

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRAT *Al-Māida*, 5

This sūra deals, by way of recapitulation, with the backsliding of the Jews and Christians from their pure religions, to which the coping stone was placed by Islam. It refers particularly to the Christians, and to their solemn Sacrament of the Last Supper, to whose true meaning they are declared to have been false.

As a logical corollary to the corruption of the earlier religions of Allah, the practical precepts of Islam, about food, cleanliness, justice, and fidelity are recapitulated.

The fourth verse contains the memorable declaration: "This day have I perfected your religion for you": which was promulgated in 10 H., during the Prophet's last Pilgrimage to Makkah. Chronologically it was the last verse to be revealed.

Summary.—Beginning with an appeal to fulfil, as sacred, all obligations, human and divine, it points to certain regulations about food, as conducive to a sober and social life, without superstition and without-bias or hatred (v. 1-5).

Cleanliness of body, and justice and uprightness of dealing are nearest to Piety (v. 6-11).

If the Jews and the Christians turned back from the Truth and violated their Covenants, they have had their warning (v. 12-26).

The murder of Abel by Cain is the type of the treatment which the just man suffers from the envious. There is punishment from Allah. The just man must not grieve (v. 27-43).

Muslims must do impartial justice, but must protect their own Brotherhood and their Faith from insult and scorn: they must appreciate piety, humility, and other good points among the Christians (v. 44-86).

They must enjoy with gratitude all that is good and lawful, but guard themselves against excess. Swearing, intoxication, gambling, violation of the Sanctuary, superstitions of all kinds, and false evidence are condemned (v. 87-108).

The miracles of Jesus, and how they were misused by those who bore his name (v. 109-120).

Al-Mā'ida, or The Table Spread.

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

1. O ye who believe!

Fulfil (all) obligations.⁶⁸²

Lawful unto you (for food)

Are all beasts of cattle

With the exceptions named:⁶⁸³

But animals of the chase

Are forbidden while ye

Are in the Sacred Precincts

Or in the state of pilgrimage.⁶⁸⁴

سُورَةُ الْمَائِدَةِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَوفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ أُحِلَّتْ
لَكُمْ بَيْعَتُ الْأَنْعَامِ إِلَّا مَوَاطِنَ عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ مُحِلِّي
الصَّيْدِ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١﴾

682. This line has been justly admired for its terseness and comprehensiveness. Obligations: *'uqud*: the Arabic word implies so many things that a whole chapter of Commentary can be written on it. First, there are the divine obligations that arise from our spiritual nature and our relation to Allah. He created us and implanted in us the faculty of knowledge and foresight: besides the intuition and reason which He gave us. He made Nature responsive to our needs, and His Signs in Nature are so many lessons to us in our own inner life: He further sent Messengers and Teachers, for the guidance of our conduct in individual, social, and public life. All these gifts create corresponding obligations which we must fulfil. But in our own human and material life we undertake mutual obligations express and implied. We make a promise: we enter into a commercial or social contract; we enter into a contract of marriage: we must faithfully fulfil all obligations in all these relationships. Our group or our State enters into a treaty; every individual in that group or State is bound to see that as far as lies in his power, such obligations are faithfully discharged. There are tacit obligations; living in civil society, we must respect its tacit conventions unless they are morally wrong, and in that case we must get out of such society. There are tacit obligations in the characters of host and guest, wayfarer of companion, employer or employed, etc., etc., which every man of Faith must discharge conscientiously. The man who deserts those who need him and goes to pray in a desert is a coward who disregards his obligations. All these obligations are interconnected. Truth and fidelity are parts of religion in all relations of life.

This verse is numbered separately from the succeeding verses.

683. That is, the exceptions named not only in the Qur-ān but in the Sunnah as well. See v. 3 below.

684. Cf. v. 94-96. Hunting and the use of game are forbidden "while ye are *hurumun*," i.e., while ye are (1) in the Sacred Precincts, or (2) in the special pilgrim garb (*ihrām*), as to which see n. 212, ii. 196. In most cases the two amount to the same thing. The Sacred Precincts are sanctuary both for man and beast.

For Allah doth command
According to His Will and Plan.⁶⁸⁵

2. O ye who believe!

Violate not the sanctity
Of the rites of Allah,⁶⁸⁶
Nor of the Sacred Month,⁶⁸⁷
Nor of the animals brought
For sacrifice, nor the garlands
That mark out such animals,
Nor the people resorting
To the Sacred House,⁶⁸⁸
Seeking of the bounty
And good pleasure
Of their Lord.
But when ye are clear
Of the Sacred Precincts⁶⁸⁹
And of the state of pilgrimage,
Ye may hunt
And let not the hatred
Of some people
In (once) shutting you out
Of the Sacred Mosque

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَحِلُّوا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ
وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ
وَلَا ءَامِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامَ يَنْبَغُونَ فَضُلًا مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ
وَرِضْوَانًا وَإِذَا حُلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ
شَنَاَنُ قَوْمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ
الْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ
وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿١٠﴾

685. Allah's commands are not arbitrary. His Will is the perfect Archetype or Plan of the world. Everything He wills has regard to His Plan, in which are reflected His perfect wisdom and goodness.

686. Cf. ii. 158, where Şafā and Marwa are called "Symbols (*sha'a'ir*) of Allah". Here the Symbols are everything connected with the Pilgrimage, viz., (1) the places (like Şafā and Marwa, or the Ka'ba or 'Arafāt, etc.); (2) the rites and ceremonies prescribed; (3) prohibitions (such as that of hunting, etc.); (4) the times and seasons prescribed. There is spiritual and moral dimension in all these. See notes on ii. 158, ii. 194-200.

687. The month of pilgrimage, or else, collectively, the four sacred months (ix. 36), viz., Rajab (7th), Zul-qa'dah (11th), Zul-hijjah (12th, the month of Pilgrimage), and Muharram (the first of the year). In all these months War was prohibited. Excepting Rajab the other three months are consecutive.

688. The immunity from attack or interference extended to the animals brought as offerings for sacrifice and the garlands or fillets or distinguishing marks which gave them immunity. They were treated as sacred symbols. And of course every protection or immunity was enjoyed by the Pilgrims.

689. This is the state opposite to that described in n. 684, i.e., when ye have left the Sacred Precincts, and have doffed the special pilgrim garb, showing your return to ordinary life.

Lead you to transgression
(And hostility on your part).⁶⁹⁰
Help ye one another
In righteousness and piety,
But help ye not one another
In sin and rancour:
Fear Allah: for Allah
Is strict in punishment.

3. Forbidden to you (for food)
Are: dead meat, blood,
The flesh of swine, and that
On which hath been invoked
The name of other than Allah,⁶⁹¹
That which hath been
Killed by strangling,
Or by a violent blow,
Or by a headlong fall,
Or by being gored to death;
That which hath been (partly)
Eaten by a wild animal;
Unless ye are able
To slaughter it (in due form),⁶⁹²
That which is sacrificed⁶⁹³

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخَنَازِيرِ وَمَا
أَهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَفَقَةُ وَالْمَوْفُوذَةُ
وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبْعُ إِلَّا مَا
ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا
بِالْأَرْوَاحِ ذَلِكُمْ فَسُقُ الْيَوْمَ يَيْسُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَحْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ
أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي
وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِي

690. See n. 205 to ii. 191. In the sixth year of the Hijra the Pagans, by way of hatred and persecution of the Muslims, had prevented them from access to the Sacred Mosque. When the Muslims were re-established in Makkah, some of them wanted to retaliate. Passing from the immediate event to the general principle, we must not retaliate or return evil for evil. The hatred of the wicked does not justify hostility on our part. We have to help each other in righteousness and piety, not in perpetuating feuds of hatred and enmity. We may have to fight and put down evil, but never in a spirit of malice or hatred, but always in a spirit of justice and righteousness.

691. Cf. ii. 173 and nn. 173 and 174. The prohibition of dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which other names than that of Allah have been invoked, has been there explained.

692. If an animal dies by strangling, or by a violent blow, or a headlong fall, or by being gored to death, or by being attacked by a wild animal, the presumption is that it becomes carrion, as the life-blood is congealed before being taken out of the body. But the presumption can be rebutted. If the life-blood still flows and the solemn mode of slaughter (*zabih*) in the name of Allah is carried out, it becomes lawful as food.

693. This was also an idolatrous rite, different from that in which a sacrifice was devoted to a particular idol or a false god.

On stone (altars);
(Forbidden) also is the division⁶⁹⁴
(Of meat) by raffling
With arrows: that is impiety.

This day have those who
Reject Faith given up
All hope of your religion:⁶⁹⁵
Yet fear them not
But fear Me.
This day have I
Perfected your religion⁶⁹⁶
For you, completed
My favour upon you,
And have chosen for you
Islam as your religion.

But if any is forced
By hunger, with no inclination
To transgression, Allah is
Indeed Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

4. They ask thee what is
Lawful to them (as food).⁶⁹⁷
Say: Lawful unto you
Are (all) things good and pure:
And what ye have taught
The beasts and birds of prey,
Training them to hunt in the manner
Directed to you by Allah:

مُحَصَّصَةٌ غَيْرُ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِئَلَّا يَفْانَ اللَّهُ عَفْوَراً

رَجِيمٌ

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ
وَمَا عَلَّمْتُكُمْ مِنَ الْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ يَعْلَمُونَهَا إِنَّمَا
عَلَّمَكُمُ اللَّهُ فَعَلُوا إِنَّمَا أَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاذْكُرُوا أَسْمَ
اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْقُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

694. Gambling of all kinds is forbidden; ii. 291. A sort of lottery or raffle practised by Pagan Arabs has been described in n. 241. Division of meat in this way is here forbidden, as it is a form of gambling.

695. So long as Islam was not organised, with its own community and its own laws, the Unbelievers had hoped to wean the Believers from the new Teaching. (Now that hope was gone, with the complete organisation of Islam).

696. The last verse revealed chronologically, marking the approaching end of Al-Mustafa's ministry in his earthly life.

697. The previous verse was negative; it defined what was not lawful for food, viz., things gross, or disgusting, or dedicated to superstition. This verse is positive: it defines what is lawful, viz., all things that are good and pure.

Eat what they catch for you,⁶⁹⁸
 But pronounce the name
 Of Allah over it: and fear
 Allah; for Allah is swift
 In taking account.

5. This day are (all) things
 Good and pure made lawful
 Unto you. The food
 Of the People of the Book⁶⁹⁹
 Is lawful unto you
 And yours is lawful
 Unto them.
 (Lawful unto you in marriage)
 Are (not only) chaste women
 Who are believers, but
 Chaste women among
 The People of the Book,⁷⁰⁰
 Revealed before your time, -

الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
 الْكِتَابَ حُلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حُلٌّ لَهُمْ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ
 مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
 مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ
 غَيْرُ مُسَفِّحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِي أَخْدَانٍ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ

698. In the matter of the killing for meat, the general rule is that the name of Allah, the true God should be pronounced as a rite in order to call our attention to the fact that we do not take life thoughtlessly but solemnly for food, with the permission of Allah, to whom we render the life back. The question of hunting is then raised. How can this solemn rite be performed when we send forth trained hawks, trained hounds, or trained cheetahs or other animals trained for the chase? They must necessarily kill at some distance from their masters. Their game is legalised on these conditions: (1) that they are trained to kill, not merely for their own appetite, or out of mere wantonness, but for their master's food; the training implies that something of the solemnity which Allah has taught us in this matter goes into their action; and (2) we are to pronounce the name of Allah over the quarry; this is interpreted to mean that the *Takbir* should be pronounced when the hawk or dog, etc., is released to the quarry.

699. The question is for food generally, such as is ordinarily "good and pure": in the matter of meat it should be killed with some sort of solemnity analogous to that of the *Takbir*. The rules of Islam in this respect being analogous to those of the People of the Book, there is no objection to mutual recognition, as opposed to meat killed by Pagans with superstitious rites. In this respect the Christian rule is the same: "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication." (Acts, xv. 29). Notice the bracketing of fornication with things unlawful to eat.

700. Islam is not exclusive. Social intercourse, including inter-marriage, is permitted with the People of the Book. A Muslim man may marry a woman from their ranks on the same terms as he would marry a Muslim woman, *i.e.*, he must give her an economic and moral status, and must not be actuated merely by motives of lust or physical desire. A Muslim woman may not marry a non-Muslim man, because her Muslim status would =

When ye give them
Their due dowers, and desire
Chastity, not lewdness.
Taking them as lovers.
If any one rejects faith,⁷⁰¹
Fruitless is his work,
And in the Hereafter
He will be in the ranks
Of those who have lost
(All spiritual good).

SECTION 2.

6. O ye who believe!
When ye prepare
For prayer, wash⁷⁰²
Your faces, and your hands
(And arms) to the elbows;
Rub your heads (with water);
And (wash) your feet
To the ankles.
If ye are in a state
Of ceremonial impurity,⁷⁰³
Bathe your whole body.
But if ye are ill,
Or on a journey,
Or one of you cometh

بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ وَهُوَ فِي
الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَسِرِينَ ﴿٥﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ
فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ
وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى
الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ
مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْغَايِطِ
أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا
صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ
وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ

= be affected; the wife ordinarily takes the nationality and status given by her husband's law. Any man or woman, of any race or faith, may, on accepting Islam, freely marry any Muslim woman or man, provided it be from motives of purity and chastity and not of lewdness.

701. As always, food, cleanliness, social intercourse, marriage and other interests in life, are linked with our duty to Allah and faith in Him. Duty and faith are for our own benefit, here and in the Hereafter.

702. These are the essentials of Wudhū, or ablutions preparatory to prayers, viz., (1) to bathe the whole face in water, and (2) both hands and arms to the elbows, with (3) a little rubbing of the head with water (as the head is usually protected and comparatively clean), and (4) the bathing of the feet to the ankles. In addition, following the practice of the Prophet, it is usual first to wash the mouth, and the nose before proceeding with the face, etc.

703. Cf. iv. 43 and n. 563. Ritual impurity arises from sex pollution.

From the privy
Or ye have been
In contact with women,
And ye find no water,
Then take for yourselves
Clean sand or earth,⁷⁰⁴
And rub therewith
Your faces and hands.
Allah doth not wish
To place you in a difficulty,
But to make you clean,
And to complete
His favour to you,
That ye may be grateful.

7. And call in remembrance
The favour of Allah
Unto you, and His Covenant,⁷⁰⁵
Which He ratified
With you, when ye said:
"We hear and we obey":
And fear Allah, for Allah
Knoweth well
The secrets of your hearts.

8. O ye who believe!
Stand out firmly
For Allah, as witnesses⁷⁰⁶

عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ
وَلِيُسَمِّيَكُمْ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَمَّا كُنْتُمْ
تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

وَأذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَاقَهُ
الَّذِي وَانَقَكُم بِهِ إِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا
وَأَتَقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٧﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ
شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ

704. This is *Tayammum*, or wiping with clean sand or earth where water is not available. I take it that this substitute is permissible both for *Wudhū* and for a full bath, in the circumstances mentioned.

705. There is a particular and a general meaning. The particular meaning refers to the solemn Pledge and Covenant taken by two groups of people at 'Aqaba, a valley near Minā, the first about fourteen months before the Hijra, and the second a little later. These were Pledges of fealty to the Messenger of Allah, comparable to the Covenant under Mount Sinai taken in the time of Moses (See Q. ii. 63 and n. 78). The general meaning has been explained in n. 682 to v. 1: man is under a spiritual obligation under an implied Covenant with Allah: Allah has given man reason, judgment, the higher faculties of the soul, and even the position of vicegerent on earth (ii. 30), and man is bound to serve Allah faithfully and obey His Will. That obedience begins with cleanliness in bodily functions, food, etc. It goes on to cleanliness of mind and thought, and culminates in purity of motives in the inmost recesses of his heart and soul.

706. Cf. iv. 135.

To fair dealing, and let not
The hatred of others
To you make you swerve⁷⁰⁷
To wrong and depart from
Justice. Be just: that is
Next to Piety: and fear Allah.
For Allah is well-acquainted
With all that ye do.

9. To those who believe
And do deeds of righteousness
Hath Allah promised forgiveness
And a great reward.
10. Those who reject faith
And deny Our Signs
Will be Companions
Of Hell-fire.
11. O ye who believe!
Call in remembrance
The favour of Allah
Unto you when
Certain men formed the design
To stretch out
Their hands against you,
But (Allah) held back
Their hands from you:⁷⁰⁸
So fear Allah. And on Allah
Let Believers put
(All) their trust.

شَتَانُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ لَا تَعْدِلُوا أَعْدِلُوا هُوَ
أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٩﴾

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ
أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٠﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ
عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ أَن يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ
أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

707. To do justice and act righteously in a favourable or neutral atmosphere is meritorious enough, but the real test comes when you have to do justice to people who hate you or to whom you have an aversion. But no less is required of you by the higher moral law.

708. In the life-time of the Prophet it happened again and again that the enemies of Islam stretched out their hands against him, his people, and his teaching. The odds were, from a worldly point of view, in their favour, but their hands were rendered inert and powerless because they were fighting against the truth of Allah. So does it happen always, now as it did then. True faith must take heart, and at the same time humbly recognise Allah's favour and mercy, and be grateful.

SECTION 3.

12. Allah did aforetime

Take a Covenant from

The Children of Israel,⁷⁰⁹And We appointed twelve
Chieftains among them.And Allah said: "I am
With you: if ye (but)Establish regular Prayers,
Pay Zakat

Believe in My Messengers,

Honour and assist them,

And loan to Allah

A beautiful loan,⁷¹⁰

Verily I will wipe out

From you your evils,

And admit you to Gardens

With rivers flowing beneath;

But if any of you, after this,

Resisteth faith, he hath truly

Wandered from the path

Of rectitude."⁷¹¹

13. But because of their breach

Of their Covenant, We

Cursed them,⁷¹² and made

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ
وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا وَقَالَ اللَّهُ
إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَيْتُمُ
الزَّكَاةَ وَءَامَنْتُمْ بِرُسُلِي وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ
وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ
عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ
تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ
بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ

السَّبِيلِ ﴿١٢﴾

فِيمَا نَقَضُوا مِنْهُمْ لَعْنَتَهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا
قُلُوبَهُمْ قَنَاسِيَةً يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ

709. Cf. ii. 63 and n. 78. "Moses... called for the elders of the people... and all the people answered together and said. 'All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.'" (Exod. xix, 7-8). This was under the towering height of Mount Sinai.

The chieftains or elders or leaders of the people were selected, one from each of the twelve tribes (see ii. 60 and n. 73). For census purposes the names of the elders of the tribes are given in Num. i. 4-16; they are called "every one the head of the house of his fathers". Later, twelve other "heads of the Children of Israel" were selected to spy out the land of Canaan: their names are mentioned in Num. xiii. 1-16. See also, below, v. 20-26 and notes.

710. Cf. ii. 245, n. 276. The phrase means "spending in the cause of Allah". Allah in His infinite grace looks upon this as a loan, for which He gives a recompense manifold.

711. *The path of rectitude*: or the even way: see ii. 108. n. 109.

712. *Cursed them*: that means that because of the breach of their Covenant, Allah withdrew His overflowing Grace from them. The withdrawal of Grace made their hearts grow hard in two ways: (1) they were no longer protected from the assaults of evil, and (2) they became impervious even to the message of forgiveness and mercy which is open to all Allah's creatures.

Their hearts grow hard:
 They change the words
 From their (right) places
 And forget a good part
 Of the Message that was
 Sent them, nor wilt thou
 Cease to find them—
 Barring a few—ever
 Bent on (new) deceits:⁷¹³
 But forgive them, and overlook⁷¹⁴
 (Their misdeeds): for Allah
 Loveth those who are kind.

14. From those, too, who call
 Themselves Christians,
 We did take a Covenant,⁷¹⁵
 But they forgot a good part
 Of the Message that was
 Sent them: so We stirred up
 Enmity and hatred
 Between the one and the other,
 To the Day of Judgment.
 And soon will Allah^{715-A} show
 Them what it is
 They have done.

عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ، وَتَسْوَأُ حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ،
 وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى خَائِنَةٍ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ
 فَأَعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاصْفَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ
 الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِي أَخَذْنَا
 مِيثَاقَهُمْ فَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ،
 فَأَغْرَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ
 الْقِيَمَةِ وَسَوْفَ يُنَبِّئُهُمُ اللَّهُ
 بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

713. Israel, when it lost Allah's grace as above, began to sin against truth and religion in three ways: (1) they began to misuse Scripture itself, by either taking words out of their right meaning, or applying them to things for which they were never meant; (2) in doing so, they conveniently forgot a part of the Message and purpose of Allah: and (3) they invented new deceits to support the old ones.

714. Cf. ii. 109 and n. 110, where I have explained the different shades of meaning in the words for "forgiveness."

715. The Christian Covenant may be taken to be the charge which Jesus gave to his disciples, and which the disciples accepted, to welcome Ahmad (Q. lxi. 6). Glimpses of this are to be found in the Gospel of St. John even as it exists now (John xv. 26. xvi. 7). It is those who call themselves "Christians" who reject this. True Christians have accepted it. The enmity between those who call themselves Christians and the Jews will continue till the Last Day.

715-A. The change from the First Person in the beginning of the verse to the Third Person here illustrates the change from the personal relationship of the Covenant, to the impersonal operation of Justice at Judgment. Cf. xxxv. 9.

15. O people of the Book!
There hath come to you
Our Messenger, revealing
To you much that ye
Used to hide in the Book,
And passing over much
(That is now unnecessary):
There hath come to you
From Allah a (new) light
And a perspicuous Book,-⁷¹⁶

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ
رَسُولُنَا يَتْلُو لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا
كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ
مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16. Wherewith Allah guideth all
Who seek His good pleasure
To ways of peace and safety,
And leadeth them out
Of darkness, by His Will,
Unto the light,—guideth them
To a Path that is Straight.

يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ
سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ
الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ
وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٦﴾

17. They disbelieved indeed
Those that say
That Allah is Christ
The son of Mary
Say: "Who then
Hath the least power
Against Allah, if His Will
Were to destroy Christ
The son of Mary, his mother,
And all—every one
That is on the earth?
For to Allah belongeth
The dominion of the heavens

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ
الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ مِنَ
اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ الْمَسِيحَ
ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ، وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
جَمِيعًا وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ
عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٧﴾

716. *Mubin*: I wish I could translate by a simpler word than "perspicuous". But "plain" may mean unadorned, the opposite of beautiful, and this Book is among the most beautiful that it is the privilege of mankind to read. "Clear" would be right as far as it means "unambiguous, self-evident, not involved in mysteries of origin, history, or meaning, one which every one can understand as to the essentials necessary for him, without the intervention of priests or privileged persons". *Mubin* has all these meanings, but it suggests, besides, some quality of a shining light, by which we are able to make things clear, to distinguish the true from the false. This I think is suggested better by "perspicuous" than by the word "clear". Besides it is hardly good idiom to speak of "a clear Book."

And the earth, and all
That is between. He createth⁷¹⁷
What He pleaseth. For Allah
Hath power over all things."

18. (Both) the Jews and the Christians
Say: "We are sons
Of Allah, and His beloved."⁷¹⁸
Say: "Why then doth He
Punish you for your sins?
Nay, ye are but men,-
Of the men He hath created:
He forgiveth whom He pleaseth.
And He punisheth whom He
Pleaseth:

And to Allah belongeth⁷¹⁹
The dominion of the heavens
And the earth, and all
That is between:
And unto Him
Is the final goal (of all)."

19. O People of the Book!
Now hath come unto you,
Making (things) clear unto you,

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ عَنُ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ
وَأَحْبَتُوهُ قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ
بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن
يَشَاءُ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٧٨﴾

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ
عَلَىٰ فَرَقٍ مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا مِن بَشِيرٍ

717. The most honoured of the prophets of Allah are but men. All power belongs to Allah, and not to any man. Allah's creation may take many forms, but because in any particular form it is different from what we see daily around us, it does not cease to be Creation, or to be subject to the power of Allah. No creature can be God.

718. *Sons of God*: Cf. Job, xxxviii. 7; "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." In the 29th Psalm, 1st verse, the authorised Translation "O ye mighty" should apparently be "O ye sons of Elim". El being a name of God, Cf. also Genesis, vi. 2: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men."

Beloved: Cf. Psalms, cxvii. 2: "He giveth his beloved sleep."

If used figuratively, these and like words refer to the love of Allah. Unfortunately, "son" used in a physical sense, or "beloved" in an exclusive sense as if Allah loved only the Jews, make a mockery of religion.

719. This refrain in the last verse negatives the idea of sonship, and in this verse negatives the idea of an exclusive "Beloved". In both cases it means that Allah is independent of physical relationship or exclusive partiality.

Our Messenger, after the break⁷²⁰
 In (the series of) our messengers,
 Lest ye should say:
 "There came unto us
 No bringer of glad tidings
 And no warner":
 But now hath come
 Unto you a bringer
 Of glad tidings
 And a warner.
 And Allah hath power
 Over all things.

وَلَا نَذِيرٌ فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
 عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 4.

20. Remember Moses said
 To his people: "O my People!
 Call in remembrance the favour
 Of Allah unto you, when He
 Produced prophets among you,⁷²¹
 Made you kings,⁷²² and gave
 You what He had not given
 To any other among the peoples.⁷²³

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَنْقُومُ أَدْرُكُوا نِعْمَةَ
 اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ وَجَعَلَكُمْ
 مُلُوكًا وَآتَاكُمْ مِمَّا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. "O my people! enter⁷²⁴
 The holy land which

يَنْقُومُوا أَدْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ
 لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

720. The six hundred years (in round figures) between Christ and Muḥammad were truly the dark ages of the world. Religion was corrupted; the standard of morals fell low; many false systems and heresies arose; and there was a break in the succession of prophets until the advent of Muḥammad.

721. There was a long line of patriarchs and prophets before Moses, e.g., Abraham, Isaac, Ismā'il, Jacob, etc.

722. From the slavery of Egypt the Children of Israel were made free and independent, and thus each man became as it were a king, if only he had obeyed Allah and followed the lead of Moses.

723. Cf. Exod. xix. 5: "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people." Israel was chosen to be the vehicle of Allah's message, the highest honour which any nation can receive.

724. We now come to the events detailed in the 13th and 14th chapters of the Book of Numbers in the Old Testament. Read these as a Commentary, and examine a good map of the Sinai Peninsula, showing its connections with Egypt on the west. North-West =

Allah hath assigned unto you,
And turn not back
Ignominiously, for then
Will ye be overthrown,
To your own ruin."

22. They said: "O Moses!
In this land are a people
Of exceeding strength:⁷²⁵
Never shall we enter it
Until they leave it:
If (once) they leave,
Then shall we enter."
23. (But) among (their) God-fearing men
Were two on whom
Allah had bestowed His grace:⁷²⁶
They said: "Assault them
At the (proper) Gate:
When once ye are in,
Victory will be yours;
But on Allah put your trust
If ye have faith."

قَالُوا يَمْوَسَّىٰ إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَنَن
تَدْخُلُهَا حَتَّىٰ يَخْرُجُوا مِنهَا فَإِن يَخْرُجُوا
مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دَاخِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

قَالَ رَجُلَانِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنعَمَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِمَا ادْخُلُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوهُ
فَأَنزِلْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا
إِن كُنتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

= Arabia on the east, and Palestine on the north-east. We may suppose that Israel crossed from Egypt into the Peninsula somewhere near the northern extremity of the Gulf of Suez. Moses organised and numbered the people, and instituted the Priesthood. They went south about 200 miles to Mount Sinai where the Torah was received. Then, perhaps a hundred and fifty miles north, was the desert of Paran, close to the southern borders of Canaan. From the camp there twelve men were sent to spy out the land, and they penetrated as far as Hebron, say about 150 miles north of their camp, about 20 miles south of the future Jerusalem. They saw a rich country, and brought from it pomegranates and figs and a bunch of grapes so heavy that it had to be carried by two men on a staff. They came back and reported that the land was rich, but the men there were too strong for them. The people of Israel had no courage and no faith, and Moses remonstrated with them.

725. The people were not willing to follow the lead of Moses, and were not willing to fight for their "inheritance." In effect they said: "Turn out the enemy first, and then we shall enter into possession." In Allah's Law we must work and strive for what we wish to enjoy.

726. Among those who returned after spying out the land were two men who had faith and courage. They were Joshua and Caleb. Joshua afterwards succeeded Moses in the leadership after 40 years. These two men pleaded for an immediate entry through the proper Gate, which I understand to mean, "after taking all due precautions and making all due preparations". Cf. ii.189 and n. 203. But of course, they said, they must put their trust in Allah for victory.

24. They said: "O Moses!
We shall never enter it
As long as they are
In it.
Go thou, and thy Lord,
And fight ye two,
While we sit here⁷²⁷

قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى إِنَّا لَنَدْخُلُهَا أَبَدًا مَا دَامُوا فِيهَا
فَاذْهَبْ أَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَتِلَا إِنَّا هَاهُنَا
فَاعِدُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

25. He said: "O my Lord!
I have power only
Over myself and my brother:⁷²⁸
So separate us from this
Rebellious people!"

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَأَخِي فَافْرِقْ
بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

26. Allah said: "Therefore
Will the land be out
Of their reach for forty years:⁷²⁹
In distraction will they
Wander through the land:
But sorrow thou not
Over these rebellious people.

قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً
يَتِيهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ
الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

727. The advice of Joshua and Caleb, and the proposals of Moses under divine instructions were unpalatable to the crowd, whose prejudices were further inflamed by the other ten men who had gone with Joshua and Caleb. They made an "evil report," and were frightened by the great stature of the Canaanites. The crowd was in open rebellion, was prepared to stone Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb, and return to Egypt. Their reply to Moses was full of irony, insolence, blasphemy, and cowardice. In effect they said: "You talk of your God and all that: go with your God and fight there if you like: we shall sit here and watch."

728. "Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation." (Num. xiv. 5). According to the words in the Old Testament story, Allah said: "I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them." (Num. xiv. 12). Moses prayed and interceded. But as we are told here, (a spiritual touch not found in the Jewish story). Moses was careful to separate himself and his brother from the rebellion.

729. The punishment of the rebellion of these stiff-necked people, rebellion that was repeated "these ten times" (Num. xiv. 22) and more, was that they were left to wander distractedly hither and thither through the wilderness for forty years. That generation was not to see the Holy Land. All those that were twenty years old and upwards were to die in the wilderness: "your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness." (Num. xiv. 29). Only those who were then children would reach the promised land. And so it happened. From the desert of Paran they wandered south, north, and east for forty years. From the head of what is now the Gulf of 'Aqaba, they travelled north, keeping to the east side of the depression of which the Dead Sea and the river Jordan are portions. Forty years afterwards they crossed the Jordan opposite what is now Jericho, but by that time Moses, Aaron, and the whole of the elder generation had died.

SECTION 5.

27. Recite to them the truth⁷³⁰
Of the story of the two sons⁷³¹
Of Adam. Behold! they each
Presented a sacrifice (to Allah):
It was accepted from one,
But not from the other.
Said the latter: "Be sure
I will slay thee." "Surely,"
Said the former, "Allah
Doth accept of the sacrifice
Of those who are righteous.
28. "If thou dost stretch thy hand
Against me, to slay me,
It is not for me to stretch
My hand against thee
To slay thee: for I do fear
Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds.
29. "For me, I intend to let
Thee draw on thyself
My sin as well as thine."⁷³²

﴿٧٠﴾ وَأَتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا
قُرْبَانًا فَتُقْبِلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ
قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ
مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

لَئِنْ بَسَطْتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا أَنَا بِبَاسِطٍ يَدِيَ
إِلَيْكَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبْوَأَ بِإِثْمِي وَإِثْمُكَ فَتَكُونَ
مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

730. Literally: "recite to them in truth the story", etc. The point is that the story in Gen. iv. 1-15 is a bare narrative, not including the lessons now to be enforced. The Prophet is told now to supply the truth of the matter, the details that will enforce the lessons.

731. The two sons of Adam were Hâbil (in the English Bibel, Abel) and Qâbil (in English, Cain). Cain was the elder, and Abel the younger,—the righteous and innocent one. Presuming on the right of the elder, Cain was puffed up with arrogance and jealousy, which led him to commit the crime of murder. Among the Christians, Cain was the type of the Jew as against Abel the Christian. The Jew tried to kill Jesus and exterminate the Christian. In the same way, as against Muhammad, the younger brother of the Semitic family. Cain was the type of the Old Testament and New Testament people, who tried to resist and kill Muhammad and put down his people.

732. *My sin as well as thine.* "My sin" has been interpreted as "the sin against me, in that thou slayest me": in that case thy "sin" may mean either "thy crime in committing a murder." or "thy sin against thyself, for the crime causes real loss to thyself in the Hereafter." See the last clause of the next verse.

For thou wilt be among
The Companions of the Fire,
And that is the reward
Of those who do wrong.⁷³³

30. The (selfish) soul of the other
Led him to the murder
Of his brother: he murdered
Him, and became (himself)
One of the lost ones.⁷³⁴

فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُ، فَأَصْبَحَ
مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

31. Then Allah sent a raven,
Who scratched the ground,
To show him how to hide
The naked body of his brother.⁷³⁵
"Woe is me!" said he;
"Was I not even able
To be as this raven,
And to hide the naked body
Of my brother?" Then he became
Full of regrets.⁷³⁶

فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحِثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ
كَيْفَ يُوَارِي سَوْءَ أَخِيهِ قَالَ يُؤْتِلَقِي
أَعْجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُوَارِيَ
سَوْءَ أَخِي فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّادِمِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

32. On that account: We ordained
For the Children of Israel

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ أَنَّهُ
مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ

733. Abel's speech is full of meaning. He is innocent and God-fearing. To the threat of death held out by the other, he returns a calm reply, aimed at reforming the other. "Surely," he pleads, "if your sacrifice was not accepted, there was something wrong in you, for Allah is just and accepts the sacrifice of the righteous. If this does not deter you, I am not going to retaliate, though there is as much power in me against you as you have against me. I fear my Maker, for I know He cherishes all His Creation. Let me warn you that you are doing wrong. I do not intend even to resist, but do you know what the consequences will be to you? You will be in torment."

734. The innocent unselfish pleading of the younger brother had no effect, for the soul of the other was full of pride, selfishness and jealousy. He committed the murder, but in doing so, ruined his own self.

735. *Sau-at* may mean "corpse", with a suggestion of nakedness and shame in two senses: (1) the sense of being exposed without burial, and (2) the sense of being insulted by being violently deprived by the unwarranted murder, of the soul which inhabited it, - the soul, too, of a brother.

736. The thought at last came home to the murderer. It was dreadful indeed to slay any one - the more so as he was a brother, and an innocent righteous brother! But worse still, the murderer had not even the decency to bury the corpse, and of this simple duty he was reminded by a raven - a black bird usually held in contempt! His regret was on that account. That was no true repentance.

That if any one slew
A person—unless it be
For murder or for spreading
Mischief in the land—
It would be as if
He slew the whole people:⁷³⁷
And if any one saved a life.
It would be as if he saved
The life of the whole people.
Then although there came
To them Our Messengers
With Clear Signs, yet,
Even after that, many
Of them continued to commit
Excesses in the land.

33. The punishment of those
Who wage war against Allah
And His Messenger, and strive
With might and main
For mischief through the land⁷³⁸
Is: execution, or crucifixion,
Or the cutting off of hands
And feet from opposite sides,⁷³⁹
Or exile from the land:

فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا
فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ
جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ
بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لُمْسِرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا
أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ
وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ
ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ جِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

737. The story of Cain is referred to in a few graphic details in order to tell the story of Israel. Israel rebelled against Allah, slew and insulted righteous men who did them no harm but on the contrary came in all humility. When Allah withdrew His favour from Israel because of its sins and bestowed it on brother nation, the jealousy of Israel plunged it deeper into sin. To kill or seek to kill an individual because he represents an ideal is to kill all who uphold the ideal. On the other hand, to save an individual life in the same circumstances is to save a whole community. What could be stronger condemnation of individual assassination and revenge?

738. For the double crime of treason against the State, combined with treason against Allah, as shown by overt crimes, four alternative punishments are mentioned, any one of which is to be applied according to the crime committed, viz., execution (cutting off of the head), crucifixion, maiming, or exile. These were features of the Criminal Law then and for centuries afterwards, except that tortures such as "hanging, drawing, and quartering" in English Law, and piercing of eyes and leaving the unfortunate victim exposed to a tropical sun, which was practised in Arabia, and all such tortures were abolished. In any case sincere repentance before it was too late was recognised as a ground for mercy.

739. Understood to mean the right hand and the left foot.

That is their disgrace
In this world, and
A heavy punishment is theirs
In the Hereafter;

34. Except for those who repent
Before they fall
Into your Power:
In that case, know
That Allah is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْرُوا عَلَيْهِمْ
فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

SECTION 6.

35. O ye who believe!
Do your duty to Allah,⁷⁴⁰
Seek the means
Of approach unto Him,
And strive (with might
And main) in His cause:
That ye may prosper.⁷⁴¹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا
إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36. As to those who reject
Faith,—if they had
Everything on earth,
And twice repeated,
To give as ransom
For the Chastisement of the Day
Of Judgment, it would
Never be accepted of them.
Theirs would be
A grievous Chastisement

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَيَفْقَدُوهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ
يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا نُقِيلَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

740. *Taqwā* here too might be translated "fear of Allah", but the very next clause shows that "fear of Allah" does not mean "fear" in the ordinary sense, which would make you avoid the object of fear. On the contrary the "fear of Allah" is the intense desire to avoid everything that is against His Will and Law. It is in fact duty to Allah, for we are told to seek ardently the means by which we may approach Him, and that can only be done by striving with might and main for His cause.

741. "*Prosper*" in the real sense, for that is all that matters, as the life of this world is brief and fleeting, and of small account as against Eternity.

37. Their wish will be
To get out of the Fire.
But never will they
Get out therefrom:
Their Chastisement will be
One that endures.
38. As to the thief,⁷⁴²
Male or female,
Cut off his or her hands:
A retribution for their deed
And exemplary punishment
From Allah,
And Allah is Exalted in Power,
Full of Wisdom.
39. But if the thief repent
After his crime,
And amend his conduct,
Allah turneth to him
In forgiveness; for Allah
Is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.
40. Knowest thou not⁷⁴³
That to Allah (alone)
Belongeth the dominion
Of the heavens and the earth?
He punisheth whom He pleaseth,
And He forgiveth whom He pleaseth:

يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُخْرَجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَاهُمْ
بِخُرُوجِهَا مِنهَا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَاءً
بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

مَنْ تَابَ مِن بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

742. Here we touch upon jurisprudence. The Canon Law jurists are not unanimous as to the value of the property stolen, which would involve the penalty of the cutting off of the hand. The majority hold that petty thefts are exempt from this punishment. The general opinion is that only one hand should be cut off for the first theft, on the principle that "if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee" (Matt. xviii. 8). Apparently in the age of Jesus thieves were crucified (Matt. xxvii. 38).

743. Punishment really does not belong to mortals, but to Allah alone. Only, in order to keep civil society together, and protect innocent people from crime, certain principles are laid down on which people can build up their criminal law. But we must always remember that Allah not only punishes but forgives, and forgiveness is the attribute which is more prominently placed before us. It is not our wisdom that can really define the bounds of forgiveness or punishment, but His Will or Plan, which is the true standard of righteousness and justice.

And Allah hath power
Over all things.

41. O Messenger! let not
Those grieve thee, who race
Each other into Unbelief:⁷⁴⁴
(Whether it be) among those
Who say "We believe"
With their lips but
Whose hearts have no faith;
Or it be among the Jews—
Men who will listen
To any lie,—will listen
Even to others who have
Never so much as come⁷⁴⁵
To thee. They change the words
From their (right) places⁷⁴⁶
They say,
"If ye are given this,
Take it, but if not,
Beware!" If any one's trial
Is intended by Allah, thou hast
No authority in the least
For him against Allah.
For such—it is not
Allah's will to purify
Their hearts. For them

يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنكَ الَّذِينَ
يُكَفِّرُونَ فِي الْكَفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا آمَنَّا
بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ
هَادُوا وَسَمِعُوا لِلْكَذِبِ
سَمْعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ يَحْرِفُونَ
الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ يَقُولُونَ إِنْ
أُوتِينَا هَذَا فَخَذُّوهُ وَإِنْ لَمْ تُؤْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوا
وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنَ
اللَّهِ شَيْئًا أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ
يُطَهِّرْ قُلُوبَهُمْ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ
فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾

744. Two classes of men are meant, viz., the Hypocrites and the Jews. For both of them Al-Mustafā laboured earnestly and assiduously, and it must have been a cause of great grief and disappointment to him that some among them showed so much insincerity, cunning, and hardness of heart. These are types not yet extinct.

745. There were men among the Jews who were eager to catch up any lie against the Prophet. They had their ears open even to tales from people who had never so much as come near to the Prophet. If we understand "for" instead of "to" before "others" (for the Arabic word would bear both meanings), the sense will be: They are keen listeners or spies for any lies they can catch; and they will act as spies for others (their Rabbis, etc.) who are in the background but to whom they carry false tales.

746. Cf. v. 13. The addition of the words *min ba'di* here suggests the change of words from their right *times* as well as places. They did not deal honestly with their Law, and misapplied it, by distorting the meaning. Or it may be that as tale-bearers they distorted the meaning by misrepresenting the context.

There is disgrace
In this world, and
In the Hereafter
A heavy punishment.

42. (They are fond of) listening
To falsehood, of devouring⁷⁴⁷
Anything forbidden.
If they do come to thee,
Either judge between them,
Or decline to interfere.⁷⁴⁸
If thou decline, they cannot
Hurt thee in the least.
If thou judge, judge
In equity between them.
For Allah loveth those
Who judge in equity.

43. But why do they come⁷⁴⁹
To thee for decision,
When they have (their own)
Torah before them?—
Therein is the (plain)
Command of Allah; yet
Even after that, they would
Turn away. For they
Are not (really)
People of Faith.

سَمِعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكْثَرُونَ لِلسَّحْتِ
فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ
وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا
وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

وَكَيْفَ يُحْكُمُونَكَ وَعِنْدَهُمُ التَّوْرَةُ فِيهَا حُكْمُ
اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ
وَمَا أُولَئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

747. *Devouring anything forbidden*: both in a literal and in a figurative sense. In the figurative sense, it would be: the taking of usury or bribes, or taking undue advantage of people's weak position or their own fiduciary powers to add to their own wealth.

748. Where it is merely a trick to catch out the unwary, a just man may honourably decline to interfere in a cause submitted to him, as also in a case where the parties are not honestly desirous of justice, but each hopes that some partiality will be shown to it.

749. This is a searching question as to the motive of the Jews in bringing their cases for decision to the Prophet. They came either (1) to ridicule whatever he said, or (2) to deceive him as to facts and snatch a favourable decision which was against equity. If their own Law did not suit their selfish interests, they sometimes twisted it. But Muhammad was always inflexible in his justice.

SECTION 7.

44. It was We who revealed
The Torah (to Moses): therein
Was guidance and light.⁷⁵⁰
By its standard have been judged
The Jews, by the Prophets
Who bowed (as in Islam)
To Allah's Will, by the Rabbis⁷⁵¹
And the Doctors of Law:
For to them was entrusted
The protection of Allah's Book,
And they were witnesses thereto.⁷⁵²
Therefore fear not men,
But fear Me, and sell not
My Signs for a miserable price.⁷⁵³
If any do fail to judge
By what Allah
Hath revealed, they are
Unbelievers.

45. We ordained therein for them:⁷⁵⁴
"Life for life, eye for eye,

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا
الْيَتِيمُونَ الَّذِينَ آسَلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا
وَالرَّبَّيْنِیُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا
مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ فَلَا
تَخْشَوُا النَّكَاسَ وَأَخْسَوْا وَلَا تَتَشَرَّوْا
بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَكُتِبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنْ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ
وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ

750. *Guidance*, with reference to conduct, *light*, with reference to insight into the higher realms of the faith.

751. *Rabbānī* may, I think, be rightly translated by the Jewish title of *Rabbi* for their learned men. Jewish learning is identified with Rabbinical literature. *Aḥbār* is the plural of *hibr* or *ḥabr*, by which we may understand Jewish Doctors of Law. Later the term was applied to those of other religions.

752. They were living witnesses to the truth of Scripture, and could testify that they had made it known to the people: Cf. ii. 143, and iv. 135.

753. Two charges are made, against the Jews: (1) that even the books which they had, they twisted in meaning, to suit their own purposes, because they feared men rather than Allah; (2) that what they had was but fragments of the original Law given to Moses, mixed up with a lot of semi-historical and legendary matter, and some fine poetry. The *Taurāt* mentioned in the Qur-ān is not the Old Testament as we have it: nor is it even the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament, containing the Law embedded in a great deal of semi-historical and legendary narrative). See Appendix II, on the *Taurāt* (printed at the end of this Sūra).

754. The retaliation is prescribed in three places in the Pentateuch, viz., Exod. xxi, 23-25; Leviticus xxiv. 18-21, and Deut. xix. 21. The wording in the three quotations is different, but in none of them is found the additional rider for mercy, as here. Note that in Matt. v. 38. Jesus quotes the Old Law "eye for eye," etc., and modifies it in the =

Nose for nose, ear for ear,
Tooth for tooth, and wounds
Equal for equal." But if
Any one remits the retaliation
By way of charity, it is
An act of atonement for himself.⁷⁵⁵
And if any fail to judge
By what Allah
Hath revealed, they are
Wrong-doers.⁷⁵⁶

46. And in their footsteps
We sent Jesus the son
Of Mary, confirming
The Torah that had come
Before him: We sent him
The Gospel: therein
Was guidance and light.⁷⁵⁷
And confirmation of the Torah
That had come before him:
A guidance and an admonition
To those who fear Allah.
47. Let the People of the Gospel
Judge by what Allah hath revealed
Therein. If any do fail
To judge by
What Allah hath revealed,

وَالْأَذُنَ بِالْأَذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ
فِصَاصٌ فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ فَهُوَ كَفَّارٌ
لَّهُ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ
هُمْ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

وَفَقِينَا عَلَىٰ أَثَرِهِمْ بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَآيَاتِنَا الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى
وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَهُدًى
وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَلِيَحْكُمُوا أَهْلَ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ وَمَنْ لَمْ
يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ
هُمْ الْمُنَافِقُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

= direction of forgiveness, but the Quranic injunction is more practical. Even where the injured one forgives, the State or Ruler is competent to take such action as is necessary for the preservation of law and order in Society. For crime has a bearing that goes beyond the interests of the person injured: the Community is affected: see Q. v. 32.

755. This is not part of the Mosaic Law, but the teaching of Jesus and of Muḥammad. Notice how the teaching of Jesus is gradually introduced as leading up to the Qur-ān.

756. The seeming repetitions at the end of verses 47, 48 and 50 are not real repetitions. The significant words in the three cases are: Unbelievers, wrong-doers, and rebellious: and each fits the context. If the Jews tamper with their books they are Unbelievers; if they give false judgments, they are wrong-doers. If the Christians follow not their light, they are rebellious.

757. *Guidance and light*: see n. 750 above. For the meaning of the Gospel (Injil), see Appendix III, "On the *Injil*", (printed at the end of this Sūra).

They are
Those who rebel.⁷⁵⁸

48. To thee We sent the Scripture
In truth, confirming
The scripture that came
Before it, and guarding it⁷⁵⁹
In safety: so judge
Between them by what
Allah hath revealed,
And follow not their vain
Desires, diverging
From the Truth that hath come
To thee. To each among you
Have We prescribed a Law
And an Open Way.⁷⁶⁰
If Allah had so willed,
He would have made you⁷⁶¹
A single People, but (His
Plan is) to test you in what
He hath given you: so strive
As in a race in all virtues.

وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا
أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ هُمْ عَمَّا
جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً
وَمِنْهَا جَاءَ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً
وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَمِيقُوا
الْخِزْيَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا
فَیُنِشِقُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

758. See n. 756 above.

759. After the corruption of the older revelations, the Qur-ān comes with a twofold purpose: (1) to confirm the true and original Message, and (2) to guard it, or act as a check to its interpretation. The Arabic word *Muhaimin* is very comprehensive in meaning. It means one who safeguards, watches over, stands witness, preserves, and upholds. The Qur-ān safeguards "the Book", for it has preserved within it the teachings of all the former Books. It watches over these Books in the sense that it will not let their true teachings to be lost. It supports and upholds these Books in the sense that it corroborates the Word of Allah which has remained intact in them. It stands a witness because it bears testimony to the Word of Allah contained in these Books and helps to sort it out from the interpretations and commentaries of the people which were mixed with it: what is confirmed by the Qur-ān is the Word of Allah and what is against it is that of the people.

760. Law: *shir'at* = rules of practical conduct. Open Way: *Minhaj* = The guidance of the Prophet in all aspects of life.

761. By origin mankind were a single people or nation: iv, 1, and ii, 213. That being so Allah could have kept us all alike, with one language, one kind of disposition, and one set of physical conditions (including climate) to live in. But in His wisdom, He gives us diversity in these things, not only at any given time, but in different periods and ages. This tests our capacity for Unity (*Waḥdāniyat*) still more, and accentuates the need of Unity and Islam.

The goal of you all is to Allah;
It is He that will show you
The truth of the matters
In which ye dispute;⁷⁶²

49. And this (He commands):
Judge thou between them
By what Allah hath revealed,
And follow not their vain
Desires, but beware of them
Lest they beguile thee
From any of that (teaching)
Which Allah hath sent down
To thee. And if they turn
Away, be assured that
For some of their crimes
It is Allah's purpose to punish
Them. And truly most men
Are rebellious.

50. Do they then seek after
A judgment of (the Days)⁷⁶³
Of Ignorance? But who,
For a people whose faith
Is assured, can give
Better judgment than Allah?

SECTION 8.

51. O ye who believe!
Take not the Jews
And the Christians

وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ
وَاحْذَرُهُمْ أَن يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
إِلَيْكَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّهُ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَن يُصِيبَهُمْ بِبَعْضِ
ذُنُوبِهِمْ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنْ اللَّهِ
حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

﴿٥١﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى

762. Men are wont to make conflicting claims regarding Allah, the ultimate destiny of man, and other questions of vital importance. No matter how vehement and eloquent the proponents of false doctrines might be, their efforts will prove fruitless and it will be indisputably clear on the Day of Judgment as to who entertained false notions and who cherished the truth.

763. The Days of Ignorance were the days of tribalism, feuds and selfish accentuation of differences in man. Those days are really not yet over. It is the mission of Islam to take us away from that false mental attitude, towards the true attitude of Unity. If our Faith is certain (and not merely a matter of words). Allah will guide us to that Unity.

For your friends and protectors:⁷⁶⁴
They are but friends and protectors
To each other. And he
Amongst you that turns to them
(For friendship) is of them.
Verily Allah guideth not
A people unjust.

أَوْلِيَائَهُمْ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَائُ بَعْضٍ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ يَتَوَلَّكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ
مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

52. Those in whose hearts⁷⁶⁵
Is a disease—thou seest
How eagerly they run about
Amongst them, saying:
"We do fear lest a change
Of fortune bring us disaster."
Ah! perhaps Allah will give
(Thee) victory, or a decision
From Him
Then will they regret
Of the thoughts which they secretly
Harboured in their hearts.

فَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يُسْرِعُونَ فِيهِمْ
يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَى أَنْ تُصِيبَنَا دَآئِرَةٌ فَعَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ
بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ فَيُصْبِحُوا عَلَى مَا أَسْرُوا
فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ نَدِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53. And those who believe
Will say: "Are these
The men who swore
Their strongest oaths by Allah,
That they were with you?"⁷⁶⁶
All that they do
Will be in vain,
And they will fall
Into (nothing but) ruin.

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ
جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ إِنْهُمْ لَعَنَكُمْ حَبِطَتِ أَعْمَالُهُمْ
فَأَصْبَحُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

764. That is, look not to them for help and comfort. They are more likely to combine against you than to help you. And this happened more than once in the lifetime of the Prophet, and in after-ages again and again. He who associates with them and shares their counsels must be counted as of them. The trimmer loses whichever way the wheel of fortune turns.

765. Cf. ii. 10.

766. The Hypocrites, while matters were doubtful, pretended to be with Muslims, but were in league with their enemies. When matters came to a decision and Allah granted victory to Islam, their position was awkward. They were not only disowned by the Muslims, but the Muslims could well say in reproach to their enemies: "Are these the men who swore friendship for you? What was their friendship worth to you? Where are they now?"

54. O ye who believe!

If any from among you
Turn back from his Faith,
Soon will Allah produce
A people whom He will love
As they will love Him,-
Lowly with the Believers,
Mighty against the Rejecters,
Fighting in the Way of Allah,
And never afraid
Of the reproaches
Of such as find fault.⁷⁶⁷
That is the Grace of Allah,
Which He will bestow
On whom He pleaseth.
And Allah encompasseth all,
And He knoweth all things.

55. Your (real) friends are
(No less than) Allah,
His Messenger, and the
Believers,-those who
Establish regular prayers
And pay Zakat
And they bow
Down humbly (in worship).

56. As to those who turn
(For friendship) to Allah,

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ
يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
أَعَزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا
يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةً لَا يَمُرُّ بِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ
الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ

767. As "most men are rebellious" (v. 49), it is inevitable that there should be apostates even from such a religion of reason and common-sense as Islam. But here is a warning to the Muslim body that they should not repeat the history of the Jews, and become so self-satisfied or arrogant as to depart from the spirit of Allah's teaching. If they do, the loss will be their own. Allah's bounty is not confined to one group or section of humanity. He can always raise up people who will follow the true spirit of Islam. That spirit is defined in two ways: first in general terms; they will love Allah and Allah will love them; and secondly, by specific signs; amongst the Brethren, their attitude will be that of humility, but to wrong-doers they will offer no mealy-mouthed compromises; they will always strive and fight for truth and right; they will know no fear, either physical, or that more insidious form, which says: "What will people say if we act thus? They are too great in mind to be haunted by any such thought. For, as the next verse says, their friends are Allah, His Prophet, and His people, the people who judge rightly, without fear or favour.

His Messenger, and the
Believers,—it is
The party of Allah
That must certainly triumph.

SECTION 9

57. O ye who believe!
Take not for friends
And protectors those
Who take your religion
For a mockery or sport,—⁷⁶⁸
Whether among those
Who received the Scripture
Before you, or among those
Who reject Faith:
But fear ye Allah,
If ye have Faith (indeed).
58. When ye proclaim
Your call to prayer,
They take it (but)
As mockery and sport;
That is because they are
A people without understanding.
59. Say: "O people of the Book!
Do ye disapprove of us
For no other reason than
That we believe in Allah,
And the revelation
That hath come to us
And that which came
Before (us), and (perhaps)

هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُوًا
وَلَعِبًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أَوْتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكَفَّارَ
أَوْلِيَاءَ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِن كُنتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَإِذَا نَادَيْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ اتَّخَذُوا هُزُوًا وَلَعِبًا ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

قُلْ يٰٓأَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ هَلْ تَنقِصُونَ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَن ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ
وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلُ وَأَن أَكْثَرُكُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

768. It is not right that we should be in intimate association with those to whom religion is either a subject of mockery or at best is nothing but a plaything. They may be amused, or they may have other motives for encouraging you. But your association with them will sap the earnestness of your Faith, and make you cynical and insincere.

That most of you
Are rebellious and disobedient?"⁷⁶⁹

60. Say: "Shall I point out
To you something much worse
Than this, (as judged)
By the treatment it received
From Allah? Those who
Incurred the curse of Allah
And His wrath, those of whom some
He transformed into apes and
swine,"⁷⁷⁰

Those who worshipped Evil (Tagut)-
These are (many times) worse
In rank, and far more astray
From the even Path!"

61. When they come to thee,
They say: "We believe":
But in fact they enter
With a disbelief,
And they go out
With the same.
But Allah knoweth fully
All that they hide.

62. Many of them dost thou
See, racing each other
In sin and transgression

قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرِّ مِّنْ ذَلِكَ مَثُوبَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ لَعْنَةُ
اللَّهِ وَغَضَبُ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْفِرْدَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ
وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوتِ أُولَئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ عَنْ سَوَاءِ
السَّبِيلِ ﴿٦٠﴾

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَقَدْ دَخَلُوا بِالْكَفْرِ وَهُمْ
قَدْ خَرَجُوا بِهِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

وَرَأَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يَسْرِعُونَ فِي الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

769. There is the most biting irony in this and the next verse. You People of the Book! Do you hate us because we believe in Allah and not only our scripture, but yours also? Perhaps you hate us because we obey and you are in rebellion against Allah! Why hate us? There are worse things than our obedience and our Faith. Shall I tell you some of them? Our test will be: what treatment Allah meted out to the things I mention. Who were the people who incurred the curse of Allah? (See Deut. xi. 28, and xxviii. 15-68: and numerous passages like Hosea viii. 14, and ix. 1). Who provoked Allah's wrath? (See numerous passages like Deut. i. 34: Matt. iii. 7). Who forsook Allah, and worshipped evil? (See Jeremiah, xvi. 11-13). That is your record. Is that why you hate us?

770. For apes see Q. ii. 65. For men possessed by devils, and the devils being sent into swine, see Matt. viii. 28-32.

And their eating of things⁷⁷¹
Forbidden. Evil indeed
Are the things that they do.

63. Why do not the Rabbis
And the doctors of law forbid
Them from their (habit
Of) uttering sinful words
And eating things forbidden?
Evil indeed are their works.

64. The Jews say: "Allah's hand"⁷⁷²
Is tied up," Be *their* hands
Tied up and be they accursed
For the (blasphemy) they utter.
Nay, both His hands
Are widely outstretched:
He giveth and spendeth
(Of His bounty) as He pleaseth.
But the revelation that
Cometh to thee from Allah
Increaseth in most of them
Their obstinate rebellion⁷⁷³
And blasphemy. Amongst them
We have placed enmity⁷⁷⁴
And hatred till the Day

وَأَكَلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ لَئِيسَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّيُّونَ وَالْأَخْبَارُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمْ
إِلَّا نَذَرُوا أَكَلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ لَئِيسَ مَا كَانُوا
يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلَعْنُوا
بِمَا قَالُوا بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ يُنفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ
وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ مَا أَتَزَلُ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا
وَكُفْرًا وَالْقَيْسَانِ بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ إِلَى يَوْمِ
الْقِيَامَةِ كُلَّمَا أَوْقَدُوا نَارًا لِلْحَرْبِ أَطْفَأَهَا اللَّهُ
وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

771. *Eating of things forbidden*: may be construed in a literal or a figurative sense. From its juxtaposition with sin and hatred, it is better to construe it in a figurative sense, as referring to their fraudulent misappropriations of other people's property or trust property. "Eating" is used in v. 66 below in the general sense of enjoyment and happiness.

772. Cf. v. 12. and ii. 245, for a "beautiful loan to Allah", and iii, 181, for the blasphemous taunt, "Then Allah is poor!" It is another form of the taunt to say, "Then Allah's hands are tied up. He is close-fisted. He does not give!" This blasphemy is repudiated. On the contrary, boundless is Allah's bounty, and He gives, as it were, with both hands outstretched,—a figure of speech for unbounded liberality.

773. Their jealousy—because Al-Muṣṭafā is chosen for Allah's Message—is so great that it only confirms and strengthens their rebellion and blasphemy.

774. Cf. v. 14. where the eternal warring of the Christian sects, among themselves and against the Jews, is referred to. The reference is to the whole of the People of the Book, Jews and Christians,—their internal squabbles and their external disputes, quarrels, and wars.

Of Judgment. Every time
They kindle the fire of war,
Allah doth extinguish it;
But they (ever) strive
To do mischief on earth.
And Allah loveth not
Those who do mischief.⁷⁷⁵

65. If only the People of the Book
Had believed and been righteous.
We should indeed have
Blotted out their iniquities
And admitted them
To Gardens of Bliss.

66. If only they had stood fast
By the Torah, the Gospel,
And all the revelation that was sent
To them from their Lord,
They would have eaten
Both from above them
And from below their feet.⁷⁷⁶
There is from among them
A party of the right course:
But many of them
Follow a course that is evil.

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا
لَكَفَّرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَآ دَخَلَتْهُمْ جَنَّتِ
النَّعِيمِ ﴿٦٥﴾

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ
مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ
أَرْجُلِهِمْ مِّنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُّقْصِدَةٌ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ
سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

775. The argument of the whole verse may be thus stated. The Jews blaspheme and mock, and because of their jealousy, the more they are taught, the more obstinate they become in their rebellion. But what good will it do to them? Their selfishness and spite sow quarrels among themselves, which will not be healed till the Day of Judgment. When they stir up wars, especially against the innocent. Allah's Mercy is poured down like a flood of water to extinguish them. But their wickedness continues to devise ever new mischief. And Allah loves not mischief or those who do mischief.

776. To eat (*akala*) is a very comprehensive word, and denotes enjoyment generally, physical, social, mental and moral, and spiritual. "To eat what is forbidden" in verses 62 and 63 referred to taking unlawful profit, from usury or trust funds or in other ways. Here "eating" would seem to mean receiving satisfaction or happiness in this life as well as in the life to come. "From above them" may refer to heavenly or spiritual satisfaction, and "from below their feet" to earthly satisfaction. But it is better to take the words as a general idiom, and understand "satisfaction or happiness from every side."

SECTION 10

67. O Messenger! proclaim
The (Message) which hath been
Sent to thee from thy Lord.⁷⁷⁷
If thou didst not, thou
Wouldst not have fulfilled
And proclaimed His Mission.
And Allah will defend thee
From men (who mean mischief).
For Allah guideth not
Those who reject Faith.
68. Say: "O People of the Book!
Ye have no ground
To stand upon unless
Ye stand fast by the Torah.
The Gospel, and all the revelation
That has come to you from
Your Lord." It is the revelation
That cometh to thee from
Thy Lord, that increaseth in most
Of them their obstinate
Rebellion and blasphemy.
But sorrow thou not
Over (these) people without Faith.⁷⁷⁸
69. Those who believe (in the Qur-ān).
Those who follow the Jewish
(scriptures),

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ
وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ
مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ حَتَّى تُقِيمُوا
التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ
طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِغِينَ
وَالصُّورِيِّينَ أَمْسَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ

777. Muḥammad had many difficulties to contend with, many enemies and dangers to avoid. His mission must be fulfilled. And he must—as he did—go forward and proclaim that Message and fulfil his mission, trusting to Allah for protection, and unconcerned if people who had lost all sense of right rejected it or threatened him.

778. In v. 26, Moses was told not to sorrow over a rebellious people. Here Muḥammad is told not to sorrow over people without Faith. The second situation is even more trying than the first. Rebellion may be a passing phase. Want of faith is an attitude of mind that is well-nigh hopeless. Yet the Prophet patiently reasoned with them and bore their taunts and insults. If, the argument runs, you do not believe in anything, even in the things that you may be expected to believe in, how can you receive in Faith Allah's Message that has come in another form? In fact your jealousy adds to your obstinacy and unbelief.

And the Sabians and the Christians,-
Any who believe in Allah
And the Last Day,
And work righteousness,⁷⁷⁹
On them shall be no fear,
Nor shall they grieve.

70. We took the Covenant
Of the Children of Israel
And sent them Messengers.
Every time there came
To them a Messenger
With what they themselves
Desired not-some
(Of these) they called
Impostors, and some they slay.⁷⁸⁰

71. They thought there would be
No trial (or punishment);
So they became blind and deaf;⁷⁸¹
Yet Allah (in mercy) turned

صَلِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ وَارْسَلْنَا
إِلَيْهِمْ رُسُلًا كَلَّمَا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى
أَنفُسُهُمْ فَرِيقًا كَذَّبُوا وَفَرِيقًا يَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

وَحَسِبُوا أَنَّ تَكْوِينَ فَتْنَةً فَعَمُوا وَصَمُّوا
تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ عَمُوا وَصَمُّوا كَثِيرٌ

779. Here, as in Sura Al-Baqarah (ii: 62), the Qur-ān underscores the importance of true and genuine faith, which is to be judged by a sincere belief in Allah and man's accountability to Him backed by a righteous conduct rather than by mere forms or labels. At both the places it repudiates the false claims of the People of the Book that they had a special relationship with Allah for they were the children of Abraham; that they were a chosen people with special privileges, and no matter what they did, their high status would remain unaffected. Here this false notion is refuted and the People of the Book are being reminded that it is through sincere belief and righteous conduct rather than pretentious claims that man can win his Lord's pleasure and achieve ultimate success. The verse does not purport to lay down an exhaustive list of the articles of faith. Nor does it seek to spell out the essentials of a genuine belief in Allah, which has no meaning unless it is accompanied by belief in His Prophets for it is through their agency alone that we know Allah's Will and can abide by it in our practical lives. This is especially true of His final Prophet, Muḥammad (peace be on him) whose message is universal, and not confined to any particular group or section of humanity. Belief in the Prophethood of Muḥammad (peace be on him) is thus an integral part and a logical corollary of belief in Allah. Moreover, it is also an essential test of genuineness of such belief. This becomes clear when the verse is read in conjunction with other relevant verses of the Qur-ān. See, for instance, iv. 170, v. 15, 19, vii. 157, 158, xxi. 107, xxv. 1, xxxiii. 40, lxi. 6. See also ii. 40, iii. 31-32, iv. 150-151.

780. Cf. ii. 87, and n. 91.

781. That is, they turned away their eyes from Allah's Signs and they turned a deaf ear to Allah's Message.

To them; yet again many
Of them became blind and deaf.
But Allah sees well
All that they do.

مَنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ يَّمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

72. Certainly they disbelieve who say:
"Allah is Christ the son
Of Mary." But said Christ:⁷⁸²
"O Children of Israel!
Worship Allah, my Lord
And your Lord." Whoever
Joins other gods with Allah,-
Allah will forbid him
The Garden, and the Fire
Will be his abode. There will
For the wrong-doers
Be no one to help.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ
الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ بَنِيَّ
إِسْرَءِيلَ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ مَن
يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَهُ
النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن أَنْصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾

73. They disbelieve who say:
Allah is one of three
(In a Trinity:) for there is
No god except One God.
If they desist not
From their word (of blasphemy),
Verily a grievous chastisement
Will befall the disbelievers.
Among them.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ
وَمَآئِنِ إِلَهِ إِلَّا إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ وَإِن لَّمْ يَنْتَهُوا عَمَّا
يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

74. Why turn they not to Allah
And seek His forgiveness?
For Allah is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَهُ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

75. Christ the son of Mary
Was no more than

مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ

782. Cf. Matt. iv. 10, where Christ rebukes Satan for desiring the worship of other than Allah: John xx. 17, where Christ says to Mary Magdalene, "Go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God." Cf. also Luke xviii. 19, where Christ rebukes a certain ruler for calling him Good Master: "Why callest thou me good? None is good, save One, that is, Allah." In Mark xii. 25 Jesus says: "The first of all the commandments is, Hear O Israel; the Lord our God is One Lord."

A Messenger; many were
The Messengers that passed away
Before him. His mother
Was a woman of truth.⁷⁸³
They had both to eat
Their (daily) food.
See how Allah doth make
His Signs clear to them;⁷⁸⁴
Yet see in what ways
They are deluded
Away from the truth!

76. Say: "Will ye worship,
Besides Allah, something
Which hath no power either
To harm or benefit you?
But Allah,—He it is
That heareth and knoweth
All things."

77. Say: "O People of the Book!
Exceed not in your religion⁷⁸⁵
The bounds (of what is proper),
Trespassing beyond the truth,
Nor follow the vain desires
Of people who went wrong
In times gone by,—who misled
Many, and strayed (themselves)
From the even Way.

مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ كَانَا
يَا كُلَّ لَانِ الطَّعَامِ أَنْظَرُ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ
لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ أَنْظَرُ أَنْ
يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ
لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا وَاللَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٦﴾

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ
غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ
ضَلُّوا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّوا
عَنْ سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٧٧﴾

783. She never claimed that she was a mother of God, or that her son was God. She was a pious virtuous woman.

784. Note how logically the argument has led up from Jewish back-slidings and want of faith, to blasphemies associated with the names of Jesus and Mary, and in the following verses to the worship of senseless stocks and stones. Allah is One; His Message is one; yet how people's perversity transforms truth into falsehood, religion into superstition!

785. Excess, as opposed to moderation and reason, is the simplest test by which a hypocrite or a selfish man who "trades" on religion, is known from a sincere, pious, and truly religious man. Excess means that truth is sometimes concealed or trampled upon, that the fashions of ancestors or contemporaries are copied or overdone, and Allah's name is dishonoured by blasphemies or the setting up of false gods or fetishes, or that good (or even bad) men are deified and worshipped. The true path is the even path, the path of rectitude. (Cf. ii. 108, and v. 12).

SECTION 11.

78. Curses were pronounced
On those among the Children
Of Israel who rejected Faith,
By the tongue of David⁷⁸⁶
And of Jesus the son of Mary:⁷⁸⁷
Because they disobeyed
And persisted in Excesses.

لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ
عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ
ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79. Nor did they
Forbid one another⁷⁸⁸
The iniquities which they
Committed: evil indeed
Were the deeds which they did.

كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ
فَعَلُوهُ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

80. Thou seest many of them
Turning in friendship
To the Unbelievers.
Evil indeed are (the works) which
Their souls have sent forward
Before them (with the result),
That Allah's wrath
Is on them,
And in torment
Will they abide.

تَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِبِئْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ
أَنْ سَخِطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِي الْعَذَابِ
هُمُ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81. If only they had believed
In Allah, in the Prophet,
And in what hath been
Revealed to him, never

وَلَوْ كَانُوا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللهِ وَالنَّبِيِّ
وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمَا لَأَخَذَهُم أُولَئِكَ وَلَكِنَّ

786. The Psalms of David have several passages of imprecations against the wicked. Cf. Psalms cix 17-18; lxxviii. 21-22 ("Therefore the Lord heard this and was wroth; so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel; because they believed not in God, and trusted not in His salvation"); Psalms lxi. 22-28, and Psalms v. 10.

787. Cf. Matt. xxiii, 33 ("Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Hell?"); also Matt. xii. 34.

788. There are bad men in every community, but if leaders connive at the misdeeds of the commonalty,--and even worse, if leaders themselves share in the misdeeds, as happened with the Pharisees and Scribes against whom Jesus spoke out, then that community is doomed.

Would they have taken
Them for friends and protectors,
But most of them are
Rebellious wrong-doers.

82. Strongest among men in enmity
To the Believers wilt thou
Find the Jews and Pagans;
And nearest among them in love
To the Believers wilt thou
Find those who say,⁷⁸⁹
"We are Christians":
Because amongst these are
Men devoted to learning.⁷⁹⁰
And men who have renounced
The world, and they
Are not arrogant.

83. And when they listen
To the revelation received
By the Messenger, thou wilt
See their eyes overflowing
With tears, for they
Recognise the truth:
They pray: "Our Lord!
We believe, write us
Down among the witnesses.

84. "What cause can we have
Not to believe in Allah
And the truth which has
Come to us, seeing that
We long for our Lord

كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ فَتَسْفُوتُ ﴿٨١﴾

لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدُوًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا وَلَتَجِدَنَّ
أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا
إِنَّا نَصْرِيكَ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ إِنَّا نَحْنُ الْيَهُودُ
وَرَهْبَانَانَا أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَى أَعْيُنُهُمْ
تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ
رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْحَقِّ
وَنَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَدْخُلَنَا رَبَّنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

789. The meaning is not that they merely call themselves Christians, but that they were such sincere Christians that they appreciated Muslim virtues, as did the Abyssinians to whom Muslim refugees went during the persecution in Makkah.

790. *Qissis*: I have translated as "devoted to learning," following the Commentators. It seems to be a foreign word, possibly Abyssinian rather than Syriac, as the reference seems to be to the Abyssinian Christians. Their real devotion to learning and the renunciation of the world by the Monastic Orders are contrasted with the hypocrisy and arrogance of the Pharisees and Scribes.

To admit us to the company
Of the righteous?"

85. And for this their prayer
Hath Allah rewarded them
With Gardens, with rivers
Flowing underneath,—their eternal
Home. Such is the recompense
Of those who do good.

فَأَنذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا لَأَجَنَّتْ نَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
أَلَا نَهْرُ خِلْدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86. But those who reject Faith
And belie Our Signs,—
They shall be Companions
Of Hell-fire.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ
أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾

SECTION 12.

87. O ye who believe!
Make not unlawful
The good things which Allah
Hath made lawful for you,
But commit no excess:⁷⁹¹
For Allah loveth not
Those given to excess.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ
اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا إِيَّاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88. Eat to the things which
Allah hath provided for you,
Lawful and good; but fear
Allah, in Whom ye believe.

وَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
الَّذِي أَشْرَبَكُمْ مُمْنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89. Allah will not call you
To account for what is
Void in your oaths,⁷⁹²

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ
بِوَأْدِكُمْ بِمَا عَقَدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانَ فَكَفَّرَتْهُ

791. In pleasures that are good and lawful the crime is excess. There is no merit merely in abstention or asceticism, though the humility or unselfishness that may go with asceticism may have its value. In v. 82, Christian monks are praised for particular virtues, though here and elsewhere monasticism is disapproved of. Use Allah's gifts of all kinds with gratitude, but excess is not approved of by Allah.

792. Vows of penance or abstention may sometimes be futile, or even stand in the way of really good or virtuous act. See ii. 224-226, and notes. The general principles established are: (1) take no futile oaths; (2) use not Allah's name, literally or in intention, to fetter yourself against doing a lawful or good act; (3) keep to your solemn oaths to the utmost of your ability; (4) where you are unable to do so, expiate your failure by feeding or clothing the poor, or obtaining some one's freedom, or if you have not the means, by fasting. This is from a spiritual aspect.

But He will call you
To account for your deliberate
Oaths: for expiation, feed
Ten indigent persons,
On a scale of the average
For the food of your families;
Or clothe them; or give
A slave his freedom.
If that is beyond your means,
Fast for three days.
That is the expiation
For the oaths ye have sworn.
But keep to your oaths.
Thus doth Allah make clear
To you His Signs, that ye
May be grateful.

90. O ye who believe!
Intoxicants and gambling,⁷⁹³
Sacrificing to stones,⁷⁹⁴
And (divination by) arrows,⁷⁹⁵
Are an abomination,—
Of Satan's handiwork:
Eschew such (abomination),
That ye may prosper.

91. Satan's plan is (but)
To excite enmity and hatred
Between you, with intoxicants
And gambling, and hinder you

إِطْعَامُ عَشْرَةِ مَسْكِينٍ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تَطْعَمُونَ
أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كَسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ
فَصِيَامَ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ كَفْرَةٌ أَيْمَنَ بَيْنَكُمْ
إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ وَأَحْضُوا أَيْمَنَكُمْ كَذَلِكَ بَيِّنٌ
لِللَّهِ لَكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ
وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ
وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

793. Cf. ii. 219, and notes 240 and 241.

794. Cf. v. 3. The stones there referred to were stone altars or stone columns on which oil was poured for consecration, or slabs on which meat was sacrificed to idols. Any idolatrous or superstitious practices are here condemned. The ansâb were objects of worship, and were common in Arabia before Islam. See Renan, "History of Israel", Chapter iv, and *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*. Part I. p. 154: Illustrations Nos. 123 and 123 bis are Phoenician columns of that kind, found in Malta.

795. Cf. v. 3. The arrows there referred to were used for the division of meat by a sort of lottery or raffle. But arrows were also used for divination, i.e., for ascertaining lucky or unlucky moments, or learning the wishes of the heathen gods, as to whether men should undertake certain actions or not. All superstitions are condemned.

From the remembrance
Of Allah, and from prayer:
Will ye not then abstain?

92. Obey Allah, and obey the
Messenger.⁷⁹⁶

And beware (of evil):
If ye do turn back,
Know ye that it is
Our Messenger's duty
To proclaim (the Message)⁷⁹⁷
In the clearest manner.

93. On those who believe
And do deeds of righteousness
There is no blame
For what they ate (in the past),
When they guard themselves
From evil, and believe,
And do deeds of righteousness,-
Then again, guard themselves
From evil and believe,-
Then again, guard themselves
From evil and do good.
For Allah loveth those
Who do good.⁷⁹⁸

وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَاحْذَرُوا فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ
فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَّغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٩٢﴾

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا ءَامَنُوا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَأَحْسَنُوا
وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

796. We are asked to obey the commands of Allah (which are always reasonable), instead of following superstitions (which are irrational), or seeking undue stimulation in intoxicants or undue advantage in gambling. To some there may be temporary excitement or pleasure in these, but that is not the way either of prosperity or piety.

797. Cf. v. 67. Both the worldly and the spiritual aspects of loss are pointed out. Can Allah's Message do more?

798. There is a subtle symphony in what appears at first sight to be a triple repetition. The relation of such simple regulations as those of food, or game, or the reverence due to a sacred place or sacred institution, has to be explained *vis-a-vis* man's higher duties. Baïdhawî is right in classifying such duties under three heads; those due to Allah, those due from a man to himself (his self-respect), and those due to other creatures of Allah. Or perhaps all duties have this threefold aspect. The first may be called Believing or Faith; the second, Guarding ourselves from evil, or Conscience; and the third, doing good or Righteousness. But the simplest physical rules, e.g., those about eating, cleanliness, etc., if they are good, refer also to the higher aspects. If we eat bad food, we hurt ourselves, we cause offence to our neighbours, and we disobey Allah. If =

SECTION 13.

94. O ye who believe!
 Allah doth but make a trial of you
 In a little matter
 Of game well within reach
 Of your hands and your lances,
 That He may test⁷⁹⁹
 Who feareth Him unseen:
 Any who transgress
 Thereafter, will have
 A grievous chastisement.

95. O ye who believe!
 Kill not game
 While in the Sacred
 Precincts or in the state of
 pilgrimage⁸⁰⁰
 If any of you doth so
 Intentionally, the compensation
 Is an offering, brought
 To the Ka'ba, of a domestic animal
 Equivalent to the one he killed.⁸⁰¹
 As adjudged by two just men
 Among you; or by way

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِيَبْلُوَكُمُ اللَّهُ يَشَى وَمِنَ الصَّيْدِ
 تَنَالُهُ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَرِمَاحُكُمْ لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَخَافُهُ
 بِالْغَيْبِ فَمَن أَعْدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ وَمَن
 قَتَلَهُ مِنْكُمْ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ
 يَحْكُمُ بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ هَذَىٰ بِأَبْلِغَ الْكَعْبَةِ
 أَوْ كَفَّرَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسْكِينٍ أَوْ عَدْلُ ذَلِكَ صِيَامًا
 لِّذُو قُرْبَىٰ وَأَمْرٌ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْ سَلْفٍ وَمَنْ عَادَ
 فَسِنَّقُمْ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ﴿٩٥﴾

= we have faith and righteousness, are we likely to be wanting in conscience? If we have conscience and faith, are we likely to fail in righteousness? If we have conscience and righteousness, what can be their foundation but faith? All three manifest themselves in a willing obedience to Allah, and love for Him. We realise His love in loving and doing good to His creatures, and our love for Him is meaningless without such good.

799. Literally, "know" Cf. iii. 166, and iii. 154, n. 467. Game is forbidden in the Sacred Precincts.

800. See v. 1, and n. 684. The pilgrim garb, *Ihrām*, has been explained in n. 212, ii. 196.

801. Intentional breach will be prevented, if possible, by previous action. If in some case the preventive action is not effective, the penalty is prescribed. The penalty is in three alternatives: an equivalent animal should be brought to the Ka'ba for sacrifice; if so, the meat would be distributed to the poor; or the poor must be fed, with grain or money, according to the value of the animal if one had been sacrificed; or the offender must fast as many days as the number of the poor who would have been fed under the second alternative. Probably the last alternative would only be open if the offender is too poor to afford the first or second, but on this point Commentators are not agreed. The "equivalent animal" in the first alternative would be a domestic animal of similar value =

Of atonement, the feeding
Of the indigent; or its
Equivalent in fasts: that he
May taste of the penalty
Of his deed. Allah
Forgives what is past:
For repetition Allah will
Punish him
For Allah is Exalted,
And Lord of Retribution.

96. Lawful to you is the pursuit⁸⁰²
Of water-game and its use
For food,—for the benefit
Of yourselves and those who
Travel; but forbidden
Is the pursuit of land-game:—
As long as ye are
In the Sacred Precincts
Or in the state of pilgrimage
And fear Allah, to Whom
Ye shall be gathered back.
97. Allah made the Ka'ba,
The Sacred House, a means of
Support for men, as
Also the Sacred Months,⁸⁰³
The animals for offerings,
And the garlands that mark them:⁸⁰⁴
That ye may know

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ مَتَعًا لَكُمْ
وَلِلسَّيَّارَةِ وَحُرْمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

﴿٩٧﴾ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَمًا
لِلنَّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْهَدْيَ وَالْقَلْبَ ذَٰلِكَ
لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ عَلَيْهِ ﴿٩٧﴾

= or weight in meat or of similar shape (e.g., goat to antelope), as adjudged by two just men on the spot.

The alternatives about the penalty and its remission ("Allah forgives what is past") or exaction explain the last two lines of the verse: being "Exalted and Lord of Retribution", Allah can remit or regulate according to His just laws.

802. *Water-game*: i.e., game found in water, e.g., fish, etc. "Water" includes sea, river, lake, pond, etc.

803. The Sacred or Prohibited Months are explained in n. 209. ii. 194, and n. 687, v. 2.

804. See v. 2 and n. 688.

That Allah hath knowledge
Of what is in the heavens
And on earth and that Allah
Is well acquainted
With all things.⁸⁰⁵

98. Know ye that Allah
Is strict in punishment
And that Allah is
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.
99. The Messenger's duty is
But to proclaim (the Message).
But Allah knoweth all
That ye reveal and ye conceal.
100. Say: "Not equal are things
That are bad and things
That are good, even though
The abundance of the bad
May dazzle thee:⁸⁰⁶
So fear Allah, O ye
That understand;
That (so) ye may prosper."

SECTION 14.

101. O ye who believe!
Ask not questions
About things which,
If made plain to you,
May cause you trouble.

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ
عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٩٨﴾

مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ
وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ
كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَتَّوَلَّى الْآلُ الْبَسِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلَحُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ
إِنْ تُبَدَّلَ لَكُمْ تَسْؤُكُمْ وَإِنْ تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ
الْقُرْءَانُ تُبَدَّلَ لَكُمْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهَا وَاللَّهُ

805. All sorts of people from all parts of the earth gather during the Pilgrimage. They must not think that they are strangers, that nobody knows them, and that they may behave as they like. It is the House of Allah, and He has supreme knowledge of all things, of all thoughts, and all motives. As the next verse says, while He is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. He is also strict in enforcing respect for His ordinances.

806. Cf. ii. 204. People often judge by quantity rather than quality. They are dazzled by numbers: their hearts are captured by what they see everywhere around them. But the man of understanding and discrimination judges by a different standard. He knows that good and bad things are not to be lumped together, and carefully chooses the best, which may be the scarcest, and avoids the bad, though evil may meet him at every step.

But if ye ask about things
When the Qur-ān is being
Revealed, they will be
Made plain to you,⁸⁰⁷
Allah will forgive those:
For Allah is Oft-forgiving,
Most Forbearing.

102. Some people before you
Did ask such questions,⁸⁰⁸
And on that account
Lost their faith.

103. It was not Allah
Who instituted (superstitions)⁸⁰⁹
Like those of) a slit-ear
She-camel, or a she-camel
Let loose for free pasture,
Or idol sacrifices for
Twin-births in animals,

عَفُوٌّ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾

قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَصْبَحُوا
بِهَا كَافِرِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَحِيرَةٍ وَلَا سَائِبَةٍ وَلَا وَصِيلَةٍ
وَلَا حَامٍ وَلَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَقْتُرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ
الْكَذِبَ وَآكَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

807. Many secrets are wisely hidden from us. If the future were known to us, we need not necessarily be happy. In many cases we should be miserable. If the inner meaning of some of the things we see before our eyes were disclosed to us, it might cause a lot of mischief. Allah's Message, in so far as it is necessary for shaping our conduct, is plain and open to us. But there are many things too deep for us to understand, either individually or collectively. It would be foolish to pry into them, as some people tried to do in the time of the Prophet. Where a matter is mentioned in the Qur-ān, we can reverently ask for its meaning. That is not forbidden. But we should never pass the bounds of (1) our own capacity to understand, (2) the time and occasion when we ask questions, and (3) the part of the Universal Plan which it is Allah's purpose to reveal to us.

808. For example, the merely fractious questions asked of Moses by the Jews: ii. 68-71. They showed that they had no faith. When foolish questions are asked, and there is no answer, it also shakes the faith of the foolish ones.

809. A number of Arab Pagan superstitions are referred to. The Pagan mind, not understanding the hidden secrets of nature, attributed certain phenomena to divine anger and were assailed by superstitious fears which haunted their lives. If a she-camel or other female domestic animal had a large number of young, she (or one of her offspring) had her ear slit and she was dedicated to a god: such an animal was a *baḥīra*. On return in safety from a journey, or on recovery from an illness a she-camel was similarly dedicated and let loose for free pasture: she was called a *sāiba*. Where an animal bore twins, certain sacrifices or dedications were made to idols: an animal so dedicated was a *wasīla*. A stallion-camel dedicated to the gods by certain rites was a *ḥām*. The particular examples lead to the general truth: that superstition is due to ignorance, and is degrading to men and dishonouring to Allah.

Or stallion-camels
Freed from work:
It is the disbelievers
Who invent a lie
Against Allah; but most
Of them lack wisdom.

104. When it is said to them:
"Come to what Allah
Hath revealed; come
To the Messenger":
They say: "Enough for us"⁸¹⁰
Are the ways we found
Our fathers following."
What! even though their fathers
Were void of knowledge
And guidance?

105. O ye who believe!
Guard your own souls:
If ye follow (right) guidance.
No hurt can come to you
From those who stray.
The return of you all
Is to Allah: it is He
That will inform you
Of all that ye do.⁸¹¹

106. O ye who believe!
When death approaches
Any of you, (take) witnesses
Among yourselves when making
Bequest,—two just men
Of your own (brotherhood)
Or others from outside
If ye are journeying
Through the earth,

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُم تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَىٰ
الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا أَحْسَبُنا مَا وَجَدَنا عَلَيْنَا ءِابَاءَنا
أَوْ لَوْ كَانُوا ءِابَاؤَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا
وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسُكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ
مَنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا أَهْتَدَيْتُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرَجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا
فِي نَبْئِكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا شَهِدُوا بَيْنَكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ
أَحَدُكُمْ الْمَوْتُ حِينَ الْوَصِيَّةِ أَشْهَانِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ
مِنْكُمْ أَوْ آخَرَانِ مِنْ غَيْرِكُمْ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي
الْأَرْضِ فَأَصَابَتْكُمْ مُصِيبَةُ الْمَوْتِ تَحْسِبُوهُمَا
مِنْ بَعْدِ الصَّلَاةِ فَفِئْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَبْتُمْ

810. Cf. ii. 170. Where a Messenger of Truth comes to teach us the better way, it is foolish to say: "What our ancestors did is good enough for us."

811. The unity of the one Judge will do perfect justice to each one's conduct, however different in form it may have appeared in this world.

And the chance of death
 Befalls you (thus).
 If ye doubt (their truth),
 Detain them both
 After prayer, and let them both
 Swear by Allah:
 "We will not take
 For it a price
 Even though the (beneficiary)
 Be our near relation:
 We shall hide not
 The evidence we owe to Allah
 If we do, then behold!
 We shall be sinners."⁸¹²

107. But if it gets known
 That these two were guilty
 Of the sin (of perjury),
 Let two others stand forth
 In their places,—nearest
 In kin from among those
 Who claim a lawful right.⁸¹³
 Let them swear by Allah:
 "We affirm that our witness
 Is truer than that
 Of those two, and that we
 Have not trespassed (beyond
 The truth): if we did,
 Behold! we will be
 Wrong-doers."

لَا تَسْرِي بِهِمْ مَتْنًا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ وَلَا تَكْتُمُ
 شَهَادَةَ اللَّهِ إِنَّا إِذَا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

فَإِنْ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِمَا اسْتِحْقَاقُ إِثْمًا فَخَرَانِ يَقُومَانِ
 مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأُولَانِ
 فَيَقْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ لَشَهَدْنَا أَحَقَّ مِنْ شَهَدَتِهِمَا
 وَمَا عَدَدْنَا إِنَّا إِذَا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

812. Ordinarily this oath should be decisive, and the matter must rest here. But if it gets known that the oath was false, other evidence may be taken as in the next verse.

813. *Istahaqqa* = Deserved having something (good or evil) attributed to one; hence the alternative meanings: (1) committed or was guilty (of a sin); (2) had or claimed a lawful right (to property). The procedure was followed in an actual case in the Prophet's life-time. A man from Madinah died abroad, having made over his goods, to two friends, to be delivered to his designated heirs in Madinah. They, however, kept back a valuable silver cup. When this was found out, oaths were taken from those who knew, and justice was done.

108. That is most suitable:
That they may give the evidence
In its true nature and shape,
Or else they would fear
That other oaths would be
Taken after their oaths.
But fear Allah, and listen
(To His counsel): for Allah
Guideth not a rebellious people.

SECTION 15.

109. On the day when Allah will
Gather the Messengers together,
And ask: "What was
The response ye received
(From men to your teaching)?"
They will say: "We
Have no knowledge: it is Thou
Who knowest in full
All that is hidden."⁸¹⁴

110. Then will Allah say:
"O Jesus the son of Mary!
Recount My favour⁸¹⁵
To thee and to thy mother.
Behold! I strengthened thee⁸¹⁶
With the Holy Spirit.
So that thou didst speak
To the people in childhood

ذَلِكَ أَدْفَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِالشَّهَادَةِ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهَا
أَوْ يَخَافُوا أَنْ تُرَدَّ أَيْمَانُ بَعْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَسْمِعُوا لِلْعَالَمِينَ ۝١٠٨

﴿يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا أُجِبْتُمْ﴾
﴿قَالُوا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّمَهُ الْغُيُوبَ﴾ ۝١٠٩

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَىٰ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ أَذْكُرُ نِعْمَتِي
عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَلَدَيْكَ إِذْ آتَيْتُكَ بِرُوحِ
الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا
وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ

814. A scene of the Day of Reckoning is put before us in graphic words, showing the responsibility and the limitations of the Prophets of Allah, sent to preach His Message to men, with special reference to the Message of Jesus. The Messengers are sent to preach the Truth. What fantastic forms the Message takes in men's reactions to it was beyond their knowledge, at the time, and beyond their responsibility.

815. In a solemn scene before the Court of Judgment, Jesus is asked to recount all the mercies and favours shown to him, so that his followers should become ashamed of their ingratitude in corrupting that Message, when they could have done so much in profiting by its purity and spiritual truth. This argument continues to the end of the Sūra.

816. Cf. ii. 87, and iii. 62, n. 401.

And in old age⁸¹⁷

Behold! I taught thee

The Book and Wisdom,⁸¹⁸

The Torah and the Gospel.

And behold! thou makest⁸¹⁹

Out of clay, as it were,

The figure of a bird,

By My leave.

And thou breathest into it,

And it becometh a bird

By My leave,

And thou healest those

Born blind, and the lepers,

By My leave.

And behold! thou

Bringest forth the dead

By My leave.⁸²⁰

And behold! I did

Restrain the Children of Israel

From (violence to) thee⁸²¹

When thou didst show them

The Clear Signs,

And the unbelievers among them

Said: 'This is nothing

But evident magic.'⁸²²

وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ
يَاذَنِي فَتَنْفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُبْرِئُ
الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ
الْمَوْتِ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ
عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
مِنْهُمْ إِنَّا هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿١١﴾

817. Cf. iii. 46, and n. 388.

818. Cf. iii. 48.

819. Cf. iii. 49, and n. 390.

820. Note how the words "by My leave" are repeated with each miracle to emphasize the fact that they arose, not out of the power or will of Jesus, but by the leave and will and power of Allah, who is supreme over Jesus as He is over all other mortals.

821. The Jews were seeking to take the life of Jesus long before their final attempt to crucify him: see Luke iv. 28-29. Their attempt to crucify him was also foiled, according to the teaching we have received: Q. iv. 157.

822. According to Luke (xi. 15), when Christ performed the miracle of casting out devils, the Jews said he did it through the chief of the devils, i.e., they accused him of black magic. No such miracle of casting out devils is mentioned in the Qur-ān. But Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad were all accused of magic and sorcery, by those who could find no other explanation of Allah's power.

111. "And behold! I inspired
The Disciples to have faith
In Me and Mine Messenger:
They said, 'We have faith,
And do thou⁸²³ bear witness
That we bow to Allah
As Muslims'. "⁸²⁴

112. Behold! the Disciples said:
"O Jesus the son of Mary!
Can thy Lord send down to us
A Table set (with viands)
From heaven?" Said Jesus:
"Fear Allah, if ye have faith"⁸²⁵

113. They said: "We only wish
To eat thereof and satisfy
Our hearts, and to know
That thou has indeed
Told us the truth; and
That we ourselves may be
Witnesses to the miracle."

114. Said Jesus the son of Mary:
"O Allah our Lord!
Send us from heaven

وَإِذْ أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي
وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ
يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ
السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَنَطْمِئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا
وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتَ وَأَتَوَكَّلُونَ عَلَيْهَا
مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً

823. "Thou" refers to Jesus, who is being addressed by his Disciples. Cf. iii. 52.

824. Before or after Muḥammad's life on this earth, all who bowed to Allah's Will were Muslims, and their religion is Islam. Cf. iii, 52, and n. 392.

825. The request of the Disciples savours a little of (1) want of faith, (2) too much attention to physical food, and (3) a childish desire for miracles or Signs. All these three can be proved from the Canonical Gospels. (1) Simon Peter, quite early in the story, asked Jesus to depart from him, as he (Simon) was a sinful man (Luke v. 8). The same Peter afterwards denied his Master three times shamelessly when the Master was in the power of his enemies. And one of the Disciples (Judas) actually betrayed Jesus. (2) Even in the Canonical Gospels, so many of the miracles are concerned with food and drink, e.g., the turning of the water into wine (John, ii. 1-11); the conversion of five loaves and two small fishes into food for 5,000 men (John vi. 5-13), this being the *only* miracle recorded in all the four Gospels; the miraculous number of fishes caught for food (Luke v. 4-11); the cursing of the fig tree because it had no fruit (Matt. xxi. 18-19); the allegory of eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood (John vi. 53-57). (3) Because the Samaritans would not receive Jesus into their village, the Disciples James and John wanted a fire to come down from heaven and consume them (Luke ix. 54).

A Table set (with viands),⁸²⁶
 That there may be for us—
 For the first and the last of us—
 A solemn festival
 And a Sign from Thee;
 And provide for our sustenance,⁸²⁷
 For Thou art the best
 Sustainer (of our needs)."

مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عَيْدًا إِلَّا أَوَّلَنَا وَآخِرَنَا
 وَءَايَةً مِنْكَ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

115. Allah said: "I will
 Send it down unto you:
 But if any of you
 After that resisteth faith,
 I will punish him
 With a chastisement such
 As I have not inflicted
 On any one among
 All the peoples."⁸²⁸

قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَرْسِلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بَعْدُ
 مِنْكُمْ فَإِنِّي أُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا لَا أُعَذِّبُهُ
 أَحَدًا مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١١٦﴾

SECTION 16.

116. And behold! Allah will say:
 "O Jesus the son of Mary!
 Didst thou say unto men,
 "Take me and my mother
 For two gods beside Allah?"
 He will say: "Glory to Thee!
 Never could I say
 What I had no right
 (To say). Had I said

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ءَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ
 لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّي آلِهَتَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
 قَالَ سُبْحٰنَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي
 بِحَقٍّ إِن كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ تَعَلَّمَ مَا فِي نَفْسِي

826. The words of the Prayer seem to suggest the Last Supper. Cf. also the vision of Peter in "The Acts of the Apostles," x. 9-16.

827. As in Islam, so in Christ's Prayer, sustenance should be taken for both physical and spiritual strength, especially the latter. "Give us this day our daily bread" seems the rendering of a literalist whose attention was fixed too much on bread.

828. It is a wicked generation that asks for Signs and Miracles. Usually they are not vouchsafed. But where they are, the responsibility of those who ask for them is increased. If, after that, they reject faith, invent lies, and go after false gods or false ideals, their penalty will be worse than that of other people. How this works out practically among those who call themselves Christians is exemplified in such books as the late Mr. W.T. Stead's "If Christ Came to Chicago?"

Such a thing. Thou wouldst
Indeed have known it.
Thou knowest what is
In my heart, though I
Know not what is
In Thine. For Thou
Knowest in full
All that is hidden.⁸²⁹

117. "Never said I to them
Aught except what Thou
Didst command me
To say, to wit, 'Worship
Allah, my Lord and your Lord':⁸³⁰
And I was a witness
Over them whilst I dwelt
Amongst them; when thou
Didst take me up
Thou wast the Watcher
Over them, and Thou
Art a witness to all things.⁸³¹

118. "If Thou dost punish them,
They are Thy servants:
If Thou dost forgive them,
Thou art the Exalted in power,
The Wise."⁸³²

وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿١١٦﴾

مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ عِبَادُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي
وَرَبَّكُمْ وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ
فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبْدُكَ وَإِنْ تُغْفِرَ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ
أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾

829. Jesus disclaims here any knowledge of the sort of things that are attributed to him by those who take his name. The worship of Mary, though repudiated by the Protestants, was widely spread in the earlier churches, both in the East and the West.

830. Cf. v. 72, and n. 782.

831. Jesus here acknowledges that he was mortal, and that his knowledge was limited like that of a mortal.

832. A Master can justly punish His servants for disobedience: no one can say Him nay, for He is high above all. But if He chooses to forgive. He in His wisdom sees things that we mortals cannot see. This is the limit of intercession that men of God can make on behalf of sinners.

119. Allah will say; "This is
A day on which
The truthful will profit
From their truth: theirs
Are Gardens, with rivers
Flowing beneath,—their eternal
Home: Allah well-pleased
With them, and they with Allah:
That is the mighty Triumph⁸³³
(The fulfilment of all desires).

120. To Allah doth belong the dominion
Of the heavens and the earth,
And all that is therein,
And it is He who hath power
Over all things.

قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمُ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ
لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا
رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١٩﴾

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا فِيهِنَّ
وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٢٠﴾

833. Fauz = Felicity, happiness, achievement, salvation, the attainment or fulfilment of desires. What a beautiful definition of salvation or the end of life!—that we should win Allah's good pleasure and that we should reach the stage at which His good pleasure is all-in-all to us.

APPENDIX No. 2.

On the *Taurât* (see v. 44, n. 753)

The *Taurât* is frequently referred to in the Qur-ân. It is well to have clear ideas as to what it exactly means. Vaguely we may say that it was the Jewish Scripture. It is mentioned with honour as having been, in its purity, a true revelation from Allah.

To translate it by the words "The Old Testament" is obviously wrong. The "Old Testament" is a Christian term, applied to a body of old Jewish records. The Protestants and the Roman Catholics are not agreed precisely as to the number of records to be included in the canon of the "Old Testament." They use the term in contradistinction to the "New Testament," whose composition we shall discuss in Appendix III.

Nor is it correct to translate *Taurât* as the "Pentateuch," a Greek term meaning the "Five Books." These are the first five books of the Old Testament, known as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. They contain a semi-historical and legendary narrative of the history of the world from the Creation to the time of the arrival of the Jews in the Promised Land. There are in them some beautiful idylls but there are also stories of incest, fraud, cruelty, and treachery, not always disapproved. A great part of the Mosaic Law is embodied in this narrative. The books are traditionally ascribed to Moses, but it is certain that they were not written by Moses or in an age either contemporary with Moses or within an appreciable distance of time from Moses. They were in their present form probably compiled some time after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian Captivity. The decree of Cyrus permitting such return was in 536 B.C. Some books now included in the Old Testament, such as Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were admittedly written after the return from the captivity, Malachi being as late as 420-397 B.C. The compilers of the Pentateuch of course used some ancient material: some of that material is actually named. Egyptian and Chaldaean terms are relics of local colour and contemporary documents.

But there are some ludicrous slips, which show that the compilers did not always understand their material. Modern criticism distinguishes two distinct sources among the documents of different dates used by the editors. For the sake of brevity and convenience they may be called (a) Jehovistic, and (b) Elohist. Then there are later miscellaneous interpolations. They sometimes overlap and sometimes contradict each other.

Logically speaking, the Book of Joshua, which describes the entry into the Promised Land, should be bracketed with the Pentateuch, and many writers speak of the six books together as the Hexateuch (Greek term for Six Books).

The Apocrypha contain certain Books which are not admitted as Canonical in the English Bible. But the early Christians received them as part of the Jewish Scriptures, and the Council of Trent (A.D. 1545-1563) seems to have recognised the greater part of them as Canonical. The statement in 2 Esdras (about the first century A.D.) that the law was burnt and Ezra (say, about 458-457 B.C.) was inspired to rewrite it, is probably true as to the historical fact that the law was lost, and that what we have now is no earlier than the time of Ezra, and some of it a good deal later.

So far we have spoken of the Christian view of the Old Testament. What is the Jewish view? The Jews divide their Scripture into three parts: (1) the Law (*Torah*), (2) the Prophets (*Nebiim*), and (3) the Writings (*Kethubim*). The corresponding Arabic words would be: (1) *Taurât*, (2) *Nabiyîn*, and (3) *Kutub*. This division was probably current in the time of Jesus. In Luke xxiv, 44 Jesus refers to the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. In other places (e.g., Matt. vii. 12) Jesus refers to the Law and the Prophets as summing up the whole Scripture. In the Old Testament Book, II. Chronicles xxxiv. 30, the reference to the Book of the Covenant must be to the *Torah* or the original Law. This is interesting, as the Qur-ân frequently refers to the Covenant with reference to the Jews. The modern Christian terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament" are substitutes for the older terms "Old Covenant" and "New Covenant." The Samaritans, who claim to be the real Children of Israel and disavow the Jews as schismatics from their Law of Moses, only recognise the Pentateuch, of which they have their own version slightly different from that in the Old Testament.

The view of the school of Higher Criticism is radically destructive. According to Renan it is doubtful whether Moses was not a myth. Two versions of Sacred History existed, different in language, style, and spirit, and they were combined together into a narrative in the reign of Hezekiah (B.C. 727-697). This forms the greater part of the Pentateuch as it exists to-day, excluding the greater part of Deuteronomy and Leviticus. In the reign of Josiah about 622 B.C., certain priests and scribes (with Jeremiah the prophet) promulgated a new code, pretending that they had found it in the Temple (II. Kings, xxii. 8). This Law (*Torah* = *Taurât*) was the basis of Judaism, the new religion then founded in Palestine. This was further completed by the sacerdotal and Levitical *Torah*, compiled under the inspiration of Ezekiel, say, about 575 B.C., and contained mainly in the Book of Leviticus, with scattered fragments in Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua. We are entitled to accept the general results of a scientific

examination of documents, probabilities, and dates: even though we reject the premise which we believe to be false, viz., that Allah does not send inspired Books through inspired Prophets. We believe that Moses existed; that he was an inspired man of God; that he gave a message which was afterwards distorted or lost; that attempts were made by Israel at various times to reconstruct that message; and that the *Taurât* as we have it is (in view of the statement in 2 Esdras) no earlier than the middle of the fifth century B.C.

The primitive *Torah* must have been in old Hebrew, but there is no Hebrew manuscript of the Old Testament which can be dated with certainty earlier than 916 A.D. Hebrew ceased to be a spoken language with the Jews during or after the Captivity, and by the time we come to the period of Jesus, most cultivated Hebrews used the Greek language, and others used Aramaic (including Syriac and Chaldee), Latin, or local dialects. There were also Arabic versions. For historical purposes the most important versions were the Greek version, known as the Septuagint, and the Latin version, known as the Vulgate. The Septuagint was supposed to have been prepared by 70 or 72 Jews (Latin, septuaginta = seventy) working independently and at different times, the earliest portion dating from about 284 B.C. This version was used by the Jews of Alexandria and the Hellenized Jews who were spread over all parts of the Roman Empire. The Vulgate was a Latin translation made by the celebrated Father of the Christian Church, St. Jerome, from Hebrew, early in the fifth century A.D., superseding the older Latin versions. Neither the Septuagint nor the Vulgate have an absolutely fixed or certain text. The present standard text of the Vulgate as accepted by the Roman Catholic Church was issued by Pope Clement VIII (A.D. 1592-1605).

It will be seen therefore that there is no standard text of the Old Testament in its Hebrew form. The versions differ from each other frequently in minor particulars and sometimes in important particulars. The Pentateuch itself is only a small portion of the Old Testament. It is in narrative form, and includes the laws and regulations associated with the name of Moses, but probably compiled and edited from older sources by Ezra (or Esdras Arabic, 'Uzair) in the 5th century B.C. As Renan remarks in the preface to his *History of the People of Israel*, the "definite constitution of Judaism" may be dated only from the time of Ezra. The very early Christians were divided into two parties. One was a Judaizing party, which wished to remain in adherence to the Jewish laws and customs while recognising the mission of Jesus. The other, led by Paul, broke away from Jewish customs and traditions. Ultimately Pauline Christianity won. But both parties recognised the Old Testament in its present form (in one or another of its varying versions) as Scripture. It was the merit of Islam that it pointed out that as scripture it was of no value, although it recognised Moses as an inspired messenger and his original Law as having validity in his period

until it was superseded. In its criticism of the Jewish position it said in effect: "You have lost your original Law; even what you have now as its substitute, you do not honestly follow; is it not better, now that an inspired Teacher is living among you, that you should follow him rather than quibble over uncertain texts?"

But the Jews in the Prophet's time (and since) went a great deal by the Talmud, or a body of oral exposition, reduced to writing in different Schools of doctors and learned men. "Talmud" in Hebrew is connected with the Arabic root in *Tilmiz*, "disciple" or "student." The Talmudists took the divergent texts of the Old Testament and in interpreting them by a mass of traditional commentary and legendary lore, evolved a standard body of teaching. The Talmudists are of special interest to us, as, in the sixth century A.D., just before the preaching of Islam, they evolved the Massorah, which may be regarded as the body of authoritative Jewish Traditions, to which references are to be found in passages addressed to the Jews in the Qur-ān.

The first part of the Talmud is called the *Mishna*,—a collection of traditions and decisions prepared by the Rabbi Judah about 150 A.D. He summed up the results of a great mass of previous rabbinical writings. The *Mishna* is the "Second Law": Cf. the Arabic *Thān-in* = second. "It bound heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, and laid them on men's shoulders": Matt. xxiii. 4.

There were also many Targums or paraphrases of the Law among the Jews. "Targum" is connected in root with the Arabic *Tarjama*, "he translated." There were many Targums, mostly in Aramaic, and they constituted the teaching of the Law to the masses of the Jewish people.

The correct translation of the *Taurāt* is therefore "The Law." In its original form it was promulgated by Moses, and is recognised in Islam as having been an inspired Book. But it was lost before Islam was preached. What passed as "The Law" with the Jews in the Prophet's time was the mass of traditional writing which I have tried to review in this Appendix.

Authorities: *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Bible": *Helps to the Study of the Bible*, Oxford University Press; A.F. Kirkpatrick. *Divine Library of the Old Testament*: C. E. Hammond, *Outline of Textual Criticism*: E. Renan, *History of Israel*; G.F. Moore, *Literature of the Old Testament*, and the bibliography therein (Home University Library); Sir Frederic Kenyon, *The Story of the Bible*. 1936.

APPENDIX No. 3.

On the *Injil* (see v. 46, n. 757)

Just as the *Taurāt* is not the Old Testament, or the Pentateuch, as now received by the Jews and Christians, so the *Injil* mentioned in the Qur-ān is certainly not the New Testament, and it is not the four Gospels, as now received by the Christian Church, but an original Gospel which was promulgated by Jesus as the *Taurāt* was promulgated by Moses and the Qur-ān by Muḥammad Al-Muṣṭafā.

The New Testament as now received consists of (a) four Gospels with varying contents (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John); and other miscellaneous matter; viz., (b) the Acts of the Apostles (probably written by Luke and purporting to describe the progress of the Christian Church under St. Peter and St. Paul from the supposed Crucifixion of Jesus to about 61 A.D.); (c) twenty-one Letters or Epistles (the majority written by St. Paul to various churches or individuals, but a few written by other Disciples, and of a general nature); and (d) the Book of Revelation or Apocalypse (ascribed to St. John, and containing mystic visions and prophecies, of which it is difficult to understand the meaning).

As Prof. F.C. Burkitt remarks (*Canon of the New Testament*), it is an odd miscellany. "The four biographies of Jesus Christ... are not all independent to each other, and neither of them was intended by its writer to form one of a quartette. But they are all put side by side, unharmonised, one of them being actually imperfect at the end, and one being only the first volume of a larger work." All this body of unmethodical literature was casual in its nature. No wonder, because the early Christians expected the end of the world very soon. The four canonical Gospels were only four out of many, and some others besides the four have survived. Each writer just wrote down some odd sayings of the Master that he recollected. Among the miracles described there is only one which is described in all the four Gospels, and others were described and believed in other Gospels, which are not mentioned in any of the four canonical Gospels. Some of the Epistles contain expositions of doctrine, but this has been interpreted differently by different Churches. There must have been hundreds of such Epistles, and not all the Epistles now received as canonical were always so received or intended to be so received. The Apocalypse also was not the only one in the field. There were others. They were prophecies of "things which must shortly come to pass": they could not have been meant for long preservation, "for the time is at hand."

When were these four Gospels written? By the end of the second century A.D. they were in existence, but it does not follow that they had been selected by that date to form a canon. They were merely pious productions comparable to Dean Farrar's *Life of Christ*. There were other Gospels besides. And further, the writers of two of them, Mark and Luke, were not among the Twelve Disciples "called" by Jesus. About the Gospel of St. John there is much controversy as to authorship, date, and even as to whether it was all written by one person. Clement of Rome (about 97 A.D.) and Polycarp (about 112 A.D.) quote sayings of Jesus in a form different from those found in the present canonical Gospels. Polycarp (Epistle. vii) inveighs much against men "who pervert the sayings of the Lord to their own lusts," and he wants to turn "to the Word handed down to us from the beginning," thus referring to a Book (or a Tradition) much earlier than the four orthodox Gospels. An Epistle of St. Barnabas and an Apocalypse of St. Peter were recognised by Presbyter Clement of Alexandria (flourished about 180 A.D.). The Apocalypse of St. John, which is a part of the present Canon in the West, forms no part of the Peshitta (Syriac) version of the Eastern Christian, which was produced about 411-433 A.D., and which was used by the Nestorian Christians. It is probable that the Peshitta was the version (or an Arabic form of it) used by the Christians in Arabia in the time of the Prophet. The final form of the New Testament canon for the West was fixed in the fourth century A.D. (say, about 367 A.D.) by Athanasius and the Nicene creed. The beautiful Codex Sinaiticus which was acquired for the British Museum in 1934, and is one of the earliest complete manuscripts of the Bible, may be dated about the fourth century. It is written in the Greek language. Fragments of unknown Gospels have also been discovered, which do not agree with the received canonical Gospels.

The *Injil* (Greek. Evangel = Gospel) spoken of by the Qur-ān is not the New Testament. It is not the four Gospels now received as canonical. It is the single Gospel which, Islam teaches, was revealed to Jesus, and which he taught. Fragments of it survive in the received canonical Gospels and in some others, of which traces survive (e.g., the Gospel of Childhood or the Nativity, the Gospel of St. Barnabas, etc.). Muslims are therefore right in respecting the present Bible (New Testament and Old Testament), though they reject the peculiar doctrines taught by orthodox Christianity or Judaism. They claim to be in the true tradition of Abraham, and therefore all that is of value in the older revelations, it is claimed, is incorporated in the teaching of the Last of the Prophets.

Authorities: The first two mentioned for Appendix II, and in addition: Prof. F.C. Burkitt, on the Canon of the New Testament, in *Religion*, June 1934, the Journal of Transactions of the Society for Promoting the Study of Religions: R. W. Mackay. *Rise and Progress of Christianity*: G.R.S. Mead. *The*

Appendix 3.

Gospel and the Gospels: B.W. Bacon. *Making of the New Testament*, with its Bibliography: Sir Frederic Kenyon. *The Story of the Bible*; R. Hone. *The Apocryphal New Testament*, London 1820: H.I. Bell and T.C Skeat. *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and other Christian Papyri*, published by the British Museum. 1935. See also chapter 15 of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, where the genesis of the early churches and sects in the Roman Empires is briefly reviewed.