

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRAT *Al-Hashr*, 59.

This is the third of the series of ten short Madinah Sūras, dealing each with a special point in the life of the Ummat : see Introduction to S. lvii. The special theme here is how treachery to the Ummat on the part of its enemies recoils on the enemies themselves, while it strengthens the bond between the different sections of the Ummat itself, and this is illustrated by the story of the expulsion of the Jewish tribe of the Banū Nadhīr in Rabī I, A.H. 4.

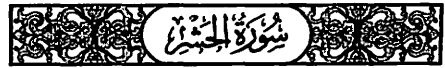
This fixes the date of the Sūra.

Summary.—The expulsion of the treacherous Jews from the neighbourhood of Madinah was smoothly accomplished: their reliance on their fortified position and on the faith of their allies in treachery proved futile. But the internal bonds in the Ummat were strengthened. Such is the wisdom of Allah, Lord of the Most Beautiful Names. (lix. 1-24).

Al-Hashr, or The Gathering
(or Banishment, lix. 2-3)

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

1. Whatever is
In the heavens and
On earth, declares
The Praises and Glory⁵³⁶⁸
Of Allah: for He is
The Exalted in Might,
The Wise.
2. It is He Who got out
The Unbelievers among
The People of the Book⁵³⁶⁹
From their homes
At the first gathering
(Of the forces).
Little did ye think
That they would get out:⁵³⁷⁰



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

سَبِّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١﴾

هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ
مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِأَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا
وَوَلَّوْنَا أَنفُسَهُمْ مَآزِعَهُمْ حُصُونَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ
فَانظُرْ لَهُمْ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا وَقَدَفَ

5368. This verse, introducing the Sūra is identical with lvii. I, introducing S. lvii. The theme of both is the wonderful working of Allah's Plan and Providence. In the one case it referred to the conquest of Makkah and taught the lesson of humility. In this case it refers to the dislodgment of the treacherous Banū Nadhīr from their nest of intrigue in the neighbourhood of Madinah practically without a blow. See next note.

5369. This refers to the Jewish tribe of the Banū Nadhīr whose intrigues and treachery nearly undid the Muslim cause during the perilous days of the battle of Uhud in Shawwāl, A.H. 3. Four months after, in Rabī, I. A.H. 4, steps were taken against them. They were asked to leave the strategic position which they occupied, about three miles south of Madinah, endangering the very existence of the Ummat in Madinah. At first they demurred, relying on their fortresses and on their secret alliance with the Pagans of Makkah and the Hypocrites of Madinah. But when the Muslim army was gathered to punish them and actually besieged them for some days, their allies stirred not a finger in their aid, and they were wise enough to leave. Most of them joined their brethren in Syria, which they were permitted to do, after being disarmed. Some of them joined their brethren in Khaibar; see n. 3705 to xxxiii. 27. The Banū Nadhīr richly deserved punishment, but their lives were spared, and they were allowed to carry away their goods and chattels.

5370. That is, without actual hostilities, and the shedding of precious Muslim blood.

And they thought
That their fortresses
Would defend them from Allah!
But the (Wrath of) Allah
Came to them from quarters⁵³⁷¹
From which they little
Expected (it), and cast
Terror into their hearts,
So that they destroyed
Their dwellings by their own⁵³⁷²
Hands and the hands
Of the Believers.
Take warning, then,
O ye with eyes (to see)!

3. And had it not been
That Allah had decreed
Banishment for them,⁵³⁷³
He would certainly have
Punished them in this world:

فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ
وَأَيْدَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِيَ الْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٥٩﴾

وَلَوْلَا أَنْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَلَاءَ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابُ النَّارِ ﴿٦٠﴾

5371. They had played a double game. Originally they were sworn allies of the Madinah Muslims under the holy Prophet, but they secretly intrigued with the Makkah Pagans under Abū Sufyān and the Madinah Hypocrites. They even tried treacherously to take the life of the Prophet while he was on a visit to them, breaking both the laws of hospitality and their own sworn alliance. They thought the Pagan Quraish of Makkah and the Hypocrites of Madinah would help them, but they did not help them. On the contrary the eleven days siege showed them their own helplessness. Their supplies were cut off; the exigencies of the siege necessitated the destruction of their outlying palm trees; and the unexpected turn in their fortunes disheartened them. Their hearts were struck with terror and they capitulated. But they laid waste their homes before they left: see next note.

5372. Their lives were spared, and they were allowed ten days in which to remove themselves, their families, and such goods as they could carry. In order to leave no habitations for the Muslims they demolished their own houses and laid waste their property, to complete the destruction which the operations of war had already caused at the hands of the besieging force of the Muslims.

5373. Banishment was a comparatively mild punishment for them, but the Providence of Allah had decreed that a chance should be given to them even though they were a treacherous foe. Within two years, their brethren the Banū Qurayẓa showed that they had not profited by their example, and had to be dealt with in another way: see xxxiii. 26 and notes.

And in the Hereafter
They shall (certainly) have
The Punishment of the Fire,

4. That is because they
Resisted Allah and His Messenger:
And if any one resists Allah,⁵³⁷⁴
Verily Allah is severe
In Punishment.

5. Whatever ye cut down
(O ye Muslims!) of
The tender palm-trees,
Or ye left them standing
On their roots, it was⁵³⁷⁵
By leave of Allah, and
In order that He might⁵³⁷⁶
Cover with shame
The rebellious transgressors.

6. What Allah has bestowed
On His Messenger (and taken
Away) from them—for this
Ye made no expedition
With either cavalry or camelry:⁵³⁷⁷

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۖ وَمَنْ يُشَاقِ اللَّهَ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٥٩﴾

مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ لَبَنَةٍ أَوْ نَزَعْتُمْوهَا قَائِمَةً
عَلَى أَصُولِهَا فَأِذِنْ اللَّهَ وَلِيُخْرِىَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

وَمَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَى رَسُولٍ مِنْهُمْ ۖ فَمَا أَوْجَفْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ
مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَلَا رِكَابٍ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ رُسُلَهُ

5374. The punishment of the Banū Nadr̥ was because in breaking their plighted word with the Messenger and in actively resisting Allah's Message and supporting the enemies of that Message, they rebelled against him. For such treason and rebellion the punishment is severe, and yet in this case it was seasoned with Mercy.

5375. The unnecessary cutting down of fruit trees or destruction of crops, or any wanton destruction whatever in war, is forbidden by the law and practice of Islam. But some destruction may be necessary for putting pressure on the enemy, and to that extent it is allowed. But as far as possible, consistently with that objective of military operations, such trees should not be cut down. Both these principles are in accordance with the Divine Will, and were followed by the Muslims in their expedition.

5376. The arrogance of the Banū Nadr̥ had to be humbled, and their power for mischief destroyed.

5377. Neither cavalry nor troops mounted on camels were employed in the siege. In fact the enemy surrendered at the first onset. See lix. 2, and n. 5369 above.

But Allah gives power
To His messengers over
Any He pleases: and Allah⁵³⁷⁸
Has power over all things.

7. What Allah has bestowed⁵³⁷⁹
On His Messenger (and taken
Away) from the people⁵³⁸⁰
Of the townships,—belongs
To Allah,—to His Messenger,⁵³⁸¹
And to kindred and orphans,
The needy and the wayfarer;
In order that it may not
(Merely) make a circuit
Between the wealthy among you.
So take what the Messenger
Gives you, and
Refrain from what
He prohibits you.

عَلَىٰ مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٦﴾

مَا آفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ
وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ
كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ
الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٧﴾

5378. Allah accomplishes His purpose in various ways, according to His wise Will and Plan. In some cases a fight is necessary. In some cases the godly attain their objective and overawe the forces of evil without actual fighting.

5379. The Jews had originally come from outside Arabia, and seized on the land near Madinah. They refused to adapt themselves to the people of Arabia, and were in fact a thorn in the side of the genuine Arabs of Madinah. Their dispossession is therefore a restoration of the land to its original people. But the word "*Fai*" is here understood in a technical sense, as meaning property abandoned by the enemy or taken from him without a formal war. In that sense it is distinguished from "*Anfal*", or spoils, taken after actual fighting, about which see viii. 1 and 41.

5380. "*The people of the townships*": the townships were the Jewish settlements round Madinah, of the Banū Nadhīr, and possibly of other tribes. Cf. the "*townships*" mentioned in lix. 14 below. The reference cannot be to the Wādī-ul-Qurā (Valley of Towns), now Madāīn Ṣāliḥ, which was subjugated after Khaibar and Fadak in A.H. 7, unless this verse is later than the rest of the Sūra.

5381. "*Belongs to Allah*": i.e., to Allah's Cause; and the beneficiaries are further detailed. No shares are fixed; they depend upon circumstances, and are left to the judgement of the Leader. Compare a similar list of those entitled to Charity, in ii. 177, but the two lists refer to different circumstances and have different beneficiaries in addition to the portion common to both.

And fear Allah; for Allah
Is strict in Punishment.

8. (Some part is due)
To the indigent Muhājirs,⁵³⁸²
Those who were expelled
From their homes and their
property,

While seeking Grace from Allah
And (His) Good Pleasure,
And aiding Allah and His Messenger:
Such are indeed
The truthful;—

9. And those who
Before them, had homes⁵³⁸³
(In Madinah)
And had adopted the Faith,—
Show their affection to such
As came to them for refuge,
And entertain no desire
In their hearts for things
Given to the (latter),
But give them preference
Over themselves, even though

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ
وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا
وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ
مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَلْبِثُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ
حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ
وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾

5382. The *Muhājir* are those who forsook their homes and property in Makkah in order to assist the holy Prophet in his migration to Madinah (*Hijrat*). Their devotion and sincerity were proved beyond doubt by their self-denial, and they were now to be rewarded.

5383. This refers to the *Anṣār* (the Helpers), the people of Madinah who accepted Islam when it was persecuted in Makkah, and who invited the holy Prophet to join them and become their Leader in Madinah. The Hijrat was possible because of their goodwill and their generous hospitality. They entertained the Prophet and all the refugees (*Muhājirs*) who came with him. The most remarkable ties of full brotherhood were established between individual members of the one group and the other. Until the Ummat got its own resources, the Helpers regularly gave and the Refugees regularly received. The Helpers counted it a privilege to entertain the Refugees, and even the poor vied with the rich in their spirit of self-sacrifice. When the confiscated land and property of the Banū Naḍhīr was divided, and the major portion was assigned to the refugees, there was not the least jealousy on the part of the Helpers. They rejoiced in the good fortune of their brethren. And incidentally they were themselves relieved of anxiety and responsibility on their behalf.

Poverty was their (own lot).
And those saved from
The covetousness of their own
Souls,—they are the ones
That achieve prosperity.

10. And those who came⁵³⁸⁴
After them say: "Our Lord!
Forgive us, and our brethren
Who came before us
Into the Faith
And leave not,
In our hearts,
Rancour (or sense of injury)⁵³⁸⁵
Against those who have believed.
Our Lord! Thou art
Indeed Full of Kindness,
Most Merciful."

SECTION 2.

11. Hast thou not observed
The Hypocrites say
To their misbelieving brethren
Among the People of the
Book?⁵³⁸⁶

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا
بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا يَقُولُونَ لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجْتُمْ

5384. *Those that came after them:* the immediate meaning would refer to later arrivals in Madinah or later accessions to Islam, compared with the early Muhājirs. But the general meaning would include all future comers into the House of Islam. They pray, not only for themselves, but for all their brethren, and above all, they pray that their hearts may be purified of any desire or tendency to disparage the work or virtues of other Muslims or to feel any jealousy on account of their successes or good fortune.

5385. Cf. vii. 43, and n. 1021.

5386. The Jews of the Banū Nadhīr had been assured by the Hypocrites of Madinah of their support to their cause. They had thought that their defection from the Prophet's Cause would so weaken that cause that they would save their friends. But they never intended to undertake any act involving self-sacrifice on their part; if they had helped their Jewish friends, it was not likely that they would have succeeded; and if they had actually gone to the fight; they had neither valour nor fervour to support them, and they would have fled ignominiously before the discipline, earnestness, and Faith of the men of Islam.

"If ye are expelled,
We too will go out
With you, and we will
Never hearken to any one
In your affair; and if
Ye are attacked (in fight)
We will help you".
But Allah is witness⁵³⁸⁷
That they are indeed liars.

12. If they are expelled,
Never will they go out
With them; and if they
Are attacked (in fight),
They will never help them;
And if they do help them,
They will turn their backs;
So they will receive no help.⁵³⁸⁸

13. Of a truth ye arouse
Greater fear⁵³⁸⁹
In their hearts,
Than Allah.
This is because they are
Men devoid of understanding.

14. They will not fight you
(Even) together, except
In fortified townships,
Or from behind walls.⁵³⁹⁰

لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُمْ مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نَطِيعُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا أَبَدًا وَإِن
فُوتِلْتُمْ لَنَنْصُرَنَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١١﴾

لَئِن أُخْرِجُوا لَا يَخْرُجُونَ مَعَهُمْ وَلَئِن قُوتِلُوا
لَا يَنْصُرُوهُمْ وَلَئِن نَّصَرُوهُمْ لَيُوَلُّنَّ
الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يَنْصُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

لَأَنَّهُمْ أَشَدُّ رَهْبَةً فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ
ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

لَا يَقْدِرُونَ كُمْ جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِي قُرَى مُّحَصَّنَةٍ
أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ جُدُرٍ بَأْسُهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيدٌ تَحْسَبُهُمْ

5387. For this actually happened. They never stirred a finger for the Jews, and they never intended to do so. And Allah knows all their motives and secrets: cf. xlvii. 26, n. 4850.

5388. All hopes founded on iniquity and treachery are vain and illusory. There may be honour among thieves. But there is no honour as between dishonest intriguers, and they are not likely to get any real help from any quarter.

5389. Being Unbelievers they fear you more than they fear Allah, because your valour they see, but in Allah they do not believe.

5390. They have not sufficient self-confidence or *clan* to sustain them in a fight except under material advantages or defences. Even if they join forces, they have not sufficient trust in each other to expose themselves to open fighting.

Strong is their fighting (spirit)
 Amongst themselves:
 Thou wouldst think
 They were united,
 But their hearts are divided:⁵³⁹¹
 That is because they
 Are a people devoid
 Of wisdom.

جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّىٰ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ
 قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15. Like those who lately⁵³⁹²
 Preceded them, they have
 Tasted the evil result
 Of their conduct; and
 (In the Hereafter there is)
 For them a grievous Chastisement;-

كَمَثَلِ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيبًا ذَاقُوا وَبَالَ أَمْرِهُمْ
 وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16. (Their allies deceived them),
 Like Satan
 When he says to man,
 "Disbelieve": but when⁵³⁹³
 (Man) disbelieves,

كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ اكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ
 قَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّنكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ
 رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

5391. 'It may be that they have a strong fighting spirit among themselves, but they have no Cause to fight for and no common objective to achieve. The Makkan Pagans want to keep their own unjust autocracy; the Madinah Hypocrites wish for their own domination in Madinah; and the Jews want their racial superiority established over the Arabs, of whose growing union and power they are jealous.' Their pretended alliance could not stand the strain of either a defeat or a victory. If they had been wise, they would have accepted the Cause of Unity, Faith, and Truth.

5392. The immediate reference was probably to the Jewish goldsmith tribe of the Qainuqā', who were also settled in a fortified township near Madinah. They were also punished and banished for their treachery, about a month after the battle of Badr, in which the Makkan Pagans had suffered a signal defeat, in Shawwāl, A.H. 2. The Nadhīr evidently did not take that lesson to heart. The general meaning is that we must learn to be on our guard against the consequences of treachery and sin. No fortuitous alliances with other men of iniquity will save us.

5393. An apt simile. Evil tempts man in all sort of ways, and presents seductive promises and alliances to delude him into the belief that he will be saved from the consequences. Satan says, "Deny Allah": which means not merely denial in words, but denial in acts,—disobedience of Allah's Law, deviation from the path of rectitude. When the sinner gets well into the mire, Satan says cynically: "How can I help you against Allah? Don't you see I am afraid of Him? All our alliances and understandings were moonshine. You must bear the consequences of your own folly."

Satan says,
 "I am free of thee:
 I do fear Allah,
 The Lord of the Worlds!"

17. The end of both will be
 That they will go
 Into the Fire, dwelling
 Therein for ever.
 Such is the reward
 Of the wrong-doers.

SECTION 3.

18. O ye who believe!
 Fear Allah,⁵³⁹⁴
 And let every soul look
 To what (provision) he has⁵³⁹⁵
 Sent forth for the morrow.
 Yea, fear Allah:^{5395-A}
 For Allah is well-acquainted
 With (all) that ye do.
19. And be ye not like
 Those who forgot Allah;⁵³⁹⁶
 And He made them forget
 Themselves! Such
 Are the rebellious transgressors!

فَكَانَ عَاقِبَتُهُمَا أَنَّهُمَا فِي النَّارِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
 وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ
 نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
 خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنسَاهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ
 أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

5394. The "fear of Allah" is akin to love; for it means the fear of offending Him or doing anything wrong that will forfeit His Good Pleasure. This is *Taqwā*, which implies self restraint, guarding ourselves from all sin, wrong, and injustice, and the positive doing of good. See ii. 2, and n. 26.

5395. The positive side of *Taqwā*, or "fear of Allah" (see last note) is here emphasised. It is not merely a feeling or an emotion: it is an act, a doing of things which become a preparation and provision for the Hereafter,—the next life, which may be described as "the morrow" in relation to the present Life, which is "to-day".

5395-A. The repetition emphasises both sides of *Taqwā*: "let your soul fear to do wrong and let it do every act of righteousness; for Allah observes both your inner motives and your acts, and in His scheme of things everything will have its due consequences."

5396. To forget Allah is to forget the only Eternal Reality.

20. Not equal are

The Companions of the Fire
And the Companions
Of the Garden:
It is the Companions
Of the Garden,
That will achieve Felicity.⁵³⁹⁷

لَا يَسْتَوِي أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ وَأَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ
أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. Had We sent down

This Qur-ān on a mountain,⁵³⁹⁸
Verily, thou wouldst have seen
It humble itself and cleave⁵³⁹⁹
Asunder for fear of Allah.
Such are the similitudes
Which We propound to men,
That they may reflect.

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَاهُ عَلَى قُورْءٍ أَوْ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا
مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَلُ
نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

22. Allah is He, than Whom

There is no other god;—⁵⁴⁰⁰
Who knows (all things)
Both secret and open;
He, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عِلْمُهُ الْغَيْبِ
وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٢﴾

5397. The others, the Companions of the Fire, will find their lives wasted and nullified. Their capacities will be rendered inert and their wishes will end in futility.

5398. There are two ideas associated in men's minds with a mountain: one is its height, and the other that it is rocky, stony, hard. Now comes the metaphor. The Revelation of Allah is so sublime that even the highest mountains humble themselves before it. The Revelation is so powerful and convincing that even the hard rock splits asunder under it. Will man then be so arrogant as to consider himself superior to it, or so hard-hearted as not to be affected by its powerful Message? The answer is "No" for unspoilt man; "Yes" for man when degraded by sin to be the vilest of creatures.

5399. Cf. vii. 143, and n. 1103, where, in the story of Moses, the Mount became as dust "when the Lord manifested His Glory". Also cf. xxxiii. 72, and n. 3778, where the mountains are mentioned as an emblem of stability, but as refusing to accept the Trust (*Amānat*) because they felt themselves to be too humble to be equal to such a tremendous Trust.

5400. Here follows a passage of great sublimity, summing up the attributes of Allah. In this verse, we have the general attributes, which give us the fundamental basis on which we can form some idea of Allah. We start with the proposition that there is nothing else like Him. We think of His Unity; all the varying and conflicting forces in Creation are controlled by Him and look to Him, and we can never get a true idea of Him unless =

23. Allah is He, than Whom
 There is no other god;⁵⁴⁰¹
 The Sovereign, the Holy One,
 The Source of Peace
 (and Perfection),
 The Guardian of Faith,
 The Preserver of Safety,⁵⁴⁰²
 The Exalted in Might,
 The Irresistible, the justly Proud⁵⁴⁰³
 Glory to Allah!
 (High is He)
 Above the partners⁵⁴⁰⁴
 They attribute to Him.

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ
 السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ
 الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ
 عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

= we understand the meaning of Unity. His knowledge extends to everything seen and unseen, present and future, near and far, in being and not in being: in fact these contrasts, which apply to our knowledge, do not apply to Him. His Grace and His Mercy are unbounded: see i. 1, and n. 19; and unless we realise these, we can have no true conception of our position in the working of His Will and Plan.

5401. This phrase is repeated from the last verse in order to lead us to the contemplation of some other attributes of Allah, after we have realised those which form our fundamental conceptions of Allah. See the preceding and the following note.

5402. How can a translator reproduce the sublimity and the comprehensiveness of the magnificent Arabic words, which mean so much in a single symbol? (1) "The Sovereign" in our human language implies the one undisputed authority which is entitled to give commands and to receive obedience, and which in fact receives obedience; the power which enforces law and justice. (2) Human authority may be misused, but in the title "the Holy One", we postulate a Being free from all stain or evil, and replete with the highest Purity. (3) "Salām" has not only the idea of Peace as opposed to Conflict, but wholeness as opposed to defects: hence our paraphrase "Source of Peace and Perfection". (4) *Mū-min*, one who entertains Faith, who gives Faith to others, who is never false to the Faith that others place in him: hence our paraphrase "Guardian of Faith: (5) "Preserver of Safety"; guarding all from danger, corruption, loss, etc.; the word is used for the Qur-ān in v. 51. These are the attributes of kindness and benevolence: in the next note are described the attributes of power.

5403. See last note. (6) Allah is not only good, but He can carry out His Will. (7) And if anything resists or opposes Him, His Will prevails. (8) For He is Supreme, above all things and creatures. Thus we come back to the Unity with which we began in verse 22.

5404. Such being Allah's attributes of Goodness and Power, how foolish is it of men to worship anything else but Him? Who can approach His glory and goodness?

24. He is Allah, the Creator,⁵⁴⁰⁵

The Originator,

The Fashioner⁵⁴⁰⁶To Him belong⁵⁴⁰⁷

The Most Beautiful Names:

Whatever is in

The heavens and on earth,

Doth declare⁵⁴⁰⁸

His Praises and Glory:

And He is the Exalted

In Might, the Wise.

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَلِيقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ
الْحُسْنَىٰ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٤﴾

5405. Allah's attributes of Goodness and Power having been referred to, we are now told of His creative energy, of which three aspects are here mentioned, as explained in the following note. The point is emphasised that He does not merely create and leave alone; He goes on fashioning, evolving new forms and colours, and sustaining all the energies and capacities which He has put into His Creation, according to various laws which He has established.

5406. The act or acts of creation have various aspects, and the various words used in this connection are summarised in n. 120 to ii. 117, as supplemented by n. 916 to vi. 94 and n. 923 to vi. 98. *Khalaqa* is the general term for creation, and the Author of all Creation is *Khāliq*. *Baraa* implies a process of evolving from previously created matter or state: the Author of this process is *Bāri-u*, the Originator. *Ṣawwara* implies giving definite form or colour, so as to make a thing exactly suited to a given end or object: hence the title *Musawwir*, Fashioner for this shows the completion of the visible stage of creation.

5407. Cf. vii. 180, n. 1154; and xvii. 110, n. 2322.

5408. Thus the argument of the Sūra is rounded off on the same note as was struck at the beginning lix. 1. The first verse and the last verse of the Sūra are the same, except as regards the tense of the verb *sabbaha*. In the first verse it is the optative form of the preterite *sabbaha*: everything declares the Glory of Allah! After the illustrations given, the declaratory form of the aorist is appropriate, *yusabbiḥu*: "everything doth declare the Glory of Allah".