implied in *Mubin*: (1) that the warning should be clear and perspicuous; there should be no mincing of matters, no ambiguity, no compromise with evil, vii. 184; (2) that the warning should be delivered publicly, before all people, in spite of opposition and persecution, xxvi. 115. Both these ideas I have tried to express in this passage.

4225. Two passages may be compared with this: viz.: (1) ii. 30-39, where merely the first stages of the Rebellion against Allah and its consequences to mankind are mentioned, and (2) xv. 29-40, where the further intrusion of evil in man's life here below is referred to, and an assurance is given that Evil will have no power except over those who yield to it. The latter is the passage most relevant here, as we are now dealing with the spiritual power of Revelation to defeat the machinations of Evil.

4226. This shows that the material world round us was created by Allah before Allah fashioned man and breathed of His soul into him. Geology also shows that man came on the scene at a very late stage in the history of this planet.

4227. See n. 1968 to xv. 29, where the spiritual significance of this is explained.

74. Not so Iblis: he  
Was haughty, and became<sup>4228</sup>  
One of those who reject Faith.
75. (Allah) said: "O Iblis!  
What prevents thee from  
Prostrating thyself to one  
Whom I have created  
With My hands?<sup>4229</sup>  
Art thou haughty?  
Or art thou one<sup>4230</sup>  
Of the high (and mighty) ones?
76. (Iblis) said: "I am better  
Than he: Thou createdst  
Me from fire, and him  
Thou createdst from clay."
77. (Allah) said: "Then get thee  
Out from here: for thou  
Art rejected, accursed.
78. "And My Curse shall be  
On thee till the Day<sup>4231</sup>  
Of Judgment."
79. (Iblis) said: "O my Lord!  
Give me then respite<sup>4232</sup>  
Till the Day  
The (dead) are raised."

إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ اسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِدَيِّ  
اسْتَكْبَرْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعَالِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ خَلَقْنِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

قَالَ فَأَخْرِجْ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

وَأَن عَذَابُكَ لَعَنَتِي إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿٧٨﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

4228. Arrogance (self-love) is thus the root of Evil and of Unfaith.

4229. Man, as typified by Adam, is in himself nothing but frail clay. But as fashioned by Allah's creative power into something with Allah's spirit breathed into him, his dignity is raised above that of the highest creatures.

4230. If, then, Satan refuses, it is a rebellion against Allah. It arises from arrogance or haughtiness, an exaggerated idea of Self. Or, it is asked, are you really sufficiently high in rank to dispute with the Almighty? Of course he was not.

4231. See n. 1972 to xv. 35, where it is explained why the respite is to the Day of Judgment. The whole of that passage in S. xv. forms a good commentary on this.

4232. For the significance of the respite see n. 1973 to xv. 36.

80. (Allah) said: "Respite then  
Is granted thee—

قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81. "Till the Day  
Of the Time Appointed."<sup>4233</sup>

إِلَى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ ﴿٨١﴾

82. (Iblis) said: "Then,  
By Thy Power,<sup>4234</sup> I will  
Lead them all astray."<sup>4235</sup>

قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾

83. "Except Thy Servants  
Amongst them, sincere  
And purified (by Thy grace)."

إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمْ الْمُخْلِصِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84. (Allah) said:  
"This is the Truth,  
And the Truth  
I say."<sup>4236</sup>

قَالَ فَالْحَقُّ وَالْحَقُّ أَقُولُ ﴿٨٤﴾

85. "That I will certainly fill<sup>4237</sup>  
Hell with thee  
And those that follow thee,—  
Every one."

لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنْكَ وَمِمَّنْ تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

4233. It is not an indefinite respite. It is for a period definitely limited, while this our Probation lasts in this world. It is part of the test as to how we use our limited free-will. After that, our whole existence will be on a different plane. The good will have been sorted out, the chain of consequences of the present world will be broken, and "a new Creation" will have taken the place of the present World.

4234. This phrase, this oath of Satan, is a fresh point introduced in this passage, because here we are dealing with Power—the Power of Good contrasted with Evil,—the Power of Allah as contrasted with the power that we see in our earthly affairs. Satan acknowledges that even his Power, such as it is, has no reality except in so far as it is permitted to operate by Allah in Allah's wise and universal Plan, and that it cannot harm the true and sincere worshippers of Allah.

4235. See n. 1974 to xv. 39.

4236. Cf. n. 1990 to xv. 64.

4237. Cf. vii. 18; vii. 179; and xi. 119, n. 1623. The punishment of defiance, disobedience, and rebellion is inevitable and just, and the followers who chose to identify themselves with the disobedience must suffer as well as the leaders. Cf. x. 33.

86. Say: "No reward do I ask<sup>4238</sup>  
Of you for this (Qur-ān),  
Nor am I a pretender."<sup>4239</sup>

قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُتَكَلِّفِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

87. "This is no less than  
A Reminder to (all)<sup>4240</sup>  
The Worlds.

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88. "And ye shall certainly  
Know the truth of it (all)<sup>4241</sup>  
After a while."

وَلَنَعْلَمَنَّ نَبَاهُ بَعْدَ حِينٍ ﴿٨٨﴾

4238. Cf. xxv. 57; xxvi. 109; and many other passages. The prophet of Allah neither seeks nor expects any reward from men. On the contrary he suffers much at their hands. He is unselfish and offers his services under Allah's inspiration. He is satisfied with the hope "that each one who will may take a straight Path to his Lord." That is his reward. And the reward he hopes for from Allah is similarly unselfish. He earnestly hopes to win His Good Pleasure i.e. "to see His Face."

4239. *Mutakallif*: a man who pretends to things that are not true, or declares as facts things that do not exist, one who takes upon himself tasks to which he is not equal. True prophets are not people of that kind.

4240. So far from there being any false or selfish motive in the Message proclaimed in Revelation, it is a healing mercy to all mankind. More, it is in accord with all parts of Allah's Creation, and makes us kin with all Creation, the handiwork of the One True God.

4241. There may be many things which we in our "muddy vesture of decay" may not fully understand or take in. If we only follow the right Path, we shall arrive at the Goal in the Hereafter, and then everything will be clear to us.