

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRAT *At-Tauba*, 9

At-Tauba (Repentance) or *Barāat* (Immunity)

Logically this Sūra follows up the argument of the last Sūra (VIII), and indeed may be considered a part of it, although chronologically the two are separated by an interval of seven years.

We saw that Sūra VIII dealt with the large questions arising at the outset of the life of a new Ummat or organised nation: questions of defence under attack, distribution of war acquisitions after victory, the virtues needed for concerted action, and clemency and consideration for one's own and for enemies in the hour of victory. We pass on in this Sūra to deal with the question: what is to be done if the enemy breaks faith and is guilty of treachery? No nation can go on with a treaty if the other party violates it at will; but it is laid down that a period of four months should be allowed by way of notice after denunciations of the treaty; that due protection should be accorded in the intervening period; that there should always be open the door to repentance and reunion with the people of Allah; and that if all these fail, and war must be undertaken, it must be pushed with the utmost vigour.

These are the general principles deducible from the Sūra. The immediate occasion for their promulgation may be considered in connection with the chronological place of the Sūra.

Chronologically, verses 1-29 were a notable declaration of State policy promulgated about the month of Shawwāl, A.H. 9, and read out by Ḥaḍhrat 'Alī at the Pilgrimage two months later in order to give the policy the widest publicity possible. The remainder of the Sūra, verses 30-129, was revealed a little earlier, say about the month of Ramadhān, A.H. 9, and sums up the lessons of the Prophet's Tabūk expedition in the late summer of A.H. 9 (say October 630).

Tabūk is a place near the frontier of Arabia, quite close to what was then Byzantine territory in the Province of Syria (which includes Palestine). It is on the Hijāz Railway, about 350 miles north-west of Madinah, and 150 miles south of Ma'ān. It had a fort and a spring of sweet water. In consequence of strong and persistent rumours that the Byzantines (Romans) were preparing to invade Arabia and that the Byzantine Emperor himself had arrived near the frontier for the purpose, the Prophet collected as large a force as he could, and marched to Tabūk. The Byzantine invasion did not come off. But the Prophet took the opportunity of consolidating the Muslim position in that direction and making treaties of alliance with certain Christian and Jewish tribes near the Gulf of 'Aqaba. On his return to Madinah he considered the situation. During his

absence the Hypocrites had played, as always a double game, and the policy hitherto followed, of free access to the sacred centre of Islam, to Muslims and Pagans alike, was now altered, as it had been abused by the enemies of Islam.

This is the only Sūra to which the usual formula of *Bismillāh* is not prefixed. It was among the last of the Sūras revealed, and though the Prophet had directed that it should follow Sūra VIII, it was not clear whether it was to form a separate Sūra or only a part of Sūra VIII. It is now treated as a separate Sūra, but the *Bismillāh* is not prefixed to it, as there is no warrant for supposing that the Prophet used the *Bismillāh* before it in his recitation of the Qur-ān. The Sūra is known under many names: the most commonly used are (1) *At-Tauba* (Repentance), with reference to ix. 104 and (2) *Barāat* (Immunity), the opening word of the Sura.

Summary.—Treaties with those Pagans who have treacherously broken their terms are denounced, but four months time is given for adjustments or repentance. Pagans to be excluded from the sacred Mosques. Infidelity to be fought (ix. 1-29).

The People of the Book have obscured the light of Allah, but the Truth of Allah must prevail over all. We must be ready to fight for the Faith that is in us: otherwise we shall be unworthy to uphold Allah's banner, and He will raise other people in our place (ix 30-42).

The hypocrites and their double dealing: their evil ways pointed out. Their punishment will be as sure as the blessings of the righteous (ix. 43-72).

All evil should be resisted, unless there is repentance: falsehood is not content with breach of faith but mocks all good: it should not be envied but shunned (ix. 73-99).

The good pleasure of Allah is with those who are sincere and make sacrifices in His cause: He will forgive those who do wrong and repent, but not those who intend mischief and foment unbelief and disunion among believers. The Believers by their self-surrender obtain eternal Felicity. Allah will turn in mercy even to those who, though they waver or fail in duty, turn at last to Him (ix. 100-118).

Those who believe should associate with the righteous and the truthful, actively doing their duty. But if the Community marches out, a part of them should remain behind for the purpose of diligently studying religion and teaching their brethren when they return. Every Sūra increases the faith of those who believe, though those diseased in heart may add doubt to doubt. Trust in Allah, Lord of the Throne of Glory (ix. 119-129).

At-Tauba (Repentance) or Barāat
(Immunity)

1. A (declaration) of immunity¹²⁴⁶
From Allah and His Messenger,
To those of the Pagans
With whom ye have contracted
Mutual alliances:-
2. Go ye, then for four months,¹²⁴⁷
(As ye will), throughout the land,
But know yet that ye cannot
Frustrate Allah (by your falsehood)
But that Allah will cover
With shame those who reject Him.
3. And an announcement from Allah
And His Messenger, to the people
(Assembled) on the day
Of the Great Pilgrimage,¹²⁴⁸
That Allah and His Messenger
Dissolve (treaty) obligations
With the Pagans.

سُورَةُ التَّوْبَةِ

بَرَاءَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ
مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١﴾

فَسِيحُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ
غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يُخْزِي الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢﴾

وَأَذِّنْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ
الْأَكْبَرِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ
فَإِنْ تَبَيَّنْتُمْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا
أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣﴾

1246. *Barāat*: usually translated "immunity". I do not think that word correctly represents the Arabic word in this context. I retain it as I cannot think of any single English word as an equivalent. The general sense is explained in the introduction to this Sūra. In verse 3 below I use the periphrasis "dissolve treaty obligations," which goes some way to explain the meaning. The Pagans and enemies of Islam frequently made treaties of mutual alliance with the Muslims. The Muslims scrupulously observed their part, but the Pagans violated their part again and again when it suited them. After some years, experience it became imperative to denounce such treaties altogether. This was done in due form, with four months' notice, and a chance was given to those who faithfully observed their pledges, to continue their alliance.

1247. *Four Months*: Some Commentators understand by this the four forbidden months in which warfare by ancient Arabian custom was unlawful, viz., Rajab. Zul-qa'dah, Zul-hijjah, and Muharram: See ii. 194 n. But it is better to take the signification of the four months immediately following the Declaration. Assuming that the Sūra was promulgated early in Shawwāl (see Introduction), the four months would be Shawwāl, Zul-qa'dah, Zul-hijjah, and Muharram, of which the last three would also be the customary Prohibited Months.

1248. The great day of Hajj is either the 9th of Zul-hijjah ('Arafa), or the 10th (the Day of Sacrifice).

If, then, ye repent,
It were best for you;
But if ye turn away,
Know ye that ye cannot
Frustrate Allah, And proclaim
A grievous chastisement to those
Who reject Faith.

4. (But the treaties are) not dissolved¹²⁴⁹
With those Pagans with whom
Ye have entered into alliance
And who have not subsequently
Failed you in aught,
Nor aided any one against you.
So fulfil your engagements
With them to the end
Of their term: for Allah
Loveth the righteous.

5. But when the forbidden months¹²⁵⁰
Are past, then fight and slay¹²⁵¹
The Pagans wherever ye find them,
And seize them, beleaguer them,
And lie in wait for them
In every stratagem (of war);

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ لَمْ
يَنْقُصُوكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَمْ يُظَاهِرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَحَدًا
فَاتِّمُوا إِلَيْهِمْ عَاهِدَهُمْ إِلَىٰ مَدَّتِهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ
الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١﴾

فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ
حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَحْصُرُوهُمْ وَأَقْعُدُوا
لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصِدٍ إِن تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَأَتَوْا الزَّكَاةَ فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢﴾

1249. The sacred duty of fulfilling all obligations of every kind, to Muslims and non Muslims, in public as well as private life, is a cardinal feature of Muslim ethics. The question what is to be done with those who abuse this principle by failing in their duty but expect the Muslims to do their part is not to be solved (in the case of treaties) by a general denunciation of treaties but by a careful consideration of the cases where there has been fidelity and not treachery. There we are enjoined to give the strictest fidelity, as it is a part of righteousness and our duty to Allah.

1250. The emphasis is on the first clause: it is only when the four months of grace are past, and the other party show no signs of desisting from their treacherous designs by right conduct, that the state of war supervenes—between Faith and Unfaith.

1251. When war becomes inevitable, it must be prosecuted with vigour. According to the English phrase, you cannot fight with kid gloves. The fighting may take the form of killing, capture, or siege, or ambush and other stratagems. But even then there is room for repentance and amendment on the part of the guilty party, and if that takes place, our duty is forgiveness and the establishment of peace.

But if they repent,¹²⁵²
 And establish regular prayers.
 And pay Zakat
 Then open the way for them:
 For Allah is Oft-forgiving,
 Most Merciful.

6. If one amongst the Pagans¹²⁵³
 Ask thee for asylum,
 Grant it to him,
 So that he may hear the Word
 Of Allah; and then escort him
 To where he can be secure,¹²⁵⁴
 That is because they are
 Men without knowledge.

SECTION 2.

7. How can there be a covenant
 Before Allah and His Messenger,
 With the Pagans, except those¹²⁵⁵

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ
 حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ ابْلِغْهُ مَا مَنَّهُ. ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ
 قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾

كَيْفَ يَكُونُ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ عَهْدٌ عِنْدَ
 اللَّهِ وَعِنْدَ رَسُولِهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ

1252. The repentance must be sincere, and that is shown by conduct—a religious spirit of true prayer and charity. In that case we are not to bar the gate against the repentant. On the contrary we must do all we can to make their way easy, remembering that Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

1253. Even among the enemies of Islam, actively fighting against Islam, there may be individuals who may be in a position to require protection. Full asylum is to be given to them, and opportunities provided for hearing the Word of Allah. If they accept the Word, they become Muslims and brethren, and no further question arises. If they do not see their way to accept Islam, they will require double protection: (1) from the Islamic forces openly fighting against their people, and (2) from their own people, as they detached themselves from them. Both kinds of protection should be ensured for them, and they should be safely escorted to a place where they can be safe. Such persons only err through ignorance, and there may be much good in them.

1254. *Maaman*: place or opportunity of being secure from all harm.

1255. In this section we have the reasons why the treaties with treacherous Pagan foes were denounced. The clause introducing the exception is a parenthetical clause. The word "Pagans" must be connected with verse 8 which follows. In that verse the word *kaifa* resumes the clause introduced by the word *kaifa* at the beginning of verse 7. The exceptional Pagan tribes which remained true to their word were the Banu Ḥamza and the Banu Kināna, who swore their treaty near the Sacred Mosque and faithfully observed it. They were to be given the full benefit of their fidelity even though their kindred tribes were treacherous.

With whom ye made a treaty
Near the Sacred Mosque?
As long as these stand true
To you, stand ye true to them:
For Allah doth love the righteous.

8. How (can there be such
a covenant)¹²⁵⁶

Seeing that if they get an advantage
Over you, they respect not
In you the ties either of kinship¹²⁵⁷
Or of covenant? With (fair words
From) their mouths they please you,
But their hearts are averse
From you; and most of them
Are rebellious and wicked.

9. The Words of Allah have they sold
For a miserable price,
And (many) have they hindered
From His Way: evil indeed
Are the deeds they have done.

10. In a Believer they respect not
The ties either of kinship

عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ قَدْ اسْتَقْتَمُوا لَكُمْ
فَاسْتَقِيمُوا لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٧﴾

كَيْفَ وَإِنْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ لَا تَرْقُبُوا
فِيكُمْ إِلَّا وَلَا ذِمَّةً يُرْضُونَكُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتَأْبَى
قُلُوبُهُمْ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾

أَشْرَوْا بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَفَصَدُوا
عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩﴾

لَا يَرْقُبُونَ فِي مُؤْمِنٍ إِلَّا وَلَا ذِمَّةً وَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الْمُعْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

1256. The exceptions having been stated parenthetically in verse 7, the indictment of the general mass of Pagan tribes is now set out briefly but fully and convincingly. After that kind of behaviour how can treaty be possible with them? The counts are: (1) that whenever they got a slight advantage, they disregarded the ties both of kinship and of covenant as against the Muslims because of their Faith, thus proving doubly treacherous; (2) that they spoke fair words, but had venom in their hearts; (3) that their attitude was one of rebellion against their plighted word; (4) that they disregarded the solemn words of Allah for some miserable worldly gain; (5) that they tried to prevent other people from coming to the Way of Allah. The first clause is repeated again as the last clause, to emphasise their double treachery, and round off the argument.

1257. Among the Arabs the ties of kinship were so strong as to be almost unbreakable. The Pagan Arabs went out of their way to break them in the case of the Muslims, who were kith and kin to them. Besides the bond of kinship there was the further bond of their plighted oath in the Treaty. They broke that oath because the other parties were Muslims!

Or of covenant! It is they
Who have transgressed all bounds.¹²⁵⁸

11. But (even so), if they repent,¹²⁵⁹
Establish regular prayers,
And pay Zakat
They are your brethren in Faith:
(Thus) do We explain the Signs
In detail, for those who understand.

فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَوْا الزَّكَاةَ
فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَنُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12. But if they violate their oaths
After their covenant,
And attack your Faith,¹²⁶⁰
Fight ye the chiefs of Unfaith:
For their oaths are nothing to them:
That thus they may be restrained.

وَأِنْ تَكُونُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ وَطَعْنُوا
فِي دِينِكُمْ فَقَاتِلُوا أَيْمَةَ الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ
لَا أَيْمَنَ لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَنْتَهُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13. Will ye not fight people
Who violated their oaths,
Plotted to expel the Messenger,¹²⁶¹
And attacked you
First? Do ye fear them? Nay,
It is Allah Whom ye should
More justly fear, if ye believe!

أَلَا تَقَاتِلُونَ قَوْمًا نَكَثُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ
وَهَمُّوا بِإِخْرَاجِ الرَّسُولِ وَهُمْ
بَدَءُوكُمْ أُولَئِكَ مَرَّةً كَانُوا فِيهَا يَخْشَوْنَ
فَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَوْهُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

1258. The catalogue of their sins being set out, it is clear that they were aggressors in the worst possible ways; and war became inevitable.

1259. The chance of repentance and mercy to the worst enemies is again emphasised, in order that people with any understanding may not be misled into thinking that war was an easy or light matter. This emphasis is balanced by the emphasis in the next verse on the causes which made war inevitable for those with any self-respect.

1260. Not only did the enemies break their oaths shamelessly, but they even taunted the Muslims on their Faith and the "simple-minded" way in which they continued to respect their part of the treaty, as if they were afraid to fight!

1261. The argument now takes a new turn. An appeal is made to the Muslims on various grounds: (1) the shameless disregard of treaties by the enemy, (2) the under-hand plots to discredit the Holy Prophet, and turn him out of Madinah as he had been turned out of Makkah, (3) the aggressive taken by the Quraish and their confederates in Madinah after the treaty of Hudaibiya (A.H. 6, Zul-qa'dah. Feb. 628), (4) the manly attitude that fears Allah rather than men, and (5) the need to prove our sincere faith by test and trial and struggle and sacrifice (ix 16).

14. Fight them, and Allah will
Punish them by your hands,
And disgrace them
Help you (to victory) over them,
Heal the breasts of Believers.¹²⁶²

فَنَلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِيهِمْ
وَيَضْرِبُكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ
قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

15. And still the indignation of their
hearts.¹²⁶³
For Allah will turn (in mercy)¹²⁶⁴
To whom He will: and Allah
Is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

وَيَذْهَبُ غَيْظُ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَيَتُوبُ اللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16. Do you think that you
Would be left alone while
Allah has not yet known¹²⁶⁵
Those among you who strive
With might and main, and take
None for friends and protectors
Except Allah, His Messenger,
And the (community of) Believers?
And Allah is well-acquainted
With (all) that ye do.

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُتْرَكُوا وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ
جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
وَلَا رَسُولِهِ وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلِجَنَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ
خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

SECTION 3.

17. It is not for such
As join gods with Allah,

مَا كَانَ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يَعْمُرُوا مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ
شَاهِدِينَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ بِالْكُفْرِ أُولَٰئِكَ

1262. *Heal the breasts of believers, i.e., of wounds that they may have sustained from the assaults, taunts, and cruelty of the enemy.*

1263. When the victory comes and the wounds are healed, a great peace comes to the hearts of those who have suffered, striven, and struggled. The fighting was necessity forced by injustice and oppression. When Allah's Law is established, the fire of indignation is quelled, and the true Peace of Islam is attained.

1264. Allah's mercy is unlimited. When evil is destroyed, many of those who were enticed by evil will come into the fold of truth and righteousness, and the cessation of war and conflict will bring peace, certainly to those who fought for the right, but also possibly to those whose eyes have been opened to the working of Allah's Law and who in healing reconciliation become members of the Brotherhood of Peace in Islam.

1265. We must all be tested and tried, but Allah knows our inmost hearts, and He will support those who strive in His way, out of sincere love for Him, His Prophet, and the body of the true men of faith.

To maintain¹²⁶⁶

The mosques of Allah
While they witness
Against their own souls
To infidelity. The works
Of such bear no fruit:
In Fire shall they dwell.

18. The mosques of Allah
Shall be visited and maintained
By such as believe in Allah
And the Last Day, establish
Regular prayers, and
Pay Zakat, and fear
None (at all) except Allah¹²⁶⁷
It is they who are expected
To be on true guidance.¹²⁶⁸

19. Do ye consider the giving¹²⁶⁹

حِطَّتْ أَعْمَلُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ

هَمْ خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنَ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ
وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ أَن يَكُونُوا
مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

﴿١٩﴾ أَجَعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ

1266. 'Amara as applied to mosques implies the following ideas: (1) to build or repair: (2) to maintain in fitting dignity: (3) to visit for purposes of devotion: and (4) fill with light and life and activity. For brevity I have only used "maintain" in the Translation.

Before the preaching of Islam the Pagans built, repaired, and maintained the Mosque, and celebrated Pagan ceremonies in it. They made an income out of it. Islam protested, and the Pagans ejected Muslims and their Leader from Makkah and shut them out from the Ka'ba itself. When the Muslims were strong enough to re-take Makkah (A.H. 8), they purified the Mosque and re-established the worship of the true God. If they became Muslims, it was a different matter. The further question arose: should they be allowed to visit it and practise their unseemly Pagan rites? Obviously this would be derogatory to the dignity and honour of the Mosque, and was forbidden. This was the particular occasion to which the verse refers. The general deduction is clear. A house of Allah is a place of sincere devotion, not a theatre for vulgar rites nor a source of worldly income. Only sincere Believers have a right of entry. Who the sincere Believers are, is explained in the next verse.

1267. See the previous note. Sincere Believers are those who have faith in Allah and the future, and have a spirit of devotion and charity—a true and abiding spirit, not merely isolated acts now and again. Moreover they must not bow to worldly greed or ambition, which produces fear of worldly power.

1268. Others may call themselves by what names they like. True guidance is shown by the tests here indicated.

1269. Giving drinks of cold water to thirsty pilgrims, and doing material services to a mosque are meritorious acts, but they are only external. If they do not touch the soul, their value is slight. Far greater, in the sight of Allah, are Faith, Endeavour, and self- =

Of drink to pilgrims,
Or the maintenance of
The Sacred Mosque, equal
To (the pious service of) those
Who believe in Allah
And the Last Day, and strive
With might and main
In the cause of Allah?
They are not equal
In the sight of Allah:
And Allah guides not
Those who do wrong.

20. Those who believe, and emigrate
And strive with might
And main, in Allah's cause,¹²⁷⁰
With their goods and their persons,
Have the highest rank
In the sight of Allah:
They are the people
Who will achieve (salvation).
21. Their Lord doth give them
Glad tidings of a Mercy
From Himself, of His good pleasure.
And of Gardens for them,
Wherein are delights
That endure:
22. They will dwell therein
For ever. Verily with Allah

كَمَنْ أَمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَجَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
لَا يَسْتَوُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ أَكْظَمُ دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَرِضْوَانٍ وَجَنَّاتٍ
لَهُمْ فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ
عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

= surrender to Allah. Men who practise these will obtain honour in the sight of Allah. Allah's light and guidance comes to them, and not to those self-sufficient beings who think that a little show of what the world considers piety is enough.

1270. Here is a good description of *Jihād*. It may require fighting in Allah's cause, as a form of self-sacrifice. But its essence consists in (1) a true and sincere Faith, which so fixes its gaze on Allah, that all selfish or worldly motives seem paltry and fade away, and (2) an earnest and ceaseless activity, involving the sacrifice (if need be) of life, person, or property, in the service of Allah. Mere brutal fighting is opposed to the whole spirit of *Jihād*, while the sincere scholar's pen or preacher's voice or wealthy man's contributions may be the most valuable forms of *Jihād*.

Is a reward, the greatest (of all).¹²⁷¹

23. O ye who believe! Take not
For protectors your fathers
And your brothers if they love
Infidelity above Faith:
If any of you do so,
They do wrong.

يَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ
وَأَيُّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ
عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَوَلَّيَكَ
هُمْ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24. Say: If it be that your fathers,
Your sons, your brothers,
Your mates, or your kindred:
The wealth that ye have gained;
The commerce in which ye fear
A decline: or the dwellings
In which ye delight—¹²⁷²
Are dearer to you than Allah
Or His Messenger, or the striving
In His cause;—then wait
Until Allah brings about¹²⁷³
His Decision: and Allah
Guides not the rebellious.

قُلْ إِن كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ
وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ
وَتُجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسْكَنٌ
أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَبَرِّضُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ
لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

SECTION 4.

25. Assuredly Allah did help you
In many battle-fields

لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرٍ وَيَوْمَ

1271. Those who strive and suffer in Allah's cause are promised (1) a mercy specially from Himself, (2) His own good pleasure, (3) gardens of perpetual delight, (4) the supreme reward. Allah's own nearness. These are in gradation: (1) is a special mercy, higher than flows out to all creatures: (2) is a consciousness of Allah's good pleasure, which raises the soul above itself: (3) is that state of permanent assurance, and (4) is the final bliss, which is the sight of Allah Himself.

1272. Man's heart clings to (1) his own kith and kin—parents, children, brothers and sisters, husbands or wives, or other relatives, (2) wealth and prosperity, (3) commerce or means of profit and gain, or (4) noble buildings, for dignity or comfort. If these are a hindrance in Allah's cause, we have to choose which we love most. We must love Allah even if it involves the sacrifice of all else.

1273. If we love our earthly ties and comforts, profits and pleasures, more than we love Allah, and therefore fail to respond to Allah's cause, it is not Allah's cause which will suffer. Allah's purpose will be accomplished, with or without us. But our failure to respond to His will must leave us bereft of grace and guidance: "for Allah guides not the rebellious".

And on the day of Hunain:¹²⁷⁴

Behold! your great numbers
Elated you, but they availed
You naught; the land.
For all that it is wide,
Did constrain you, and ye
Turned back in retreat.¹²⁷⁵

حِينَ إِذْ أَغْجَبَكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ
عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا وَصَافَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ
الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُمْ
مُذِرِينَ

26. But Allah did pour His calm¹²⁷⁶

ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ

This is of universal application. But it was strikingly illustrated in the case of those faithful ones who obeyed the Prophet's call, left the comfort of their homes in Makkah and suffered exile in Madinah, gave up their trade and their possessions, strove and fought for Allah's cause, sometimes against their own kith and kin or their own tribesmen who were enemies of Islam. They won through. Others were not prepared for such sacrifice, but their failure did not stop the accomplishment of Allah's plan and purpose.

1274. Hunain is on the road to Tāif from Makkah about fourteen miles to the east of Makkah. It is a valley in the mountainous country between Makkah and Tāif. Immediately after the conquest of Makkah, (A.H. 8), the Pagan idolaters, who were surprised and chagrined at the wonderful reception which Islam was receiving, organised a great gathering near Tāif to concert plans for attacking the Prophet. The Hawāzin and the Thaḡif tribes took the lead and prepared a great expedition for Makkah, boasting of their strength and military skill. There was on the other hand a wave of confident enthusiasm among the Muslims at Makkah, in which the new Muslims joined. The enemy forces numbered about 4,000 but the Muslim force reached a total of ten or twelve thousand, as every one wished to join. The battle was joined at Hunain, as described in the next note.

1275. For the first time the Muslims had at Hunain tremendous odds in their favour. But this itself constituted a danger. Many in their ranks had more enthusiasm than wisdom, more a spirit of elation than of faith and confidence in the righteousness of their cause. The enemy had the advantage of knowing the ground thoroughly. They laid an ambush in which the advance guard of the Muslim forces was caught. The country is hilly, in which the enemy concealed himself. As soon as the Muslim vanguard entered the Hunain valley, the enemy fell upon them with fury and caused havoc with their arrows from their places of concealment. In such ground the numbers of the Muslims were themselves a disadvantage. Many were slain, and many turned back in confusion and retreat. But the Prophet, as ever, was calm in his wisdom and faith. He rallied his forces and inflicted the most crushing defeat on the enemy.

1276. *Sakina*: calm, peace, security, tranquillity. Cf. ii. 248. The Prophet never approved of over-weening confidence, or reliance merely upon human strength, or human resources or numbers. In the hour of danger and seeming disaster, he was perfectly calm, and with cool courage relied upon the help of Allah. Whose standard he carried. His calmness inspired all around him, and stopped the rout of those who had turned their backs. It was with Allah's help that they won, and their victory was complete. They followed it up with an energetic pursuit of the enemies, capturing their camps, their flocks and herds, and their families, whom they had boastfully brought with them in expectation of an easy victory.

On the Messenger and on the
Believers,

And sent down forces which ye
Saw not: He punished
The Unbelievers: thus doth He
Reward those without Faith.

وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ جُنُودًا لَمْ تَرَوْهَا
وَعَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ
الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦﴾

27. Again will Allah, after this,¹²⁷⁷
Turn (in mercy) to whom
He will: for Allah
Is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

ثُمَّ تَوَّابُ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾

28. O ye who believe! Truly
The Pagans are unclean;¹²⁷⁸
So let them not,
After this year of theirs,¹²⁷⁹
Approach the Sacred Mosque.
And if ye fear poverty,¹²⁸⁰
Soon will Allah enrich you,
If He wills, out of His bounty,
For Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ
نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عِلْمِهِمْ
هَذَا أَوْ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ عَيْلَةً فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيكُمْ اللَّهُ
مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنْ شَاءَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٨﴾

29. Fight those who believe not
In Allah nor the Last Day,
Nor hold that forbidden
Which hath been forbidden

قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا يَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

1277. Examples of Allah's mercy and grace in difficult circumstances in one case illustrate His grace and mercy at all times to those who have faith.

1278. *Unclean*: because Muslims are enjoined to be strict in cleanliness, as well as in purity of mind and heart, so that their word can be relied upon.

1279. *This year of theirs*: there is a two-fold meaning: (1) now that you have complete control of Makkah and are charged with the purity of worship there, shut out all impurity from this year: (2) you have seen how the Pagans have behaved this year; their year of power and misuse of that power may be called *their year*; it is over, and now you Muslims are responsible.

1280. The concourse in Makkah added to the profits of trade and commerce. "But fear not," we are told: "the Pagans are a waning power, bound to disappear, and you should strengthen your own community, that they may more than counter-balance the apparent loss of custom; and Allah has other means of improving your economic position." This actually happened. The Pagans were extinguished from Arabia, and the concourse of pilgrims from all parts of the world increased the numbers more than a hundred-fold. Here is commonsense, wisdom, and statesmanship, even if we look at it from a purely human point of view.

By Allah and His Messenger,
Nor acknowledge the Religion
Of Truth, from among
The People of the Book,
Until they pay the *Jizya*¹²⁸¹
With willing submission,¹²⁸²
And feel themselves subdued.

SECTION 5.

30. The Jews call 'Uzair a son¹²⁸³
Of Allah, and the Christians
Call Christ the Son of Allah.
That is a saying from their mouth;
(In this) they but imitate¹²⁸⁴
What the Unbelievers of old
Used to say. Allah's curse
Be on them: how they are deluded

وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ
وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ
النَّصَارَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ
ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ
يُضَاهِئُونَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ
فَلَنُكَلِّمَهُمُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكُونُوا يَتَّبِعُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

1281. *Jizya*: the root meaning is compensation. The derived meaning, which became the technical meaning, was a poll-tax levied from those who did not accept Islam, but were willing to live under the protection of Islam, and were thus tacitly willing to submit to its ideals being enforced in the Muslim State. There was no amount permanently fixed for it. It was an acknowledgment that those whose religion was tolerated would in their turn not interfere with the preaching and progress of Islam. Imām Shāfi'i suggests one dinār per year, which would be the Arabian gold dinār of the Muslim States. The tax varied in amount, and there were exemptions for the poor, for females and children (according to Abū Hanifa), for slaves, and for monks and hermits. Being a tax on able-bodied males of military age, it was in a sense a commutation for military service. But see the next note.

1282. '*An Yadin* (literally, from the hand) has been variously interpreted. The hand being the symbol of power and authority. I accept the interpretation "in token of willing submission." The *Jizya* was thus partly symbolic and partly a commutation for military service, but as the amount was insignificant and the exemptions numerous, its symbolic character predominated. See the last note.

1283. In n. 718 to v. 18, I have quoted passages from the Old Testament, showing how freely the expression "sons of Allah" was used by the Jews. A sect of them called 'Uzair a son of Allah, according to Baidhāwī. In Appendix II (Sūra v.) I have shown that the constitution of Judaism dates from 'Uzair (Ezra). The Christians still call Christ the Son of Allah.

1284. Taking men for gods or sons of Allah was not a new thing. All ancient mythologies have fables of that kind. There was less excuse for such blasphemies after the Prophets of Allah had clearly explained out true relation to Allah than in the times of primitive ignorance and superstition.

Away from the Truth.¹²⁸⁵

31. They take their priests¹²⁸⁶

And their anchorites to be
Their lords beside Allah.¹²⁸⁷

And (they take as their Lord)

Christ the son of Mary;
Yet they were commanded

To worship but One God:

There is no god but He.

Praise and glory to Him:¹²⁸⁸

(Far is He) from having

The partners they associate

(With Him).

32. Fain would they extinguish

Allah's Light with their mouths,¹²⁸⁹

اتَّخَذُوا أَجْبَارَهُمْ وَرُءُوبَهُمْ أَزْبَابًا
مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا
لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ سُبْحَانَهُ عَمَّا
يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ

1285. Cf. v. 75.

1286. *Ahbar*: doctors of law; priests; learned men. Cf. v. 44. where they are associated with Rabbis. *Ruhban*: monks, ascetics, anchorites, men who have renounced the world; where there is a celibate clergy, the term can be applied to them as well as to members of monastic orders. It is also permissible to apply the term to "saints", where they are deified or credited with divine powers, or where people pray to them as they do in the Roman Catholic Church.

1287. Priest worship, and the worship of saints and ascetics is a form of superstition to which men have been prone in all ages. The growth of Jewish superstition is shown in the Talmud, and of Christian superstition in the doctrine of papal infallibility and the worship of saints. The mere idea of a separate order of priesthood to stand between Allah and man and be the exclusive repository of Allah's secrets is derogatory to the goodness and all-pervading grace of Allah. The worship of "lords many and gods many" was not confined only to the Pagans. The deification of the son of Mary is put here in a special clause by itself, as it held (and still holds) in its thrall a large portion of civilised humanity.

1288. Cf. vi. 100.

1289. *With their mouths*: there is a twofold meaning: (1) the old-fashioned open oil lamps were extinguished by blowing with the mouth; the Unbelievers would like to blow out Allah's Light as it is a cause of offence to them; (2) false teachers and preachers distort the Message of Allah by the false words of their mouth. Their wish is to put out the light of Truth for they are people of darkness; but Allah will perfect His Light, i.e., make it shine all the brighter in the eyes of men. His Light in itself is ever perfect, but it will penetrate the hearts of men more and more, and so become more and more perfect for them.

But Allah will not allow
But that His Light should be
Perfected, even though the
Unbelievers
May detest (it).

33. It is He Who hath sent
His Messenger with Guidance
And the Religion of Truth,
To cause it to prevail¹²⁹⁰
Over all religion,
Even though the Pagans
May detest (it).

34. O ye who believe! There are
Indeed many among the priests
And anchorites, who in falsehood¹²⁹¹
Devour the wealth of men
And hinder (them) from the Way
Of Allah. And there are those
Who hoard gold and silver¹²⁹²
And spend it not in the Way
Of Allah: announce unto them
A most grievous chastisement—

وَيَأْتِي اللَّهَ لَا أَنْ يُشَمِّرَهُ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ
الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ
الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ
الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

﴿٣٤﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ كَثِيرًا
مِّنَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالرُّهْبَانِ لَيَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ
النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ
وَلَا يَنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ
بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

1290. Every religion which commends itself widely to human beings and lasts through some space of time has a glimpse of Truth in it. But Islam being the perfect light of Truth is bound to prevail. As the greater Light, through its own strength, outshines all lesser lights, so will Islam outshine all else, in spite of the displeasure of those to whom light is an offence. See also xlvi. 28, n. 4912, and lxi. 9, n. 5442.

1291. *Bil-bātili* = in falsehood. i.e., by false means, pretences, or in false or vain things. This was strikingly exemplified in the history of Mediaeval Europe. Though the disease is apt to attack all peoples and organisations at all times. Priests got rich by issuing indulgences and dispensations; they made their office a stepping stone to worldly power and possessions. Even the Monastic Orders, which took vows of poverty for individuals grew rich with corporate property, until their wealth became a scandal, even among their own nations.

1292. Misuse of wealth, property, and resources is frequently condemned, and in three ways: (1) do not acquire anything wrongfully or on false pretences; (2) do not hoard or bury or amass wealth for its own sake but use it freely for good, whether for yourself or for your neighbours; and (3) be particularly careful not to waste it for idle purposes, but only so that it may fructify for the good of the people.

35. On the Day when it
Will be heated¹²⁹³ in the fire
Of Hell, and with it will be
Branded their foreheads,
Their flanks, and their backs,
-“This is the (treasure) which ye
Hoarded for yourselves:¹²⁹⁴ taste ye,
Then, the (treasures) ye hoarded”

يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فُتْكُوىٰ بِهَا
جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ
هَذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36. The number of months¹²⁹⁵
In the sight of Allah
Is twelve (in a year)-
So ordained by Him
The day He created
The heavens and the earth;
Of them four are sacred:
That is the right religion
So wrong not yourselves¹²⁹⁶

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا
فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضَ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ذَلِكَ الَّذِي
أَلَقِمْنَاهُمْ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَقَدْ لَوْ
الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُفْتِنُوكُمْ

1293. Gold and silver, symbolising wealth which these people cherished even more than the good pleasure of their Lord, will not only be the cause but the instrument whereby they would receive a grievous punishment.

1294. The voice enforces the moral: “did you expect satisfaction or salvation from the treasures that you misused? Behold! they add to your torment!”

1295. This and the following verse must be read together. They condemn the arbitrary and selfish conduct of the Pagan Arabs, who, because there was a long-established custom of observing four months as those in which fighting was forbidden, changed the months about or added or deducted months when it suited them, to get an unfair advantage over the enemy. The four Prohibited Months were: Zul-qa'dah, Zul-hijjah, Muharram, and Rajab. If it suited them they postponed one of these months, and so a prohibited month became an ordinary month: while their opponents might hesitate to fight, they got an undue advantage. It also upset the security of the Month of Pilgrimage. This very ancient usage made for fair dealing all round, and its infraction by the Pagans is condemned.

The question of a solar astronomical year as against the lunar Islamic year does not arise here. But it may be noted that the Arab year was roughly luni solar like the Hindu year, the months being lunar and the intercalation of a month every three years brought the year nearly but not accurately up to the solar reckoning. From the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage (A.H. 10) the Islamic year was definitely fixed as a purely lunar year of roughly 354 days, the months being calculated by the actual appearance of the moon. After that, every month of the Islamic year came about 11 days earlier in the solar year, and thus the Islamic months travelled all round the seasons and the solar year.

1296. The Muslims were at a disadvantage on account of their scruples about the Prohibited Months. They are told not to wrong themselves in this. If the Pagans fought =

Therein, and fight the Pagans
All together as they
Fight you all together.
But know that Allah
Is with those who restrain
Themselves.

37. Verily the transposing¹²⁹⁷
(Of a prohibited month)
Is an addition to Unbelief:
The Unbelievers are led
To wrong thereby: for they make
It lawful one year,
And forbidden another year,
In order to agree with the number
Of months forbidden by Allah
And make such forbidden ones
Lawful. The evil of their course
Seems pleasing to them.¹²⁹⁸
But Allah guideth not
Those who reject Faith.

SECTION 6.

38. O ye who believe! what
Is the matter with you,¹²⁹⁹

كَافَّةً وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

إِنَّمَا النَّسِيءُ زِيَادَةٌ فِي الْكُفْرِ يُضِلُّ بِهِ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُجِلُّونَهُ عَامًا وَيُخَرِّمُونَهُ عَامًا
لِيُؤْطِئُوا عِدَّةَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ فَيُجِلُّوا مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ
زَيْنٌ لَهُمْ سُوءٌ أَعْمَكَ إِلَهُهُمُ وَاللَّهُ
لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَا لَكُمْ إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ

= in all months on one pretence or another, they were allowed to defend themselves in all months. But self-restraint was (as always) recommended as far as possible.

1297. To meddle with an old-established custom of close time for warfare during Prohibited or Sacred Months was not only a demonstration of the Unbelievers against the Muslims on account of their Faith, but was wrong and unjust in itself, as it abolished a wholesome check on unregulated warfare, and prejudiced the law-abiding side by arbitrary decisions.

1298. Cf. vi. 122. The lawless man thinks he is doing a great thing in getting the better of those who are careful to observe a law they believe in. But the lawless man loses the guidance of Faith he will therefore lose in the end.

1299. The immediate reference is to the expeditions to Tabūk (A.H. 9), for which see the Introduction to this Sūra. But the lesson is perfectly general. When a call is made on behalf of a great cause, the fortunate ones are those who have the privilege of responding to the call. The unfortunate ones are those who are so engrossed in their parochial affairs that they turn a deaf ear to the appeal. They are suffering from a spiritual disease.

That, when ye are asked
To go forth in the Cause of Allah,
Ye cling heavily to the earth?¹³⁰⁰
Do ye prefer the life
Of this world to the Hereafter?
But little is the comfort
Of this life, as compared
With the Hereafter.

39. Unless ye go forth,¹³⁰¹

He will punish you
With a grievous penalty,
And put others in your place;
But Him ye would not harm
In the least, For Allah
Hath power over all things.

40. If ye help not (the Prophet),

(It is no matter): for Allah
Did indeed help him,¹³⁰²
When the Unbelievers

أَفِرُّوْا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَتَأْتِلُم إِلَى الْأَرْضِ
أَرْضَيْتُمْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ
فَمَا مَتَّعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ
إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

إِلَّا تَنْفِرُوا يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا
وَيَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ وَلَا تَضُرُّهُ شَيْئًا
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذَا أَخْرَجَهُ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا تَائِفًا ثَنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا

1300. The choice is between two courses: will you choose a noble adventure and the glorious privilege of following your spiritual leader, or grovel in the earth for some small worldly gain or for fear of worldly loss? The people who hesitated to follow the call of Tabūk were deterred by (1) the heat of the summer, in which the expedition was undertaken on account of the threat to the existence of the little community, and (2) the fear of losing the fruit harvest, which was ripe for gathering.

1301. *Tanfīrā* = go forth, march onward, be ready to strive and suffer. For this is the condition of all progress in the spiritual and moral, as well as in the physical, world. According to the homely English proverb, God helps those who help themselves. Inactivity and lethargy are fatal. No one can rest on his oars. Man is not necessary to Allah, but Allah is necessary to man. If a nation receives favours and fails to deserve them, it will be replaced by another: as has so often happened in history. We may take this as a special warning to Islamic nations.

1302. The Tabūk expedition was not a failure. Though some hesitated, many more joined in. But a more striking example was when the Prophet was hunted out of Makkah and performed his famous *Hijrat*. His enemies plotted for his life. He had already sent his followers on to Madinah. Alī had volunteered to face his enemies in his house. His single companion was Abū Bakr. They two concealed themselves in the cave of *Thaur*, three miles from Makkah, for three nights, with the enemy prowling around in great numbers in fruitless search of them. "We are but two," said Abū Bakr. "Nay," said Muḥammad, "for Allah is with us." Faith gave their minds peace, and Allah gave them safety. They reached Madinah, and a glorious chapter opened for Islam. The forces that helped them were not seen, but their power was irresistible.

Drove him out: being
 The second of the two¹³⁰³
 They two were in the Cave,
 And he said to his companion,
 "Have no fear, for Allah
 Is with us": then Allah
 Sent down His peace upon him,¹³⁰⁴
 And strengthened him with forces
 Which ye saw not, and humbled¹³⁰⁵
 To the depths the word
 Of the Unbelievers.
 But the word of Allah
 Is exalted to the heights:
 For Allah is Exalted in might, Wise.

41. Go ye forth, (whether equipped)¹³⁰⁶

Lightly or heavily, and strive
 And struggle, with your goods
 And your persons, in the Cause
 Of Allah. That is best
 For you, if ye (but knew).

42. If there had been

Immediate gain (in sight),
 And the journey easy,
 They would (all) without doubt
 Have followed thee, but
 The distance was long,
 (And weighed) on them.

فَالْفَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَخَظَرْ
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ
 عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ
 كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَى
 وَكَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ
 حَكِيمٌ

أَنْفِرُوا خِفَافًا وَثِقَالاً وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ
 وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
 تَعْلَمُونَ

لَوْ كَانَ عَرَضًا قَرِيبًا وَسَفَرًا قَاصِدًا لَاتَّبَعُوكَ
 وَلَكِنْ بَعُدَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الشُّقَّةُ وَسَيَحْلِفُونَ
 بِاللَّهِ لَوِ اسْتَطَعْنَا لَخَرَجْنَا مَعَكُمْ يُهْلِكُونَ
 أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ

1303. "The second of two," which afterwards became Abū Bakr's proud title.

1304. Cf. ix. 26.

1305. The superlatives in the Arabic I have rendered by the periphrasis, "humbled to the depths" and "exalted to the heights," as they accord better with the genius of the English language. The enemies of Islam had boasted that they would root it out: the result showed them up as ridiculous and despicable.

1306. *Whether equipped lightly or heavily*: to be taken both literally and metaphorically. All were invited, and they were to bring such resources as they had, -light-armed or heavy-armed, on foot or mounted, experienced men for posts of danger, raw men for duties for which they were fit. All would and should help. Even those who were too old or feeble to go could contribute such money or resources as they had.

They would indeed swear
By Allah, "If we only could,
We should certainly
Have come out with you:"
They would destroy their
own souls,¹³⁰⁷
For Allah doth know
That they are certainly lying.

SECTION 7.

43. God give thee grace!¹³⁰⁸ Why
Didst thou grant them exemption
Until those who told the truth
Were seen by thee in a clear light,
And thou hadst proved the liars?
44. Those who believe in Allah
And the Last Day ask thee
For no exemption from fighting
With their goods and persons.
And Allah knoweth well
Those who do their duty.

عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْكَ لِمَ أَذِنْتَ لَهُمْ حَتَّى يَسْبِغَ لَكَ
الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَتَعْلَمَ الْكَذِبِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

لَا يَسْتَفِذُونَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ أَنْ يُجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُنْفِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

1307. The arts and excuses of the Hypocrites are here exposed. If there had been booty in sight or an easy walk-over, they would have come. All their oaths are false, and in taking the false oaths they are destroying their spiritual life. Indeed the backsliders are jeopardising their own physical lives in hanging back. If the enemy succeeded, they would all suffer.

1308. Literally, "Allah give thee forgiveness!" But there is no question of fault here, and Imâm Râzi understands the expression to mean an exclamation,—as one might say in English, "God bless you!" In Shakespeare "God save you!" is a simple friendly greeting, without any question of danger: *e. g.*, in "Much Ado about Nothing." iii. 2, 82. Note that in Q. iii. 152, last clause, "forgiveness" is put in juxtaposition to "grace" as having closely allied meanings. What the Holy Prophet had done in the Tabûk expedition was that he had been granting exemptions which may appear from a military point of view too liberal. He was not actuated by motives of kindness as well as policy:—kindness, because, in the urgency of the moment he did not wish any one who had a real excuse to be refused exemption: and policy, because, if any one did not come with hearty good-will, he would be a burden instead of a help to the army. The policy was justified, because in fact 30,000 men or more followed him. But that did not in any way justify the slackers, and in a review of the position, the slackers and hypocrites are justly condemned.

45. Only those ask thee for exemption
Who believe not in Allah
And the Last Day, and
Whose hearts are in doubt,
So that they are tossed¹³⁰⁹
In their doubts to and fro.

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ وَازْتَابَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فَهُمْ
فِي رَبِّهِمْ يَرْتَدُّونَ ﴿١٥﴾

46. If they had intended
To come out, they would
Certainly have made
Some preparation therefor:
But Allah was averse
To their being sent forth;
So He made them lag behind,
And they were told,
"Sit ye among those
Who sit (inactive)."

﴿١٦﴾ وَلَوْ أَرَادُوا الْخُرُوجَ لَأَعَدُّوا لَهُ عُدَّةً
وَلَكِنْ كَرِهَ اللَّهُ انْبِعَاثَهُمْ فَثَبَّطَهُمْ
وَقِيلَ أَقْعُدُوا مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

47. If they had come out
With you, they would not
Have added to your (strength)
But only (made for) disorder,
Hurrying to and fro in your midst¹³¹⁰
And sowing sedition among you,
And there would have been
Some among you
Who would have listened to them.
But Allah knoweth well
Those who do wrong.

لَوْ خَرَجُوا فِىكُمْ مَا زَادُوكُمْ إِلَّا خَبَالًا
وَلَا أَتَوْا بِمُقَدِّمٍ لَّكُمْ يَبْغُونَكُمْ
الْفِتْنَةَ وَفِىكُمْ سَمْعُونَ لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ
عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

48. Indeed they had plotted
Sedition before, and upset
Matters for thee,-until
The Truth arrived, and the Decree
Of Allah became manifest,

لَقَدْ ابْتَغَوُا الْفِتْنَةَ مِن قَبْلُ وَقَلَّبُوا لَكَ
الْأُمُورَ حَتَّى جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَظَهَرَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَهُمْ
كَرِهُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

1309. Doubt takes away all stability of conduct, while Faith makes a man firm in action and cool and collected in mind.

1310. *Khilal* has more than one meaning, but I follow the interpretation of Rāgib and the majority of accepted Commentators, who take it to mean "in your midst".

Much to their disgust.¹³¹¹

49. Among them is (many) a man
Who says: "Grant me exemption
And draw me not¹³¹²
Into trial." Have they not
Fallen into trial already?
And indeed Hell surrounds
The Unbelievers (on all sides).

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَقُولُ أَتَذُنُنِي وَلَا تُفْتِنِي
أَلَا فِي الْفِتْنَةِ سَقَطُوا وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ
لَمُحِيطَةٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50. If good befalls thee,
It grieves them; but if
A misfortune befalls thee,
They say, "We took indeed
Our precautions beforehand,"
And they turn away rejoicing.

إِنْ تُصِيبَكَ حَسَنَةٌ فُسَوْهُمْ
وَإِنْ تُصِيبَكَ مُصِيبَةٌ يَقُولُوا قَدْ أَخَذْنَا
أَمْرًا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَيَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51. Say: "Nothing will happen to us
Except what Allah has decreed
For us: He is our Protector":
And on Allah let the Believers
Put their trust.

قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ
اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ
فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

52. Say: "Can you expect for us
(Any fate) other than one
Of two glorious things—
(Martyrdom or victory)?"

قُلْ هَلْ تَرْتَبِصُونَ بِنَا إِلَّا إِحْدَى الْحُسَيْنَيْنِ
وَتَحْنُنْ نَرْتَبِصُ بِكُمْ أَنْ يُصِيبَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابٍ

1311. Evil plotters against Truth are only too glad to get an opportunity of meddling from within with affairs which they want to spoil or upset. They plot from outside, but they like to get into the inner circle, that their chances of intrigue may be all the greater. They are, however, unwilling to incur any danger or any self-sacrifice. Their whole activities are directed to mischief. Great wisdom is required in a leader to deal with such a situation, and the best of such leaders must need divine guidance, as was forthcoming in this case.

1312. *Fitnat*, as explained in n. 1198, viii. 25, may mean either trial or temptation, or else tumult, turmoil, or sedition. The Commentators here take the former meaning, and explain that some Hypocrites claimed exemption from service in the Tabūk expedition in the direction of Syria on the plea that they could not withstand the charms of Syrian women and ought best to stay at home. The answer is: "But you have already fallen into temptation here by refusing service and disobeying the call. But perhaps the other meaning of "turmoil" may also be permissible as a secondary echo; in that case they object to be drawn into the turmoil of war, but they are told that they are already in a moral turmoil in advancing a disingenuous plea. In using the English word "trial" in the translation, I have also had in my mind the two shades of meaning associated with that word in English.

But we can expect for you
Either that Allah will send
His punishment from Him
Or by our hands. So wait
(Expectant); we too
Will wait with you."¹³¹³

53. Say: "Spend (for the Cause)
Willingly or unwillingly:¹³¹⁴
Not from you will it be
Accepted: for ye are indeed
A people rebellious and wicked."

54. The only reasons why
Their contributions are not
Accepted are: that they reject
Allah and His Messenger;
That they come not to prayer
Save lazily and that
They offer contributions unwillingly.

55. Let not their wealth
Nor their children¹³¹⁵

مِنْ عِنْدِهِ أَوْ يَأْتِيَنَا فَنَرَبِّصُوا
إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُتَرَبِّصُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

قُلْ أَفَقُوا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا لَن يُقْبَلَ مِنْكُمْ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ كُفْتُمْ قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَنْ تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ نَفَقَتُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ
كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الصَّلَاةَ
إِلَّا وَهُمْ كَسَالَى وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ
كَرْهُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ

1313. The waiting of the Unbelievers and that of the Believers are in different senses. The Unbelievers wish for disaster to the Believers, but the Believers will either conquer or die as martyrs in the Cause, in either case happy in the issue. The Believers expect punishment for the Unbelievers for their infidelity, either through their own instrumentality, or in some other way in Allah's Plan, and the Unbelievers would not like it in either case. Cf. vi. 158.

1314. The Hypocrites, who secretly plotted against Islam, might sometimes (and they did) make a show of making some contribution to the Cause in order to keep up their pretence. Their contributions were not acceptable, whether they seemed to give willingly or unwillingly, because rebellion and disobedience were in their hearts. Three reasons are specifically given for their rejection, in the next verse: (1) they did not believe; (2) their prayers were not earnest, but for mere show; and (3) in reality their hearts were not behind the contributions which they offered. Nothing is acceptable to Allah which does not proceed from a pure and sincere heart.

1315. If they appeared to be prosperous, with their purses and their quivers full (metaphorically), they were not to be envied. In reality their wealth and their sons might themselves be a snare: Cf. viii. 28. On this particular occasion this was proved to the hilt. The wealth of the Pagans filled them with pride, darkened their understanding, and led to their destruction. Their sons and followers adopted the Faith which their fathers had fought against, much to the chagrin of the fathers, whose spiritual death was even worse than their discomfiture in this world.

Dazzle thee: in reality
Allah's Wish is to punish them
With these things in this life,¹³¹⁶
And that their souls may perish
In their (very) denial of Allah.

لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَنَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ
وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56. They swear by Allah
That they are indeed
Of you: but they are not
Of you: yet they are afraid
(Of you).

وَيَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنْهُمْ لَيْسَ لَكُمْ وَمَا هُمْ بِكُمْ
وَلَكِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَفْرُقُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57. If they could find
A place to flee to,
Or caves, or a place
Of concealment, they would
Turn straightway thereto
With an obstinate rush.¹³¹⁷

لَوْ يَجِدُونَ مَلْجَأً أَوْ مَغْرَبًا أَوْ مَخْلًا
لَوَلُّوا إِلَيْهِ وَهُمْ يَجْمَحُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58. And among them are men
Who slander thee in the matter
Of (the distribution of) the alms.¹³¹⁸
If they are given part thereof,
They are pleased, but if not,
Behold! they are indignant!

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَلْمِزُكَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا مِنْهَا
رَضُوا وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطُوا مِنْهَا إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَخْطُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59. If only they had been content
With what Allah and His Messenger
Gave them, and had said,
"Sufficient unto us is Allah!
Allah and His messenger will soon
Give us of His bounty:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ
وَرَسُولُهُ وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا اللَّهُ
مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَرَسُولُهُ إِنَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَاغِبُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

1316. Cf. iii. 176-178.

1317. *Jamaḥa* = to be ungovernable, to run like a runaway horse, to rush madly and obstinately.

1318. *Ṣadaqa* = alms, that which is given in Allah's name, mainly to the poor and needy, and for the cognate purposes specified in the next verse but one: *Zakāt* is the regular and obligatory charity in an organised Muslim community, usually 2½ per cent, of merchandise and 10 per cent, on the fruits of the earth. There is a vast body of literature on this subject. The main points may be studied in the *Hidāya til furū*, of Shaikh Burhānud-dīn 'Alī. As against *zakat* the term *sadaqah* has a much wider connotation, and is inclusive of *zakat* as in the verse 60 of this Sura.

To Allah do we turn our hopes!"
(That would have been the right
Course).¹³¹⁹

SECTION 8.

60. Alms are for the poor
And the needy, and those
Employed to administer the (funds):
For those whose hearts
Have been (recently) reconciled
(To Truth); for those in bondage
And in debt; in the cause
Of Allah; and for the wayfarer:¹³²⁰
(Thus is it) ordained by Allah.
And Allah is full of knowledge
And wisdom.
61. Among them are men
Who molest the Prophet

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ
وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ
وَالْغَرَمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ
فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ

وَمِنْهُمْ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ النَّبِيَّ وَيَقُولُونَ

1319. Selfish men think that charitable funds are fair game for raids, but the Islamic standards on this subject are very high. The enforcement of such standards is always unpopular, and even the Holy Prophet was subjected to obloquy and slander for his strictness to principle. In doubtful cases, claimants who are disappointed should not blame the principles or those who enforce them, but put their trust in Allah, whose bounties are unbounded, and are given to all, whether rich or poor, according to their needs and their deserts. For every one it is excellent advice to say: deserve before you desire.

1320. Alms or charitable gifts are to be given to the poor and the needy and those who are employed in their service. That is, charitable, funds are not to be diverted to other uses, but the genuine expenses of administering charity are properly chargeable to such funds. Who are the needy? Besides the ordinary indigent, there are certain classes of people whose need is great and should be relieved. Those mentioned here are: (1) men who have been weaned from hostility to Truth, who would probably be persecuted by their former associates, and require assistance until they establish new connections in their new environment: (2) those in bondage, literally and figuratively: captives of war must be redeemed: slaves should be helped to freedom; those in the bondage of ignorance or superstition or unfavourable environment should be helped to freedom to develop their own gifts: (3) those who are held in the grip of debt should be helped to economic freedom: (4) those who are struggling and striving in Allah's Cause by teaching or fighting or in duties assigned to them by the Islamic State, who are thus unable to earn their ordinary living: and (5) strangers stranded on the way. All these have a claim to charity. They should be relieved by individual or organised effort, but in a responsible way. In this verse, the word *sadaqat* refers to obligatory charity (*zakat*). See n. 1318 above.

And say, "He is (all) ear."¹³²¹
 Say, "He listens to what is
 Best for you: he believes
 In Allah, has faith
 In the Believers, and is a Mercy
 To those of you who believe."
 But those who molest the Prophet
 Will have a grievous chastisement

هُوَ أَذُنٌ قُلٌّ أَذُنٌ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ
 وَيُؤْمِنُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِلَّذِينَ
 ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ
 لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾

62. To you they swear by Allah.
 In order to please you:
 But it is more fitting
 That they should please
 Allah and His Messenger,
 If they are Believers.

يَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَكُمْ لِيَرْضَوْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ
 وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُرْضَوْهُ إِنْ كَانُوا
 مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63. Know they not that for those
 Who oppose Allah and His
 Messenger,
 Is the Fire of Hell?—
 Wherein they shall dwell.
 That is the supreme disgrace.

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ مِنَ يُحَادِدُ اللَّهَ
 وَرَسُولَهُ فَأَبْدَلَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا
 ذَلِكَ الْخِزْيُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٣﴾

64. The Hypocrites are afraid¹³²²
 Lest a Sūra should be sent down
 About them, showing them what
 Is (really passing) in their hearts.
 Say: "Mock ye! But verily
 Allah will bring to light all
 That ye fear (should be revealed).

يَحْذَرُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ أَنْ تُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُورَةٌ
 تُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ قُلْ اسْتَهِزُّوْا
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُخْرِجٌ مَا تَحْذَرُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65. If thou dost question them,
 They declare (with emphasis):

وَلَيْن سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا

1321. The assonance of the Arabic words "ṣ-zūna" and "uzumun" is of course lost in the Translation. But the sense remains. Detractors of the Prophet said. "O! he listens to everybody!" "Yes," is the answer, "he listens for their good: he is a mercy and a blessing to all men of Faith, but specially to you (who are addressed)." The general statement is emphasised for the particular people addressed.

1322. The dissection of the motives of the Hypocrites alarmed them. For it meant that they would fail in their policy of having the best of both worlds and undermining the loyalty of the weaker members of the Muslim community. So they turn it off as a jest. But they are sharply rebuked: "Can you make such solemn matters subjects of playful jokes? Fie upon you! You are found out, and your guile is of no effect."

"We were only talking idly
And in play.": Say: "Was it
At Allah, and His Signs,
And His Messenger, that ye
Were mocking?"

نَحْوُكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ قُلْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَيْدِيهِمْ وَرَسُولُهُمْ
كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

66. Make ye no excuses:
Ye have rejected Faith
After ye had accepted it.
If We pardon some of you,
We will punish others amongst you,
For that they are sinners¹³²³

لَا تَعْذِرُوا أَقَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ إِنْ نَعْفَ
عَنْ طَائِفَةٍ مِنْكُمْ نُعَذِّبْ طَائِفَةً
بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

SECTION 9.

67. The Hypocrites, men and women,
Are alike:¹³²⁴
They enjoin evil, and forbid
What is just, and tighten¹³²⁵
Their purse's strings. They have
Forgotten Allah: so He¹³²⁶
Hath forgotten them. Verily
The Hypocrites are rebellious
And perverse.
68. Allah hath promised the Hypocrites
Men and women, and the rejecters,
Of Faith, the fire of Hell:
Therein shall they dwell:
Sufficient is it for them:

الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ
يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ نَسُوا اللَّهَ
فَنَسِيَهُمْ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ
هُمْ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْكُفَّارَ
نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا هِيَ حَسْبُهُمْ وَلَعْنُهُمْ
اللَّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

1323. See last note. Hypocrisy is a half-way house, a state of indecision in the choice between good and evil. Those who definitely range themselves with good obtain forgiveness: those who pass definitely to evil suffer the penalties of evil.

1324. Literally, "the Hypocrites... are of each other". The forms of hypocrisy may vary, but they are all alike, and they understand each other's hypocrisy. They hold together.

1325. The English phrase "close-fisted" would cover only a part of the meaning. The hand is the symbol of power, help, and assistance. This may be financial, or it may be in other ways. The Hypocrites pretend a great deal, but are of no use or real help to any one.

1326. Cf. vii. 51. and n. 1029. They ignore Allah: and Allah will ignore them.

For them is the curse of Allah.¹³²⁷
And an enduring punishment,—

69. As in the case of those
Before you: they were
Mightier than you in power,
And more flourishing in wealth
And children. They had
Their enjoyment of their portion:
And ye have of yours, as did
Those before you; and ye
Indulge in idle talk
As they did. They!—
Their works are fruitless
In this world and in the Hereafter,
And they are the
Losers.

70. Hath not the story reached them
Of those before them?—
The people of Noah, and 'Ād,¹³²⁸
And Thamūd; the people
Of Abraham, the men¹³²⁹
Of Midian, and the Cities
overthrown.¹³³⁰
To them came their messengers

كَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ كَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْكُمْ قُوَّةً
وَأكْثَرَ أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَدًا فَاسْتَمْتَعُوا بِخَلْقِهِمْ
فَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِخَلْقِكُمْ كَمَا اسْتَمْتَعَ الَّذِينَ
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ بِخَلْقِهِمْ وَخُضْتُمْ كَالَّذِي خَاضُوا
أُولَئِكَ حِطَّتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

الَّذِي بَاتِهِمْ نَبَأُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ
وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَهُمْ وَأَصْحَابِ
مَدْيَنَ وَالْمُؤْتَفِكَاتِ أَنْتُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ
كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

1327. "Curse," here as elsewhere, is deprivation of grace and mercy, brought about by the rejection of Allah by the Unbelievers.

1328. The story of Noah is told in vii. 59-64: of 'Ād in vii. 65-72; and of Thamūd in vii. 73-79; of Abraham in numerous places, but see specially vi. 74-82; of Midianites in vii. 85-93; and of Lot and the Cities of the Plain overthrown for their wickedness, in vii. 80-84.

1329. In the case of Noah and Abraham, the word I have translated as "people of..." is *qawm*: these prophets were messengers each to his own people or nation, as was also Hūd to the 'Ad people and Ṣāliḥ to the Thamūd people. The word used for the Midianites is *Aṣ-ḥāb-i-Madyan*, which I have translated "men of Midian" for want of a better word. The Midianites were for the greater part of their history nomads, with pasture grounds but no settled territory or town. The town of Madyan on the Gulf of 'Aqaba refers to much later times when the Midianites as a people had ceased to count. See n. 1053 to vii. 85.

1330. The Cities of Plain, Sodom and Gomorrah, to whom Lot preached in vain to desist from their abominations: vii. 80-84.

With Clear Signs. It is
Not Allah Who wrongs them,
But they wrong their own souls.

71. The Believers, men
And women, are protectors,
One of another: they enjoin
What is just, and forbid
What is evil: they observe
Regular prayers, pay
Zakat and obey
Allah and His Messenger.
On them will Allah pour
His mercy: for Allah
Is Exalted in power, Wise.
72. Allah hath promised to Believers,
Men and women, Gardens
Under which rivers flow,
To dwell therein,
And beautiful mansions
In Gardens of everlasting stay
But the greatest bliss
Is the Good Pleasure of Allah:
That is the supreme triumph

SECTION 10.

73. O Prophet! strive hard against
The Unbelievers and the Hypocrites,
And be firm against them.
Their abode is Hell,—
An evil refuge indeed.
74. They swear by Allah that they
Said nothing (evil), but indeed
They uttered blasphemy,
And they uttered it after accepting
Islam: and they meditated¹³³¹

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ
يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ
وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَٰئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسْكِنٌ طَيِّبٌ
فِي جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ
ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٧٢﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا وَدَّعَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ وَيْسَ الْمَصِيرِ ﴿٧٣﴾

يَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ
وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ وَهُمْ أَوِيَاءٌ لِّمَا نَزَّلُوا
وَمَا نَقَمُوا إِلَّا أَنْ أَغْنَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

1331. The reference is to a plot made by the Prophet's enemies to kill him when he was returning from Tabûk. The plot failed. It was all the more dastardly in that some of the conspirators were among the men of Madinah who were enriched by the general =

A plot which they were unable
To carry out: this revenge
Of theirs was (their) only return
For the bounty with which
Allah and His Messenger had enriched
Them! If they repent,
It will be best for them:
But if they turn back
(To their evil ways),
Allah will punish them
With a grievous chastisement
In this life and in the Hereafter:
They shall have none on earth
To protect or help them.

فَإِنْ يَتُوبُوا إِلَيْكَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُمْ وَإِنْ يَتَوَلَّوْا يَعْذِّبُهُمْ
اللَّهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ
فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿٧٤﴾

75. Amongst them are men
Who made a Covenant with Allah,
That if He bestowed on them
Of His bounty; they would give
(Largely) in charity, and be truly
Amongst those who are righteous.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ عٰهَدَ اللّٰهَ لَئِنْ ءَاتٰنَا
مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُوْنَنَّ
مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76. But when He did bestow
Of His bounty, they became
Misers, and turned back
(From their Covenant), averse
(From its fulfilment).

فَلَمَّآ ءَاتٰهُمْ مِّنْ فَضْلِهٖ بَخِلُوْا بِهٖ وَتَوَلَّوْا
وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77. So He hath put as a consequence¹³³²
Hypocrisy into their hearts,
(To last) till the Day whereon
They shall meet Him: because

فَاَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ اِلَى يَوْمٍ يَلْقَوْنَهٗ
بِمَا اَخْلَفُوْا اللّٰهَ مَا وَعَدُوْهُ وَبِمَا كَانُوْا
يَكْذِبُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

= prosperity that followed the peace and good government established through Islam in Madinah. Trade flourished: justice was firmly administered with an even hand. And the only return that these men could make was a return of evil for good. That was their revenge, because Islam aimed at suppressing selfishness, stood for the rights of the poorest and humblest, and judged worth by righteousness rather than by birth or position.

1332. If men are false to their covenants and words, the natural consequence will be hypocrisy to cover their falsehood. Such consequences will last till the Day of Judgment, when they will have to account for their deeds. They may think that they are deceiving men by their hypocrisy, but they cannot deceive Allah, to Whom all their most secret thoughts and plots and doings are known.

They broke their Covenant
With Allah, and because they
Lied (again and again).

78. Know they not that Allah
Doth know their secret (thoughts)
And their secret counsels,
And that Allah knoweth well
All things unseen?

79. Those who slander such
Of the Believers as give themselves
Freely to (deeds of) charity,
As well as those who give
According to their means,-
And throw ridicule on them,-¹³³³
Allah will throw back
Their ridicule on them:
And they shall have
A grievous chastisement

80. Whether thou ask
For their forgiveness,
Or not, (their sin is unforgivable):
If thou ask seventy times¹³³⁴
For their forgiveness, Allah
Will not forgive them:
Because they have rejected
Allah and His Messenger: and Allah
Guideth not those
Who are perversely rebellious.

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوَاهُمْ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿٧٨﴾

الَّذِينَ يَلْمِزُونَ الْمُطَّوِّعِينَ
مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ وَالَّذِينَ
لَا يَجِدُونَ إِلَّا جُهْدَهُمْ فَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنْهُمْ سَخِرَ اللَّهُ
مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٩﴾

أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ إِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ
سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ
كَفَرُوا بِآلِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

1333. When financial help is necessary for the Cause, every Muslim contributes what he can. Those who can afford large sums are proud to bring them in of their own free-will, and those who are very poor contribute their mite or their labour. Both kinds of gifts are equally precious because of the faith and good-will behind them, and only cynics will laugh at the scantiness of the one or the lavishness of the other. Sometimes they not only laugh, but attribute wrong motives to the givers. Such conduct is here reprimanded.

1334. An awful warning for those who actively oppose the Cause of Allah. The Holy Prophet was by nature full of mercy and forgiveness. He prayed for his enemies. But in such a case even his prayers are nullified by their attitude of rejecting Allah.

SECTION 11.

81. Those who were left behind
(In the Tabūk expedition)
Rejoiced in their sitting back
Behind the Messenger
Of Allah: they hated to strive
And fight, with their goods
And their persons, in the Cause
Of Allah: they said,
"Go not forth in the heat."¹³³⁵
Say, "The fire of Hell
Is fiercer in heat," If
Only they could understand!

82. Let them laugh a little:
Much will they weep:¹³³⁶
A recompense for the (evil)
That they do.

83. If, then, Allah bring thee back
To any of them, and they ask
Thy permission to come out
(With thee), say: "Never shall ye
Come out with me, nor fight
An enemy with me:
For ye preferred to sit
Inactive on the first occasion:
Then sit ye (now)
With those who stay behind."

84. Nor do thou ever pray
For any of them that dies,
Nor stand at his grave:¹³³⁷

فَرِحَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ بِمَقْعَدِهِمْ خَلْفَ رَسُولِ
اللَّهِ وَكَرِهُوا أَنْ يُجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ وَقَالُوا لَا تَنْفِرُوا فِي الْحَرِّ قُلْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ
أَشَدُّ حَرًّا لَوْ كَانُوا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلًا وَلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيرًا
جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

فَإِنْ رَجَعَكَ اللَّهُ إِلَى طَائِفَةٍ مِنْهُمْ فَاسْتَعَذُّوكَ
لِلْخُرُوجِ فَقُلْ لَنْ تُخْرَجُوا مَعِيَ أَبَدًا وَلَنْ تُقَاتِلُوا
مَعِيَ عَدُوًّا إِنَّكُمْ رَضِيتُمْ بِالْقُعُودِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ
فَأَقْعُدُوا مَعَ الْخَالِفِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

وَلَا تَصَلِّ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ مَاتَ أَبَدًا وَلَا تَقُمْ عَلَى قَبْرِهِ
إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَمَاتُوا

1335. The Tabūk expedition had to be undertaken hurriedly in the heat of summer, because of a threat or fear of Byzantine invasion. They marched from Madinah about the month of September or October in the solar calendar.

1336. They may sneer or ridicule or rejoice now: that will be only for a little: much will they have to weep for afterwards.

1337. On the death of a Muslim, it is the pious duty of every neighbouring Muslim who can, to assist in the simple funeral ceremonies,—the prayer for mercy before the body =

For they rejected Allah
And His Messenger, and died
In a state of perverse rebellion.

85. Nor let their wealth
Nor their children
Dazzle thee: Allah's Wish
Is to punish them
With these things in this world,
And that their souls may depart
While they are unbelievers¹³³⁸

86. When a Sūra comes down,
Enjoining them to believe
In Allah and to strive and fight
Along with His Messenger,
Those with wealth and influence
Among them ask thee
For exemption, and say:
"Leave us (behind): we
Would be with those
Who sit (at home)."

87. They prefer to be with (the women),
Who remain behind (at home):¹³³⁹
Their hearts are sealed
And so they understand not.

وَهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

وَلَا تُغْنِجُكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَأَوْلَادُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ
أَنْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ
وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

وَإِذَا أَنْزَلَتْ سُورَةٌ أَنْ آمَنُوا بِاللهِ وَجَاهِدُوا
مَعَ رَسُولِهِ اسْتَأْذَنَكَ أُولُوا الطَّوْلِ مِنْهُمْ
وَقَالُوا ذَرْنَا نَكُنْ مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

رَضُوا بِأَنْ يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ وَطُبِعَ
عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

= is consigned to the grave, and the consignment of the body to the grave, by a simple, solemn, and dignified ritual. For those who have shown hostility to Islam, this would not be seemly and is forbidden.

1338. Except for the omission of a single word ("life"), this verse repeats verse 55 above. But the repetition indicates the harmonious closing of the same argument in two aspects. In ix. 55 it occurred in connection with the reasons for refusing to receive the contributions of such persons to the expenses of an enterprise which though vital to Islam's defence was secretly opposed by such persons. Here (in ix. 85) it is a question of refusing to participate in the obsequies of such persons after their death: it is natural to omit the word "life" in this case.

1339. *Khawālif*, plural of *Khālifa*, those (feminine) who remain behind at home when the men go to war: women. There is a stinging taunt in this, a suggestion that such men were cowards, preferring to remain behind like women when stiff work was to be done by men in defending their homes. They were not only cowards, but fools: as they did not understand their own best interests. If the enemy got the better of their brethren, they would themselves be crushed. "Their hearts are sealed": the habits of cowardice and hypocrisy which they have adopted have become their second nature.

88. But the Messenger, and those
Who believe with him,
Strive and fight with their wealth
And their persons: for them
Are (all) good things:¹³⁴⁰
And it is they
Who will prosper.

لَيَكُنِ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ جَاهِدُوا
بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْخَيْرَاتُ
وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89. Allah hath prepared for them
Gardens under which rivers flow,
To dwell therein:
That is the supreme triumph.¹³⁴¹

أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٨٩﴾

SECTION 12.

90. And there were, among
The desert Arabs (also),
Men who made excuses
And came to claim exemption:
And those who were false
To Allah and His Messenger
(Merely) sat behind:¹³⁴²
Soon will a grievous chastisement
Seize the Unbelievers
Among them.

وَجَاءَ الْمُعَذِّرُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ لِيُؤْذَنَ لَهُمْ
وَقَعَدَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

1340. "Good things," and "prosperity," are to be understood both in the physical and in the highest spiritual sense as the next verse makes clear.

1341. In this verse there is a reminiscence, but not an exact repetition, of verse 72 above. This balances the parallel repetition or reminiscence in verse 85 above. See n. 1338. The symmetry of the argument is thus completed, as regards the Hypocrites of Madinah before we pass on to consider the case of the Hypocrites among the desert Bedouins in section 12.

1342. Not only had the Hypocrites a nest in Madinah, but their tactics affected some of the village or desert Bedouins, who loved war and would have followed a standard of war even if no question of Faith or a sacred Cause was involved. But some of them, though professing Islam, were frightened by the hardships of the Tabūk expedition and the prospect of meeting the trained armies of the great Roman (Byzantine) Empire. They made all sorts of lying excuses, but really their want of faith made them ineligible for being enlisted in a sacred Cause, in the terms of ix. 46-47 and ix. 53-54. Some came to make excuses: other did not even come, but sat at home, ignoring the summons.

91. There is no blame¹³⁴³

On those who are infirm,
Or ill, or who find
No resources to spend
(On the Cause), if they
Are sincere (in duty) to Allah
And His Messenger:
No ground (of complaint)
Can there be against such
As do right: and Allah
Is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

لَيْسَ عَلَى الضَّعَفَاءِ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرْضَى وَلَا عَلَى
الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ مَا يَنْفِقُونَ حَرَجٌ
إِذَا نَصَحُوا لِلَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ
مِنْ سَبِيلٍ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

92. Nor (is there blame)

On those who came to thee
To be provided with mounts.¹³⁴⁴
And when thou saidst,
"I can find no mounts
For you," they turned back,
Their eyes streaming with tears
Of grief that they had
No resources wherewith
To provide the expenses.

وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَا أَتَوْكَ لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ قُلْتَ
لَا أَجِدُ مَا أَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ تَوَلَّوْا وَأَعْيَتْهُمْ
فَیْضٌ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ حَزَنًا أَلَّا يَجِدُوا
مَا يَنْفِقُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

1343. Though active service in person or by contributing resources is expected in emergencies of every person who believes in the Cause, there are some who must necessarily be exempted without the least blame attaching to them. Such would be those who are weak in body on account of age, sex, infirmity, or illness. Personal service in their case is out of the question, but they could contribute towards expenses if they are able. But if they are too poor to afford even such assistance, they are excused. But in all cases the motive must be sincere, and there should be a desire to serve and do such duty as they can. With such motives people are doing good or right in whatever form they express their service: sometimes, in Milton's words, "they also serve who only stand and wait." In any case their purity of motive would get Allah's grace and forgiveness, and we must not criticise even if we thought they might have done more.

1344. *Hamala, yahmilu*, here seems to mean: to provide means of transport, viz., mounts (horses, camels, etc.) for riding, and perhaps beasts of burden for carrying equipment and baggage, suitable to the rank of those concerned. It may possibly mean other facilities for getting about, such as boots and shoes, or provisions: for an army's march depends upon all these things. Where people fight as volunteers for a cause, without an extensive war fund, those who can afford it provide such things for themselves, but those without means, yet anxious to serve, have to be left behind. Their disappointment is in proportion to their eagerness to serve.

93. The ground (of complaint)
Is only against such as claim
Exemption while they are rich.
They prefer to stay
With the (women) who remain
Behind: Allah hath sealed
Their hearts: so they know not¹³⁴⁵

﴿ إِنَّمَا السَّيْلُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْذِرُونَكَ
وَهُمْ أَغْنِيَاءُ رَضُوا بِأَنْ يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ
وَطَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾ (٩٣)

94. They will present their excuses
To you when ye return
To them. Say thou: "Present
No excuses: we shall not
Believe you: Allah hath already
Informed us of the true state
Of matters concerning you:
It is your actions that Allah
And His Messenger will observe:
In the end will ye
Be brought back to Him
Who knoweth what is hidden
And what is open:
Then will He show you
The truth of all
That ye did."

﴿ يَسْتَنْذِرُونَكَ إِلَيْكُمْ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ قُلْ
لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا لَنْ تُؤْمِنَ لَكُمْ قَدْ نَبَأْنَا اللَّهَ
مِنْ أَخْبَارِكُمْ وَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ
ثُمَّ تَرْدُّونَ إِلَى عِلْمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ
فَيَنْبِتُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ (٩٤)

95. They will swear to you by Allah,
When ye return to them,
That ye may leave them alone.
So leave them alone:
For they are an abomination,
And Hell is their dwelling-place,-
A fitting recompense
For the (evil) that they did.

﴿ سَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَكُمْ إِذَا انْقَلَبْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ
لَتَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمْ فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ رَجِسٌ
وَمَآ وَهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا
يَكْسِبُونَ ﴾ (٩٥)

96. They will swear unto you,
That ye may be pleased with them.
But if ye are pleased with them.

﴿ يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ لَتَرْضُوا عَنْهُمْ فَإِنْ تَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ
فَاتَّ اللَّهُ لَا يَرْضَى عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴾ (٩٦)

1345. Cf. ix. 87, where similar phrases are used for a similar shirking of duty by towns-folk, while here we are considering the desert folk. It is not only a duty, but a precious privilege, to serve a great Cause by personal self-sacrifice. Those who shirk such an opportunity know not what they miss.

Allah is not pleased
With those who disobey.

97. The Bedouin Arabs
Are the worst in unbelief
And hypocrisy, and most fitted
To be in ignorance
Of the command which Allah
Hath sent down to His Messenger:
But Allah is All-Knowing,
All-Wise.

الْأَعْرَابُ أَشَدُّ كُفْرًا وَنِفَاقًا وَأَجْدَرُ
أَلَّا يَعْلَمُوا حُدُودَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

98. Some of the Bedouin Arabs
Look upon their payments¹³⁴⁶
As a fine, and watch
For disasters for you: on them
Be the disaster of Evil:
For Allah is He that heareth
And knoweth (all things).

وَمِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مَنْ يَتَّخِذُ مَا يُنْفِقُ مَغْرَمًا
وَيَتَرَبَّصُّ بِكُمُ الدَّوَائِرَ عَلَيْهِمْ دَائِرَةُ السَّوْءِ
وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

99. But some of the Bedouin Arabs
Believe in Allah and the Last Day,
And look on their payments
As pious gifts bringing them
Nearer to Allah and obtaining
The prayers of the Messenger.
Aye, indeed they bring them
Nearer (to Him): soon will Allah
Admit them to His Mercy:¹³⁴⁷
For Allah is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

وَمِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ وَيَتَّخِذُ مَا يُنْفِقُ قُرْبًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
وَصَلَوَاتِ الرَّسُولِ ۚ أَلَا إِنَّهَا قُرْبَةٌ لَهُمْ
سِوَا ذَلِكَ هُم مِّنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ
عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٩﴾

1346. The payments refer to the regular Charity established by Islam—the obligatory alms. If you look upon them as a fine or a burden, their virtue is lost. If you rejoice that you have there an opportunity of helping the Community to maintain its standards of public assistance and to suppress the unseemly beggary and loathsome importunity whose relief is only governed by motives of getting rid of awkward obstacles on the way, then your outlook is entirely different. You wish for organised and effective efforts to solve the problems of human poverty and misery. In doing so, you get nearer to Allah, and you earn the good wishes and prayers of godly men, led by our holy Leader Al-Mustafā.

1347. The Mercy of Allah is always present, as the sun is always shining. But when we have prepared ourselves to receive it, we come to the full enjoyment of it, as a man who was in a shade comes out by his effort into the open, and basks in sunshine.

SECTION 13.

100. The vanguard (of Islam)-¹³⁴⁸

The first of those who forsook
(Their homes) and of those
Who gave them aid, and (also)
Those who follow them
In (all) good deeds.-
Well-pleased is Allah with them,
As are they with Him:
For them hath He prepared
Gardens under which rivers flow,¹³⁴⁹
To dwell therein for ever:
That is the supreme Triumph.

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ
وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ
اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا
ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٠٠﴾

101. Certain of the desert Arabs

Round about you are Hypocrites,
As well as among
The Madinah folk:¹³⁵⁰ they are
Obstinate in hypocrisy: thou
Knowest them not: We know them:
Twice shall We punish them:¹³⁵¹

وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مُتَفِقُونَ
وَمِنَ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ مَرَدُّو عَلَى الْإِنْفَاقِ لَا تَعْلَمُهُمْ
نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ سَنُعَذِّبُهُمْ مَّرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّوْنَ
إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾

1348. The vanguard of Islam-those in the first rank-are those who dare and suffer for the Cause and never flinch. The first historical examples are the Muhājirs and the Anṣār. The Muhājirs-those who forsook their homes in Makkah and migrated to Madinah, the Holy Prophet being among the last to leave the post of danger, are mentioned first. Then come the Anṣār, the Helpers, the citizens of Madinah who invited them, welcomed them, and gave them aid, and who formed the pivot of the new Community. Then are mentioned all who follow them in good deeds: not only the early heroes and ordinary men and women who had been Companions of the Prophet or had seen him, but men and women in all ages who have lived noble lives. In spite of all their sacrifice and suffering they rejoice in the precious gift of the Good Pleasure of Allah, and their Salvation is the Supreme Felicity which such Good Pleasure gives.

1349. Note the description of the final accomplishment of the destiny of man. In mathematical science it would be like a letter or formula which would sum up a long course of reasoning. In this very Sūra it occurs before in ix. 72 and ix. 89, where see n. 1341.

1350. The desert Arabs were not all simple folk. There were cunning hypocrites among them: both among certain tribes encamped round about Madinah and certain others in Madinah itself.

1351. Their punishment in this world was double, viz., not only in their discomfiture, but because in their obstinate ignorance, they failed to understand the accomplished facts, while cleverer men realised that their hostility to Islam was hopeless. In addition to their discomfiture in this life, they would have to meet the penalties to come.

And in addition shall they be
Sent to a grievous Chastisement

102. Others (there are who) have
Acknowledged their wrong-doings:
They have mixed an act
That was good with another¹³⁵²
That was evil. Perhaps Allah
Will turn unto them (in mercy):
For Allah is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

وَأَآخَرُونَ اعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا عَمَلًا صَالِحًا
وَأَعْمَرَ سَيِّئًا عَسَىٰ اللَّهُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103. Of their wealth take alms.
That so thou mightest
Purify and sanctify them;
And pray on their behalf.
Verily thy prayers are a source
Of security for them:
And Allah is One
Who heareth and knoweth.

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا
وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ
وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾

104. Know they not that Allah
Doth accept repentance from
His votaries and receives
Their gifts of charity, and that
Allah is verily He,
The Oft-Returning, Most Merciful?

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ
وَيَأْخُذُ الصَّدَقَاتِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ
الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105. And say: "Work (righteousness)."¹³⁵³
Soon will Allah observe your work,
And His Messenger, and the
Believers:

وَقُلْ أَعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَىٰ اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ
وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عِلِّيِّ الْعَلِيِّ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ

1352. There were some whose will was weak and succumbed to evil, although there was much good in them. To them is held out the promise of forgiveness if they would repent and undertake all acts of Muslim charity, which would purify their souls, aided by the prayers of Allah's Messenger. Then would they get the Peace that comes from purity and right conduct.

1353. The repentant should be encouraged, after their repentance, to amend their conduct. The kindly interest of their brethren in them will strengthen them in virtue and blot out their past. When they go back into Eternity, they will understand the healing grace which saved them, just as the evil ones will then have their eyes opened to the real truth of their spiritual degradation (ix. 94). The similar words, in verse 84 and here, clench the contrast.

Soon will ye be brought back
To the Knower of what is
Hidden and what is open:
Then will He show you
The truth of all that ye did."

106. There are (yet) others,
Held in suspense for the command
Of Allah, whether He will
Punish them, or turn in mercy¹³⁵⁴
To them: and Allah
Is All-Knowing, Wise.

107. And there are those¹³⁵⁵
Who put up a mosque
By way of mischief and infidelity—
To disunite the Believers—
And in preparation for one¹³⁵⁶
Who warred against Allah
And His Messenger aforetime.
They will indeed swear
That their intention is nothing

بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

وَأَخْرُوتُ مُرْجُونَ لِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِمَّا يُعَذِّبُهُمْ
وَإِمَّا يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مَسْجِدًا ضِرَارًا وَكُفْرًا
وَتَفْرِيقًا بَيْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِزْوَادًا لِمَنْ
حَارَبَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَيَحْلِفُنَّ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا
إِلَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَاللَّهُ يُشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

1354. Three categories of men are mentioned, whose faith was tested and found wanting in the Tabūk affair, but their characteristics are perfectly general, and we may here consider them in their general aspects: (1) the deep-dyed hypocrites, who when found out make excuses because otherwise they will suffer ignominy; they are unregenerate and obstinate, and there is no hope for them (ix. 101); (2) there are those who have lapsed into evil, but are not altogether evil; they repent and amend, and are accepted (ix. 102-105); and (3) there are doubtful cases, but Allah will judge them (ix. 106). A fourth category is mentioned in ix. 107, which will be discussed later.

1355. Three categories of Hypocrites having already been mentioned (n. 1354), a fourth class of insidious evil-doers is now mentioned, whose type is illustrated in the story of the Qubāa "Mosque of mischief (*dhirār*)". Qubāa is a suburb of Madinah about three miles to the south-east. When the Holy Prophet arrived at Madinah for Hijrat, he rested four days in Qubāa before entering the town of Madinah. Here was built the first mosque, the "Mosque of Piety" to which he frequently came during his subsequent stay in Madinah. Taking advantage of these sacred associations, some Hypocrites of the Tribe of Banī Ganam built an opposition mosque in Qubāa, pretending to advance Islam. In reality they were in league with a notorious enemy of Islam, one Abū 'Amir, who had fought against Islam at Uhūd and who was now, after the battle of Hunain (A.H. 9), in Syria; his confederates wanted a mosque for him to come to, but it would only be a source of mischief and division, and the scheme was disapproved.

1356. Abū 'Amir, surnamed the *Rāhib* (Monk), as he had been in touch with Christian monks. See last note.

But good; but Allah doth declare
That they are certainly liars.

108. Never stand thou forth therein.
There is a mosque whose
foundation¹³⁵⁷

Was laid from the first day
On piety; it is more worthy
Of thy standing forth (for prayer)
Therein. In it are men who
Love to be purified; and Allah
Loveth those who make
themselves pure.¹³⁵⁸

109. Which then is best?—he that
Layeth his foundation
On piety to Allah
And His Good Pleasure?—or he
That layeth his foundation
On an undermined sand-cliff¹³⁵⁹
Ready to crumble to pieces?
And it doth crumble to pieces
With him, into the fire
Of Hell. And Allah guideth not
People that do wrong.

110. The foundation of those
Who so build is never free
From suspicion and shakiness¹³⁶⁰

لَا تَقُمْ فِيهِ أَبَدًا الْمَسْجِدُ أُسِّسَ عَلَى التَّقْوَىٰ
مِنْ أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَقُومَ فِيهِ فِيهِ رِجَالٌ
يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا اللَّهَ وَحْدَهُ
الْمُطَهَّرِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

أَفَمَنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَى تَقْوَىٰ مِنَ اللَّهِ
وَرِضْوَانٍ خَيْرٌ أَمْ مَنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَى شَفَا
جُرْفٍ هَارٍ فَاتَّخِذَهُ يَدِيهِ فَإِنْ جَاءَهُ مِنْهُ
الْقَوْمُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

لَا يَزَالُ بُنْيَانُهُمُ الَّذِي بَنَوْا رِيبَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
إِلَّا أَنْ تَقَطَّعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

1357. The original "Mosque of Piety" built by the Holy Prophet himself.

1358. The true Muslim must be pure in body, mind, and heart. His motives should always be sincere, and his religion without any alloy of worldly gain.

1359. A man who builds his life on Piety (which includes sincerity and the purity of all motives) and his hopes on the Good Pleasure of Allah, builds on a firm foundation of rock that will never be shaken. In contrast to him is the man who builds on a shifting sand-cliff on the brink of an abyss, already undermined by forces which he does not see. The cliff and the foundations all crumble to pieces along with him, and he is plunged into the Fire of misery from which there is no escape.

1360. "Their hearts cut to pieces" i.e., they meet their death. The parable is continued further. The heart of man is the seat of his hopes and fears, the foundation of his moral and spiritual life. If that foundation is on an undermined sand-cliff already crumbling to pieces, what security or stability can he have? He is being shaken by alarms =

In their hearts, until
Their hearts are cut to pieces.
And Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.

SECTION 14.

111. Allah hath purchased of the the
Believers

Their persons and their goods;
For theirs (in return)
Is the Garden (of Paradise):¹³⁶¹
They fight in His Cause,
And slay and are slain:
A promise binding on Him
In Truth, through the Torah,
The Gospel, and the Qur-ān:¹³⁶²
And who is more faithful
To his Covenant than Allah?

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ
وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِآثَ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ
حَقًّا فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ
وَمَنْ أَوْفَ بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَبِشِرُوا
بِيعْتِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُمْ بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ
الْعَظِيمُ﴾

= and suspicions and superstitions, until like the edge of a sand-cliff they are cut clean away and fall into a heap of ruin and his spiritual life and all its land-marks are destroyed.

1361. In a human bargain both sides give something and receive some advantage. In the divine bargain of Allah with man, Allah takes man's will and soul and his wealth and goods, and gives him in return ever-lasting Felicity. Man fights in Allah's Cause and carries out His will. All that he has to give up is the ephemeral things of this world, while he gains eternal salvation, the fulfilment of his highest spiritual hopes,—a supreme achievement indeed.

1362. We offer our whole selves and our possessions to Allah, and Allah gives us Salvation. This is the true doctrine of redemption: and we are taught that this is the doctrine not only of the Qur-ān but of the earlier Revelations,—the original Law of Moses and the original Gospel of Jesus. Any other view of redemption is rejected by Islam, especially that of corrupted Christianity, which thinks that some other person suffered for our sins and we are redeemed by his blood. It is our self-surrender that counts, not other people's merits. Our complete self-surrender may include fighting for the cause, both spiritual and physical. As regards actual fighting with the sword there has been some difference in theological theories at different times, but very little in the practice of those who framed those theories. The Jewish wars were ruthless wars of extermination. The Old Testament does not mince matters on this subject. In the New Testament St. Paul, in commending the worthy fruits of Faith, mentions Gideon, Barak, and other warriors of the Old Testament as his ideals, "Who through faith subdued kingdoms... waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens..." (Hebrews, xi. 32-34). The monkish morality of the Gospels in their present form has never been followed by any self-respecting Christian or other nation in history. Nor is it common-sense to ignore lust of blood in unregenerate man as a form of evil which has to be combated "within the limits, set by Allah" (Q. ix. 112).

Then rejoice in the bargain
Which ye have concluded:
That is the achievement supreme.

112. Those that turn (to Allah)¹³⁶³
In repentance; that serve Him,
And praise Him; that wander
In devotion to Cause of Allah;
That bow down and prostrate
themselves
In prayer; that enjoin good
And forbid evil; and observe
The limits set by Allah.-
(These do rejoice). So proclaim
The glad tidings to the Believers.

113. It is not fitting,
For the Prophet and those
Who believe, that they should
Pray for forgiveness
For Pagans, even though
They be of kin, after it is
Clear to them that they
Are companions of the Fire.¹³⁶⁴

114. And Abraham prayed
For his father's forgiveness
Only because of a promise
He had made to him.¹³⁶⁵

الْمُتَّخِذُونَ الْغَنِيِّاتِ الْحَنِيدُونَ
الْمُسْتَكْبِحُونَ الرَّكْعَتُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّكَاهُونَ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَافِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ
وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

مَا كَانَتْ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا
لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أُولَىٰ قُرْبَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ
مَا بَيَّنَّ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١١٣﴾

وَمَا كَانَتْ أَسْتَغْفَرُ ابْنَهُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ إِلَّا عَنْ
مَوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَهَا إِيَّاهُ فَلَمَّا بَيَّنَّ لَهُ أَنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ
لِللَّهِ تَبَرَّأ مِنْهُ إِنَّ ابْنَ إِسْمَاعِيلَ لَأَوَدُ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٤﴾

1363. We are to rejoice that by giving up such small things as ourselves and our possessions we are to be rewarded with such a great thing as the eternal life of felicity. The truly righteous, whose lives in various aspects are described in this verse, do so rejoice. The good news is to be proclaimed to all Believers, including the weakest among us, so that they may profit by that example.

1364. This is usually understood to refer to the prayer for the dead, (1) if they died unrepentant after Islam was preached to them. (2) if they actively resisted or opposed the Faith to the last.

1365. Abraham and his unbelieving father are referred to in vi. 74. Apparently when Abraham was convinced that the conditions mentioned in the last note applied to his father, he gave up praying for him, as the physical bond was cut off by the spiritual hostility. For the promise to pray for his father, see xix. 47.

But when it became clear
To him that he was
An enemy to Allah, he
Dissociated himself from him:
For Abraham was most
Tender hearted, forbearing.¹³⁶⁶

115. And Allah will not mislead¹³⁶⁷
A people after He hath
Guided them until he makes clear
To them as to what
They should avoid,
For Allah hath knowledge
Of all things.

116. Unto Allah belongeth
The dominion of the heavens
And the earth. He giveth life
And He taketh it. Except for Him
Ye have no protector
Nor helper.

117. Allah turned with favour
To the Prophet, the Muhajirs.¹³⁶⁸
And the Anṣār,—who followed
Him in a time of distress,
After that the hearts of a part¹³⁶⁹

وَمَا كَانَتْ لِلَّهِ لِيُضِلَّ قَوْمًا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَاهُمْ
حَتَّىٰ يَبَيِّنَ لَهُم مَّا يَتَّقُونَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ
وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ
وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿١١٦﴾

لَقَدْ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ
وَالْأَنْصَارِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ فِي سَاعَةِ الْعُسْرَةِ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا كَادَ يَزِيغُ قُلُوبُ فَرِيقٍ مِنْهُمْ

1366. Abraham was loyal and tender-hearted, and bore with much that he disapproved, being in this a prototype of Al-Muṣṭafā, and it must have gone against his grain to cut off relations in that way. But it would obviously be wrong for a human being to entreat Allah for mercy on people who had finally rejected Allah.

1367. Allah's clear commands are given, so that Believers may not be misled by their human frailty into unbecoming conduct.

1368. Cf. ix. 100. The Muhājirs were the people who originally forsook their homes in Makkah and followed Al-Muṣṭafā in exile to Madinah. The Anṣār were the Madinah people who received them with honour and hospitality into their city. Both these groups were staunch supporters of Islam, and proved their Faith by great sacrifices. But in the difficult days of the Tabūk expedition some of them, not perversely, but out of lethargy and human weakness, had failed to follow the standard. They were forgiven, and they afterwards acquitted themselves with zeal.

1369. Note that the "swerving from duty" was merely an inclination due to the weakness of human nature in the face of new difficulties: that it only affected a part of the men for a time: and that it was overcome even in their case by the grace of Allah, =

Of them had nearly swerved
(From duty); but He turned
To them (also): for He is
Unto them Most Kind,
Most Merciful.

118. (He turned in mercy also)
To the three who were left
Behind; (they felt guilty)¹³⁷⁰
To such a degree that the earth
Seemed constrained to them,
For all its spaciousness,
And their (very) Souls seemed
Straitened to them,-
And they perceived that
There is no fleeing from Allah
(And no refuge) but to Himself.
Then He turned to them,
That they might repent:
For Allah is Oft-Returning,
Most Merciful.

ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّهُ بِهِمْ رَءُوفٌ

رَحِيمٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

وَعَلَى الثَّلَاثَةِ الَّذِينَ خُلِفُوا حَتَّى إِذَا صَافَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ
الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ وَصَافَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ
وَعُظِنُوا أَنْ لَا مَلْجَأَ مِنْ اللَّهِ إِلَّا إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ تَابَ
عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَسْتَوِيُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾

= so that they all did their duty, and were freely forgiven their incipient weakness, which they conquered. There were three exceptions, which are referred to in the next verse.

1370. *Left behind:* i.e., the acceptance of their repentance was delayed. Among the Faithful, the largest number consisted of those who were perfectly staunch and ever ready to do their duty. They obtained the love and good pleasure of Allah. Next came a few who wavered because their will was weak and they were daunted by the dangers and difficulties that faced them; Allah's saving grace protected them and they conquered their weakness, and did not fail in their duty; Allah forgave them and accepted their repentance. Lastly, in the illustration taken from the Tabūk affair, there were some who actually failed in their duty, not from contumacy or ill-will, but from thoughtlessness, slackness, and human weakness: they actually failed to obey the Holy Prophet's summons, and were naturally called on to explain, and were excluded from the life of the Community. Their mental state is here described graphically. Though the earth is spacious, to them it was constrained. In their own souls they had a feeling of constraint. In worldly affluence they felt poor in spirit. They realised that they could not flee from Allah, but could only find solace and refuge in coming back to Him. They freely repented and showed it in their deeds, and Allah freely forgave them and took them to His grace. Though illustrated by the particular examples of Ka'b, Marārah and Hilal, the lesson is perfectly general and is good for all times.

SECTION 15.

119. O ye who believe! Fear Allah
And be with those
Who are truthful.
120. It was not fitting
For the people of Madinah
And the Bedouin Arabs
Of the neighbourhood, to stay
behind
Allah's Messenger,
Nor to prefer their own lives
To his: because nothing
Could they suffer or do,
But was reckoned to their credit
As a deed of righteousness,—
Whether they suffered thirst,
Or fatigue, or hunger, in the Cause
Of Allah, or trod paths
To raise the ire of the Unbelievers,
Or gain any gain¹³⁷¹
From an enemy:
For Allah suffereth not
The reward to be lost
Of those who do good;—
121. Nor could they spend anything
(For the Cause)—small or great—
Nor cut across a valley,¹³⁷²

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا
مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

مَا كَانَ لِأَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُ
مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ أَنْ يَتَخَلَّفُوا عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَرْغَبُوا
بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ ؕ ذَٰلِك بِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يُصِيبُهُمْ
ظَمًا وَلَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا مَخْصَصَةٌ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَلَا يَبْطَلُونَ مَوْطِنًا يُعْزِطُ الْكُفَّارَ
وَلَا يَتَالَوْنَ مِنْ عَدُوٍّ نَيْلًا ؕ إِلَّا كَتِبَ لَهُمْ
بِهِ عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ نَفَقَةً صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً
وَلَا يَنْقُطُونَ وَادِيًا ؕ إِلَّا كَتِبَ لَهُمْ

1371. Again, the illustration is that of Tabūk, but the lesson is general. We must not hold our own comfort or lives dearer than that of our leader, nor desert him in the hour of danger. If we have true devotion, we shall hold our own lives or comfort cheap in comparison to his. But whatever service we render to the Cause of Allah, and whatever sufferings, hardships, or injuries we endure, or whatever resources we spend for the Cause,—all goes to raise our degree in the spiritual world. Nothing is lost. Our reward is far greater in worth than any little service we can render, or any little hardship we can suffer, or any little contributions we can make to the Cause. We "painfully attain to joy".

1372. *Cut across a valley*: this is specially mentioned, as denoting an individual act of heroism, dash, or bravery. To march with the troops along valleys, tread paths of danger along with our Comrades, is good and praiseworthy: Notice that both the things =

But the deed is inscribed
To their credit; that Allah
May requite them
With the best (possible reward).

122. It is not for the Believers
To go forth together:
If a contingent
From every expedition
Go forth
To devote themselves
To studies in religion,
And admonish the people
When they return to them,-
That thus they (may learn)¹³⁷³
To guard themselves (against evil).

SECTION 16.

123. O ye who believe! Fight
The Unbelievers who are near to
you¹³⁷⁴
And let them find harshness
In you: and know that Allah
Is with those who fear Him.

لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً
فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا
فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ يَلُونَكُمْ
مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ وَلْيَجِدُوا فِيكُمْ غِلْظَةً
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

= mentioned in this verse.- the spending of resources and the dashing across a valley-are individual acts, while those mentioned in the last verse are collective acts, which are in some ways easier. The individual acts having been mentioned, the next verse follows naturally.

1373. Fighting may be inevitable, and where a call is made by the ruler of an Islamic State, it should be obeyed. But fighting is not to be glorified to the exclusion of all else. Even among those who are able to go forth, a party should remain behind-for purposes of study, so that when the fighters return home, their minds may be attuned again to the more normal interests of religious life, under properly instructed teachers. The students and teachers are soldiers of the *Jihād* in their spirit of obedience and discipline.

1374. When conflict becomes inevitable, the first thing is to clear our surroundings of all evil, for it is only evil that we can rightly fight. To evil we must put up a stout and stiff resistance. Mealy-mouthed compromises are not right for soldiers of truth and righteousness. They are often a compound of cowardice, weariness, greed, and corruptibility.

124. Whenever there cometh down¹³⁷⁵

A Sūra, some of them say:

"Which of you has had
His faith increased by it?"

Yea, those who believe,—
Their faith is increased,
And they do rejoice.

125. But those in whose hearts¹³⁷⁶

Is a disease,—it will add doubt
To their doubt, and they will die
In a state of Unbelief

126. See they not that they

Are tried every year¹³⁷⁷

Once or twice? Yet they
Turn not in repentance,
And they take no heed.

127. Whenever there cometh down

A Sūra, they look at each other,
(Saying), "Doth anyone see you?"

Then they turn away:
Allah hath turned their hearts¹³⁷⁸

وَإِذَا مَا أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ
زَادَتْهُ هَذِهِ إِيمَانًا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا

فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَتْهُمْ
رِجْسًا إِلَىٰ رِجْسِهِمْ وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ

كَافِرُونَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

أَوَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّهُمْ يُفْتَنُونَ فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ
مَّرَّةً أَوْ مَرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ لَا يَتُوبُونَ وَلَا هُمْ

يَذْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

وَإِذَا مَا أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ نَّظَرَ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ
هَلْ يَرَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ ثُمَّ انْصَرَفُوا

1375. The incompatibility of Unfaith and Faith are contrasted in this section in respect of revelation and the divine teacher. The Unbelievers laugh at revelation, and say to each other mockingly: "Does this increase your faith?" To the Believer every new aspect of Allah's truth as revealed increases his faith, and wonder, and gratitude. He rejoices, because he gets added strength for life and achievement.

1376. Cf. ii. 10 and several similar passages. Just as the light, which to healthy eyes gives enlightenment, causes pain to the diseased eye, which emits unclean matter, so to those spiritually diseased. Allah's grace is unwelcome, and they put forth more doubts to cover their disease. And they die in their disease, and of their disease. Note the aptness of the metaphor.

1377. Yet, in spite of their infidelity, one or two chances are given them every year. The door is not closed to them. Yet they deliberately turn away, and take no heed of all the warnings which their own nature and the teaching and example of good men should give them.

1378. Even the Unbelievers, in their heart and conscience, feel uncomfortable when they turn away from Faith and Truth, and therefore their turning aside is figured by furtive glances, such as we may suppose literally to have been cast by the Hypocrites in the assemblies of the Holy Prophet. Then they slink away, feeling superior in their minds. And yet, if they only knew it, their contumacy deprives them of Allah's grace and light. They are turning Grace away, and when Allah withdraws it altogether, they perish utterly.

(From the light); for they
Are a people that understand not.

128. Now hath come unto you
A Messenger from amongst
Yourselves: it grieves him
That ye should suffer,
Ardently anxious is he
Over you: to the Believers
Is he most kind and merciful.¹³⁷⁹

129. But if they turn away,
Say: "Allah sufficeth me:
There is no god but He
On Him is my trust,-
He the Lord of the Throne
Supreme!"¹³⁸⁰

صَرَفَكَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ
عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ
تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿١٢٩﴾

1379. The tender heart of the Teacher is grieved that any among his flock should rush headlong to ruin. He watches ardently over them, and whenever any of them show signs of Faith, his kindness and mercy surround him and rejoice over him.

1380. But if the Message is rejected, he still proclaims the burning Faith of his heart, which is unquenchable. Allah is sufficient to all. To trust Him is to find the accomplishment of all spiritual desire. His grandeur is figured by a lofty Throne, supreme in glory!

Thus have we been led, through a notable incident in Al-Muṣṭafā's earthly career, to truths of the highest spiritual import.