

INTRODUCTION TO SŪRAT *An-Nisā*, 4.

This Sūra is closely connected chronologically with Sūra III. Its subject-matter deals with the social problems which the Muslim community had to face immediately after Uḥud. While the particular occasion made the necessity urgent, the principles laid down have permanently governed Muslim Law and social practice.

Broadly speaking, the Sūra consists of two parts: (1) that dealing with women, orphans, inheritance, marriage, and family rights generally, and (2) that dealing with the recalcitrants in the larger family, the community at Madinah, viz., the Hypocrites and their accomplices.

Summary.—It begins with an appeal to the solidarity of mankind, the rights of women and orphans, and the implications of family relationship, including an equitable distribution of property after death. (iv. 1-14).

While the decencies of family life should be enforced, women should be held in honour and their rights recognized, in marriage, property, and inheritance; and this principle of goodness should be extended to all beings, great and small. (iv. 15-42).

The sections in Madinah, not yet in the Muslim community, should not go after false gods, but should accept the authority of the Prophet, and obey him. Then it will be their privilege to be admitted to a great and glorious Fellowship. (iv. 43-70).

The Believers should organize in self-defence against their enemies, and beware of the secret plots and mischiefs of the Hypocrites; how deserters should be treated. (iv. 71-91).

Caution about the taking of life; recommendations for leaving places inimical to Islam; religious duties in the midst of war. (iv. 92-104).

Treachery and the lure of evil (iv. 105-126).

Women and orphans to be justly dealt with; Faith must go with justice, sincerity, and moderation in speech. (iv. 127-152).

Where People of the Book went wrong, with honourable exceptions. (iv. 153-176).

An-Nisāa, or The Women.

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious
Most Merciful.

1. O mankind! fear
Your Guardian Lord,
Who created you
From a single Person,⁵⁰⁴
Created, out of it,
His mate, and from them twain
Scattered (like seeds)
Countless men and women;-
Fear Allah, through Whom⁵⁰⁵
Ye demand your mutual (rights),
And be heedful of the wombs⁵⁰⁶
(That bore you): for Allah
Ever watches over you.
2. To orphans restore their property
(When they reach their age),
Nor substitute (your) worthless things
For (their) good ones; and devour not

سُورَةُ النِّسَاءِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ
وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا
وِنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾

وَأَتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْخَيْثَ بِالْطَّيِّبِ
وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا
كَبِيرًا ﴿٢﴾

504. *Nafs* may mean: (1) soul; (2) self; (3) person, living person; (4) will, good pleasure, as in iv. 4 below. *Minhā*: I follow the construction suggested by Imām Rāzī. The particle *min* would then suggest here a species, a nature, a similarity. The pronoun *hā* refers of course to *Nafs*.

505. All our mutual rights and duties are referred to Allah. We are His creatures: His Will is the standard and measure of Allah; and our duties are measured by our conformity with His Will. "Our wills are ours, to make them Thine," says Tennyson (*In Memoriam*). Among ourselves (human beings) our mutual rights and duties arise out of Allah's Law, the sense of Right that is implanted in us by Him.

506. Among the most wonderful mysteries of our nature is that of sex. The unregenerate male is apt, in the pride of his physical strength, to forget the all-important part which the female plays in his very existence, and in all the social relationships that arise in our collective human lives. The mother that bore us must ever have our reverence. The wife, through whom we enter parentage, must have our reverence. Sex, which governs so much of our physical life, and has so much influence on our emotional and higher nature, deserves—not our fear, or our contempt, or our amused indulgence, but—our reverence in the highest sense of the term. With this fitting introduction we enter on a discussion of women, orphans, and family relationships.

Their substance (by mixing it up)⁵⁰⁷
With your own. For this is
Indeed a great sin.

3. If ye fear that ye shall not
Be able to deal justly
With the orphans,⁵⁰⁸
Marry women of your choice,
Two, or three, or four;
But if ye fear that ye shall not
Be able to deal justly (with them),
Then only one, or
That which your right hands possess.
That will be more suitable,
To prevent you
From doing injustice.⁵⁰⁹

4. And give the women
(On marriage) their dower
As an obligation; but if they,
Of their own good pleasure,
Remit any part of it to you,
Take it and enjoy it
With right good cheer.

وَأِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِسُوا مَاطَابَ
لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مِثْلَىٰ وَلَكُمْ وَرَبْعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ
أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ آذَنٌ
أَلَّا تَعُولُوا ﴿٢﴾

وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ
شَيْءٍ مِنْهُ فَاكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَرِيَّتًا ﴿٤﴾

507. Justice to orphans is enjoined, and three things are particularly mentioned as temptations in the way of a guardian: (1) He must not postpone restoring all his ward's property when the time comes; subject to iv. 5 below. (2) If there is a list of property, it is not enough that that list should be technically followed: the property restored must be of equal value to the property received: the same principle applies where there is no list. (3) If property is managed together, or where perishable goods must necessarily be consumed, the strictest probity is necessary when the separation takes place, and this is insisted on. See also ii. 220 and note.

508. Notice the conditional clause about orphans, introducing the rules about marriage. This reminds us of the immediate occasion of the promulgation of this verse. It was after Uhud, when the Muslim community was left with many orphans and widows and some captives of war. Their treatment was to be governed by principles of the greatest humanity and equity. The occasion is past, but the principles remain. Marry the orphans if you are quite sure that you will in that way protect their interests and their property, with perfect justice to them and to your own dependants if you have any. If not, make other arrangements for the orphans.

509. The unrestricted number of wives of the "Times of Ignorance" was now strictly limited to a maximum of four, provided you could treat them with equality.

5. To those weak of understanding⁵¹⁰
Give not your property⁵¹¹ which
Allah has assigned to you
To manage,
But feed and clothe them
Therewith, and speak to them
Words of kindness and justice.
6. Make trial of orphans
Until they reach the age⁵¹²
Of marriage; if then ye find
Sound judgment in them,
Release their property to them;
But consume it not wastefully,
Nor in haste against their growing up.
If the guardian is well-off,
Let him claim no remuneration,
But if he is poor, let him
Have for himself what is
Just and reasonable.
When ye release their property
To them, take witnesses
In their presence:
But all-sufficient

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَمًا
وَأَرْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ﴿٥٠﴾

وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ آنَسْتُمْ
مِنْهُمْ زُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا
إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَنْ يَكْبَرُوا وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا
فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فَأَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ
وَكُنْ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ﴿٥١﴾

510. This applies to orphans, but the wording is perfectly general, and defines principles like those of Chancery in English Law and the Court of Wards in Indian Law. Property has not only its rights but also its responsibilities. The owner may not do just what he likes absolutely; his right is limited by the good of his family of which he is a member, and if he is incapable of understanding it, his control should be removed. This does not mean that he is harshly dealt with. On the contrary his interest must be protected, and he must be treated with special kindness because of his incapacity.

511. *Your property*: Ultimately all property belongs to Allah, and is intended for the support of his close relations. It is held in trust by a particular individual. If he is incapable, he is put aside but gently and with kindness. While his incapacity remains, the duties and responsibilities devolve on his guardian even more strictly than in the case of the original owner: for he may not take any of the profits for himself unless he is poor, and in that case his remuneration for his trouble must be on a scale that is no more than just and reasonable.

512. The age of marriage is the age when they reach their majority.

Is Allah in taking account.⁵¹³

7. From what is left by parents
And those nearest related⁵¹⁴
There is a share for men
And a share for women,
Whether the property be small
Or large,—a determinate share.
8. But if at the time of division
Other relatives, or orphans,
Or poor, are present,
Give them out of the (property),
And speak to them
Words of kindness and justice.
9. Let those (disposing of an estate)
Have the same fear in their minds
As they would have for their own
If they had left a helpless family
behind:
Let them fear Allah, and speak
Appropriate words⁵¹⁵
10. Those who unjustly
Eat up the property
Of orphans, eat up
A Fire into their own
Bodies: they will soon
Be enduring a blazing Fire!

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ
وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ
مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ﴿٧﴾

وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقَرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسْكِينُ فَأَرْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهُ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ
قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ﴿٨﴾

وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً
ضَعِيفًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَسْقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا
قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٩﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا
إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ
سَعِيرًا ﴿١٠﴾

513. It is good to take human witnesses when you faithfully discharge your trust; but remember that, however fully you satisfy your fellow-men when you give your account to them, there is a stricter account due from you to Allah. If you are righteous in Allah's eyes, you must follow these stricter standards.

514. I have resisted the temptation to translate "next to kin," as this phrase has a technical meaning in Indian Law, referring to certain kinds of heirs, whereas here the people meant are those whose inheritance is to be divided. The shares are specified. Here the general principles are laid down that females inherit as well as males, and that relatives who have no legal shares, orphans, and indigent people are not to be treated harshly, if present at the division.

515. It is a touching argument addressed to those who have to divide an estate. 'How anxious would you be if you had left a helpless family behind? If others do so, help and be kind'.

SECTION 2.

11. Allah (thus) directs you
 As regards your children's⁵¹⁶
 (Inheritance): to the male,
 A portion equal to that
 Of two females: if only
 Daughters, two or more,⁵¹⁷
 Their share is two-thirds
 Of the inheritance;
 If only one, her share
 Is a half.
- For parents, a sixth share
 Of the inheritance to each,
 If the deceased left children;
 If no children, and the parents
 Are the (only) heirs, the mother
 Has a third: if the deceased
 Left brothers (or sisters)
 The mother has a sixth.
 (The distribution in all cases
 Is) after the payment
 Of legacies and debts.
 Ye know not whether

يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلَّذِي كَرِهَ مِثْلَ حَظِّ
 الْأُنثَيَيْنِ فَإِنْ كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ
 ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ
 وَلَا يُؤْتِيهِ لِلْكَلِّ وَاحِدٌ مِّنْهُمَا الشُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ
 إِنْ كَانَ لِلَّهِ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَتْهُ
 أَبَوَاهُ فَلِلْأُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِلْأُمِّهِ
 الشُّدُسُ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ
 ءَابَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَنْدُرُونَ أَيْهَمُ أَقْرَبُ
 لَكُمْ نَفْعًا فَرِيضَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَلَّهَ كَانَ
 عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١﴾

516. The principles of inheritance law are laid down in broad outline in the Qur-ān; the precise details have been worked out on the basis of the Prophet's practice and that of his Companions, and by interpretation and analogy. Muslim jurists have collected a vast amount of learning on this subject, and this body of law is enough by itself to form the subject of life-long study. Here we shall deal only with the broad principles to be gathered from the Text, as interpreted by the Jurists.

(1) The power of testamentary disposition extends over only one-third of the Property; the remaining two-thirds are distributed among heirs as laid down. (2) All distribution takes place after the legacies and debts (including funeral expenses) have first been paid. (3) Legacies cannot be left to any of the heirs included in the scheme of distribution; or it will amount to upsetting the shares and undue preference of one heir to another. (4) Generally, but not always, the male takes a share double that of a female in his own category.

517. At first sight, the Arabic words seem to mean: "if more than two daughters." But the alternative in the next clause is: "if only one daughter." Logically, therefore, the first clause must mean: "if daughters, two or more." This is the general interpretation, and is confirmed by the supplementary provision in iv. 176 at the end of the Sūra, which should be read along with this.

Your parents or your children
Are nearest to you
In benefit. These are
Settled portions ordained⁵¹⁸
By Allah: and Allah is
All-knowing, All-wise.

12. In what your wives leave,
Your share is a half,
If they leave no child,
But if they leave a child,
Ye get a fourth; after payment
Of legacies and debts.
In what ye leave;
Their share is a fourth,⁵¹⁹
If ye leave no child;
But if ye leave a child,
They get an eighth; after payment
Of legacies and debts.
If the man or woman
Whose inheritance is in question,

وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ
إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ
فَلَكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ
وَصِيَّةٍ يُوْصِيْنَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٌ وَلَهُنَّ
الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ
فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ الثُّمُنُ
مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوْصَوْنَ
بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٌ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ رَجُلٌ يُورِثُ
كَأَنَّهُ أَوْ امْرَأَةٌ وَلَهُ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتُ فَلِكُلِّ
وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ فَإِنْ كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ

518. This verse deals with the portions allotted to (a) children, and (b) parents. The next verse deals with the portions allotted to (c) husband or wife of the deceased, and (d) collaterals. The children's shares are fixed, but their amount will depend upon what goes to the parents. If both parents are living, and there are also children, both father and mother take a sixth each: if only one parent is living, he or she takes his or her sixth; and the rest goes to the children. If the parents are living, and there is no child or other heir, the mother gets a third (and the father the remaining two-thirds); if there are no children, but there are brothers or sisters (this is interpreted strictly in the plural), the mother has a sixth, and the father apparently the residue, as the father excludes collaterals. This is far from being an exhaustive statement, but it establishes the proposition that children and parents have always some share if they survive, but their shares are affected by the existence and number of the heirs in these categories.

519. The husband takes a half of his deceased wife's property if she leaves no child, the rest going to residuaries; if she leaves a child, the husband gets only a fourth. Following the rule that the female share is generally half the male share, the widow gets a fourth of her deceased husband's property, if he leaves no children, and an eighth if he leaves children. If there are more widows than one, their collective share is a fourth or an eighth as the case may be; *inter se* they divide equally.

Has left neither ascendants nor
descendants,⁵²⁰

But has left a brother⁵²¹
Or a sister, each one of the two
Gets a sixth; but if more
Than two, they share in a third;
After payment of legacies
And debts; so that no loss⁵²²
Is caused (to any one).
Thus is it ordained by Allah;
And Allah is All-knowing,
Most Forbearing.

13. Those are limits

Set by Allah; those who
Obey Allah and His Messenger
Will be admitted to Gardens
With rivers flowing beneath,
To abide therein (for ever)
And that will be

مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي الثُّلُثِ مِنْ بَعْدِ
وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرَ مُضَارٍّ
وَصِيَّةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَىٰ
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾

520. The word in Arabic is *kalālat*, which is so construed usually. But it was nowhere defined authoritatively in the lifetime of the Messenger. This was one of the three terms about which *Hadhrrat Umar* wished that the Messenger had defined them in his lifetime, the other two being the share of grandfather, and *ribā* (usury). On the accepted definition, we are concerned with the inheritance of a person who has left no descendant or ascendant (however distant), but only collaterals, with or without a widow or widower. If there is a widow or widower surviving, she or he takes the share as already defined, before the collaterals come in.

521. A "brother or sister" is here interpreted to mean a uterine brother or sister, i.e., a brother or sister by the same mother but not by the same father, as the case of full brothers and sisters or brothers and sisters by the same father but different mothers is understood to be dealt with later, in the last verse of this Sūra. The uterine brother or sister, if only one survives, takes a sixth; if more than one survive, they take a third collectively, and divide among themselves; this on the supposition that there are no descendants or ascendants, however remote. There may, however, be a widow or widower surviving; she or he takes her or his share, as already specified.

The shares of collaterals generally are calculated on a complicated system which cannot be described in a brief note. For these, and the rules about Residuaries (*Aṣāba*) reference should be made to special legal treatises.

522. Debts (in which funeral expenses take first rank) and legacies are the first charge on the estate of a deceased person, before distribution takes place. But equity and fair dealing should be observed in all matters, so that no one's interests are prejudiced. Thus funeral expenses should be reasonable; debts must be genuine and not reckless debts; and the shares must be calculated with fairness.

The supreme achievement.^{522-A}

14. But those who disobey
Allah and His Messenger
And transgress His limits
Will be admitted
To a Fire, to abide therein:
And they shall have
A humiliating punishment.

وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ
حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُ
عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿١٤﴾

SECTION 3.

15. If any of your women
Are guilty of lewdness,⁵²³
Take the evidence of four⁵²⁴
(Reliable) witnesses from amongst you
Against them; and if they testify,
Confine them to houses until
Death do claim them,
Or Allah ordain for them
Some (other) way.⁵²⁵
16. If two persons among you
Are guilty of lewdness,
Punish them both.
If they repent and amend,
Leave them alone; for Allah
Is Oft-returning, Most Merciful.
17. Allah accepts the repentance
Of those who do evil
In ignorance and repent

وَالَّتِي يَأْتِيكِ الْفَحِشَةُ مِنْ نِسَائِكَ
فَأَسْتَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ
شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّى
يَتَوَفَّيْنَهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٥﴾

وَالَّذَانِ يَأْتِيَنِهَا مِنْكُمْ فَتَاذُوهُمَا
فَإِنْ تَابَا وَأَصْلَحَا فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٦﴾

إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ
بِجَهْلٍ ثُمَّ يَتَوُفُّونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَتُوبُ

522-A. Cf. xlv. 57, n. 4733.

523. Most commentators understand this to refer to adultery or fornication; in that case they consider that the punishment was altered by the later verse, xxiv. 2.

524. To protect the honour of women, stricter evidence is required, i.e., the evidence of four instead of the usual two witnesses. It is the same for adultery (see xxiv. 4.).

525. Keep them in prison until some definite order is received. Those who take the crime to be adultery or fornication construe this definite order ("some other way") to mean some definite pronouncement by the Prophet under inspiration; this was the punishment of flogging under xxiv. 2, for fornication, and stoning to death under the Prophet's directives for adultery.

Soon afterwards; to them
Will Allah turn in mercy:
For Allah is full of knowledge
And wisdom.

18. Of no effect is the repentance
Of those who continue⁵²⁶
To do evil, until death
Faces one of them, and he says,
"Now have I repented indeed;"
Nor of those who die
Rejecting Faith: for them
Have we prepared
A chastisement most grievous.

19. O ye who believe!
Ye are forbidden to inherit
Women against their will.⁵²⁷
Nor should ye treat them
With harshness, that ye may
Take away part of the dower⁵²⁸
Ye have given them,—except
Where they have been guilty
Of open lewdness;
On the contrary live with them
On a footing of kindness and equity
If ye take a dislike to them
It may be that ye dislike
A thing, and Allah brings about
Through it a great deal of good.

اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧﴾

وَلَيْسَتْ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ
السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّى إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ
قَالَ إِنِّي تَبْتُ النَّفْسَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ
وَهُمْ كُفَّارُ أُولَئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا
أَلِيمًا ﴿١٨﴾

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا
النِّسَاءَ كَرْهًا وَلَا تَقْضُوا لَهُنَّ لَتَدْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ
مَا ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَحْشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ
وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ
فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ
خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾

526. Note the fine touch. A sin may be fashionable, and people may sin together without compunction. When one of them is faced with Death, he repents, but that sort of repentance is no good.

527. Among many nations, including Arabs in the Days of Ignorance, a step-son or brother took possession of a dead man's widow or widows along with his goods and chattels. This shameful custom is forbidden. See also iv. 22 below.

528. Another trick, to detract from the freedom of married women was to treat them badly and force them to sue for a *Khul'a* divorce (see ii. 229, n. 258) or its equivalent in pre-Islamic custom, when the dower could be claimed back. This is also forbidden. Or the harshness may be exercised in another way: a divorced woman may be prevented by those who have control of her, from re-marrying unless she remits her dower. All kinds of harshness are forbidden.

20. But if ye decide to take
One wife in place of another,
Even if ye had given the latter
A whole treasure⁵²⁹ for dower,
Take not the least bit of it back:
Would ye take it by slander
And a manifest sin?

21. And how could ye take it
When ye have gone in
Unto each other, and they have
Taken from you a solemn covenant?

22. And marry not women
Whom your fathers married,-
Except what is past:
It was shameful and odious,-
An abominable custom indeed.⁵³⁰

SECTION 4.

23. Prohibited to you
(For marriage) are:-⁵³¹
Your mothers, daughters,⁵³²
Sisters; father's sisters,
Mother's sisters; brother's daughters,
Sister's daughters; foster-mothers⁵³³
(Who gave your suck), foster-sisters;

وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوا زَوْجَ مَكَاتٍ زَوْجٍ
وَأَتَيْتُمْ إِيَّاهُنَّ فَنُطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ
شَيْئًا أَتَأْخُذُونَ بِهِتْنًا وَإِنَّمَا مَيْسَرَةٌ

وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَقْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ
إِلَى بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذَتْ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا
غَلِيظًا

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنْ
النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ
فَاحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ
وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ
الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ النَّبِيِّ
أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمُ مِنَ الرِّضَاعَةِ

529. Treasure: *Qintār* = a Talent of gold: see iii. 14, first note.

530. See above: iv. 19, n. 527.

531. This Table of Prohibited Degrees agrees in the main with what is usually accepted among all nations, except in minor details. It begins in the last verse (with father's widows or divorcees). The scheme is drawn up on the assumption that the person who proposes to marry is a man: if it is a woman, the same scheme will apply, *mutatis mutandis*: it will read: "your fathers, sons, brothers," etc.; or you can always read it from the husband's view of relationship, as there must always be a husband in a marriage.

532. "Mother" includes grandmother (through the father or mother), great grandmother, etc.; "daughter" includes grand-daughter (through son or daughter), great-grand daughter, etc.; "sister," includes full-sister and half-sister. "Father's sister" includes grandfather's sister, etc., and "mother's sister" includes grandmother's sister, etc.

533. "Fosterage" or milk-relationships play an important part in Muslim Law, and count like blood-relationships: it would therefore seem that not only foster-mothers and foster-sisters, but foster-mother's sister, etc., all come within the prohibited degrees.

Your wives, mothers;
 Your step-daughters under your⁵³⁴
 Guardianship, born of your wives
 To whom ye have gone in,-
 No prohibition if ye have not gone in;-
 (Those who have been)
 Wives of your sons⁵³⁵ proceeding
 From your loins;
 And two sisters in wedlock
 At one and the same time,⁵³⁶
 Except for what is past;
 For Allah is Oft-forgiving,
 Most Merciful;-

وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبِّبَاتُكُمُ اللَّاتِي
 فِي حُجُورِكُمْ مِّنْ نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي
 دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُمْ
 بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَحَلَائِلُ
 أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ
 وَأَن تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ
 سَلَفَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾

24. Also (prohibited are)
 Women already married,
 Except those
 Whom your right hands possess:⁵³⁷
 Thus hath Allah ordained
 (Prohibitions) against you:
 Except for these, all others
 Are lawful, provided
 Ye seek (them in marriage)
 With gifts from your property,-
 Desiring chastity, not fornication.⁵³⁸
 Give them their dowry
 For the enjoyment you have

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ
 أَيْمَانُكُمْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأُحِلَّ لَكُمْ
 مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ أَن تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ
 غَيْرَ مُسْفَحِينَ ۚ فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ
 فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ
 عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا تَرَضَيْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٢٤﴾

534. It is generally held that "under your guardianship" is a description, not a condition.

535. "Sons" includes grandsons.

536. The bar against two sisters in marriage together applies to aunt and niece together, but not to deceased wife's sister.

537. *Whom your right hands possess: i.e., captives.*

538. After defining the prohibited degrees, the verse proceeds to say that women other than those specified may be sought in marriage, but even so, not from motives of lust, but in order to promote chastity between the sexes. Marriage in the original Arabic is here described by a word which suggests a fortress (*ḥiṣn*): marriage is, therefore, the fortress of chastity.

Of them as a duty; but if,⁵³⁹
 After a dower is prescribed, ye agree
 Mutually (to vary it),
 There is no blame on you,
 And Allah is All-knowing
 All-wise.

25. If any of you have not
 The means wherewith
 To wed free believing women,
 They may wed believing
 Girls from among those
 Whom your right hands possess:⁵⁴⁰
 And Allah hath full knowledge
 About your faith.
 Ye are one from another:
 Wed them with the leave
 Of their owners, and give them
 Their dowers, according to what
 Is reasonable: they should be
 Chaste, not fornicators, nor taking
 Adulterous: when they
 Are taken in wedlock,
 If they commit indecency
 Their punishment is half
 That for free women.
 This (permission) is for those
 Among you who fear sin;
 But it is better for you
 That ye practise self-restraint.
 And Allah is Oft-forgiving,
 Most Merciful.

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكَحَ
 الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ
 أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَمِنْ بَيْنِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ
 بِإِيمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَانْكِحُوهُنَّ
 بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَءَاتُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ
 بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَفَّحَاتٍ وَلَا
 مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ فَإِذَا أُحْصِنَ فَإِنْ أَتَيْتِ
 بِفَحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ
 مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ
 مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
 رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

539. As the woman in marriage surrenders her person, so the man also must surrender, at least some of his property according to his means. And this gives rise to the law of Dower. A minimum dower is prescribed, but it is not necessary to stick to the minimum, and in the new relationship created, the parties are recommended to act towards each other with the greatest confidence and liberality.

540. That is, captives taken in a *Jihad*: If you seek such a person in marriage, do it from no base motives. Safeguard your faith, and see that she too does believe. In that case, after all, she is of the human brotherhood, and her condition is accidental and redeemable. If the slave bore a child to her master, she would become free.

SECTION 5.

26. Allah doth wish
To make clear to you
And to guide you into
The ways of those
Before you; and (He
Doth wish to) turn to you
(In Mercy): and Allah
Is All-knowing, All-wise.

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ الَّذِي فِيكُمْ وَيُغْفِرَ لَكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٦﴾

27. Allah doth wish
To turn to you,
But the wish of those
Who follow their lusts
Is that ye should turn
Away (from Him),—
Far, far away.

وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٦٧﴾

28. Allah doth wish
To lighten your (burdens):
For man was created
Weak (in resolution).

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وِثْرَ الْإِنْسَانِ صَعِيفًا ﴿٦٨﴾

29. O ye who believe!⁵⁴¹
Eat not up your property
Among yourselves in vanities:
But let there be amongst you
Traffic and trade
By mutual good-will:
Nor kill (or destroy)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٦٩﴾

541. Let me paraphrase this verse, for there is profound meaning in it. (1) All your property you hold in trust, whether it is in your name, or belongs to the community, or to people over whom you have control. To waste is wrong. (2) In ii. 188 the same phrase occurred, to caution us against greed. Here it occurs, to encourage us to increase property by economic use (traffic and trade), recalling Christ's parable of the Talents (Matt. xxv. 14-30), where the servants who had increased their master's wealth were promoted and the servant who had hoarded was cast into darkness. (3) We are warned that our waste may mean our own destruction ("nor kill or destroy yourselves.") But there is a more general meaning also: we must be careful of our own and other people's lives. We must commit no violence. This is the opposite of "trade and traffic by mutual good-will." (4) Our violence to our own brethren is particularly preposterous, seeing that Allah has loved and showered His mercies on us and all His creatures.

Yourselves: for verily
Allah hath been to you
Most Merciful!

30. If any do that
In rancour and injustice,-
Soon shall We cast him
Into the Fire: and easy
It is for Allah.
31. If ye (but) eschew
The most heinous
Of the things
Which ye are forbidden to do,
We shall remit
Your evil deeds,
and admit you to a Gate
Of great honour.
32. And in no wise covet⁵⁴²
Those things in which Allah
Hath bestowed His gifts
More freely on some of you
Than on others: to men
Is allotted what they earn,
And to women what they earn:
But ask Allah of His bounty.
For Allah hath full knowledge
Of all things.
33. To (benefit) every one,
We have appointed

وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ عُدْوَانًا وَظُلْمًا فَسَوْفَ
نُصْلِيهِ نَارًا وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ
يَسِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾

إِنْ تَحْتَسِبُوا كِبَآئِرَ مَا نُهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ
عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُدْخَلًا
كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ
عَلَى بَعْضٍ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا اكْتَسَبُوا
وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا اكْتَسَبْنَ وَسَأَلُوا اللَّهَ
مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٢﴾

وَلِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ
وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدَتْ أَيْمَنُكُمْ

542. Men and women have gifts from Allah—some greater than others. They seem unequal, but we are assured that Allah has allotted them by a scheme by which people receive what they earn. If this does not appear clear in our sight, let us remember that we have no full knowledge but Allah has. We must not be jealous if other people have more than we have—in wealth or position or strength or honour or talent or happiness. Probably things are equalized in the aggregate or in the long run, or equated to needs and merits on a scale which we cannot appraise. If we want more, instead of being jealous or covetous, we should pray to Allah and place before Him our needs. Though He knows all, and has no need of our prayer, our prayer may reveal to ourselves our shortcomings and enable us to deserve more of Allah's bounty or make ourselves fit for it.

Sharers and heirs⁵⁴³

To property left

By parents and relatives.

To those, also, to whom

Your right hand was pledged,⁵⁴⁴

Give their due portion.

For truly Allah is witness

To all things.

SECTION 6.

34. Men are the protectors⁵⁴⁵

And maintainers of women,

Because Allah has given

The one more (strength)

Than the other, and because

They support them

From their means.

Therefore the righteous women

Are devoutly obedient, and guard

In (the husband's) absence

What Allah would have them guard.⁵⁴⁶

فَتَأْتُوهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ إِنَّا اللَّهُ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ

شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ

بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ

فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ

بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّي تَحَافُونَ نَفْسَهُنَّ

فِعْظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ

وَإِذَا رُجُوهُنَّ فِانْطَبَحْنَ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ

543. *Mawālī*, plural of *Mawlā*; from the root *walā*, to be near in place or relationship, to follow. *Mawlā* may therefore mean: (1) nearly related, (2) heir, (3) sharer or partner; these three meanings are implied here; (4) neighbour, or friend, or protector, or client (xliv. 44); (5) lord or master (xvi. 76).

544. When the emigration took place from Makkah to Madinah, bonds and links of brotherhood were established between the Emigrants and the Helpers, and they shared in each other's inheritance. Later, when the Community was solidly established, and relations with those left behind in Makkah were resumed, the rights of blood-relations in Makkah, and the Helper-brethren in Madinah were both safeguarded. This is the particular meaning. The more general meaning is similar; respect your ties of blood, of neighbourhood, and of friendly compacts and understandings. Be just to all.

545. *Qawwām*: one who stands firm in another's business, protects his interests, and looks after his affairs: or it may be, standing firm in his own business, managing affairs, with a steady purpose. Cf. iv. 135.

546. Or the sentence may be rendered: "and protect (the husband's interests) in his absence, as Allah has protected them. "If we take the rendering as in the text, the meaning is: the good wife is obedient and harmonious in her husband's presence, and in his absence guards his reputation and property and her own virtue, as ordained by Allah. If we take the rendering as in the note, we reach the same result in a different way: the good wife, in her husband's absence, remembering how Allah has given her a sheltered position, does everything to justify that position by guarding her own virtue and his reputation and property.

As to those women
On whose part ye fear
Disloyalty and ill-conduct,
Admonish them (first),⁵⁴⁷
(Next), refuse to share their beds,
(And last) beat them (lightly);
But if they return to obedience,
Seek not against them⁵⁴⁸
Means (of annoyance):
For Allah is Most High,
Great (above you all).

سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٣١﴾

35. If ye fear a breach
Between them twain,
Appoint (two) arbiters,
One from his family,
And the other from hers,⁵⁴⁹
If they seek to set things aright,
Allah will cause
Their reconciliation:
For Allah hath full knowledge,
And is acquainted
With all things.

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَأَبْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِنْ
أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا
يُوفِقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٣٢﴾

547. In case of family jars four steps are mentioned, to be taken in that order: (1) perhaps verbal advice or admonition may be sufficient; (2) if not, sex relations may be suspended; (3) if this is not sufficient, some slight physical correction may be administered; but Imâm Shafi'i considers this inadvisable, though permissible, and all authorities are unanimous in deprecating any sort of cruelty, even of the nagging kind, as mentioned in the next clause; (4) if all this fails, a family council is recommended in iv. 35 below.

548. Temper, nagging, sarcasm, speaking at each other in other people's presence, reverting to past faults which should be forgiven and forgotten,—all this is forbidden. And the reason given is characteristic of Islam. You must live all your life as in the presence of Allah, Who is high above us, but Who watches over us. How petty and contemptible will our little squabbles appear in His presence!

549. An excellent plan for settling family disputes, without too much publicity or mud-throwing, or resort to the chicaneries of the law. The Latin countries recognise this plan in their legal systems. It is a pity that Muslims do not resort to it universally, as they should. The arbiters from each family would know the idiosyncracies of both parties, and would be able, with Allah's help to effect a real reconciliation.

36. Serve Allah, and join not⁵⁵⁰
Any partners with Him;
And do good—
To parents, kinsfolk,
Orphans, those in need,
Neighbours who are of kin⁵⁵¹
Neighbours who are strangers,
The Companion by your side,⁵⁵²
The way-farer (ye meet),
And what your right hands possess:⁵⁵³
For Allah loveth not
The arrogant, the vainglorious:—⁵⁵⁴

وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا
وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ
الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنْبِ وَابْنِ
السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَلًا فَخُورًا ﴿٣٦﴾

37. (Nor) those who are niggardly,
Enjoin niggardliness on others,
Hide the bounties
Which Allah hath bestowed⁵⁵⁵
On them; for We have prepared,
For those who resist Faith,

الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمُ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ مَاءَ اللَّهِ عَنْهُمْ فَضْلَهُ
وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ﴿٣٧﴾

550. The essence of Islam is to serve Allah and do good to your fellow-creatures. This is wider and more comprehensive than "Love God and love your neighbour". For it includes duties to animals as our fellow-creatures, and emphasises practical service rather than sentiment.

551. *Neighbours who are near*: that is, in local situation as well as intimate relationships, just as *neighbours who are strangers* includes those whom we do not know or who live away from us.

552. The *Companion by your side* may be your intimate friends and associates, just as the *way-farer you meet* may be a casual acquaintance on your travels. This last is much wider than the "stranger within your gate."

553. *What your right hands possess*: For the meaning of the phrase see n. 537 above.

554. Real deeds of service and kindness proceed, not from showing off or from a superior sort of condescension (cf. "White Man's Burden"), but from a frank recognition of our own humility and the real claims, before Allah, of all our fellow-creatures. For in our mutual needs we are equal before Allah, or perhaps the best of us (as the world sees us) may be worse than the worst of us (from the same point of view).

555. Arrogance is one reason why our deeds of love and kindness do not thrive. Another is niggardliness or selfishness. Allah does not love either the one or the other, for they both proceed from want of love of Allah, or faith in Allah. Niggardly is the worldly wise man who not only refuses to spend himself in service, but by example and precept prevents others from doing so, as otherwise he would be made odious by comparison, before his fellow-creatures. So he either makes a virtue of his caution, or hides the gifts which have been given him—wealth, position, talent, etc.

A Punishment that steeps⁵⁵⁶
Them in contempt;-

38. Nor those who spend
Of their substance, to be seen⁵⁵⁷
Of men, and have no faith
In Allah and the Last Day:
If any take the Satan
For their intimate,
What a dreadful intimate he is!

39. And what burden
Were it on them if they
Had faith in Allah
And in the Last Day,
And they spent
Out of what Allah hath
Given them for sustenance?⁵⁵⁸
For Allah hath full
Knowledge of them.

40. Allah is never unjust
In the least degree:
If there is any good (done),
He doubleth it,
And giveth from His Own self
A great reward.⁵⁵⁹

41. How then if We brought
From each People a witness,
And We brought thee

وَالَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ رِيقًا لِلنَّاسِ
وَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَنْ يَكُنِ
الشَّيْطَانُ لَهُ قَرِينًا فَسَاءَ قَرِينًا ﴿٣٨﴾

وَمَا ذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَنْفَقُوا
مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٩﴾

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِنْ تَكَ حَسَنَةً
يُضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا
بِكَ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٤١﴾

556. Note how the punishment fits the crime. The niggard holds other people in contempt, and in doing so, becomes himself contemptible.

557. A fault opposed to niggardliness, and equally opposed to true Charity, is to spend lavishly to be seen of men. It is mere hypocrisy: there is no love in it, either for Allah or for man.

558. *Sustenance*: physical, intellectual, spiritual—everything pertaining to life and growth. Our being is from Allah, and we must therefore spend ourselves freely for Allah. How can it be a burden? It is merely a response to the demand of our own healthy nature.

559. Any little good of our own comes from the purity of our heart. Its results in the world are doubled and multiplied by Allah's grace and mercy; but an even greater reward comes from Him: His good pleasure, which brings us nearer to Him

As a witness against
These People!⁵⁶⁰

42. On that day
Those who reject Faith
And disobey the Messenger
Will wish that the earth
Were made one with them:⁵⁶¹
But never will they hide
A single fact from Allah!

SECTION 7.

43. O ye who believe!
Approach not prayers
In a state of intoxication,⁵⁶²
Until ye can understand
All that ye say.-
Nor in a state
Of ceremonial impurity
Except when you are
Passing by (through the mosque),
Until after washing
Your whole body.
If ye are ill,
Or on a journey,
Or one of you cometh
From the privy,
Or ye have been
In contact with women,

يَوْمَ يَذُودُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَعَصُوا الرَّسُولَ لَوْ
نَسُوا بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ حَدِيثًا ﴿٤٢﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنتُمْ
سُكَرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا
عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ
سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ
أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا
صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا ﴿٤٣﴾

560. Each Prophet and Leader is a witness for his People and his contemporaries—for those who accept Allah, and against those who reject Him.

561. Those who reject Allah's message will wish, when their eyes are opened, that they were reduced to dust, for existence itself will be agony to them. They might like to hide in the dust, but nothing is hidden from Allah. All their past will stand out clear before Him.

562. The reference is either to a state of intoxication or to a dazed state of mind on account of drowsiness or some other cause. Or perhaps both are implied. Before the prohibition of intoxicants altogether was promulgated, it was at least unbecoming that people should come to prayers in such a state. For prayers it is only right that we should collect our whole minds and approach Allah in a spirit of reverence.

And ye find no water,⁵⁶³
Then take for yourselves
Clean sand (or earth),
And rub therewith
Your faces and hands.
For Allah doth blot out sins
And forgive again and again.

44. Hast thou not turned
Thy thought to those
Who were given a portion⁵⁶⁴
Of the Book? They traffic
In error, and wish that ye
Should lose the right path.

45. But Allah hath full knowledge
Of your enemies:
Allah is enough for a Protector.
And Allah is enough for a Helper.

46. Of the Jews there are those
Who displace words
From their (right) places,
And say: "We hear
And we disobey";⁵⁶⁵

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أَوْتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ
يَشْتُرُونَ الضَّلَالَةَ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن تَضِلُّوا السَّبِيلَ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَائِكُمْ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَى
بِاللَّهِ نَصِيرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ
وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَاسْمِعْ غَيْرَ مُسْمِعٍ
وَرَعْنَا لِيَّا بِاللِّسَانِ ۚ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ
قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَاسْمِعْ وَانْظُرْ ۚ لَأَكَانَ خَيْرًا

563. The strictest cleanliness and purity of mind and body are required, especially at the time of prayer. But there are circumstances when water for ablutions is not easily obtainable, especially in the dry conditions of Arabia, and then washing with dry sand or clean earth is recommended. Four such circumstances are mentioned: the two last when washing is specially required; the two first when washing may be necessary, but it may not be easy to get water. For a man, when he is ill, cannot walk out far to get water, and a man on a journey has no full control over his supplies. In all four cases, where water cannot be got, cleaning with dry sand or dry earth is recommended. This is called *Tayammum*.

564. Cf. iii. 23 and n. 366.

565. See ii. 93, n. 98. A trick of the Jews was to twist words and expressions, so as to ridicule the most solemn teachings of Faith. Where they should have said, "We hear and we obey," they said aloud, "We hear," and whispered, "We disobey." Where they should have said respectfully, "We hear," they added in a whisper, "May you not hear," by way of ridicule. Where they claimed the attention of the Prophet, they used an ambiguous word apparently harmless, but in their intention disrespectful.

And "Here, may you not
Hear;" and "Rā'inā"⁵⁶⁶
With a twist of their tongues
And a slander to Faith.
If only they had said:
"We hear and we obey";
And "Do hear";
And "Do look at us":
It would have been better
For them, and more proper;
But Allah hath cursed them
For their Unbelief; and but few
Of them will believe.

47. O ye People of the Book!
Believe in what We
Have (now) revealed, confirming
What was (already) with you,
Before We change the face and
fame⁵⁶⁷
Of some (of you) beyond all
recognition,
And turn them hindwards,
Or curse them as We cursed
The Sabbath-breakers,⁵⁶⁸
For the decision of Allah
Must be carried out.

هَمْ وَأَقَوْمَ وَلَكِنْ لَعْنَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَكْفُرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٦٦﴾

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ آمِنُوا بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا
مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَطْمِسَ وُجُوهًا
فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَى أَدْبَارِهَا أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعْنَا أَصْحَابَ
السَّبْتِ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا ﴿٦٧﴾

566. See ii. 104, n. 106. "Rā'inā" if used respectfully in the Arabic way, would have meant "Please attend to us." With a twist of their tongue, they suggested an insulting meaning, such as "O thou that takest us to pasture!" or in Hebrew. "Our bad one!"

567. Literally, "before We obliterate some features (or faces) and turn them front to back (or back to front)": an Arabic idiom, which must be translated freely to yield its proper meaning in English. The face is the chief expression of a man's own real essence; it is also the index of his fame and estimation. The People of the Book had been specially favoured by Allah with revelations. If they proved themselves unworthy, they lost their "face". Their eminence would, owing to their own conduct, be turned into degradation. Others would take their place. The first shall be last and the last shall be first: Matt. xix. 30.

568. Cf. ii. 65 and n. 79.

48. Allah forgiveth not
That partners should be set up
With Him; but He forgiveth
Anything else, to whom
He pleaseth; to set up
Partners with Allah
Is to devise a sin⁵⁶⁹
Most heinous indeed.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ
لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا
عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٨﴾

49. Hast thou not turned
Thy thought to those
Who claim purity
For themselves?⁵⁷⁰
Nay—but Allah
Doth purify
Whom He pleaseth.
And they will not be
Wronged a whit⁵⁷¹

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ بِلِلَّهِ يُزَكَّى
مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَلَا يَظْلُمُونَ فِتِيلًا ﴿٤٩﴾

50. Behold! how they invent
A lie against Allah!
But that by itself
Is a manifest sin!

أَنْظِرْ كَيْفَ يَقْرَءُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ
إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٠﴾

SECTION 8

51. Hast thou not turned
Thy thought to those
Who were given a portion⁵⁷²
Of the Book? They believe

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا
مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ

569. Just as in an earthly kingdom the worst crime is that of treason, as it cuts at the very existence of the State, so in the Divine Kingdom, the unforgivable sin is that of contumacious treason against Allah by putting up Allah's creatures in rivalry against Him. This is rebellion against the Creator. It is what plato would call the "lie in the soul." But even here, if the rebellion is through ignorance, and is followed by sincere repentance and amendment, Allah's Mercy is always open (iv. 17).

570. The sanctimonious or self-sanctified people are the farthest from sanctity or purity, which can only proceed from Allah. They cannot play with Allah's Truth and yet go on claiming to be guided and purified or justified by Allah. Their falsehood in itself condemns them: no further proof is needed of their selfishness and evil.

571. Literally, the small skin in the groove of a date stone, a thing of no value: *fatil*.

572. Cf. iii. 23 and n. 366. The phrase also occurs in iv. 44.

In Sorcery and Tagut⁵⁷³
And say to the Unbelievers
That they are better guided
In the (right) way
Than the Believers!

52. They are (men) whom
Allah hath cursed:
And those whom Allah
Hath cursed, thou wilt find,
Have no one to help.⁵⁷⁴
53. Have they a share
In dominion or power?
Behold, they give not a farthing⁵⁷⁵
To their fellow-men?
54. Or do they envy mankind
For what Allah hath given them
Of His bounty? But We
Had already given the people
Of Abraham the Book
And Wisdom, and conferred
Upon them a great kingdom.⁵⁷⁶
55. Some of them believed.
And some of them averted
Their faces from him: and enough

وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَتُّوْا لَا أَهْدَى مِنَ الَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا سَبِيْلًا ﴿٥١﴾

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يَلْعَنِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ يَجِدَ
لَهُ نَصِيْرًا ﴿٥٢﴾

أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيْبٌ مِنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذَا لَا يُوْتُوْنَ النَّاسَ
نَقِيْرًا ﴿٥٣﴾

أَمْ يَحْسُدُوْنَ النَّاسَ عَلَى مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
فَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا ءَالَ إِبْرَاهِيْمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَءَاتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿٥٤﴾

فِيْنَهُمْ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ صَدَّ عَنْهُ وَكَفَى
بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيْرًا ﴿٥٥﴾

573. The word I have translated *Sorcery* is *jibt*, which may mean divination, sorcery, magic, or any false object of belief or worship, such as an idol. The word I have translated *Evil* (here and in ii. 256) is *Tāgūt*, which means the evil one, the one who exceeds all bounds, Satan: or it may refer to some idol worshipped by the Pagan Arabs, with whom the Jews of Madinah were intriguing against the Holy Prophet. The Jews had taken much to sorcery, magic, divination, and such superstitions.

574. The Jews were then seeking the aid of the Makkan Pagans against Muḥammad, but far from getting any help from them, they and the Pagans were both overthrown. That was the immediate occasion, but the words have a perfectly general—a universal—meaning.

575. The word I have translated *farthing* is *naqir*, the groove in a date stone, a thing of no value whatever. Close-fistedness and envy are among the worst forms of selfishness, and appear specially incongruous in people of power, authority, or influence, from whom is expected generosity in giving and generosity in seeing other people's prosperity or happiness.

576. Such as the kingdoms of David and Solomon, for they had international fame.

Is Hell for a burning fire.⁵⁷⁷

56. Those who reject
Our Signs. We shall soon
Cast into the Fire:
As often as their skins
Are roasted through.
We shall change them
For fresh skins,
That they may taste
The Chastisement: for Allah
Is Exalted in Power, Wise.

57. But those who believe
And do deeds of righteousness,
We shall soon admit to Gardens,
With rivers flowing beneath,-
Their eternal home:
Therein shall they have
Spouses purified⁵⁷⁸
We shall admit them
To shades, cool and ever deepening.⁵⁷⁹

58. Allah doth command you
To render back your Trusts
To those to whom they are due;
And when ye judge
Between people
That ye judge with justice:
Verily how excellent
Is the teaching which He giveth you!
For Allah is He Who heareth
And seeth all things.

59. O ye who believe!
Obey Allah, and obey
the Messenger,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِمْ نَارًا كَلَمًا
تُضَاعَفُ جُلُودُهُمْ بِدَلَّتْهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا
الْعَذَابَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا
لَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا ظِلَالٌ
ظَلِيلًا ﴿٥٧﴾

﴿٥٨﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا
وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ نَعِيمًا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿٥٩﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي
الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ

577. Cf. iv. 97, viii. 37, ix. 95, ix. 68.

578. Cf. ii. 25 and n. 44.

579. The Garden is contrasted with the Fire: the shade is contrasted with the roasting, Evil grows with what it feeds on. So goodness and felicity grow with their practice.

And those charged
With authority among you.⁵⁸⁰
If ye differ in anything
Among yourselves, refer it
To Allah and His Messenger,
If ye do believe in Allah
And the Last Day:
That is best, and most suitable
For final determination.

SECTION 9

60. Hast thou not turned
Thy thought to those⁵⁸¹
Who declare that they believe
In the revelations
That have come to thee
And to those before thee?
Their (real) wish is
To resort together for judgment
(In their disputes)
To the Evil (Tagut)
Though they were ordered
To reject him.
But Satan's wish
Is to lead them astray
Far away (from the Right).
61. When it is said to them:
"Come to what Allah hath revealed.
And to the Messenger":

وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ
خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٥٨﴾

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ
يَتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ
يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ
ضَلًّا بَعِيدًا ﴿٥٩﴾

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى
الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ الْمُتَنَفِّقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْكَ

580. *Ulu-l-amr*=those charged with authority or responsibility or decision, or the settlement of affairs. All ultimate authority rests in Allah. Prophets of Allah derive their authority from Him. As Islam makes no sharp division between sacred and secular affairs, it expects governments to be imbued with righteousness. Likewise Islam expects Muslims to respect the authority of such government for otherwise there can be no order or discipline.

581. The immediate reference was to the Hypocrites (*Munāfiqīn*) of Madinah but the words are general, and the evil of hypocrisy has to be dealt with in all ages. The type of these men is what is called Mr. Facing-both-ways in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." Such men declare that they are always with the Right, but calmly intrigue with Evil and Injustice, and even make Injustice their judge if their personal interests are served in that way.

Thou seest the Hypocrites avert
Their faces from thee in disgust.

62. How then, when they are
Seized by misfortune.
Because of the deeds
Which their hands have sent forth?
Then they come to thee,
Swearing by Allah:
"We meant no more
Than good-will and conciliation!"

63. Those men,—Allah knows
What is in their heart;
So keep clear of them⁵⁸²
But admonish them,
And speak to them a word
To reach their very souls.

64. We sent not a Messenger,
But to be obeyed, in accordance
With the leave of Allah.
If they had only,
When they were unjust
To themselves,
Come unto thee
And asked Allah's forgiveness.
And the Messenger had asked
Forgiveness for them,
They would have found
Allah indeed Oft-returning,
Most Merciful.

65. But no by thy Lord,
They can have
No (real) Faith.
Until they make thee judge

صُدُّوْا ﴿١١﴾

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ
أَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا
إِلَّا إِحْسَنًا وَتَوْفِيقًا ﴿١٢﴾

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي
أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا لَّيْلًا ﴿١٣﴾

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ
اللَّهِ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ
فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ
لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٤﴾

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِي مَا
شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ
حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴿١٥﴾

582. How should hypocrites be treated? To take them into your confidence would of course be foolish. To wage unrelenting war against them may destroy the hope of reforming them and purging them of their hypocrisy. The Prophet of Allah keeps clear of their wiles, but at the same time, does not hesitate to show them the error of their ways, nor to put in a word in season, to penetrate their hearts and win them back to Allah.

In all disputes between them.
And find in their souls
No resistance against
Thy decisions, but accept
Them with the fullest conviction.⁵⁸³

66. If we had ordered them
To sacrifice their lives
Or to leave their homes,
Very few of them
Would have done it:⁵⁸⁴
But if they had done
What they were (actually) told,
It would have been best
For them, and would have gone
Farthest to strengthen their (faith);

67. And We should then have
Given them from Ourselves
A great reward;

68. And We should have
Shown them the Straight Way.⁵⁸⁵

69. All who obey Allah
And the Messenger
Are in the Company
Of those on whom

وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنِ اقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ
أَوْ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ مَا فَعَلُوهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ مِنْهُمْ
وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ
وَإِشْدَ تَنبِيئًا ﴿٦٦﴾

وَإِذَا لَا تَنبِيئُهُمْ مِنْ لَدُنَّا أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٦٧﴾

وَلَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ﴿٦٨﴾

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ
وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا ﴿٦٩﴾

583. The test of true Faith is not mere lip profession, but bringing all our doubts and disputes to the one in whom we profess faith. Further, when a decision is given we are not only to accept it, but find in our inmost souls no difficulty and no resistance, but on the contrary a joyful acceptance springing from the conviction of our own faith.

584. The highest in faith willingly sacrifice their lives, their homes, and all that they hold dearest, in the cause of Allah. Those whose faith is not so strong are expected at least to do what a loyal member of any society does, submit his doubts and disputes to the head of the society and cheerfully accept his decision and submit to it. The contrast is between the Hypocrites who will not even do this, and the really devoted men and women who would voluntarily sacrifice their lives.

585. Four advantages of obedience to Allah are mentioned, in the order in which they will appeal to the beginner in faith: (1) his own benefit ("best for them"); (2) strengthening of his faith, as he becomes more and more at home in the world of faith; (3) reward from Allah's own Presence, such intense conviction that no further arguments are needed; (4) the Straight Way, in which there is no doubt or difficulty whatever in our practical conduct.

Is the Grace of Allah,—
Of the Prophets (who teach),
The Sincere (lovers of Truth),
The martyres,
And the Righteous (who do good):
Ah! How beautiful is their Company.⁵⁸⁶

ذَٰلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ
عَلِيمًا ﴿٧٠﴾

70. Such is the Bounty
From Allah: and sufficient
Is it that Allah knoweth all.⁵⁸⁷

SECTION 10.

71. O ye who believe!
Take your precautions.
And either go forth in parties
Or go forth all together⁵⁸⁸

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اخذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ
فَأَنفِرُوا ثُبَاتٍ أَوْ أَنفِرُوا جَمِيعًا ﴿٧١﴾

586. A passage of the deepest devotional meaning. Even the humblest man who accepts Faith and does good becomes an accepted member of a great and beautiful company in the Hereafter. It is a company which lives perpetually in the sunshine of God's Grace. (This passage partly illustrates Q. i. 5). It is a glorious hierarchy, of which four grades are specified: (1) The highest is that of the Prophets or Apostles, who get plenary inspiration from God, and who teach mankind by example and precept. That rank in Islam is held by Muḥammad Al-Muṣṭafa. (2) The next are those whose badge is sincerity and truth: they love and support the truth with their person, their means, their influence, and all that is theirs. That rank was held by the special Companions of Muḥammad, among whom the type was that of Ḥadhrat Abū Baker As-Siddiq. (3) The next are the noble army of Witnesses, who testify to the truth. The testimony may be by martyrdom, Or it may be by the tongue of the true Preacher or the pen of the devoted scholar, or the life of the man devoted to service, (4) Lastly, there is the large company of Righteous people, the ordinary folk who do their ordinary business, but always in a righteous Way.

587. If a generous General gives the private soldier the privilege of sitting with his comrades and officers, high and low, in one common Brotherhood, people may perhaps wonder: how may this be? If we are admitted to that Company, we want to know no more. It is enough to us that Allah knows our humility and our unworthiness, and with His full knowledge admits us to that glorious Company!

588. No fight should be undertaken without due preparations and precautions. When these are taken, we must go boldly forward. "Go forth" is therefore repeated for emphasis. But we must go forth in a collective spirit, and not in a selfish spirit—either in small parties or all together, as our Leader determines. We must not tarry like the doubter in the next two verses.

72. There are certainly among you
Men who would tarry behind:⁵⁸⁹
If a misfortune befalls you,
They say: "Allah did favour us
In that we were not
Present among them."

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لَيُبَطِّئَنَّ فَإِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ
قَالَ قَدْ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا إِذْ لَمْ أَكُنْ مَعَهُمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٢﴾

73. But if good fortune comes to you
From Allah, they would be sure
To say—as if there had never been
Ties of affection between you
and them—
"Oh! I wish I had been with them:
A fine thing should I then
Have made of it!"⁵⁹⁰

وَلَيْنَ أَصَابَكُمْ فَضْلٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ لَيَقُولُنَّ كَأَنْ
لَمْ تَكُنْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ مَوَدَّةٌ يَلْبِسْتَنِي كُنْتُ
مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٣﴾

74. Let those fight
In the cause of Allah
Who sell the life of this world
For the Hereafter.⁵⁹¹
To him who fighteth
In the cause of Allah,—
Whether he is slain
Or gets victory—
Soon shall We give him
A reward of great (value).

﴿٧٤﴾ فَلْيُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ
يَشْرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ
وَمَنْ يُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ
فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٥﴾

589. The doubter detaches himself in thought and action from the community. If the general body has a reverse, he blesses Allah that he was not among them, instead of being ashamed of himself for desertion. If the general body wins a success, he does not rejoice for the common cause, but only regrets for himself that he was not there to share in the glory and the gains!

590. Just a selfish man's thought. Such men are far from being a source of strength to their community. They are no use in a fight, and the next verse by implication discards them.

591. It is not every one,—least of all, poltroons and faint-hearted persons—who is fit to fight in the cause of Allah. To do so is a privilege, and those who understand the privilege are prepared to sacrifice all their interests in this life, and this life itself; for they know that it is the sacrifice of something fleeting and of little value, for the sake of something everlasting, and of immense value. Whether (in appearance) they win or lose, in reality they win the prize for which they are fighting,—viz., *honour and glory* in the sight of Allah. Note that the only alternatives here are Death or Victory! The true fighter knows no defeat.

75. And why should ye not
Fight in the cause of Allah
And of those who, being weak,⁵⁹²
Are ill-treated (and oppressed)?—
Men, women, and children,
Whose cry is: "Our Lord!
Rescue us from this town.
Whose people are oppressors;
And raise for us from Thee
One who will protect;
And raise for us from Thee
One who will help!"⁵⁹³

76. Those who believe
Fight in the cause of Allah,
And those who reject Faith
Fight in the cause of Evil (Tagut):
So fight ye against the
Friends,⁵⁹⁴ of Satan: feeble indeed
Is the cunning of Satan.

SECTION 11.

77. Hast thou not turned
Thy thought to those

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ
مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا
مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ الطَّاغُوتِ فَقَاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ
الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴿٧٦﴾

الَّذِينَ تَرَى إِلَى الَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ

592. *Mustadh'af* = one reckoned weak, and therefore ill-treated and oppressed. Cf. iv. 98, and vii. 150.

593. Even from the human point of view the cause of Allah is the cause of justice, the cause of the oppressed. In the great persecution, before Makkah was won again, what sorrows, threats, tortures, and oppressions, were suffered by those whose faith was unshaken? Muḥammad's life and that of his adherents was threatened: they were mocked, assaulted, insulted and beaten; those within the power of the enemy were put into chains and cast into prison; others were boycotted, and shut out of trade, business, and social intercourse; they could not even buy the food they wanted, or perform their religious duties. The persecution was redoubled for the believing slaves, women, and children after the Hijrat. Their cry for a protector, and helper from Allah was answered when Muḥammad the Chosen One brought freedom and peace to Makkah again.

594. *Auliyāa* plural of *wali*, friend, supporter, protector, patron; from the same root as *maulā*, for which see iv. 33, n. 543.

Who were told to hold back⁵⁹⁵
 Their hands (from fight)
 But establish regular prayers
 And spend in regular Zakat?
 When (at length) the order
 For fighting was issued to them,
 Behold! a section of them
 Feared men as—
 Or even more than—
 They should have feared Allah:
 They said: "Our Lord!
 Why hast Thou ordered us
 To fight? Wouldst Thou not
 Grant us respite
 To our (natural) term,⁵⁹⁶
 Near (enough)? Say: "Short
 Is the enjoyment of this world:
 The Hereafter is the best
 For those who do right:
 Never will ye be
 Dealt with unjustly
 In the very least!

78. "Wherever ye are,
 Death will find you out,
 Even if ye are in towers

مِنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً
 وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالَ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْنَا
 إِلَيْنَا أَجَلَ قَرِيبٍ قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ
 خَيْرٌ لِمَنِ اتَّقَى وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٧٨﴾

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ
 مُسَيَّرَةٍ وَلَئِنْ نَظَرْتُمْ حَسَنَةً يَقُولُوا هَٰذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ

595. Before the command for fighting was issued there were some who were impatient, and could scarcely be held back. They wanted fighting from human motives,—pugnacity, hatred against their enemies, the gaining of personal ends. Fighting from such motives is wrong at all times. When the testing time came, and they had to fight, not for their own hand, but for a Sacred Cause, in which there was much suffering and little personal gain, the Hypocrites held back and were afraid.

596. "Our natural term of life," they would say, "is short enough; why should we jeopardize it by fighting in which there is no personal gain?" The answer is begun in this verse and continued in the next.

Briefly, the answer is: (1) in any case the pleasures of this world are short; this life is fleeting; the first thing for a righteous man to do is to emancipate himself from its obsessions; (2) to do your duty is to do right; therefore turn your attention mainly to duty; (3) when duty calls for self-sacrifice, be sure that Allah's call is never unjust, and never such as to exceed your capacity; and (4) if you fear death, you will not by fear escape death; it will find you out wherever you are; why not face it boldly when duty calls?

Built up strong and high!"

If some good befalls them

They say, "This is from Allah";

But if evil, they say,

"This is from thee" (O Prophet).⁵⁹⁷

Say: "All things are from Allah."

But what hath come

To these people.

That they fail

To understand

A single fact?

79. Whatever good, (O man!)

Happens to thee, is from Allah;

But whatever evil happens

To thee, is from thyself

And We have sent thee

As a Messenger⁵⁹⁸

To (instruct) mankind.

And enough is Allah

For a witness.

80. He who obeys

The Messenger, obeys Allah:

But if any turn away,

اللَّهُ وَإِنْ نَصَبْتُمْ سَيِّئَةً يَقُولُوا هَٰذَا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ
قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَمَالِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ
يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا ﴿٧٨﴾

مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ
فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ
شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٩﴾

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى
فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِظًا ﴿٨٠﴾

597. The Hypocrites were inconsistent, and in this reflect unregenerate mankind. If a disaster happens, due to their own folly, they blame somebody else; but if they are fortunate, they claim reflected credit by pretending that Heaven has favoured them because of their own superior merits. The modern critic discards even this pretence, eliminates Heaven altogether, and claims all credit direct to himself, unless he brings in blind Chance, but that he does mostly to "explain" misfortune. If we look to the ultimate Cause of all things, all things come from Allah. But if we look to the proximate cause of things, our own merit is so small, that we can hardly claim credit for good ourselves with any fairness. In Allah's hand is all good: iii.26. On the other hand, the proximate cause of our evil is due to some wrong in our own inner selves; for never are we dealt with unjustly in the very least: iv. 77.

598. To blame a man of God for our misfortunes is doubly unjust. For he comes to save us from misfortune, and it is because we flout him or pay no heed to him, that our own rebellion, brings its own punishment. If we realise this truth we shall be saved from two sins: (1) the sin of injustice to Allah's Messengers, who come for our good, and not for our harm: (2) the sin of not realising our own shortcomings or rebellion, and thus living in spiritual darkness. If the Message is from Allah, that carries its own authority: "enough is Allah for a witness."

We have not sent thee
To watch over them⁵⁹⁹

81. They have "Obedience"
On their lips; but
When they leave thee,
A section of them
Meditate all night
On things very different
From what thou tellest them.
But Allah records
Their nightly (plots):
So keep clear of them,
And put thy trust in Allah,
And enough is Allah
As a disposer of affairs.⁶⁰⁰
82. Do they not ponder on
The Qur-ān?
Had it been from other
Than Allah, they would surely
Have found therein
Much discrepancy.⁶⁰¹

وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَرُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ بَيَّتَ
طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ
مَا يُبَيِّتُونَ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى
بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٨١﴾

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ
لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

599. The Messenger was sent to preach, guide, instruct, and show the Way,—not to drive people to good. That is not Allah's Plan, which trains the human Will. The Messenger's duty is therefore to convey the Message of Allah, in all the ways of persuasion that are open to him. If men perversely disobey that Message, they are not disobeying him but they are disobeying Allah. In the same way those who obey the Message are obeying Allah. They are not obliging the Messenger: they are merely doing their duty.

600. If we trust people who are not true, they are more likely to hinder than to help. But Allah is All-good as well as All-powerful, and all our affairs are best entrusted to His care. He is the best Guardian of all interests.

Therefore we should not trust the lip professions of Hypocrites, but trust in Allah. Nor should our confidence in Allah be shaken by any secret plots that enemies hatch against us. We should take all human precautions against them, but having done so, we should put our trust in Allah, Who knows the inner working of events better than any human mind can conceive.

601. The unity of the Qur-ān is admittedly greater than that of any other sacred book. And yet how can we account for it except through the unity of Allah's purpose and design? From a mere human point of view, we should have expected much discrepancy, because (1) the Messenger who promulgated it was not a learned man or philosopher, (2) it was promulgated at various times and in various circumstances, and =

83. When there comes to them
Some matter touching
(Public) safety or fear,
They divulge it.
If they had only referred it
To the Messenger or to those
Charged with authority
Among them, the proper
Investigators would have
Known it from them (direct).
Were it not for the Grace
And Mercy of Allah unto you,
All but a few of you
Would have followed Satan.⁶⁰²

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَوْفِ
أَذَاعُوا بِهِ. وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰ أُولِي
الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ
وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ
الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

84. Then fight in Allah's cause—
Thou art held responsible
Only for thyself—
And rouse the Believers.
It may be that Allah
Will restrain the fury
Of the Unbelievers;
For Allah is the strongest
In might and in punishment.⁶⁰³

فَقَدْ لَبِثَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا تَكُفُّ إِلَّا نَفْسُكَ وَحَرَضِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يَكُفَّ بِأَسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بَأْسًا وَأَشَدُّ تَنكِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾

= (3) it is addressed to all grades of mankind. Yet, when properly understood, its various pieces fit together well even when arranged without any regard to chronological order. There was just the One Inspirer and the One Inspired.

602. In times of war or public panic, thoughtless repetition of gossip is rightly restrained by all effective States. If false, such news may cause needless alarm: if true, it may frighten the timid and cause some misgiving even to the bravest, because the counterpart of it—the preparations made to meet the danger—is not known. Thoughtless news, true or false, may also encourage the enemy. The proper course is quietly to hand all news direct to those who are in a position to investigate it. They can then sift it and take suitable measures to checkmate the enemy. Not to do so, but to deal with news either thoughtlessly or maliciously is to fall directly into the snares of evil.

603. The courage of Muhammad was as notable as his wisdom, his gentleness, and his trust in Allah. Facing fearful odds, he often stood alone, and took the whole responsibility on himself. But his example and visible trust in Allah inspired and roused the Muslims, and also—speaking purely from a human point of view—restrained the fury of his enemies. When we consider that he was Allah's inspired Messenger to carry out His Plan, we can see that nothing can resist that Plan. If the enemy happens to have strength, power, or resources, Allah's strength, power, and resources are infinitely greater. =

85. Whoever intercedes in
A good cause
Becomes a partner therein:
And whoever recommends
And helps an evil cause,
Shares in its burden:
And Allah hath power⁶⁰⁴
Over all things.

مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفْعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِّنْهَا
وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفْعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقِيمًا ﴿٨٥﴾

86. When a (courteous) greeting
Is offered you, meet it
With a greeting still more
Courteous, or (at least)
Of equal courtesy.
Allah takes careful account⁶⁰⁵
Of all things.

وَإِذَا حُيِّتُمْ بِحَيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا ﴿٨٦﴾

87. Allah! There is no god
But He: of a surety
He will gather you together
On the Day of Judgment,
About which there is no doubt.
And whose word can be
Truer than Allah's?

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لِيَجْمَعَ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ
لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا ﴿٨٧﴾

SECTION 12

88. Why should ye be
Divided into two parties

﴿٨٨﴾ فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِتْنَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَرَكَّهُمْ

= If the enemy is meditating punishment on the righteous for their righteousness. Allah's punishment for such wickedness will be infinitely greater and more effective.

604. In this fleeting world's chances Allah's providence and justice may not always appear plain to our eyes. But we are asked to believe that if we help and support a good cause, we share in all its credit and in its eventual victory. And conversely, we cannot support a bad cause without sharing in all its evil consequences. If appearances seem against this faith, let us not be deceived by appearances. For Allah has power over all things.

605. The necessary correlative to the command to fight in a good cause is the command to cultivate sweetness and cordiality in our manners at all times. For fighting is an exceptional necessity while the sweetness of daily human intercourse is a normal need. Further, we give kindness and courtesy without asking, and return it if possible in even better terms than we received, or at least in equally courteous terms. For we are all creatures of One God, and shall be brought together before Him.

About the Hypocrites?⁶⁰⁶

Allah hath cast them off
For their (evil) deeds.
Would ye guide those
Whom Allah hath thrown
Out of the Way? For those
Whom Allah hath thrown
Out of the Way, never
Shalt thou find the Way.

89. They but wish that ye
Should reject Faith,
As they do, and thus be
On the same footing (as they):
So take not friends
From their ranks
Until they flee⁶⁰⁷
In the way of Allah
(From what is forbidden).
But it they turn renegades,

بِمَا كَسَبُوا أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَهْدُوا مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ
وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٨﴾

وَذُوَالْوَتَكَفَرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً فَلَا
تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّى يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فُخِدُوا وَهُمْ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ
وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وَلِيًّا
وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٨٩﴾

606. When the desertion of the Hypocrites at Uhud nearly caused a disaster to the Muslim cause there was great feeling among the Muslims of Madinah against them. One party wanted to put them to the sword: another to leave them alone. The actual policy pursued avoided both extremes, and was determined by these verses. It was clear that they were a danger to the Muslim community if they were admitted into its counsels, and in any case they were a source of demoralisation. But while every caution was used, no extreme measures were taken against them. On the contrary, they were given a chance of making good. If they made a sacrifice for the cause ("flee from what is forbidden," see next verse), their conduct purged their previous cowardice, and their sincerity entitled them to be taken back. But if they deserted the Muslim community again, they were treated as enemies, with the additional penalty of desertion which is enforced by all nations actually at war. Even so, a humane exception was made in the two cases specified in iv. 90.

607. *Flee*: the verbal form which the noun *hijrat* is derived. Bukhārī interprets this rightly as fleeing from all that is forbidden. This would include *hijrat* in the technical sense of leaving a place in which the practice of religion is not allowed. But it is more general. In time of war, if a man is willing to submit to discipline and refrain from infringing orders issued, he has proved his fidelity and may be treated as a member of the community at war.

On the other hand if he by false pretences comes into the inner counsels merely to betray them, he may rightly be treated as a traitor or deserter and be punished for his treason or desertion; or if he escapes, he can be treated as an enemy and is entitled to no mercy. He is worse than an enemy: he has claimed to be of you in order to spy on you, and been all the time helping the enemy.

Seize them and slay them
Wherever ye find them;
And (in any case) take
No friends or helpers
From their ranks:-

90. Except those who join
A group between whom
And you there is a treaty⁶⁰⁸
(Of peace), or those who approach⁶⁰⁹
You with hearts restraining
Them from fighting you
Or fighting their own
People. If Allah had pleased,
He could have given them
Power over you, and they
Would have fought you:
Therefore if they withdraw
From you but fight you not,
And (instead) send you
(Guarantees of) peace, then Allah
Hath opened no way
For you (to war against them).

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ
أَوْ جَاءَ وَكُمْ حَصْرَتْ صُدُّوهُمْ أَنْ يَقْتُلُوكُمْ
أَوْ يَقْتُلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَاطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَلَقَتْلُوكُمْ فَإِنْ أَعَزَّ لُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يَقْتُلُوكُمْ وَالْقَوَا
إِلَيْكُمْ أَلْسَلَمْ فَأَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾

608. *Except*: the exception refers to "seize them and slay them", the death penalty for repeated desertion. Even after such desertion, exemption is granted in two cases. One is where the deserter took asylum with a tribe with whom there was a treaty of peace and amity. Presumably such a tribe (even though outside the pale of Islam) might be trusted to keep the man from fighting against the forces of Islam—in the modern phrase, to disarm him and render him harmless. The second case for exemption is where the man from his own heart desires never to take up arms against Islam, though he does not wish to join the forces of Islam, to fight against a hostile tribe (perhaps his own) fighting against Islam. But he must make a real approach, giving guarantees of his sincerity. In the modern phrase he would be "on parole". But this provision is much milder than that in modern military codes, which grant the privilege only to enemy prisoners, not to those who have deserted from the army granting them parole. The Hypocrites were in that position, but humanity as well as policy treated them with great leniency.

609. *Approach* or come: refers not to the physical act of coming, but to the mental attitude: the heart is mentioned for sincerity. When they sincerely promise not to fight against you, do not pursue them. Remember that if they had fought against you, your difficulties would have been increased. Their neutrality itself may be a great advantage to you. So long as you are satisfied that they are sincere and their acts support their declarations of peace with you, you should not consider yourself justified in pursuing them and warring against them.

91. Others you will find
That wish to be secure
From you as well
As that of their people:
Every time they are sent back⁶¹⁰
To temptation, they succumb
Thereto: if they withdraw not
From you nor give you (guarantees)
Of peace besides
Restraining their hands,
Seize them and slay them
Wherever ye get them:
In their case
We have provided you
With a clear argument
Against them.

SECTION 13.

92. Never should a Believer
Kill a Believer;
Except by mistake,⁶¹¹
And whoever kills a Believer
By mistake
It is ordained that he
Should free a believing slave.

سَتَجِدُونَ آخَرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا
قَوْمَهُمْ كُلَّ مَا رُدُّوْا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا فِيهَا فَإِنْ
لَمْ يَعْزِلُوْكُمْ وَيُلْقُوا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ وَيَكْفُرُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ
فَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَقْلَبُوهُمْ خَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ
وَأُولَئِكَ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا ﴿٩١﴾

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَاً
وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَاً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ
وَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَدَّقُوا
فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ

610. As opposed to the two classes of deserters to whom clemency may be shown, there is a class which is treacherous and dangerous and cannot be left alone. They try to win your confidence, and are all the time in the confidence of the enemy. Every time they get a chance, they succumb to the temptation of double-dealing. The best way of dealing with them is to treat them as open enemies. Keep them not in your midst. If they give you guarantees of peace and do not actually fight against you, well and good. If not, they are deserters actively fighting in the ranks of the enemy. They have openly given you proof, and you can fairly seize and slay them in war as deserters and enemies.

611. Life is absolutely sacred in the Islamic Brotherhood. But mistakes will sometimes happen, as did happen in the mêlée at Uhud, when some Muslims were killed (being mistaken for the enemy) by Muslims. There was no guilty intention: therefore there was no murder. But all the same, the family of the deceased was entitled to compensation unless they freely remitted it, and in addition it was provided that the unfortunate man who made the mistake should free a believing slave. Thus a deplorable mistake was made the occasion for winning the liberty of a slave who was a Believer, for Islam discountenances slavery. The compensation could only be paid if the deceased belonged =

And pay blood-money
To the deceased's family,
Unless they remit it freely.
If the deceased belonged
To a people at war with you,
And he was a Believer,
The freeing of a believing slave
(Is enough). If he belonged
To a people with whom
Ye have a treaty of mutual
Alliance, blood-money should
Be paid to his family,
And a believing slave be freed.
For those who find this
Beyond their means, (is prescribed)
A fast for two months
Running: by way of repentance
To Allah: for Allah hath
All knowledge and all wisdom.

93. If a man kills a Believer
Intentionally, his recompense⁶¹²
Is Hell, to abide therein
(For ever): and the wrath

فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ
مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدْيَةٌ
مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ
فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ
مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٩٣﴾

وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ
جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ

= to a Muslim society or to some people at peace with the Muslim society. Obviously it could not be paid if, though the deceased was a Believer, his people were at war with the Muslim society: even if his people could be reached, it is not fair to increase the resources of the enemy. If the deceased was himself an enemy at war, obviously the laws of war justify his being killed in warfare unless he surrendered. If the man who took life unintentionally has no means from which to free a believing slave or to give compensation, he must still by an act of strict self-denial (fasting for two whole months running) show that he is cognizant of the grave nature of the deed he has done and sincerely repentant. I take this to apply to all three cases mentioned: that is, where a Believer killed a Believer unintentionally and the deceased (1) belonged to the same community as you, or (2) belonged to a community at war with you, or (3) belonged to a community in alliance with you.

612. What is mentioned here is the punishment in the Hereafter. The legal consequences, enforceable by human society, are mentioned in ii. 178, under the rules of *Qisās*. That is, a life should be taken for a life destroyed, but this should be on a scale of equality: a single murder should not commit a whole tribe to a perpetual blood-feud, as in the days of ignorance. But if the heirs of the man slain accept reasonable compensation, this should be accepted, and the taking of a life for a life should be put a stop to. This course leads to the saving of life, and is commanded to men of understanding.

And the curse of Allah
Are upon him, and
A dreadful chastisement
Is prepared for him.

94. O ye who believe!
When ye go out⁶¹³
In the cause of Allah,
Investigate carefully,
And say not to any one
Who offers you a salutation:
"Thou art none of a Believer!"
Coveting the perishable goods
Of this life: with Allah
Are profits and spoils abundant.
Even thus were ye yourselves
Before, till Allah conferred
On you His favours: therefore
Carefully investigate.
For Allah is well aware
Of all that ye do.

95. Not equal are those
Believers who sit (at home),
Except those who are disabled.
And those who strive
And fight in the cause
Of Allah with their goods
And their persons.
Allah hath granted
A grade higher to those
Who strive and fight

وَلَعَنَهُوَأَعَدَّ لَهُعَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٣﴾

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَن أَلْفَقَ إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ
لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَغَانِمُ كَثِيرَةٌ كَذَلِكَ
كُنْتُمْ مِن قَبْلُ فَمَنِ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَتَبَيَّنُوا إِنَّكَ اللَّهُ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
خَبِيرًا ﴿٩٤﴾

لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُولِي الضَّرَرِ
وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فَضَّلَ
اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ
دَرَجَةً وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ
الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٥﴾

613. Go abroad: *dharaba* = to travel, to go for *jihad*, or for honest trade or other service, which if done with pure motives, counts as service in the cause of Allah. The immediate occasion was in connection with *jihad*, but the words are general, and can be applied to similar circumstances. In war (or in peace) we are apt to catch some worldly advantage by pluming ourselves on our superiority in Faith. In war perhaps we want to gain glory or booty by killing a supposed enemy. This is wrong. The righteous man, if he is really out in Allah's service, has more abundant and richer gifts to think of in the Hereafter.

With their goods and persons
Than to those who sit (at home).
Unto all (in Faith)⁶¹⁴
Hath Allah promised good:
But those who strive and fight
Hath He distinguished
Above those who sit (at home)
By a great reward.-

96. Ranks specially bestowed
By Him and Forgiveness
And Mercy. For Allah is
Oft-forgiving. Most Merciful.

SECTION 14.

97. When angels take
The souls of those
Who die in sin
Against their souls.⁶¹⁵

دَرَجَاتٍ مِنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا
رَحِيمًا

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّيْنَاهُمُ الْفَلَاحُ ظَالِمِينَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا
فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا

614. Allah's goodness is promised to all people of Faith. But there are degrees among men and women of Faith. There are people with natural inertia: they do the minimum that is required of them, but no more. There are people who are weak in will: they are easily frightened. There are people who are so strong in will and so firm in faith that they are determined to conquer every obstacle, whether in their own physical or other infirmities or in the external world around them. In a time of jihād, when people give their all, and even their lives, for the common cause, they must be accounted more glorious than those who sit at home, even though they have good will to the cause and carry out minor duties in aid. The special reward of such self-sacrifice is special forgiveness and mercy, as proceeding from the direct approbation and love of Allah.

615. The immediate occasion for this passage was the question of migration (*hijrat*) from places where Islam was being persecuted and suppressed. Obviously the duty of Muslims was to leave such places, even if it involved forsaking their homes, and join and strengthen the Muslim community among whom they could live in peace and with whom they could help in fighting the evils around them. But the meaning is wider. Islam does not say: "Resist not evil." On the contrary it requires a constant, unceasing struggle against evil. For such struggle it may be necessary to forsake home and unite and organise and join our brethren in assaulting and overthrowing the fortress of evil. For the Muslim's duty is not only to enjoin good but to prohibit evil. To make our assault we must be prepared to put ourselves in a position from which such assault would be possible, and Allah's earth is spacious enough for the purpose. "Position" includes not only local position, but moral and material position. For example, we must shun evil company where we cannot put it down, but organise a position from which we can put it down.

They say: "In what (plight)
Were ye?" They reply:
"Weak and oppressed
Were we in the earth".
They say: "Was not
The earth of Allah
Spacious enough for you
To move yourselves away
(From evil)?" Such men
Will find their abode
In Hell.-What an evil Refuge!-

98. Except those who are
(Really) weak and oppressed-
Men, women, and children
Who have no means
In their power, nor can they find
A way (to escape)⁶¹⁶

99. For these, there is hope
That Allah will forgive:
For Allah doth blot out (sins)
And forgive again and again.

100. He who forsakes his home
In the cause of Allah,
Finds in the earth
Many a refuge.
And abundance
Should he die
As a refugee from home
For Allah and His Messenger,
His reward becomes due
And sure with Allah:
And Allah is Oft-forgiving
Most Merciful.

أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَسِعَةً فَهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا فَأُولَٰئِكَ
مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿١٧﴾

إِلَّا الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ
لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٨﴾

فَأُولَٰئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَعْفُو عَنْهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفُوًّا
غَفُورًا ﴿١٩﴾

﴿٢٠﴾ وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرْعَمًا
كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً وَمَنْ يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يَدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٢١﴾

616. If through physical, mental, or moral incapacity, we are unable to fight the good fight, we must nevertheless guard ourselves from it. Allah's gracious Mercy will recognise and forgive our weakness if it is real weakness, and not merely an excuse.

SECTION 15.

101 When ye travel

Through the earth,
There is no blame on you
If ye shorten your prayers,⁶¹⁷
For fear the Unbelievers
May attack you:
For the Unbelievers are
Unto you open enemies.

102 When thou (O Messenger)

Art with them, and standest
To lead them in prayer,
Let one party of them
Stand up (in prayer) with thee.
Taking their arms with them:
When they finish
Their prostrations, let them
Take their position in the rear.
And let the other party come up
Which hath not yet prayed—
And let them pray with thee,
Taking all precautions,
And bearing arms:
The Unbelievers wish,
If ye were negligent
Of your arms and your baggage.

وَإِذَا صَرَيْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا
مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ يَفْشِكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُبِينًا ﴿١٠١﴾

وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلْتَقُمْ
طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ مَّعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا بِأَسْلِحَتِهِمْ فَإِذَا
سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِن وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ
طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ
وَلْيَأْخُذُوا بِأَحْذَرِهِمْ وَأَسْلِحَتِهِمْ وَذَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ
فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَدَىٰ مِّن مَّطَرٍ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ
مَرْضَىٰ أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ وَخُذُوا
حِذْرَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

617. Verse 101 gives permission to shorten four Rak'at prayers when people are on a journey: verses 102-104 deal with cases when they are in danger at war, in face of the enemy. The shortening of prayers in both cases is further governed as to details by the practice of the Messenger and his Companions. As to journeys, two questions arise: (1) what constitutes a journey for this purpose? (2) is the fear of an attack an essential condition for the shortening of the prayers? As to (1), it is best to leave the matter to discretion, having regard to all the circumstances of the journey, as in the case of the journeys which excuse a fast: see ii. 184, n. 190. The text leaves it to discretion. As to (2), the practice of the Prophet shows that danger is not an essential condition; it is merely mentioned as a possible incident. The Messenger usually shortened the prayers from four Rak'ats to two Rak'ats in *Zuhr* (midday prayer), *Asr* (afternoon prayer) and *Ishaa* (night prayer): the other two are in any case short, *Fajr* (morning prayer) having two Rak'ats and *Magrib* (evening prayer) having three.

To assault you in a single rush.⁶¹⁸
 But there is no blame on you
 If ye put away your arms
 Because of the inconvenience
 Of rain or because ye are ill;
 But take (every) precaution
 For yourselves. For the Unbelievers
 Allah hath prepared
 A humiliating punishment.

103. When ye have performed⁶¹⁹

The prayers,
 Remember Allah,
 Standing, sitting down,
 Or lying down on your sides;
 But when ye are free
 From danger, set up
 Regular Prayers:
 For such prayers
 Are enjoined on Believers
 At stated times.

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَمًا
 وَرُغُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ
 فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ
 عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

104. And slacken not

In following up the enemy:
 If ye are suffering hardships,
 They are suffering similar
 Hardships: but you

وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَاءِ الْقَوْمِ إِنْ تَكُونُوا تَأْلَمُونَ
 فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ
 اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

618. The congregational prayer in danger in face of the enemy rests on the principle that the congregation should be divided into two parties; one party prays while the other watches the enemy, and then the second party comes up to prayers while the first falls back to face the enemy; either party does only one or two Rak'ats, or about half the congregational prayer; every precaution is taken to prevent a rush by the enemy; even while at prayers armour and arms need not be put off except when rain is likely to cause inconvenience to the wearer and damage to the arms, or when illness or fatigue causes the wearer's strength to fail. Details can be varied according to circumstances, as was actually done by the Prophet at different times.

619. It means: "when ye have finished congregational prayers." It allows you to remember Allah individually in any posture possible during the danger. But when the danger is past, the full prayers should be offered at the stated times.

Hope from Allah, what they⁶²⁰
Have not. And Allah
Is full of knowledge and wisdom.

SECTION 16.

105. We have sent down
To thee the Book in truth,
That thou mightest judge
Between people by that which
Allah has shown thee; so be not
An advocate for those
Who betray their trust;⁶²¹
106. But seek the forgiveness
Of Allah; for Allah is
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.
107. Contend not on behalf
Of such as betray
Their own souls;⁶²²

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ لَتَحْكُمَ بِهِ
النَّاسُ بِمَا آرَاكَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَكُنْ لِلْخَائِبِينَ
خَصِيماً ﴿١٠٥﴾

وَأَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

وَلَا تَجِدِلْ عَنِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا ﴿١٠٧﴾

620. Religion should be a source of strength and not of weakness in all our affairs. If we have to struggle hard and suffer hardships, those without faith have to do the same, with this difference, that the man of Faith is full of hope in Allah, whereas the man without Faith has nothing to sustain him.

621. The Commentators explain this passage with reference to the case of Ṭa'ima ibn Ubairaq, who was nominally a Muslim but really a Hypocrite, and given to all sorts of wicked deeds. He was suspected of having stolen a set of armour, and when the trial was hot, he planted the stolen property into the house of a Jew, where it was found. The Jew denied the charge and accused Ṭa'ima, but the sympathies of the Muslim community were with Ṭa'ima on account of his nominal profession of Islam. The case was brought to the Prophet, who acquitted the Jew according to the strict principle of justice, as "guided by Allah." Attempts were made to prejudice him and deceive him into using his authority to favour Ṭa'ima. When Ṭa'ima realized that his punishment was imminent he fled and turned apostate.

The general lesson is that the righteous man is faced with all sorts of subtle wiles; the wicked will try to appeal to his highest sympathies and most honourable motives to deceive him and use him as an instrument for defeating justice. He should be careful and cautious, and seek the help of Allah for protection against deception and for firmness in dealing the strictest justice without fear or favour. To do otherwise is to betray a sacred trust; the trustee must defeat all attempts made to mislead him.

622. Our souls are a sort of trust with us. We have to guard them against all temptation. Those who surrender to crime or evil, betray that trust. We are warned against being deceived into taking their part, induced either by plausible appearances, or by such incentives to partiality as that they belong to our own people or that some link =

For Allah loveth not
One given to perfidy
And sin:-

108. They seek to hide themselves
From the people
But they cannot hide
From Allah, while
He is with them
When they plot by night.
In words that He cannot
Approve: and Allah
Doth compass round⁶²³
All that they do.

يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ
وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَى مِنَ الْقَوْلِ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا ﴿١٠٨﴾

109. Ah! these are the sort
Of men on whose behalf
Ye may contend in this world;
But who will contend with Allah
On their behalf on the Day
Of Judgment, or who
Will carry their affairs through?

هَٰؤُلَاءِ جَدَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا فَمَنْ يُجَادِلُ اللَّهَ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَمَةِ أَمْ مَنْ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿١٠٩﴾

110. If any one does evil
Or wrongs his own soul
But afterwards seeks
Allah's forgiveness, he will find
Allah Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ
اللَّهُ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١١٠﴾

= connects them with us, whereas when we are out to do justice, we must not allow any irrelevant considerations to sway us.

623. The plots of sinners are known fully to Allah, and He can fully circumvent them if necessary, according to the fulness of His wisdom. The word used is: *Compass them round*: *Muhit*: not only does Allah know all about it, but He is all round it: if in His wisdom He allows it, it is not because He has not complete control over it, but because, having it as it were enclosed in a complete circle. He can use it to further His own Plan. Even out of evil He can bring good.

111. And if any one earns⁶²⁴
Sin, he earns it against
His own soul: for Allah
Is full of knowledge and wisdom.

112. But if any one earns
A fault or a sin
And throws it on to one
That is innocent,
He carries (on himself)
(Both) a false charge
And a flagrant sin.

SECTION 17.

113. But for the Grace of Allah
To thee and His Mercy,
A party of them would
Certainly have plotted
To lead thee astray.
But (in fact) they will only
Lead their own souls astray,
And to thee they can do
No harm in the least.
For Allah hath sent down
To thee the Book and Wisdom
And taught thee what thou
Knewest not (before):
And great is the Grace
Of Allah unto thee.

وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا يَكْسِبُهُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١١﴾

وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ خَطِيئَةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِ بَرِيئًا
فَقَدْ أَخْتَمَلَ بُرْهَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُبِينًا ﴿١١٢﴾

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَهَمَّتْ
طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ يُضِلُّوكَ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ
إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ
تَكُن تَعْلَمُ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ
عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٣﴾

624. *Kasaba* = to earn, to gain, to work for something valuable, to lay up a provision for the future life. We do a day's labour to earn our livelihood: so in a spiritual sense, whatever good or evil we do in this life, earns us good or evil in the life to come. In verses 110-112 three cases are considered: (1) if we do ill and repent, Allah will forgive; (2) if we do ill and do not repent: thinking that we can hide it, we are wrong; nothing is hidden from Allah, and we shall suffer the full consequences in the life to come, for we can never evade our personal responsibility; (3) if we do ill, great or small, and impute it to another, our original responsibility for the ill remains, but we add to it something else; for we tie round our necks the guilt of falsehood, which converts even our minor fault into a great sin, and in any case brands us even in this life with shame and ignominy.

114. In most of their secret talks
There is no good: but if
One exhorts to a deed
Of charity or goodness
Or conciliation between people⁶²⁵
(Secrecy is permissible):
To him who does this,
Seeking the good pleasure
Of Allah, We shall soon give
A reward of the highest (value).

لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَن أَمَرَ
بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ
وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ
اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

115. If anyone contends with
The Messenger even after
Guidance has been plainly
Conveyed to him, and follows
A path other than that
Becoming to men to Faith,
We shall leave him
In the path he has chosen,
And land him in Hell,-
What an evil refuge!

وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِن بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ
وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ
وَنُصْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿١١٥﴾

SECTION 18.

116. Allah forgiveth not
(The sin of) joining other gods⁶²⁶

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِ، وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ
ذَلِكَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ

625. Usually secrecy is for evil ends, or from questionable motives, or because the person seeking secrecy is ashamed of himself and knows that if his acts or motives became known, he would make himself odious. Islam therefore disapproves of secrecy and loves and enjoins openness in all consultations and doings. But there are three things in which secrecy is permissible, and indeed laudable, provided the motive be purely unselfish, to earn "the good pleasure of Allah": (1) if you are doing a deed of charity or beneficence, whether in giving material things or in helping in moral, intellectual, or spiritual matters; here publicity may not be agreeable to the recipient of your beneficence, and you have to think of his feelings; (2) where an unpleasant act of justice or correction has to be done; this should be done, but there is no virtue in publishing it abroad and causing humiliation to some parties or adding to their humiliation by publicity; (3) where there is a delicate question of conciliating parties to a quarrel; they may be very touchy about publicity but quite amenable to the influence of a man acting in private.

626. Cf. iv. 48 and n. 569. Blasphemy in the spiritual kingdom is like treason in the political kingdom.

With Him; but He forgiveth
Whom He pleaseth other sins
Than this: one who joins
Other gods with Allah,
Hath strayed far, far away
(From the Right).

117. (The Pagans), leaving Him,
Call but upon female deities:⁶²⁷
They call but upon Satan
The persistent rebel!

118. Allah did curse him,
But he said: "I will take
Of Thy servants a portion"⁶²⁸
Marked off:

119. "I will mislead them,"⁶²⁹
And I will create
In them false desires; I will
Order them to slit the ears⁶³⁰
Of cattle, and to deface

صَلَّ صَلًّا بَعِيدًا ﴿١١٦﴾

إِنْ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا إِنْتَا وَإِنْ
يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَرِيدًا ﴿١١٧﴾

لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَقَالَ لَا يُخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ
نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا ﴿١١٨﴾

وَلَا ضِلَّيْنَهُمْ وَلَا مِئِينَئِهِمْ وَلَا مَرْثَهُمْ
فَلْيَبْشِرُوا إِنْ كُنَّا إِذَا بَالِ الْأَنْعَامِ وَلَا مَرْثَهُمْ
فَلْيَعْبُرُوا خَلْقَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذْ

627. The unity, power, and goodness of Allah are so manifest in nature and in the human mind when it is in accord with the universal spirit, that only the most abject perversion can account for the sin of religious treason. That sin arises from perverted ideas of sex or perverted ideas of self. The perversion of sex is to suppose that sex rules in religious matters. From it arise such horrible creations of the imagination as Kāli, the blood-thirsty goddess of India, or Hecate, the goddess of revenge and hate in Greek mythology. Even in beautiful forms like Saraswati (the goddess of learning) or Minerva (the virgin goddess of sport and arts), to say nothing of Venus (the goddess of carnal pleasures), the emphasis laid on sex destroys a right view of religious nature. Perverted ideas of self are typified in the story of Satan, who was so puffed up with arrogance that he disobeyed Allah, and Allah cursed him. Both these perversions, if allowed lodgment, completely ruin our religious nature and deface Allah's handiwork. Hence it is not merely an outer sin but one that corrupts us through and through.

628. Satan obtained Allah's permission to tempt man, and this was implied in such free-will as was granted to man by Allah. Satan's boast is that the portion of mankind seduced by him will be so corrupted in their nature that they will bear a sort of brand that will mark them off as his own; or that they will be like a portion assigned to himself.

629. Satan's deceptions are with false desires, false superstitions, and false fears.

630. Slitting the ears of cattle is just one instance of the superstitions to which men become slaves when they run after false gods. Astrology, magic, and vain beliefs in things that do not exist lead men away from Allah, the one true God.

The (fair) nature created⁶³¹
By Allah," Whoever,
Forsaking Allah, takes Satan
For a friend, hath
Of a surety suffered
A loss that is manifest.

120. Satan makes them promises,
And creates in them false hopes,
But Satan's promises
Are nothing but deception.

121. They (his dupes)
Will have their dwelling
In Hell, and from it
They will find no way
Of escape.

122. But those who believe
And do deeds of righteousness,—
We shall soon admit them
To Gardens, with rivers
Flowing beneath,—to dwell
Therein for ever.
Allah's promise is the truth,
And whose word can be
Truer than Allah's?

123. Not your desires, nor those⁶³²
Of the People of the Book

الشَّيْطَانُ وَلِيًّا مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ
خَسِرَ خُسْرًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١١٩﴾

يَعِدُّهُمْ وَيُمَنِّيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُّهُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ
إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿١٢٠﴾

أُولَٰئِكَ مَا وَلَّهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا
مَخْرَجًا ﴿١٢١﴾

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقًّا
وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ قِيلًا ﴿١٢٢﴾

لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيَّتِكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِي أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ

631. To deface the (fair) nature created by Allah; there is both a physical and a spiritual meaning. We see many kinds of defacements practised on men and animals, against their true nature as created by Allah, partly on account of superstition, partly on account of selfishness. Spiritually the case is even worse. How many natures are dwarfed or starved and turned from their original instincts by cruel superstitions or customs? Allah created man pure: Satan defaces the image.

632. Personal responsibility is again and again insisted on as the key-note of Islam. In this are implied faith and right conduct. Faith is not an external thing: it begins with an act of will, but if true and sincere, it affects the whole being, and leads to right conduct. In this it is distinguished from the kind of faith which promises salvation because some one else in whom you are asked to believe has borne away the sins of men, or the kind of faith which says that because you are born of a certain race ("Children of Abraham") or a certain caste, you are privileged, and your conduct will be judged by =

(Can prevail): whoever
Works evil, will be
Requited accordingly.
Nor will he find, besides Allah,
Any protector or helper.

124. If any do deeds
Of righteousness,-
Be they male or female-
And have faith,
They will enter Heaven,
And not the least injustice⁶³³
Will be done to them.

125. Who can be better
In religion than one
Who submits his whole self
To Allah, does good,
And follows the way
Of Abraham the true in faith?
For Allah did take
Abraham for a friend.⁶³⁴

126. But to Allah belong all things
In the heavens and on earth:
And He it is that
Encompasseth all things.⁶³⁵

SECTION 19.

127. They ask thy instruction
Concerning the Women.

مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ، وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ
دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٤﴾

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ
أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ
وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا ﴿١٢٥﴾

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ
وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا
وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا ﴿١٢٦﴾

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطًا ﴿١٢٧﴾

وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ ۚ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ

= a different standard from that of other men. Whatever you are, if you do evil, you must suffer the consequences, unless Allah's Mercy comes to your help.

633. *Naqir* = the groove in a date-stone, a thing of no value whatever. Cf. n. 575 to iv. 53.

634. Abraham is distinguished in Muslim theology with the title of "Freind of Allah". This does not of course mean that he was anything more than a mortal. But his faith was pure and true, and his conduct was firm and righteous in all circumstances. He was the fountainhead of the present monotheistic tradition, the Patriarch of the prophetic line, and is revered alike by Jews, Christians and Muslims.

635. *Muhit*. Cf. iv. 108, and n. 623.

Say: Allah doth

Instruct you about them:

And (remember) what hath
Been rehearsed unto you⁶³⁶

In the Book, concerning
The orphaned women to whom

Ye give not the portions
Prescribed, and yet whom ye

Desire to marry, as also

Concerning the children

Who are weak and oppressed:⁶³⁷

That ye stand firm

For justice to orphans.

There is not a good deed

Which ye do, but Allah

Is well-acquainted therewith.

128. If a wife fears

Cruelty or desertion

On her husband's part,

There is no blame on them

If they arrange

An amicable settlement

Between themselves;

فِيهِنَّ وَمَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ فِي
يَتِمَّى النِّسَاءِ الَّتِي لَا تُوْتُونَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ
لَهُنَّ وَرَغِبُونَ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ
مِنَ الْوِلْدَانِ وَأَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلْيَتَمَىٰ
بِالْقِسْطِ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِ عَلِيمًا ﴿١٢٧﴾

وَإِنْ أَمْرًا خَافَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا
وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنْفُسُ الشُّحَّ
وَإِنْ تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ

636. Again and again is it impressed on the community of Islam to be just in their dealings with women, orphans, children, and all whose weakness requires special consideration. The law about widows and orphans, imheritance, dower, and marriage had already been declared in iv. 2-35 and further instructions are now given on a further reference. It was not right that anyone should take advantage of their helpless position to deprive them of dower or of their portion in inheritance.

637. Cf. iv. 75. n. 592.

Both widows and orphans are to be helped because they are ordinarily weak, ill-treated, and oppressed. In communities which base their civil rights on brute strength, the weaker go to the wall, and public opinion expects nothing else. In Nietzsche's philosophy of the Superman that doctrine is stressed strongly, and some of the militarist nations in our own time seem inclined to support this reversion to our primitive instincts. Even in modern democracies of the saner sort, we are often told that it is the fate of minorities to suffer; strength of numbers here becomes the passport to power and privilege. Islam, while upholding sane manly views in general, enjoins the most solicitous care for the weak and oppressed in every way—in rights of property, in social rights, and in the right to opportunities of development. Spiritual strength or weakness does not necessarily go with physical or numerical strength.

And such settlement is best;
Even though men's souls
Are swayed by greed.⁶³⁸
But if ye do good
And practise self-restraint,
Allah is well-acquainted
With all that ye do.

يَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَيْرًا ﴿١٢٨﴾

129. Ye are never able
To do justice
Between wives
Even if it is
Your ardent desire:
But turn not away
(From a woman) altogether,
So as to leave her (as it were)
Hanging (in the air).⁶³⁹
If ye come to a friendly
Understanding, and practise
Self-restraint, Allah is
Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ
وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمِيلِ
فَتَذَرُوهُنَّ كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٢٩﴾

130. But if they separate
Allah will provide abundance
For each of them from His
All-reaching bounty:
For Allah is He
That careth for all
And is Wise.

وَإِنْ يَنْفَرَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِنْ سَعَتِهِ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٣٠﴾

638. To protect the woman's economic interests, various rules are prescribed for dower in marriage. But the sanctity of marriage itself is greater than any economic interests. Divorce is, of all things permitted, most hateful to Allah. Therefore if a breach between husband and wife can be prevented by some economic consideration, it is better to make that concession than to imperil the future of the wife, the children, and probably the husband also. Such concessions are permissible, in view of the love of wealth ingrained in unregenerate man, but a recommendation is made that we should practise self-restraint, and do what we can to come to an amicable settlement without any economic sacrifice on the part of the woman.

639. In this material world there are two principle causes of division between man and wife, money and "the other woman" or "the other man". Money was dealt with in the last verse. Here is the case of "the other woman". Legally more than one wife (up to four) are permissible on the condition that the man can be fair and just to all.

131. To Allah belong all things
In the heavens and on earth.⁶⁴⁰
Verily We have directed
The People of the Book
Before you, and you (O Muslims)
To fear Allah, But if ye
Deny Him, lo! unto Allah
Belong all things
In the heavens and on earth.
And Allah is free
Of all wants, worthy⁶⁴¹
Of all praise.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَلَقَدْ
وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰتَوٰا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
وَإِيَّاكُمْ اَنْ اَتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاِنْ تَكْفُرُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ
مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَنِيًّا
حَمِيْدًا ﴿١٣١﴾

132. Yea, unto Allah belong
All things in the heavens
And on earth, and enough
Is Allah to carry through⁶⁴²
All affairs.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللّٰهِ
وَكِيلًا ﴿١٣٢﴾

640. Notice the refrain: "To Allah belong all things in the heavens and on earth": repeated three times, each time with a new application. In the first instance it follows the statement of Allah's universal providence and love. If two persons, in spite of every sincere desire to love and comfort each other, fail to achieve that end, and have to separate, Allah's all-reaching bounty never fails, for He is the Lord of all things. In the second instance it is connected with Allah's Self-existence, Self-excellence, and independence of all creatures: all His commands are for our good, and they are given to all His creatures, according to their capacities. In the third instance, it is connected with His universal power; for He could destroy any individual or nation and create a new one without any loss to Himself; but He gives a chance to all again and again, and even rewards them beyond their own ambitions.

641. Allah's existence is absolute existence. It does not depend on any other person or any other thing. And it is worthy of all praise, for it is all-good and comprises every possible excellence. It is necessary to stress this point in order to show that the moral law for man is not a mere matter of transcendental commands, but really rests on the essential needs of mankind itself. If therefore such schools of thought as Behaviourism proved their theories up to the hilt, they do not affect the position of Islam in the least. The highest ethical standards are enjoined by Islam, not as dogmatic imperatives, but because they can be shown to follow from the needs of man's nature and the results of man's experience.

642. This refers to the next verse. He does not need us, but we need Him. Our hopes, our happiness, our success centre in Him; but He is Self-sufficient. He has the power to supersede us, but His goodness is ever seeking to give us every chance in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

133. If it were His Will,
He could destroy you,
O mankind, and create
Another race; for He
Hath power this to do.

إِنْ يَشَاءُ يُدْهِبْكُمْ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَيَأْتِ
بِآخَرِينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ قَدِيرًا ﴿١٣٣﴾

134. If any one desires
A reward in this life,
In Allah's (gift) is the reward
(Both) of this life
And of the Hereafter:⁶⁴³
For Allah is He that heareth
And seeth (all things).

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ ثَوَابُ
الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿١٣٤﴾

SECTION 20.

135. O ye who believe!
Stand out firmly
For justice, as witnesses⁶⁴⁴
To Allah, even as against
Yourselves, or your parents,
Or your kin, and whether
It be (against) rich or poor:⁶⁴⁵
For Allah can best protect both.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ
شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَى
بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَى أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا وَإِنْ تَلَوْا

643. Man in this life can only see up to the horizon of this life. The highest rewards which his wishes or ambitions can conceive of are conceived in the terms of this life. But Allah can give him not only these but something infinitely higher,—the rewards of the Hereafter,—which it did not even enter his heart to ask for or his imagination to conceive.

644. Justice is Allah's attribute, and to stand firm for justice is to be a witness to Allah, even if it is detrimental to our own interests (as we conceive them) or the interests of those who are near and dear to us.

Islamic justice is something higher than the formal justice of Roman Law or any other human Law. It is even more penetrative than the subtler justice in the speculations of the Greek philosophers. It searches out the innermost motives, because we are to act as in the presence of Allah, to whom all things, acts, and motives are known.

645. Some people may be inclined to favour the rich, because they expect something from them. Some people may be inclined to favour the poor because they are generally helpless. Partiality in either case is wrong. Be just, without fear or favour. Both the rich and the poor are under Allah's protection as far as their legitimate interests are concerned, but they cannot expect to be favoured at the expense of others. And He can protect their interests far better than any man.

Follow not the lusts
(Of your hearts), lest ye
Swerve, and if ye
Distort (justice) or decline
To do justice, verily
Allah is well-acquainted
With all that ye do.

وَتَعْرِضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٣٥﴾

136. O ye who believe!
Believe in Allah
And His Messenger,
And the scripture which He
Hath sent to His Messenger
And the scripture which He sent
To those before (him).⁶⁴⁶
Any who denieth Allah,
His angels, His Books,
His Messengers, and the Day
Of Judgment, hath gone
Far, far astray.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ
وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ
بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ﴿١٣٦﴾

137. Those who believe,
Then reject Faith,
Then believe (again)
And (again) reject Faith,
And go on increasing
In Unbelief,—Allah
Will not forgive them
Nor guide them on the Way.⁶⁴⁷

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا
ثُمَّ أَرَادُوا كُفْرًا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيُغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ
سَبِيلًا ﴿١٣٧﴾

646. If your belief is by habit or birth or the example of those you love or respect or admire, make that belief more specific and personal to yourself. We must not only have faith, but realise that faith in our inmost being. The chief objects of our Faith are Allah, His Messenger, and His Revelations. To all these we must give a home in our hearts. The angels we do not see and realise as we realise Allah, who is nearer to us than the vehicle of our life-blood, and the Day of Judgment is for our future experience, but we must not deny them, or we cut off a part of our religious view.

647. Those who go on changing sides again and again can have no real Faith at any time. Their motives are mere worldly double-dealing. How can they expect Allah's grace or forgiveness?

Here is a clear warning against those who make their religion a mere matter of worldly convenience. True religion goes far deeper. It transforms the very nature of man. After that transformation it is as impossible for him to change as it is for light to become darkness.

138. To the Hypocrites give
The good tidings that
There is for them
A grievous Chastisement

139. Those who take
For friends Unbelievers
Rather than Believers:
Is it honour they seek
Among them? Nay,-
All honour is with Allah.⁶⁴⁸

140. Already has He sent you⁶⁴⁹
In the Book, that when
Ye hear the Message of Allah
Held in defiance and ridicule,
Ye are not to sit with them
Unless they turn to a different
Theme: if ye did, ye would be
Like them. For Allah will
Collect the Hypocrites and those
Who defy Faith—all in Hell;-

141. (These are) the ones who
Wait and watch about you:
If ye do gain
A victory from Allah,
They say: "Were we not
With you?"-but if
The Unbelievers gain
A success, they say
(To them): "Did we not
Gain an advantage over you.

بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣٨﴾

الَّذِينَ يَتَخَذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَيْبَغُونَ عَنْدهُمْ الْعِزَّةَ
فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٣٩﴾

وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ
آيَاتِ اللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَعْدُوا
مَعَهُمْ حَتَّى يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ
مِثْلَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْكَافِرِينَ
فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٤٠﴾

الَّذِينَ يَرَبَّصُونَ بِكُمْ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ
قَالُوا آلَاءُ نَحْنُ مَعَكُمْ وَإِنْ كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ
نَصِيبٌ قَالُوا آلَاءُ نَحْنُ حُودٌ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعُكُمْ
مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ

648. If the motive is some advantage, some honour,—the fountain of all good is Allah. How can it really be expected from those who deny Faith? And if there is some show of worldly honour, what is it worth against the contempt they earn in the next world?

649. Cf. vi. 68, an earlier and Makkan verse.

Where we see or hear Truth held in light esteem, we ought to make our protest and withdraw from such company, not out of arrogance, as if we thought ourselves superior to other people, but out of real humility, lest our own nature be corrupted in such society. But it is possible that our protest or our sincere remonstrance may change the theme of discourse. In that case we have done good to those who were inclined to hold Truth in light esteem, for we have saved them for ridiculing Truth.

And did we not guard
You from the Believers?"
But Allah will judge
Betwixt you on the Day
Of Judgment. And never
Will Allah grant
To the Unbelievers
A way (to triumph)
Over the Believers.⁶⁵⁰

SECTION 21.

142. The Hypocrites—

They seek to deceive Allah
But it is Allah who deceive them.
When they stand up to prayer,
They stand without earnestness,
To be seen of men,
But little do they hold
Allah in remembrance;

143. (They are) wavering between this

And that
Belonging neither to these
Nor those
Whom Allah leaves straying,—
Never wilt thou find
For him the Way.⁶⁵¹

الْقِيَمَةُ وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤١﴾

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَدِيعُهُمْ
وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالًا يُرَاءُونَ
النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾

مُذَبِّدِينَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ لَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ وَلَا إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ
وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤٣﴾

650. The methods and motives of Hypocrisy are thoroughly unmasked here. It has no principles, but watches for an opportunity to turn any event to its own advantage. If battle is joined between two inconsistent principles, it has no belief in either, but watches the result. There is unceasing fight between Good and Evil in this world. If the Good seems to win, the hypocrites range themselves on its side with unctuous words, taking a great part of the credit to themselves. Perhaps the balance tips the other way later, and they have to make their peace with Evil. "Oh!" they say airily, "we were in the ranks of your enemy, before, on purpose to protect you when they were too strong for you!" This may suit the ways of the world. But the day of their account will come eventually. For the Good must ultimately triumph.

651. If we choose evil deliberately and double our guilt by fraud and deception, we do not deceive Allah, but we deceive ourselves. We deprive ourselves of the Grace of Allah, and are left straying away from the Path. In that condition who can guide us or show us the Way? Our true and right instincts become blunted: our fraud makes us unstable in character; when our fellow-men find out our fraud, any advantages we may have gained by the fraud are lost; and we become truly distracted in mind.

144. O ye who believe!

Take not for friends
Unbelievers rather than
Believers: do ye wish
To offer Allah an open
Proof against yourselves?

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ
أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ؕ أُرِيدُونَ
أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا ﴿١١١﴾

145. The Hypocrites will be

In the lowest depths
Of the Fire: no helper
Wilt thou find for them;—

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ
وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا ﴿١١٢﴾

146. Except for those who repent,
Mend (their life), hold fast
To Allah, and make their religious
devotion

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا
بِاللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ؕ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِي اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٣﴾

Sincere to Allah: if so
They will be (numbered)⁶⁵²
With the Believers.
And soon will Allah
Grant to the Believers
A reward of immense value.

147. What can Allah gain

By your punishment.
If ye are grateful
And ye believe?
Nay, it is Allah
That recogniseth⁶⁵³
(All good), and knoweth
All things.

مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ
وَعَآمَنْتُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

652. Even Hypocrites can obtain forgiveness, on four conditions: (1) sincere repentance, which purifies their mind; (2) amendment of their conduct, which purifies their outer life; (3) steadfastness and devotion to Allah, which strengthens their faith and protects them from the assaults of evil, and (4) sincerity in their religion, or their whole inner being, which brings them as full members into the goodly Fellowship of Faith.

653. There is no pleasure nor advantage to Allah in punishing His own creatures, over whom He watches with loving care. On the contrary He recognises any good—however little—which He finds in us, and delights to give us a reward beyond all measure. His recognition of us compared by a bold metaphor to our gratitude to Him for His favours. The epithet *shākir* is applied to Allah, as here, in ii, 158, and other passages. In xvi. 121 it is applied to Abraham: "he showed his gratitude for the favours of Allah, who chose him and guided him to a Straight Way."

148. Allah loveth not the
Shouting of evil words⁶⁵⁴
In public speech, except
By one who has been
Wronged, for Allah
Is He who heareth
And knoweth all things.

لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا
مَنْ ظَلِمَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا ﴿١٤٨﴾

149. Whether you do openly
A good deed or conceal it
Or cover evil with pardon,
Surely Allah is ever pardoning
Powerful⁶⁵⁵

إِنْ بُدِّ وَأَخِيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوْهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوْا عَنْ سُوْءٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيْرًا ﴿١٤٩﴾

150. Those who deny Allah
And His Messengers, and
Wish to separate between
Allah and His Messengers,
Saying: "We believe in some
But reject others":

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ
وَيُرِيْدُوْنَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوْا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ
وَيَقُوْلُوْا نُوْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ
وَيُرِيْدُوْنَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿١٥٠﴾

654. We can make a public scandal of evil in many ways. (1) It may be idle sensation-mongering: it often leads to more evil by imitation, as where criminal deeds are glorified in a cinema, or talked about shamelessly in a novel or drama. (2) It may be malicious gossip of a foolish, personal kind: it does no good, but it hurts people's feelings. (3) It may be malevolent slander or libel: it is intended deliberately to cause harm to people's reputation or injure them in other ways, and is rightly punishable under all laws. (4) It may be a public rebuke or correction or remonstrance, without malice. (1), (2) and (3) are absolutely forbidden. (4) may be by a person in authority: in which case the exception applies, for all wrong or injustice must be corrected openly, to prevent its recurrence. Or (4) may be a person not vested with authority, but acting either from motives of public spirit, or in order to help some one who has been wronged; here again the exception will apply. But if the motive is different, the exception does not apply. (4) would also include a public complaint by a person who has suffered a wrong; he has every right to seek public redress.

655. *Qadir*: The root *qadara* not only implies power, ability, strength, but two other ideas which it is difficult to convey in a single word, viz., the act and power of estimating the true value of a thing or persons, as in vi. 91; and the act and power of regulating something so as to bring it into correspondence with something. "Judgment of values" I think sums up these finer shades of meaning. Allah forgives what is wrong and is able fully to appreciate and judge of the value of our good deeds whether we publish them or conceal them.

And wish
To take a course midway.⁶⁵⁶

151. They are in truth
Unbelievers;
And We have prepared
For Unbelievers a humiliating
Punishment.

أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ
عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿١٥١﴾

152. To those who believe
In Allah and His messengers
And make no distinction
Between any of the messengers,
We shall soon give
Their (due) rewards:
For Allah is Oft-forgiving,
Most Merciful.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ
أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرُهُمْ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٥٢﴾

SECTION 22.

153. The People of the Book
Ask thee to cause
A book to descend to them
From heaven: indeed
They asked Moses
For an even greater
(Miracle), for they said:
"Show us Allah in public,"⁶⁵⁷

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تَنَزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا
مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ
فَقَالُوا آرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الضَّعِيقَةُ
بِظُلْمِهِمْ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ

656. Unbelief takes various forms. Three are mentioned here: (1) denial of Allah and His revelation to mankind through inspired men; (2) a sort of nominal belief in Allah and His Prophets, but one which is partial, and mixed up with racial pride, which does not allow of the recognition of any Messengers beyond those of a particular race; and (3) a nominal belief in universal revelation, but so hedged round with peculiar doctrines of exclusive salvation, that it practically approaches to a denial of Allah's universal love for all mankind and all Creation. All three amount to Unbelief. for they really deny Allah's universal love and care.

657. Cf. ii. 55, for the thunder and lightning which affected those who were presumptuous enough to ask that they should see Allah face to face, and ii. 51, and n. 66, for the worship of the golden calf.

The lesson is that it is presumptuous on the part of man to judge of spiritual things in terms of material things, or to ask to see Allah with their material eyes when Allah is above material forms and is independent of time and space.

But they were seized
For their presumption,
By thunder and lightning.
Yet they worshipped the calf
Even after Clear Signs
Had come to them;
Even so We forgave them;
And gave Moses manifest
Proofs of authority.

154. And for their Covenant
We raised over them
The Mount (Sinai);⁶⁵⁸
And (on another occasion)
We said: "Enter the gate
With humility"; and (once again)
We commanded them:
"Transgress not in the matter
Of the Sabbath."
And We took from them
A solemn Covenant.

155. (They have incurred divine⁶⁵⁹
Displeasure): in that they
Broke their Covenant;
That they rejected the Signs
Of Allah; that they slew
The Messengers in defiance⁶⁶⁰
Of right; that they said,

الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَقَوْنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ وَءَاتَيْنَا
مُوسَى سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا ﴿١٥٣﴾

وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ بِمِيثَاقِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ ادْخُلُوا
الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ
وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿١٥٤﴾

فِيمَا نَقَضُوا مِنْهُمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَكَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ
وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بَغْيًا حَقًّا وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ
بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٥٥﴾

658. In this verse there is a recapitulation of three salient incidents of Jewish refractoriness already referred to in the second Sūra: viz., (1) the Covenant under the towering height of Sinai, ii. 63: (2) their arrogance where they were commanded humility in entering a town, ii. 58: and (3) their transgression of the Sabbath, ii. 65.

659. In verses 155, 156, 157, 160 (latter half), and 161 with parenthetical clauses including those in verses 158-159, and 160 (first half), there is a catalogue of the iniquities of which the Jews were guilty, and for these iniquities we must understand some such words as: "They are under divine displeasure." Each clause of the indictment I have indicated by prefixing the word "that."

660. Cf. iii. 21, and nn. 363 and 364.

"Our hearts are the Wrappings";⁶⁶¹—
Nay, Allah hath set the seal on
their hearts

For their blasphemy,
And little is it they believe;—

156. That they rejected Faith;
That they uttered against Mary
A grave false charge;⁶⁶²

157. That they said (in boast),
"We killed Christ Jesus
The son of Mary,
The Messenger of Allah";—
But they killed him not,
Nor crucified him.⁶⁶³
Only a likeness of that
Was shown to them.

وَيَكْفُرُ بِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَى مَرْيَمَ بَهْتَنًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٥٦﴾

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ
اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ
الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ
إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ﴿١٥٧﴾

661. Cf. ii. 88, and n. 92, where the full meaning is explained.

Note the crescendo (heightening effect) in the argument, Their iniquities were: (1) that they broke their Covenant: (2) that they rejected Allah's guidance as conveyed in His signs; (3) that they killed Allah's Messengers and incurred a double guilt, viz., that of murder and that of a deliberate defiance of Allah's law; and (4) that they imagined themselves arrogantly self-sufficient, which means a blasphemous closing of their hearts for ever against the admission of Allah's grace. Then begins another series of iniquities from a different point of view: (1) that they rejected Faith: (2) that they made false charges against a saintly woman like Mary, who was chosen by Allah to be the mother of Jesus; (3) that they boasted of having killed Jesus when they were victims of their own self-hallucination: (4) that they hindered people from Allah's way: and (5) that by means of usury and fraud they oppressed their fellow-men.

662. The false charge against Mary was that she was unchaste. Cf. xix. 27-28. Such a charge is bad enough to make against any woman, but to make it against Mary, the mother of Jesus, was to bring into ridicule Allah's power itself. Islam is specially strong in guarding the reputation of women. Slanderers of women are bound to bring four witnesses in support of their accusations, and if they fail to produce four witnesses, they are to be flogged with eighty stripes and debarred from being competent witnesses: xxiv. 4.

663. The end of the life of Jesus on earth is as much involved in mystery as his birth, and indeed the greater part of his private life, except the three main years of his ministry. It is not profitable to discuss the many doubts and conjectures among the early Christian sects and among Muslim theologians. The Orthodox Christian Churches make it a cardinal point of their doctrine that his life was taken on the Cross, that he died and was buried, that on the third day he rose in the body with his wounds intact, and walked about and conversed, and ate with his disciples, and was afterwards taken up bodily to heaven. This =

And those who differ
Therein are full of doubts,
With no (certain) knowledge.
But only conjecture to follow,
For of a surety
They killed him not:-

158. Nay, Allah raised him up⁶⁶⁴
Unto Himself; and Allah
Is Exalted in Power, Wise:-

159. And there is none
Of the People of the Book
But must believe in Him
Before his death;⁶⁶⁵
And on the Day of Judgment
He will be a witness⁶⁶⁶
Against them:-

بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٥٨﴾

وَأَنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ
مَوْتِهِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِدًا ﴿١٥٩﴾

= is necessary for the theological doctrine of blood sacrifice and vicarious atonement for sins, which is rejected by Islam. But some of the early Christian sects did not believe that Christ was killed on the Cross. The Basilidans believed that some one else was substituted for him. The Docetae held that Christ never had a real physical or natural body, but only an apparent or phantom body, and that his Crucifixion was only apparent, not real. The Marcionite Gospel (about A.D. 138) denied that Jesus was born, and merely said that he appeared in human form. The Gospel of St. Barnabas supported the theory of substitution on the Cross. The Quranic teaching is that Christ was not crucified nor killed by the Jews, notwithstanding certain apparent circumstances which produced that illusion in the minds of some of his enemies: that disputations, doubts, and conjectures on such matters are vain; and that he was taken up to Allah (see next verse and note).

664. There is difference of opinion as to the exact interpretation of this verse. The words are: The Jews did not kill Jesus, but Allah raised him up (*rafa'u*) to Himself. One school holds that Jesus did not die the usual human death, but still lives in the body in heaven, which is the generally accepted Muslim view.

665. *Before his death*: Interpreters are not agreed as to the exact meaning. Those who hold that Jesus did not die refer the pronoun "his" to Jesus. They say that Jesus is still living in the body and that he will appear just before the Final Day, after the coming of the Mahdi, when the world will be purified of sin and unbelief. There will be a final death before the final Resurrection, but all will have believed before that final death. Others think that "his" is better referred to "none of the People of the Book", and that the emphatic form "must believe" (*la-yu' minanna*) denotes more a question of duty than of fact.

666. Cf. iv. 41

160. For the iniquity of the Jews
We made unlawful for them⁶⁶⁷
Certain (foods) good and wholesome
Which had been lawful for them:-
And that they hindered many
From Allah's Way:-

فَظَلَمْنَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَمًا عَلَيْهِمْ طَبِئَتْ
أُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ﴿١٦٠﴾

161. That they took usury,
Though they were forbidden;
And that they devoured
Men's wealth wrongfully:-
We have prepared for those
Among them who reject Faith
A grievous chastisement.

وَأَخَذُوا الرِّبَا وَقَدْ هُمُوهَا عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُ النَّاسِ
بِالْبَاطِلِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦١﴾

162. But those among them
Who are well-grounded
In knowledge,
And the Believers,
Believe in what hath been
Revealed to thee and what was
Revealed before thee:
And (especially) those
Who establish regular prayer
And pay Zakat
And believe in Allah
And in the Last Day:
To them shall We soon
Give a great reward.

لَكِنَّ الرَّاْسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ
وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أُولَئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ
أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٦٢﴾

SECTION 23.

163. We have sent thee
Inspiration, as We sent it
To Noah and the Messengers⁶⁶⁸

﴿ إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ
وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ

667. Cf. vi. 146. The ceremonial law of the Jews forbade the eating of the flesh of the camel, rabbit and hare (Leviticus xi. 4-6), and the fat of oxen, sheep, and goats (Leviticus vii. 23), and was in other respects very strict.

668. First we have a general statement: that inspiration was sent to many Messengers, and the inspiration was of the same kind as that sent to the Prophet Muhammad, for Allah's Message is one. Note that what is spoken of here is Inspiration, not necessarily a Book. Every nation or group of people had a messenger: x. 47. Some of these messengers have been mentioned by name in the Qur-ān, and some not: iv. 164.

After him: We sent
Inspiration to Abraham.⁶⁶⁹
Ismā'il, Isaac, Jacob
And the Tribes, to Jesus,
Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon,
And to David We gave
The Psalms.

164. Of some messengers We have
Already told thee the story;
Of others we have not;-
And to Moses Allah spoke direct;-⁶⁷⁰

165. Messengers who gave good news⁶⁷¹
As well as warning,
That mankind, after (the coming)
Of the messengers, should have
No plea against Allah:
For Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise.

166. But Allah beareth witness
That what He hath sent
Unto thee He hath sent
With His (own) knowledge,⁶⁷²
And the angels bear witness:
But enough is Allah for a witness.

وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطَ
وَعِيسَىٰ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ
وَأَتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ ذُرِّيًّا

وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا
لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ
تَكْلِيمًا

رُسُلًا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنْذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ
عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا
حَكِيمًا

لَٰكِنِ اللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنزَلَ إِلَيْكَ أَنزَلَهُ
بِعِلْمِهِ وَالْمَلَكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ وَكَفَىٰ
بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا

669. Cf. ii. 136 and iii. 84. The list here given is in three groups. (1) The first group, Abraham's family, is the same as in ii. 136, (where see the note) and in iii. 84. (2) Then we have the prophets Jesus, Job and Jonah, who symbolise patience and perseverance. (3) Then we have Aaron the priest and Solomon the King, both great figures, but each subordinate to another primary figure, viz., Moses (mentioned in the next verse) and David (mentioned at the end of this verse). David's distinction was the Psalms, some of which are still extant. Though their present form is different from the original and they do undoubtedly include Psalms not written by David, the collection contains much devotional poetry of a high order.

670. Allah spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai. Hence the title of Moses in Muslim theology: *Kalim-ullah*: the one to whom Allah spoke.

671. Every prophet proclaims Allah's goodness to the righteous and forgiveness to those who repent, (good news), and the Wrath to come for those who reject Faith and live in iniquity (warning). Their mission of warning is a prelude and complement to their mission of good news. No one can then say that he or she did not know.

672. Inspiration, though it is clothed in human language, and shaped to the personality of the inspired one, proceeds from the knowledge of Allah.

167. Those who reject Faith
And keep off (men)
From the Way of Allah,
Have verily strayed far,
Far away from the Path.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَدْ
ضَلُّوا ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ﴿١٦٧﴾

168. Those who reject Faith
And do wrong,—Allah
Will not forgive them
Nor guide them
To any way—

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَظَلَمُوا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيُغْفِرْ
لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيقًا ﴿١٦٨﴾

169. Except the way of Hell,
To dwell therein for ever.
And this to Allah is easy.⁶⁷³

إِلَّا طَرِيقَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا
وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿١٦٩﴾

170. O mankind! the Messenger
Hath come to you in truth
From Allah: believe in him:
It is best for you.⁶⁷⁴ But if
Ye reject Faith, to Allah
Belong all things in the heavens
And on earth: and Allah
Is All-knowing, All-wise.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الرَّسُولُ بِالْحَقِّ
مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَآمِنُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ وَإِنْ تَكْفُرُوا
فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧٠﴾

171. O People of the Book!
Commit no excesses⁶⁷⁵

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ

673. *Easy*—not in the sense that Allah takes any pleasure in any of His creatures going astray. The contrary is the case: for Allah's Grace recognises all good in us to such an extent that it is compared to gratitude in iv. 147: see n. 653. We must understand *easy* in the sense that Allah is Supreme in knowledge and power; if any forces of rebellion foolishly think that they can evade punishment, they are mistaken. Punishment comes as a matter of course. It is not a matter of difficulty or exertion on the part of Allah.

674. Allah's solicitude for us is for our own good, not because He gets any advantage from it. For He is independent of all things, and everything declares His glory and praise.

675. Just as a foolish servant may go wrong by excess of zeal for his master, so in religion people's excesses may lead them to blasphemy or a spirit the very opposite of religion. The Jewish excesses in the direction of formalism, racialism, exclusiveness, and rejection of Christ Jesus have been denounced in many places. Here the Christian attitude is condemned, which raises Jesus to an equality with Allah: in some cases venerates Mary almost to idolatry: attributes a physical son to Allah: and invents the doctrine of the Trinity, opposed to all reason, which according to the Athanasian Creed, unless a man believes, he is doomed to hell for ever. Let our Muslims also beware lest they fall into excesses either in doctrine or in formalism.

In your religion: nor say
Of Allah aught but the truth.
Christ Jesus the son of Mary
Was (no more than)
A Messenger of Allah,
And His Word,
Which He bestowed on Mary,
And a Spirit proceeding
From Him: so believe
In Allah and His Messengers.
Say not "Three": desist:⁶⁷⁶
It will be better for you:
For Allah is One God:
Glory be to Him:
(Far Exalted is He) above
Having a son. To Him
Belong all things in the heavens
And on earth. And enough
Is Allah as a Disposer of affairs.

SECTION 24.

172. Christ disdaineth not
To serve and worship Allah,⁶⁷⁷
Nor do the angels, those
Nearest (to Allah):
Those who disdain
His worship and are arrogant,
He will gather them all

وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ
عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ
الْقَوْلُ إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَتَأْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةً انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا
لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ
يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿١٧١﴾

لَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفَ الْمَسِيحُ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَبْدًا
لِلَّهِ وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ وَمَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفْ
عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُ
إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٧٢﴾

676. Christ's attributes are mentioned: (1) that he was the son of a woman, Mary and therefore a man; (2) but a messenger, a man with a mission from Allah, and therefore entitled to honour; (3) a Word bestowed on Mary, for he was created by Allah's word "Be" (*kun*), and he was: iii. 59; (4) a spirit proceeding from Allah, but not Allah: his life and his mission were more limited than in the case of some other Messengers, though we must pay equal honour to him as a Prophet of Allah. The doctrines of Trinity, equality with Allah, and sonship, are repudiated as blasphemies. Allah is independent of all needs and has no need of a son to manage His affairs. The Gospel of John (whoever wrote it) has put in a great deal of Alexandrian and Gnostic mysticism round the doctrine of the Word (Greek, *Logos*), but it is simply explained here.

677. Christ often watched and prayed, as a humble worshipper of Allah; and his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane was full of human dignity, suffering, and self-humiliation (see Matt. xxvi. 36-45).

Together unto Himself⁶⁷⁸
To (answer).

173. But to those who believe
And do deeds of righteousness,
He will give their (due)
Rewards,-and more,
Out of His bounty:
But those who are
Disdainful and arrogant,
He will punish
With a grievous chastisement:
Nor will they find,
Besides Allah, any
To protect or help them.

174. O mankind! Verily
There hath come to you
A convincing proof
From your Lord
For We have sent unto you
A light (that is) manifest.⁶⁷⁹

175. Then those who believe
In Allah, and hold fast
To Him,-soon will He
Admit them to Mercy
And Grace from Himself,⁶⁸⁰
And guide them to Himself
By a straight Way.

176. They ask thee
For a legal decision,
Say: Allah directs (thus)
About those who leave

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
فَيُوفِيهِمْ أَجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْتَنكَفُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا
فَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُمْ
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٧٣﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ
وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُبِينًا ﴿١٧٤﴾

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ
فَسُدِّدْ لَهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةِ مَوْلَاهُ وَفَضْلٍ وَيَهْدِهِمْ
إِلَيْهِ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ﴿١٧٥﴾

يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ
إِنِ امْرَأُؤُا هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَهُ أُخْتٌ فَلَهَا

678. The disdainful and the arrogant are the crew of Satan, who will be gathered together before the Supreme Throne for punishment.

679. The Proof and the Light are the Qur-ān and the Personality, Life, and Teaching of Muḥammad Al-Muṣṭafā.

680. The Mercy and Grace are expressed here as specially bestowed by Him.

No descendants or ascendants
 As heirs. If it is a man.⁶⁸¹
 That dies, leaving a sister
 But no child, she shall
 Have half the inheritance:
 If (such a deceased was)
 A woman, who left no child,
 Her brother takes her inheritance:
 If there are two sisters,
 They shall have two-thirds
 Of the inheritance
 (Between them): if there are
 Brothers and sisters, (they share),
 The male having twice
 The share of the female,
 Thus doth Allah make clear
 To you (His law), lest
 Ye err. And Allah
 Hath knowledge of all things.

يُصَفُّ مَا تَرَكَ وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَا إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهَا
 وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُمَا الثُّلُثَانِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ
 وَإِنْ كَانُوا إِخْوَةً رَجُلًا وَنِسَاءً فَلِلَّذَكَرِ مِثْلُ
 حِظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَضِلُّوا
 وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٦﴾

681. This verse supplements the rule of inheritance of the estate of a deceased person who has left as heir neither a descendant nor an ascendant. We shall call such a person A, who may be either a male or a female. In iv. 12 (second half), A's case was considered where he had left uterine brothers or sisters. Here A's case is considered where he has left brothers and or sisters by the father's side, whether the mother was the same or not. "Brothers" and "sisters" in this verse must be construed to be such brothers and sisters.

For the sake of clearness, I have expanded the terse language of the original in the translation. Let me explain it more concretely in this note. A, and "brother" and "sister" being strictly defined as above, we proceed to consider how A's inheritance would be divided. If A left a widow or widower, the widow's or widower's share would first be calculated as in the first half of iv. 12; if A left no spouse, this calculation would not be necessary. Then if A left a single "sister," she would have a half share, the remaining half (in so far as it, or a part of it, does not fall to a spouse, if any) going to remoter heirs: if a single "brother," he would have the whole (subject to the spouse's right if there is a spouse); if more than one "brother," they divide the whole (subject to etc.). If A left two or more "sisters," they get between them two-thirds, subject to the spouse's right, if any. If A left a "brother" and "sister," or "brothers" and "sisters," they divide on the basis that each "brother's" share is twice that of the "sister" (subject to, etc.). In all cases debts, funeral expenses, and legacies (to the amount allowed) have priority as in n. 522.