

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRAT *Al-Mūminūn*, 23.

This Sūra deals with the virtues which are seed-bed of Faith, especially in an environment in which Truth is denied and its votaries insulted and persecuted. But Truth is One and must prevail. Those who do wrong will be filled with vain regrets when it is too late for repentance.

It belongs to the late Makkan period.

Summary.— Faith, coupled with humility in prayer, charity, abstinence from vanity and from indulgence in appetites, and strict probity, must lead to final success, even though people mock and accuse the righteous of false motives, as did the contemporaries of Noah, of Moses, and of Jesus (xxiii. 1-50).

The prophets of Allah and the righteous form one Brotherhood, but those who make schisms and refuse to believe have ample evidence pointing to Truth and the goodness and greatness of Allah (xxiii. 51-92).

Evil must be repelled by goodness and faith in Allah; for the future life is sure, and those who disbelieve will wish for another chance when it is too late (xxiii. 93-118).

Al-Mūminūn, or The Believers.

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

1. Successful indeed are
The Believers,—²⁸⁶⁵
2. Those who humble themselves²⁸⁶⁶
In their prayers;
3. Who avoid vain talk;
4. Who are active in giving zakat;
5. Who guard their modesty,²⁸⁶⁷
6. Except with those joined
To them in the marriage bond,
Or (the captives) whom
Their right hands possess,—²⁸⁶⁸
For (in their case) they are
Free from blame,
7. But those whose desires exceed
Those limits are transgressors;—

سُورَةُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ﴿٥﴾

إِلَّا عَلَى أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ

فَأَنَّهُمْ غَيْرَ مُلَوِّمِينَ ﴿٦﴾

فَمَن يَبْتَغِ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ ﴿٧﴾

2865. *Aflaha*: win through, prosper, succeed, achieve their aims or obtain salvation from sorrow and all evil. This verse connects on with verses 10 and 11 below. The success or victory may come in this world, but is certain and lasting in the world to come.

2866. Humility in prayer as regards (1) their estimate of their own worth in Allah's presence, (2) as regards their estimate of their own powers or strength unless they are helped by Allah, and (3) as regards the petitions they offer to Allah.

2867. The Muslim must guard himself against every kind of sex abuse or sex perversion. The new psychology associated with the name of Freud traces many of our hidden motives to sex, and it is common knowledge that our refinement or degradation may be measured by the hidden workings of our sex instincts. But even the natural and lawful exercise of sex is restricted to the marriage bond, under which the rights of both parties are duly regulated and maintained.

2868. This is further explained and amplified in iv. 25.

8. Those who faithfully observe
Their trusts and their covenants;²⁸⁶⁹
9. And who (strictly) guard²⁸⁷⁰
Their prayers;-
10. These will be the heirs,²⁸⁷¹
11. Who will inherit Paradise:
They will dwell therein
(For ever).
12. Man We did create
From a quintessence (of clay);²⁸⁷²

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لَا مُّنتَهٰى لَهُمْ وَعَهْدُهُمْ رَعُوْنَ ﴿٨﴾
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلٰوةِهِمْ يُحَافِظُوْنَ ﴿٩﴾
اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْوٰرِثُوْنَ ﴿١٠﴾
الَّذِيْنَ يَرِثُوْنَ الْفَرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿١١﴾
وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْاِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلٰلَةٍ مِّنْ طِيْنٍ ﴿١٢﴾

2869. Trusts may be express or implied. Express trusts are those where property is entrusted or duties are assigned by some one to some other whom he trusts, to carry out either immediately or in specified contingencies, such as death. Implied trusts arise out of power, or position, or opportunity; e.g., a king holds his kingdom on trust from Allah for his subjects. The subject of covenants, express and implied, has been discussed in n. 682 to v.1. Covenants create obligations, and express and implied trusts and covenants taken together cover the whole field of obligations.

2870. In verse 2 we were directed to the spirit of humility and earnestness in our prayers. Here we are told how necessary the habit of regular prayer is to our spiritual well-being and development, as it brings us closer to Allah, and thus sums up the light of the seven jewels of our Faith, viz.: (1) humility, (2) avoidance of vanity, (3) charity. (4) sex purity, (5) fidelity to trusts, and (6) to covenants, and (7) an earnest desire to get closer to Allah.

2871. Cf. xxi. 105, where it is said that the righteous will inherit the earth. In the first verse of this Sūra, the final success or victory is referred to. Truth will prevail even on this earth, but it may not be for any individual men of righteousness to see it: it may be in the time of their heirs and successors. But in the life to come, there is no doubt that every man will see the fruit of his life here, and the righteous will *inherit* heaven. in the sense that they will attain it after their death here.

2872. In this beautiful passage, Allah's creative work, as far as man is concerned, is recapitulated, in order to show man's real position in this life, and the certainty of the future: to which he was referred for his reward in verses 10-11 above. For the various stages of creation, see n. 120 to ii. 117. Here we are not concerned with the earliest stage, the creation of primeval matter out of nothing. It is also a process of creation when inorganic matter becomes living matter. Thus inorganic constituents of the earth are absorbed into living matter by way of food and living matter reproduces itself by means of sperm. This is deposited in the ovum and fertilises it and rests for a time in security in the mother's womb. The first change in the fertilised ovum is the conversion into a sort of clot of thickly congealed blood; the zygote cells grow by segmentation; then the mass gradually assumes shape in its growth as a foetus. From the lump develop bones =

13. Then We placed him
As (a drop of) sperm
In a place of rest,²⁸⁷³
Firmly fixed;
14. Then We made the sperm
Into a clot of congealed blood;
Then of that clot We made
A (foetus) lump; then We
Made out of that lump
Bones and clothed the bones
With flesh; then We developed
Out of it another creature.²⁸⁷⁴
So blessed be Allah,
The Best to create!
15. After that, at length
Ye will die.²⁸⁷⁵
16. Again, on the Day
Of Judgment, will ye be
Raised up.

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴿١٣﴾

فَرُخَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً
فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ
لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَبَارَكُ اللَّهُ
أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ تُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

= and flesh and organs and a nervous system. So far man's growth is like that of an animal, but a further process takes place which makes the infant animal into the infant man. This is the breathing from Allah's spirit into him (xv. 29). It may be a continuous process parallel to that of physical growth. The child is born; it grows; it decays and dies; but after death another chapter opens for the individual, and it is to remind us of this most momentous chapter that the previous stages are recapitulated.

2873. The growth in the foetal stage is silent and unseen. The foetus is protected in the mother's womb like a king in a castle; it is firmly fixed, and gets the protection of the mother's body, on which it depends for its own growth until birth.

2874. From a mere animal, we now consider man as man. Is it not a Sign of wonder in itself that from dry dust (*turāb*, xxii. 5) or inorganic matter should be made protoplasm (moist clay or organic matter); from it should grow a new animal life; and out of it should grow human life, with all its capacities and responsibilities? Man carries within himself Signs of Allah's wisdom and power, and he can see them every day in the universe around him.

2875. Our physical death in this mortal life seems to make a break. But if it were the end of all, our life becomes meaningless. Our own instinct tells us that it cannot be so, and Allah assures us that there will be a resurrection for judgment.

17. And We have made, above you,
Seven tracts;²⁸⁷⁶ and We
Are never unmindful
Of (Our) Creation.²⁸⁷⁷

18. And We send down water
From the sky according to²⁸⁷⁸
(Due) measure, and We cause it
To soak in the soil;
And We certainly are able
To drain it off (with ease).

19. With it We grow for you
Gardens of date-palms
And vines: in them have ye
Abundant fruits: and of them
Ye eat (and have enjoyment).⁻²⁸⁷⁹

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعَ طَرَائِقَ
وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ الْخَلْقِ غَافِلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً بِقَدَرٍ فَأَسْكَنَّاهُ
فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنَّا عَلَى ذَهَابٍ بِهِ لَقَادِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

فَأَنشَأْنَا لَكُمْ بِهِ جَنَّاتٍ مِّنْ نَّحِيلٍ وَأَعْتَبْنَا
لَكُمْ فِيهَا فَاوَكُهُ كَثِيرَةً مِّنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

2876. *Tarāiq*: literally tracts, roads, orbits or paths. Here it means: seven heavens. The assurance given in the next clause, that Allah cares for us and all His Creation, calls out attention to Allah's goodness, which is further illustrated in the subsequent verses.

2877. Allah's care for His Creation is ceaseless. A few examples of His care for our physical well-being are given in verses 18-22, and for our spiritual well-being, in Sections 2 to 5.

2878. Normally the rain comes well distributed; it soaks into the soil; the moisture is retained for a long time in all high grounds; it soaks and penetrates through many layers of soil and forms the architecture of physical geography; the retentive powers of higher soil enable rivers to flow perennially even where, as in India, the rainfall is seasonal and confined to a few months in the year. Another form in which water comes down from the sky according to due measure is in snow and hail: these also have their place in the economy of air and soil. Were it not for snow and glaciers in the higher mountain regions, some of the rivers would fail in their abundant flow. As wonderful as the supply of water and moisture is its drainage. It returns to the sea and air in all sorts of ways, and the formation of mist and clouds repeats the cycle. Were it not for the drainage and the clearance of the waters, we should have floods and waterlogging, as happens when the normal processes of nature are temporarily obstructed. The same thing happens when the rain comes down in other than due measure. These abnormal conditions also have their value. But how grateful should man be for Allah's gifts in the ceaseless processes of nature on such an enormous scale!

2879. Cf. vii. 19 and n. 776 to v. 69.

20. Also a tree springing
Out of Mount Sinai,²⁸⁸⁰
Which produces oil,
And relish for those
Who use it for food.

وَشَجَرَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ طُورِ سَيْنَاءَ تَنْبُتُ بِالذَّهْنِ
وَصَنِيعٍ لِّالَّاكِلِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. And in cattle (too) ye
Have an instructive example:²⁸⁸¹
From within their bodies
We produce (milk) for you
To drink; there are, in them,
(Besides), numerous (other)
Benefits for you;
And of their (meat) ye eat;

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْإِنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةٌ لِّتُزَكِّيَكُمْ وَمَا فِي بِطُونِهَا
وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

22. And on them, as well as
In ships, ye ride.

وَعَلَيْهَا وَعَلَى الْفُلْكِ تُحْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

SECTION 2.

23. And certainly we sent²⁸⁸²
Noah to his people:²⁸⁸³

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَقَالَ يَتَقَوَّمُوا

2880. For Arabia the best olives grow round about Mount Sinai. The fig, the olive, Mount Sinai, and the sacred city of Makkah are mentioned together in association in xcv. 1-3, where we shall consider its meaning. Olive oil is an ingredient in medicinal ointments. If used for food, the olive has a delicious flavour. Cf. also xxiv. 35, where the olive is called a Blessed Tree, and n. 3000.

2881. 'Ibrat: the root meaning of the verb is "to interpret, or expound, or instruct", as in xii. 43; the noun means, an interpretation, or example or Sign that instructs, as here and in xvi. 66, or gives warning, as in iii. 13. From cattle we get milk and meat; also from their skins we make leather for shoes, boots, straps, saddlery, and numerous other uses; from camel's hair and sheep's wool we weave cloth, hangings, carpets, etc.; from the horns of cattle we make cups and articles of ornament or use; and camels, horses, donkeys, mules, etc., are used for riding, carrying loads, or drawing vehicles.

2882. The material gifts having been mentioned, which we receive from a wise and kindly Providence, our attention is now directed to Allah's Providence in spiritual matters. He sent Teachers to instruct and guide us, and though they were mocked, rejected, and accused of falsehood and selfishness, they were protected by Allah, and Allah's Truth at length prevailed.

2883. "People" here is almost equivalent to "contemporaries".

He said, "O my people!
Worship Allah! Ye have
No other god but Him.
Will ye not fear (Him)?"²⁸⁸⁴

24. The chiefs of the Unbelievers
Among his people said:
"He is no more than a man
Like yourselves: his wish is
To assert his superiority
Over you: if Allah had wished²⁸⁸⁵
(To send messengers),
He could have sent down
Angels: never did we hear
Such a thing (as he says),
Among our ancestors of old."

25. (And some said): "He is²⁸⁸⁶
Only a man possessed:
Wait (and have patience)
With him for a time."

26. (Noah) said: "O my Lord!
Help me: for that they
Accuse me of falsehood!"

27. So We inspired him
(With this message); "Construct
The Ark within Our sight²⁸⁸⁷

اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

فَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِ مَا هَٰذَا
إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَبْقُضَ عَلَيَّكُمْ
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَنزَلَ مَلَائِكَةً مَّا سَمِعْنَا
بِهَٰذَا فِي آبَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ فترَٰى صُورِهِ
حَتَّىٰ جَاءَ ﴿٢٥﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ انصُرْنِي بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ ﴿٢٦﴾

فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ أَنْ اصْنَعْ الْفُلَ لَكَ يَا عِزُّنَا وَوَحَيْنَا
فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ التَّنُّورُ فَاسْلُفْ فِيهَا

2884. Cf. vii. 59. To fear Allah is to lead righteous lives and eschew evil.

2885. They attribute altogether wrong motives to him (such as would have actuated them themselves), in saying that he was trying to establish his own personal superiority over them by his preaching. Then they accuse him of falsehood in claiming to bring a message of Allah. "If", they say, "Allah had wished to send us messengers, He would have sent angels, not a man like ourselves and from among ourselves. Our ancestors did not worship One God: why should we?"

2886. I construe this to be a speech of another group among them. They thought he was mad, and best left alone. His madness would run out, or he would come to an evil end.

2887. Cf. this whole passage with xi. 35-48, and notes thereon.

And under Our guidance: then
 When comes Our command,
 And the oven²⁸⁸⁸
 Gushes forth, take thou on board
 Pairs of every species, male²⁸⁸⁹
 And female, and thy family—
 Except those of them
 Against whom the Word
 Has already gone forth:²⁸⁹⁰
 And address Me not
 In favour of the wrong-doers:
 For they shall be drowned
 (In the Flood).

28. And when thou hast embarked²⁸⁹¹
 On the Ark—thou and those
 With thee,—say: “Praise be
 To Allah, Who has saved us
 From the people who do wrong.”
29. And say: “O my Lord!²⁸⁹²
 Enable me to disembark
 With Thy blessing: for Thou
 Art the Best to enable (us)
 To disembark.”
30. Verily in this there are
 Signs (for men to understand);
 Lo! We put (men) to test.²⁸⁹³

مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجَيْنِ آتَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَبَقَ
 عَلَيْهِ الْقَوْلُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تُخَاطِبُنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا
 إِنَّهُمْ مُفْرَقُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

فَإِذَا أَسْتَوَيْتَ أَنْتَ وَمَنْ مَعَكَ عَلَى الْفُلِكِ فَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ
 الَّذِي نَجَّانَا مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَنْزِلْنِي مُنْزَلًا مُبَارَكًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْمُنْزِلِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ وَإِنْ كُنَّا لَمُبْتَلِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

2888. See n. 1533 to xi. 40.

2889. See. 1534 to xi. 40.

2890. See n. 1535 to xi. 40.

2891. For *istawā* see 1386 to x. 3. Here the meaning is: mounted on board, ascended, embarked.

2892. This second prayer was inspired when the Flood subsided, and the time came for disembarkation.

2893. Noah's contemporaries had all sorts of chances and warnings. But they refused to believe and perished. But Allah's Truth survived, and it went to the next and succeeding generations. Will not mankind understand?

31. Then We raised after them
Another generation.

32. And We sent to them
A messenger from among
themselves,²⁸⁹⁴
(Saying), "Worship Allah!
Ye have no other god
But Him. Will ye not
Fear (Him)?"

SECTION 3

33. And the chiefs
Of his people, who disbelieved
And denied the Meeting
In the Hereafter, and on whom
We had bestowed the good things
Of this life, said: "He is
No more than a man
Like yourselves: he eats
And drinks of what ye drink.

34. "If ye obey a man
Like yourselves, behold,
It is certain ye will be lost."²⁸⁹⁵

35. "Does he promise that
When ye die and become dust

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ ﴿٣١﴾
فَأَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ أَفَلَا تَنْقُونُ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنَ قَوْمِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
الْآخِرَةِ وَأُتِرْتُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا
مَا هَذَا إِلَّا ابْنُ سِمْتٍ مَثَلَكُمْ لَبِئْسَ مَا تَكُونُونَ مِنْهُ
وَيَشْرَبُ مِمَّا تَشْرَبُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَلَيْنِ أَطَعْتُمْ شِرَارًا مِثْلَكُمْ إِنَّا لَنَحْسِرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

أَعِدُّكُمْ أَنْكُمْ إِذَا مِتُّمْ وَكُنْتُمْ تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا

2894. If this refers to any particular prophet, it must be Hūd whose mission was to the 'Ad people, or to Ṣāliḥ, whose mission was to the Thamūd people. That is the sequence after Noah in S. xi. 50-60 and 61-68. But I think that as the name is not mentioned, we are to understand in general the type of the post-Flood prophets until we come later on to Moses and Jesus. The object here is not to recount the stories, but to show that the resistance of the wicked made no difference to the triumph of Allah's holy Truth.

2895. The type of the narrow Sybarite, who enjoys the good things of this life, denies a future life, and is jealous of any one who presumes to widen his horizon, is here described in a few masterly strokes. He is bored by any mention of the serious things beyond his ken. What good is it, he says, to talk about the future? Enjoy the present. The gain is all in the present: the loss is all in the future.

And bones, ye shall be
Brought forth (again)?

36. "Far, very far is that
Which ye are promised!

37. "There is nothing but
Our life in this world!
We shall die and we live!²⁸⁹⁶
But we shall never
Be raised up again!

38. "He is only a man
Who invents a lie
Against Allah, but we
Are not the ones
To believe in him!²⁸⁹⁷

39. (The prophet) said:
"O my Lord help me:
For that they accuse me
Of falsehood."²⁸⁹⁸

40. (Allah) said: "In but
A little while, they
Are sure to be sorry!"²⁸⁹⁹

41. Then the Blast²⁹⁰⁰ overtook them
With justice, and We made them
As rubbish of dead leaves²⁹⁰¹
So away with the people
Who do wrong!

أَنْتُمْ تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

هَيَّاتَ هَيَّاتَ لِمَا تُوْعَدُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا

وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا

وَمَا نَحْنُ لَهُ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ انصُرْنِي بِمَا كَذَبُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

قَالَ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ لَيُصْبِحُنَّ نَادِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ بِالْحَقِّ فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ غُرَابًا

فَبَعْدَ اللَّقَوْرِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

2896. They seem to say: "There is no future life: that we shall die is certain; that we have this life is certain: some die, some are born, some live: and so the cycle continues: but how can dead men be raised to life?"

2897. "He is only a fool, and invents things, and attributes them to Allah's inspiration! We are too wise to believe such things!"

2898. See above, xxiii. 26. Every prophet is maligned and persecuted: it is always the same story with them, told in different ways.

2899. When the Punishment comes, they will be sorry for themselves, but it will be too late then.

2900. See xi. 66, and notes 1563 and 1561.

2901. *Guthā-un*: rubbish of dead leaves, or scum floating on a torrent.

42. Then We raised after them
Other generations.
43. No people can hasten
Their term, nor can they
Delay (it).
44. Then sent We Our messengers
In succession: every time
There came to a people
Their messenger, they accused him
Of falsehood: so We made
Them follow each other
(In punishment): We made them
As a tale (that is told).²⁹⁰²
So away with a people
That will not believe!
45. Then We sent Moses
And his brother Aaron,
With Our Signs and
Authority manifest,²⁹⁰³
46. To Pharaoh and his Chiefs:
But these behaved insolently:
They were an arrogant people.
47. They said: "Shall we believe
In two men like ourselves?
And their people are subject²⁹⁰⁴
To us!"

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قُرُونًا آخَرِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَخِرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا تَتْرًا كُلَّ مَاجَاءٍ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولُهَُا كَذَّبُوهُ

فَأَتَيْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ بَعْضًا وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ

أَحَادِيثَ فَبَعْدَ الْقَوْمِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَى وَأَخَاهُ هَارُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا

وَسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ

فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا عَالِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

فَقَالُوا أَأَتُومِنُ لِبَشَرَيْنِ مِثْلِنَا

وَقَوْمُهُمَا لَنَا عِدُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

2902. Their habitations and their organisation have been wiped out. What remains is merely a vague story of their existence, a tale that is told. Where their name remains, which is not always the case, it is only a by-word, suggesting all that is unstable and ephemeral,—"to point a moral and adorn a tale".

2903. Moses and Aaron had a twofold mission: (1) to Pharaoh and his Court, which failed because of Egyptian arrogance; (2) to the Israelites, for whom the Law was received on Mount Sinai, but they repeatedly rebelled against Allah. In both cases there were miracles ("Clear Signs") and other proofs which showed that they came at Allah's command and were inspired by His authority.

2904. Racial arrogance made the Egyptians say, 'These men belong to a race which we hold in subjection as our slaves: how can we accept them as messengers of Allah?'

48. So they rejected them
And they became
Of those who were destroyed.

49. And We gave Moses
The Book, in order that
They might receive guidance.²⁹⁰⁵

50. And We made
The son of Mary
And his mother
As a Sign:²⁹⁰⁶
We gave them both
Shelter on high ground,
Affording rest and security
And furnished with springs.²⁹⁰⁷

SECTION 4.

51. O ye messengers! enjoy²⁹⁰⁸
(All) things good and pure,
And work righteousness:
For I am well-acquainted
With (all) that ye do.

فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَكَانُوا مِنَ الْمُهْلَكِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَجَعَلْنَا ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ آيَةً وَآوَيْنَهُمَا

إِلَى رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

يَتَأْتِيهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُّوَامِنِ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا

إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾

2905. Here the reference is to the second part of the mission of Moses, that to the Israelites, which the Israelites rendered ineffective by their want of faith. See n. 2903 above.

2906. The virgin birth of Jesus was a miracle both for him and his mother. She was falsely accused of unchastity, but the child Jesus triumphantly vindicated her by his own miracles (xix. 27-33), and showed by his life the meanness of the calumny against his mother.

2907. There is no need to look far for the place where mother and child were given secure shelter. It is described in xix. 22-26. It was the place to which she withdrew to be delivered when the time drew near. There was a fruitful palm-tree, evidently on high ground, for beneath it flowed a spring. She retired there in seclusion, and she and her child rested there until it was time for her to go to her people with her child.

2908. Literally, "eat". See n. 776 to v. 69. The prophets of Allah do not pose as ascetics, but receive gratefully all Allah's gifts, and show their gratitude by their righteous lives.

52. And verily this Ummah
Of yours is a single Ummah²⁹⁰⁹
And I am your Lord
And Cherisher: therefore
Fear Me (and no other).
53. But people have cut off
Their affair (of unity),
Between them, into sects:
Each party rejoices in that
Which is with itself.²⁹¹⁰
54. But leave them
In their confused ignorance
For a time.
55. Do they think that because
We have granted them abundance
Of wealth and sons,
56. We would hasten them
On in every good? Nay
They do not perceive.²⁹¹¹
57. Verily those who live
In awe for fear of their Lord;
58. Those who believe
In the Signs of their Lord;
59. Those who join not (in worship)
Partners with their Lord;

وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ
فَاتَّقُونِ ﴿٥٢﴾

فَتَقَطَّعُوا أَمْرَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ زُبُرًا كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ
فَرِحُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

فَذَرُهُمْ فِي غَمَرٍ ذُو حَافِيٍّ حِينٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

أَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُم بِهِ مِنْ مَالٍ وَبَنِينَ
﴿٥٥﴾

نُسَارِعُ لَهُمْ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ بَلْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ هُمْ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِمْ مُتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا يَشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

2909. Cf. xxi. 92-93. All prophets form one Brotherhood: their message is one, and their religion and teaching are one; they serve the One True God, Who loves and cherishes them; and they owe their duty to Him and Him alone.

2910. The people who began to trade on the names of the prophets cut off that unity and made sects; and each sect rejoices in its own narrow doctrine, instead of taking the universal teaching of Unity from Allah. But this sectarian confusion is of man's making. It will last for a time, but the rays of Truth and Unity will finally dissipate it.

2911. Worldly wealth, power, and influence may be but trials. Let not their possessors think that they are in themselves things that will necessarily bring them happiness.

60. And those who dispense
Their charity with their hearts²⁹¹²
Full of fear, because
They will return to their Lord;-

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَاءً اتُوا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ

أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

61. It is these who hasten
In every good work,
And these who are
Foremost in them.

أُولَٰئِكَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ ﴿١١﴾

62. On no soul do We
Place a burden greater
Than it can bear.²⁹¹³
Before Us is a record
Which clearly speaks the truth.²⁹¹⁴
They will never be wronged.

وَلَا نَكِلُفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا وَلَدَيْنَا كِتَابٌ

يَبْطِشُ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

63. But their hearts are
In confused ignorance²⁹¹⁵
Of this; and there are,
Besides that, deeds of theirs,²⁹¹⁶
Which they will (continue)
To do,-

بَلْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فِي غَمَرٍ مِّنْ هَذَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْمَلُ مِّنْ دُونِ ذَٰلِكَ

هُمْ لَهَا عَمِلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

64. Until, when We seize
In Punishment those of them

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَخَذْنَا مُتَرَفِّهِم بِالْعَذَابِ إِذَا هُمْ يَجْعَرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

2912. Their hearts are full of reverence for Allah and fear lest their charity or their hearts be not good enough for acceptance before their Lord; for they have the certainty of a future life, in which they will stand before the Judgment Seat. They fear for their own worthiness, but they hope in Faith.

2913. Cf. ii. 286 and n. 339.

2914. The record speaks clearly, and shows exactly what each soul has done and thought, and what is due to it in justice. The worst will receive full justice. The best will receive far more than their due: xxviii. 84.

2915. This is said of the Unbelievers who rejected Faith and rejoiced in the vanities of this world. In spite of the proclamation of Truth, they are doubtful of the future Life and Judgment.

2916. In addition to their rejection of Faith, they have against them positive deeds of wrong-doing, from which, on account of their contempt of the Light from Allah, they will not desist until they are sharply pulled up for punishment: and then repentance will be too late!

Who received the good things
Of this world, behold,
They will groan in supplication!

لَا تَجْعُرُوا الْيَوْمَ إِنَّكُمْ مِنَّا لَا تُنصِرُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

65. (It will be said):

"Groan not in supplication
This day; for ye shall
Certainly not be helped by Us.

66. "My Signs used to be
Rehearsed to you, but ye
Used to turn back
On your heels-

فَذَكَاتَ آيَاتِي نُتَلَّى عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ
نَكِصُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67. "In arrogance: talking nonsense
About the (Qur-ān), like one
Telling fables by night."²⁹¹⁷

مُسْتَكْبِرِينَ بِهِ سَمِرًا تَهْجُرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68. Do they not ponder over
The Word (of Allah), or
Has anything (new) come
To them that did not
Come to their fathers of old?²⁹¹⁸

أَفَلَمْ يَذْكُرُوا الْقَوْلَ أَمَرَجَاءَهُمْ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِ
آبَاءَهُمْ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69. Or do they not recognise
Their Messenger, that they
Deny him?

أَمْ لَمْ يَعْرِفُوا رَسُولَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَهُ مُنْكَرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70. Or do they say, "he is
Possessed"? Nay, he has
Brought them the Truth,
But most of them
Hate the Truth.

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ بَلْ جَاءَهُم بِالْحَقِّ
وَأَكْثَرُهُم لِلْحَقِّ كَارِهُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71. If the Truth had been
In accord with their desires,
Truly the heavens and the earth,

وَلَوْ اتَّبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمَوَاتُ
وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّ بَلْ أَتَيْنَهُمْ بِذِكْرِهِمْ

2917. *Sāmīr*: one who remains awake by night, one who passes the night in talk or in the recital of stories of romances, a favourite amusement of the Days of Ignorance.

2918. If they ponder over the matter, they will find that Allah's Message to humanity is as old as Adam. It is good for all ages. It never grows old, and it is never new.

And all beings therein
Would have been in ruin²⁹¹⁹
Nay, We
Have sent them their admonition,
But they turn away
From their admonition.

72. Or is it that thou
Asked them for some²⁹²⁰
Recompense? But the recompense
Of thy Lord is best:
He is the Best of those
Who give sustenance.

73. But verily thou callest them
To the Straight Way;

74. And verily those who
Believe not in the Hereafter
Are deviating from that Way.

75. If We had mercy on them
And removed the distress²⁹²¹
Which is on them, they
Would obstinately persist
In their transgression,
Wandering in distraction
To and fro.

فَهُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِهِمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ خَرْجًا فَقَرْحَ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ
وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

وَإِنَّكَ لَتَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٧٣﴾

وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ عَنِ الصِّرَاطِ
لَنَكُونُوا ﴿٧٤﴾

﴿٧٥﴾ وَلَوْ رَحِمْنَاهُمْ وَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِمْ مِنْ ضُرٍّ لَلَجُوا
فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

2919. Allah is All-Wise and All-Good, and His architecture of the universe is on a perfect Plan. If these poor, low, selfish, ignorant creatures were to plan it according to their hearts' desires, it would be a dreadful world, full of confusion and corruption.

2920. This is the last of the questions, beginning with xxiii. 68 above, showing the absurdity of the position taken up by the Unbelievers. (1) The Message of Allah is as old as humanity: why do they fight shy of it? (2) They have known their Prophet to be true and righteous: why do they deny him? (3) Is it madness to bring the bitter Truth before them? (4) Does the Prophet ask any worldly reward from them? If not, why do they reject his unselfish efforts for their own good?

2921. The reference is to a very severe famine felt in Makkah, which was attributed by the Unbelievers to the presence of the holy Prophet among them and his preaching against their gods. As this is a Makkan Sūra, the famine referred to must be that described by Ibn Kathīr as having occurred in the 8th year of the Mission, say about four years before the Hijra. There was also a post-Hijra famine, which is referred to by, Bukhārī, but that was a later event.

76. We inflicted Punishment²⁹²²

On them, but they
Humbled not themselves
To their Lord, nor do they
Submissively entreat (Him)!—

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ فَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ
وَمَا يَنْضَعُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77. Until We open on them

A gate leading to
A severe Punishment: then
Lo! they will be plunged
In despair therein!²⁹²³

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَابًا ذَا عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ
إِذَا هُمْ فِيهِ مُبَسِّئُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

SECTION 5.

78. It is He Who has created

For you (the faculties of)
Hearing, sight, feeling²⁹²⁴
And understanding: little thanks
It is ye give!

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ
وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79. And He Has multiplied you

Through the earth, and to Him
Shall ye be gathered back.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

80. It is He Who gives

Life and death, and to Him

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَلَهُ اخْتَلَفُ

2922. Some Commentators understand the battle of Badr to be meant here; if so, this particular verse would be of the Madinah period. But it is better to understand it as referring to the same "distress" as in the preceding verse, or to punishments in general, which obstinate sinners refuse to take as warnings given to them to mend their ways and turn in repentance to Allah.

2923. Cf. vi. 44. If the little trials in the present life will not open their eyes, will great trials do so? Unfortunately they only cause in the wicked a feeling of despair. In the final Punishment after the Judgment, it will be too late for them to repent, and despair will be their only lot.

2924. As elsewhere, "heart" is to be understood as the seat both of feeling and intelligence. 'All the means by which knowledge can be gathered, judgment formed, and goodness cultivated, are provided for you by Allah. If you were grateful, you would use those in His service, which is expressed in your service to your fellow men. But instead you ignore these gifts, question Allah's Providence, and blaspheme against Him!'

(Is due) the alternation²⁹²⁵
Of Night and Day:
Will ye not then understand?

81. On the contrary they say
Things similar to what
The ancients said.²⁹²⁶
82. They say: "What! When we
Die and become dust and bones,
Could we really be
Raised up again?
83. "Such things have been promised
To us and to our fathers
Before! They are nothing
But tales of the ancients!"
84. Say: "To whom belong
The earth and all beings therein?
(Say) if ye know!"
85. They will say, "To Allah!"
Say: "Yet will ye not
Receive admonition?"²⁹²⁷
86. Say: "Who is the Lord
Of the seven heavens,
And the Lord of the Mighty²⁹²⁸
Throne

الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

بَلْ قَالُوا مِثْلَ مَا قَالِ الْأَوَّلُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

قَالُوا أَإِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظْمًا إِذَا نَا
لْمَبْعُوثُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

لَقَدْ وَعَدْنَا نَحْنُ وَءَابَاؤُنَا هَذَا مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ هَذَا
إِلَّا أَسْطِيزُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

قُلْ لِمَنِ الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ
الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾

2925. The alternation of Night and Day stands here as a symbol for all the beneficent processes of Nature provided by Allah for the comfort and growth of man's outer and inner life.

2926. And they are the more culpable, as they have received a later and completer revelation. Why should they now stand on the primitive ideas of their ancestors?

2927. If their argument is that such things about a future life cannot be known or proved, they are referred to the things which are actually before them. The tangible things of the earth—can they postulate their order or government except by a Power or Force or Energy outside them? They will admit that there is such a Power or Force or Energy. We call it Allah. Go a step further. We see a sublime Universe in the heavens above, stretching far, far beyond our ken. They will admit its existence and its grandeur. We ask them to entertain a feeling of reverence for the Power behind it, and to understand their own littleness and their dependence upon that Power.

2928. Cf. ix. 129.

87. They will say, "(They belong) To Allah." Say: "Will ye not Then fear."²⁹²⁹

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلّٰهِ قُلْ اَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88. Say: "Who is it in whose Hands is the sovereignty Of all things,—Who protects (All), but is not protected (Of any)? (Say) if ye know."

قُلْ مَنْ بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89. They will say, "(It belongs) To Allah." Say: "Then how Are ye deluded?"²⁹³⁰

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلّٰهِ قُلْ اَنّٰى تُضِلُّونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

90. We have sent them the Truth: But they indeed are liars.

بَلْ اَتَيْنَهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَانْتَهُمُ الْكَذِبُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

91. No son did Allah beget, Nor is there any god Along with Him: (if there were Many gods), behold, each god Would have taken away What he had created, And some would have Lorded it over others!²⁹³¹ Glory to Allah! (He is free) From the (sort of) things They attribute to Him!

مَا اتَّخَذَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ اِلٰهٍ اِذَا لَذَهَبَ كُلُّ اِلٰهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَّ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ سُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

92. He knows what is hidden And what is open: too high

عَلِيمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَتَعَلٰى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

2929. See n. 2927 above. 'If this great and glorious Universe inspires you with awe, surely the Power behind is more worthy of your awe, especially if you compare your dependence and its dependence upon Him.'

2930. 'The order and unity of purpose in the Universe argue unity of design and goodness in its Maker. Is it not then sheer madness for you to run after fancies and fail to understand and obey His Will? It is delusion in you to seek other than Allah.'

2931. Cf. xvii. 42. The multiplicity of gods is intellectually indefensible, considering the unity of Design and Purpose in His wonderful Universe.

Is He for the partners
They attribute to Him!²⁹³²

SECTION 6.

93. Say: "O my Lord!
If Thou wilt show me
(In my lifetime) that which
They are warned against,²⁹³³
94. "Then, O my Lord! put me not
Amongst the people
Who do wrong!"
95. And We are certainly able
To show thee (in fulfilment)
That against which they are warned.
96. Repel evil with that²⁹³⁴
Which is best: We are
Well acquainted with
The things they say.
97. And say "O my Lord!
I seek refuge with Thee

قُلْ رَبِّ إِمَّا تُرِيدُنِي مَا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

رَبِّ فَلَا تَجْعَلْنِي فِي الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ أَنْ نُرِيكَ مَا نَعِدُهُمْ لَقَدِيرُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةِ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ
بِمَا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ﴿٩٧﴾

2932. To suppose that Allah has a son or family or partners or companions is to have a low idea of Allah, Who is high above all such relationships. He is the One True God, and there can be none to compare with Him.

2933. In the first instance, this applied to the holy Prophet. His subsequent Hijrat from Makkah and the eventual overthrow of the Makkan oligarchy amply prove the fulfilment of the prophecy. But in general meaning it applies to all. We are taught that evil will be visited with a terrible punishment, not only in a future life, but in this very life when its cup is full and the time comes for punishment in Allah's Plan. If it has to come while we are still on the scene of this life, we are asked to pray that we may not be found in the company of those who draw such punishment on themselves. In other words we must eschew the society of evil ones.

2934. Whether people speak evil of you, in your presence or behind your back, or they do evil to you in either of those ways, all is known to Allah. It is not for you to punish. Your best course is not to do evil in your turn, but to do what will best repel the evil. Two evils do not make a good. Cf. xli. 34, n. 4504.

From the suggestions
Of the Satans.²⁹³⁵

98. "And I seek refuge with Thee
O my Lord! lest they
Should come near me."

99. Until, when death comes²⁹³⁶
To one of them, he says:
"O my Lord! send me back²⁹³⁷
(To life),-

100. "In order that I may
Work righteousness in the
things²⁹³⁸
I neglected."-"By no means!
It is but a word he says."²⁹³⁹
Before them is a Partition²⁹⁴⁰
Till the Day they are
Raised up.

وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ ﴿١٨﴾

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ ﴿١٩﴾

لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ
هُوَ قَائِلُهَا وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِم بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

2935. But in any case, shun evil for yourself, and you cannot do this without seeking the help and protection of Allah. Not only must you shun all promptings of evil, but you must shun its proximity. It may be that in retaliating on evil, or even in your curiosity to discover what evil is, you may fall into evil yourself. You should avoid going near it or anything which brings it near to you. And in this matter you should seek Allah's help.

2936. This verse I think connects on with xxiii. 90 above. Though Allah proclaims His Truth everywhere, the wicked cling to Falsehood until they face the reality of Death.

2937. The verb for "send me back" is in the plural in Arabic, which is construed either (1) as an emphatic form, as if the singular were repeated, or (2) as a plural of respect, though such a plural is not ordinarily used in addressing Allah, or (3) as a plural addressed to the angels, after the address to Allah in "O my Lord!"

2938. The unrighteous will ask for another chance. But it will be too late then. The time for repentance will then have passed.

2939. Their request will mean nothing. It will be treated merely as an empty word of excuse. They had plenty of chances in this life. Not only did they reject them, but they did not even believe in Allah or ask for His assistance.

2940. *Barzakh*: a partition, a bar or barrier; the place or state in which people will be after death and before Judgment. Cf. xxv. 53 and lv. 20. Behind them is the barrier of death, and in front of them is the *Barzakh*, partition, a quiescent state until the judgment comes.

101. Then when the Trumpet
Is blown, there will be
No more relationships
Between them that day,
Nor will one ask after another!²⁹⁴¹

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ
وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

102. Then those whose balance
(Of good deeds) is heavy,-
They will be successful.²⁹⁴²

فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ، فَأُولَئِكَ
هُمْ الْمُقْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103. But those whose balance
Is light, will be those
Who have lost their souls;²⁹⁴³
In Hell will they abide.

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ، فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا
أَنْفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

104. The Fire will burn their faces,
And they will therein
Grin, with their lips displaced.²⁹⁴⁴

تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهَهُمُ النَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105. "Were not My Signs rehearsed
To you, and ye did but
Treat them as falsehoods?"

أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَتَىٰ ثُلَايَ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَكُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكْذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106. They will say: "Our Lord!
Our misfortune overwhelmed us,²⁹⁴⁵
And we became a people
Astray!

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا
وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

2941. The old relationships of the world will then be dissolved. Each soul will stand on its merits.

2942. Good and evil deeds will be weighed against each other. If the good deeds prevail, the soul will attain *falāḥ*, i.e., prosperity, well-being, bliss, or salvation; if the contrary, there will be the misery and anguish of Hell.

2943. The loss or perdition will not mean that they will die and feel no more: xiv. 17. The punishment will mean nothing, if there was no sensibility, but total annihilation.

2944. That is to say, their faces will be disfigured with anguish, and their lips will quiver and fall out of place, exposing their teeth.

2945. 'The evil in us conquered us; it was our misfortune that we surrendered to evil, and went astray.' They forget that it was by their own deliberate choice that they surrendered to evil, and they are reminded in verses 109-110 of the ridicule with which they covered godly men in their life on earth.

107. "Our Lord! Bring us out
Of this: if ever we return
(To evil), then shall we be
Wrong-doers indeed!"
108. He will say: "Be ye
Driven into it (with ignominy)!
And speak ye not to Me!"²⁹⁴⁶
109. "A part of My servants
There was, who used to pray,
'Our Lord! we believe;
Then do Thou forgive us,
And have mercy upon us:
For Thou art the Best
Of those who show mercy!"
110. "But ye treated them
With ridicule, so much so
That (ridicule of) them made
you²⁹⁴⁷
Forget My Message while
Ye were laughing at them!"
111. "I have rewarded them
This day for their patience
And constancy: they are indeed
The ones that have achieved
Bliss..."
112. He will say:²⁹⁴⁸ "What number
Of years did ye stay
On earth?"

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

قَالَ اخْسَوْا فِيهَا وَلَا تَكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِي يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
ءَامَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

فَاتَّخَذْتُمُوهُمْ سَخِرَ بَنَاتُكُمْ ذِكْرِي
وَكُنْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ تَضْحَكُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

إِنِّي جَزَيْتُهُمُ الْيَوْمَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ
هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

قُلْ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

2946. After their flouting of Allah's Signs and their mockery of godly men on earth, they have forfeited their right to plead for mercy before Allah's Throne.

2947. Literally, 'they made you forget My Message'. The ungodly were so occupied in the backbiting and ridicule of the godly that the godly themselves became the unconscious cause of the ungodly forgetting the warnings declared by Allah against those who do not treat His Signs seriously. Thus evil often brings about its own ruin through the instrumentality of those whom it would make its victims.

2948. The Hafs reading is "Qala", "He will say". This follows the Kufa Qirāat. The Baṣra Qirāat reads "Qul", "Say" (in the imperative). The point is only one of grammatical construction. See n. 2666 to xxi. 4.

113. They will say: "We stayed
A day or part of a day:²⁹⁴⁹
But ask those who
Keep account."

114. He will say: "Ye stayed
Not but a little,-
If ye had only known!

115. "Did ye then think
That We had created you
In jest, and that ye
Would not be brought back
To Us (for account)?"²⁹⁵⁰

116. Therefore exalted be Allah,
The King, the Reality:
There is no god but He,
The Lord of the Throne
Of Honour!

قَالُوا إِنَّا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضُ يَوْمٍ فَسْئَلِ الْعَادِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾

قَالَ إِن لَّيْسَ لَكُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا لَّوْ أَنْتُمْ
كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ مَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عِبْنًا وَأَنْتُمْ
إِلَيْنَا لَا تَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١١٥﴾

فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ لَا إِلَهَ
إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ ﴿١١٦﴾

2949. The question and answer about Time imply two things. (1) The attention of the ungodly is drawn to the extremely short time of the life in this world, compared to the eternity which they face: they are made to see this, and to realise how mistaken they were in their comparative valuation of things spiritual and things material. (2) Time, as we know it now, will have faded away and appear as almost nothing. It is just a matter relative to this life of temporary probation. Cf. the experience of the Companions of the Cave: xviii. 19.

2950. Allah's Creation is not without a high serious purpose. It is not vain, or for mere play or sport. As far as man is concerned, the highest issues for him hang on his behaviour in this life. "Life is real, life is earnest, And the grave is not its goal", as Longfellow truly says. We must therefore earnestly search out Allah's Truth, encouraged by the fact that Allah's Truth is also, out of His unbounded mercy, searching us out and trying to reach us.

117. If anyone invokes, besides Allah,
Any other god, he has
No authority thereof;
And his reckoning will be
Only with his Lord!²⁹⁵¹
And verily the Unbelievers.
Shall not prosper²⁹⁵²

وَمَنْ يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ فَإِنَّمَا
حِسَابُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

118. So say: "O my Lord!
Grant Thou forgiveness and mercy!
For Thou art the Best
Of those who show mercy!"

وَقُلْ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّحِيمِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

2951. Not with any one else whatever, as Allah is the Eternal Reality. If men, out of the figments of their imagination, fancy other gods, they will be rudely undeceived. And Allah is Lord, i.e., our Cherisher as well as our Creator. In spite of all our shortcomings and our rebellions, He will forgive us if we go to Him not on our merits but on His grace.

2952. See the same word used in describing the contrast with the Believers, in the first verse of this Sūra. Righteousness must win and all opposition to it must fail. Thus the circle of the argument is completed.