

Surah 4
Al-Nisa'

(The Women)

Madinan



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE KIND,
 THE COMPASSIONATE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[1] People! Fear your Lord¹ who created you of a single soul,² and from it created its mate,³ and (then) of the pair scattered countless men and women. Fear Allah by whom you demand one of another (your rights)⁴ and (beware of the rights arising by) the wombs.⁵ Verily Allah is ever watchful over you.⁶

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

1. Mufti Shafi` has the following to state as an introduction to this passage: People's rights are of two kinds. First, those which arise out of interactions between them, such as: of trade, contract, labour, and employment. The law can force a defaulter to deliver the rights arising in these affairs. But there is another kind of rights. Those, for instance: of a wife, husband, children, orphans and others. The various rights that are due to these kind of people, in different measures, are of a nature that cannot be taken by force if a man will not deliver them of his own free will. The reliance here, therefore,

for the delivery of these rights, is on fear of Allah and His Reckoning in the Hereafter. This fear of Allah - otherwise known as *taqwa* - is the only law-enforcing authority in this sphere of life. Accordingly, fear of Allah was mentioned twice within the same opening verse of a chapter that deals mainly with the rights of the kin. That could be the reason why we find that the Prophet used to recite this verse at the beginning of his sermons.

Razi writes: It will be noticed that these words, "People! Fear your Lord," occur at the beginning of the

fourth chapter of the first half of the Qur'an. Similarly, the fourth chapter of the second half of the Qur'an also starts with the same words (*Al-Hajj, Surah 22*): "People! Fear your Lord." It will also be noticed that at this point the words that follow draw the attention to man's 'beginning': "Fear ... who created you from a single soul," while there, in the second half, the attention is drawn to the 'end,' in words:

{ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ } [الحج: ١]

"Fear ... verily the shaking of the Hour will be a great thing."

2. That is, since Allah has created mankind from a single soul, all the members of the humanity are, one way or the other, related to one another, and hence have their rights on and duties toward each other. People should, therefore, fear Allah, acknowledge the rights of others, be fair with them, not oppress them, and the strong should give the weak his due (Ibn Jarir).

Creation From a Single Soul

Even basic knowledge of cells leads to the conclusion that all humans have originated from a single pair. If they had not, then, the number, messages and the coding system of the genes would have been so differ-

ent from person to person that some people would have grown 5 meters tall and others would have had hands as long as apes. Or, if the clocks in a human body were not to be the same as in any other human body, wounds would not have healed within a period common to all, and women could not have been giving birth over ages within the same nine months time.

In fact there is so much common at the most basic level that the scientists have been led to the conclusion, although wrong, that not only the human, rather all life originated from a single source. Says J.Z.Young: "Out of the 92 natural elements there are 16 that occur in most (living) organisms while there are a few that occur in some organisms but not others. This is an amazing fact and perhaps even more amazing is that only about 20 amino-acids, out of the many possible, occur in proteins, and further the same 20 in all organisms from bacterial to mammals. Most amazing of all, the instructions that direct the synthesis of proteins depend in every organism on sequences of three of the four nucleotide bases and any given triplet always serves to incorporate the same amino-acid. The instructions for all life forms are written in similar language. Such facts tell us at once that life is a 'peculiar', 'impossi-

ble', condition, and that all surviving life must have a common origin. We shall find this conclusion reinforced when we examine more fully the still more complex units into which the molecules of living systems are organized within the cells" (An Introduction to the Study of Man, ELBS publications, 1979, p.36).

To the above we have to add that the differences between one species and another (such as between humans and apes) are nevertheless so tremendous and so completely irreconcilable - although the principles governing the bodies seem to be common - that it is difficult to assume that the two sprang up from the same origin. However, within a species, there is no room for any difference in opinion that they have sprung up from a single base. Indeed, recent researchers state that there might be a few genes in every human being right from the first ancestor, Adam, peace be upon him (Au.).

3. That is, created Hawwa' from one of the ribs of Adam while he was asleep: Mujahid, Suddi, Qatadah (Ibn Jarir).

A *hadith* in Bukhari and Muslim says:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ فَإِنَّ الْمَرْأَةَ خُلِقَتْ مِنْ ضِلْعٍ وَإِنَّ أَعْوَجَ شَيْءٍ فِي الضِّلْعِ أَعْلَاهُ فَإِنْ ذَهَبَتْ تُقِيمُهُ كَسَرْتَهُ وَإِنْ تَرَكْتَهُ لَمْ يَزَلْ أَعْوَجَ فَاسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ. صحيح البخاري.

“Deal with women in a goodly manner for woman has been created from the rib, and the most curved of them is the top most. Therefore, if you go about trying to straighten her up, you will break her. But if you leave it, it will remain curved. Therefore, deal with women in a kindly manner” (Ibn Kathir).

Sabuni adds: That in fact is the reason for naming the first woman created as Hawwa', since she was created from a haiyy (a living). Sheikh Muhammad 'Abduh has said in *Al-Manar* that “there was no point in creating Hawwa' from the rib of Adam. What was the problem in creating her out of dust?” (Similarly, a contemporary commentator of the Qur'an has said that the *hadith* about creation from the rib of Adam has not been understood properly, implying that he has understood it correctly after these several centuries: Au). “The answer is, (continues Sabuni), the Qur'anic verse is plainly worded: ‘Mankind has been created

from a single soul,' (implying, obviously, that Hawwa' was also from that single soul, Adam). Further, the *hadith* about creation from the rib of Adam is also unambiguous. Finally, the consensus of the *Ummah* is to the same effect. Now, as to the question why Allah created Hawwa' by that process, one answer is, to demonstrate that He is capable of all manners of creation, including creating a living from a living: He created Adam from dust, *Hawwa'* without a mother and *'Isa* without a father (*Rawa'e'*, slightly reworded).

With reference to the *'iwaj* in women, Majid quotes a Western scholar elsewhere: 'Women will never be able to overcome these handicaps which are deeply rooted in their physical nature .. Anyone familiar with the physiology and biology of woman will be less annoyed and irritated at her sudden changes of mood, allegedly unreasonable flares of temper, her unmotivated acts. Understanding this, man will deeply sympathize with the bearer of the egg cells who, having the same aspirations and claims upon life, are burdened with more difficult biological tasks' (Nemilow, *Biological Tragedy of Women*, pp. 187-188).

4. As they say, for instance, "For God's sake you should do this," or "In the name of God you ought not to do this," and, "I beseech you in the name of God," etc. (Ibn Jarir, *Kashshaf*, Razi).

5. Two meanings have been ascribed to the statement. First, as in the translation, which is supported by Ibn 'Abbas, 'Ikrimah, Mujahid, Suddi, Qatadah and others. In fact Qatadah has a *hadith* to relate which says: "Fear Allah and join relations by the womb." (The *hadith* is *Mursal*: Au.). The other meaning is: "Fear Allah and (fear) the wombs in the name of which you plead your rights." That is, you claim from each other many rights in the name of relationships (by the womb). This meaning is supported by Ibrahim, Mujahid and Hasan (Ibn Jarir).

Giving the relations by the womb their right is so important that even differences in creed does not come in the way. A *hadith* says,

عَنْ أَسْمَاءَ بِنْتِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَتْ
قَدِمَتْ عَلَيَّ أُمِّي وَهِيَ مُشْرِكَةٌ فِي عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَاسْتَفْتَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قُلْتُ وَهِيَ رَاغِبَةٌ أَفَأَصِلُ أُمِّي قَالَ نَعَمْ
صَلِّي أُمَّكَ. صحيح البخاري.

Asma' (Abu Bakr's daughter) said that, "When my mother came

[2] Hand over the orphans⁷ their property and substitute not the despoiled (of yours) with the good (ones of theirs).⁸ Devour not their wealth with your wealth.⁹ That indeed is a grave sin.¹⁰

وَأْتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا الْخَيْرَ
بِالضَّرِيبِ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ
إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢﴾

down to me during the time of the Prophet while she was a pagan, and desiring my company, I asked the Prophet whether I should treat her well. He said: ‘Yes, treat your mother well’ (Qurtubi).

6. *Hadith* books are replete with traditions coming from the Prophet about the rights of relations by the womb, and the virtue in meeting those rights. One *hadith* of *Mishkat* says:

مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يَبْسُطَ عَلَيْهِ فِي رِزْقِهِ وَيُنْسَأَ فِي أَثَرِهِ فَلْيَصِلْ
رَحْمَةً

“Whoever wishes that his provision be increased and his age be extended, might give those related by the wombs their rights.”

As against this, he has warned in no less ambiguous words, those that trample their rights. One of the reports, also of *Mishkat*, says:

لا يدخل الجنة قاطع

“He who tramples the rights of the kind will not enter Paradise” (*Ma`arif*).

Muslim has reported that once a people belonging to the Mudar tribe came to Madinah. They were in a terribly dishevelled state because of poverty. The Prophet ascended the mimber after *Zuhr* Prayers and in his sermon first recited this verse. He followed it up with (59: 18):

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ
لِغَدٍ [الحشر : ١٨]

“Believers. Fear Allah and let each man examine what he has prepared for tomorrow.” After that he encouraged them to spend in the way of Allah, until people gave what they could (Ibn Kathir).

7. Orphan in Islamic terminology is a minor who has lost his or her father (*Ma`arif*).

8. Suddi, Sa`id ibn Musayyib and Zuhri have said that in pre-Islamic times trustees of the orphans used to substitute their good quality property with their own despoiled and poor quality ones. They would, for instance, replace a fat and healthy lamb of the orphan with an old and

[3] And, if you fear that you will not act justly (in matters of dower) to the orphan (girls)¹¹ then (do not marry them, rather) marry what is lawful to you¹² (of other) women:¹³ two, three or four (at a time).¹⁴ But if you fear that you will not do justice then (marry) only one;¹⁵ or, (be content with) what you right hands possess (of the slave-girls).¹⁶ This way it is less likely that you will do injustice.¹⁷

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَقْسُطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا
مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ
وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ
مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا ﴿٣﴾

skinny lamb of their own. Allah forbade such acts (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

After this the Companions became so meticulous that they segregated their dishes from those of the orphans in their care until Allah revealed (2: 220):

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ وَإِنْ
تُخَالَطُوهُمْ فَاِخْوَانُكُمْ [البقرة : ٢٢٠]

“And they ask you about (how to treat) the orphans. Tell them: ‘The best thing (for them) is (promotion of their) welfare. Therefore, if you mingle (your food, drink and other things) with theirs, then, that is alright, (since, after all), they are your brethren’” (Ibn Jarir).

9. Obviously, if separate accounts are not maintained and withdrawals are made from a single account for purposes common to those of the trustee as well as of the orphan then no one would know whose wealth is depleting and at what rate. It might

be discovered too late that nothing is left of the wealth of the orphan (*Ma`arif*).

10. The textual hub has been explained as sin by Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Suddi, Qatadah and others (Ibn Jarir).

The Prophet himself used it in that sense. According to a report in Ibn Marduwayh and Hakim, when Abu Ayyub al-Ansari wished to divorce his wife he sought the counsel of the Prophet (*saws*). He told him:

إن طلاق أم أيوب حوب

“Divorcing of Umm Ayyub would be a great sin (*hoob*).” It is said that Abu Ayyub abandoned the idea (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

11. The words in the parenthesis are based on an opinion of `A'isha who said: “This verse applies to an orphan girl who happens to be in the trust

of someone who wants to marry her because of her beauty or wealth, but is not inclined to give her the *mahr* she deserves. He has been told not to marry her, rather marry others.” There have been other explanations too (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

The above statement of `A'isha is in Bukhari. However, she has another report in Bukhari itself to the effect that a man had an orphan girl in his care who jointly owned a date-palm grove with him. The man would not let her get married, (fearful that he would lose full control of the grove) - Ibn Kathir, Shawkani.

12. The words in the original are *ma taba lakum*, and have at least two implications. First, marriage is not a religious obligation. Imām Nawawi has stated that he does not know of any scholar (of the four schools) who has declared marriage obligatory. He mentions four cases. First, in which a man is fearful of falling into sin and possesses the means (to get married and maintain a household). For such a person marriage is *mustahab* (desirable). Second, he who is not fearful of falling into sin, and has no means to support a family; marriage for such a person is *makruh* (undesirable). Third, he who is fearful of falling into sins, but does not possess

the means to get married; for him too it is *makruh*. This type should seek solution in fasts (until he can manage the means). And fourth, he who is neither fearful nor has the means. According to Imām Shafe`i, it is preferable for such a person to avoid marriage and busy himself with the affairs of the hereafter. According to the Hanafiyyah, however, it is *wajib* for a man to marry if he is fearful of falling into sins. Yet, if he cannot afford, then by not marrying he is not sinning. Their opinion is that in general terms marriage is *Sunnah Mu`akkadah* (emphasized practice of the Prophet) and therefore, not marrying without a valid reason can be sinful.

Another implication hidden in the words *ma taba lakum* is, according to Suyuti, the permission to see the woman one intends to marry. A *hadith* in Muslim says, in sum, that:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ كُنْتُ عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَتَاهُ رَجُلٌ فَأَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّهُ تَرَوَّجَ امْرَأَةً مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ فَقَالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْظَرْتَ إِلَيْهَا قَالَ لَا قَالَ فَادْهَبْ فَانظُرْ إِلَيْهَا فَإِنْ فِي أَعْيُنِ الْأَنْصَارِ شَيْءٌ . صحيح مسلم

The Prophet asked a person engaged to a woman if he had seen her. He said he had not. The Prophet told him, “You better do that, for some Ansari women have

a defect in their eyes.” Nonetheless, this seeing should be done without the knowledge of the girl. As for her own permission - whether she can be seen without her knowledge or not - there is a difference of opinion among the scholars. Some say her consent is necessary, others that it is not. However, this seeing before marriage is only permissible and not obligatory. In fact, Allah Himself did not state it expressly (Alusi).

13. Some scholars have conjectured that by the addition of the words “women” (apparently redundant, since after all one marries only women), it is implied that marriage to a jinni is disallowed (Alusi).

Imām Ibn Taymiyyah has, however, stated in his *Risalat al-Jinn* that marriage between jinn and mankind is a possibility. He does not discuss the legality of the affair (Au.).

14. Since the address is to the believers as a whole, the terms used in the original are *mathna*, *wa thulatha*, *wa ruba`*, meaning twos, threes and fours, (or two two, three three, and four four), implying that everyone of the believers can marry two or three or four women (Razi and others). In other words, the permission is to one and all.

However, four is the limit, more than that being the exception of our Prophet who married fifteen women, went into thirteen of them, of whom eleven were with him at one time in his life, and nine when he died. (Of them, the Prophet remained married to a single lady - Khadijah - until he was 54, then, after her death, remained with another single lady - Sawda - until he was 58 - adding others only at the end of his life: all but one previously married women: Shafi'). There is consensus of opinion over the figure of four for the believers without any disagreement among the scholars. Traditions supporting this view are as follows. One is in Bukhari and Nasa'i but taken here from Musnad of Ahmad:

عَنْ سَالِمٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ أَنَّ غَيْلَانَ بْنَ سَلَمَةَ التَّقْفِيَّ أَسْلَمَ
وَمَحْتَهُ عَشْرُ نِسْوَةٍ فَقَالَ لَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
اخْتَرِ مِنْهُنَّ أَرْبَعًا فَلَمَّا كَانَ فِي عَهْدِ عُمَرَ طَلَّقَ نِسَاءَهُ
وَقَسَمَ مَالَهُ بَيْنَ بَنِيهِ فَبَلَغَ ذَلِكَ عُمَرَ فَقَالَ إِنِّي لَأُظَنُّ
الشَّيْطَانَ فِيمَا يَسْتَرِفُ مِنَ السَّمْعِ سَمِعَ بِمَوْتِكَ فَقَدَفَهُ
فِي نَفْسِكَ وَلَعَلَّكَ أَنْ لَا تَمُوتَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ
لَيُرْاجِعُنَّ نِسَاءَكَ وَلَيُرْجِعَنَّ فِي مَالِكَ أَوْ لَأُورِثُنَّ مِنْكَ
وَلَأَمْرُنَ بِقَدْرِكَ فَيُرْجِمَنَّ كَمَا رُجِمَ قَبْرُ أَبِي رِغَالٍ

It says that when `Imran b. Ghaylan b. Salamah embraced Islam he had ten wives. The Prophet told him to retain four. (According to one version, he told him to choose four of them and divorce

the rest: Alusi). When this same Ghaylan b. Salamah later, during the reign of `Umar, divorced the remaining four wives and divided his wealth among his sons, `Umar warned him in words: "I guess Satan has overheard some news from the heavens and has whispered in your ear that you would not last long. By Allah, you will take back your wives and your wealth (from your children) or I will forcibly give your wives their share and I will order the people to pelt stones at your grave as they used to pelt stones at the grave of Abu Rughal (one of the stray men of Thamud: *Tuhfatu l'Ahwadhi*)."

Abu Da'ud and Ibn Majah have a hasan report which says that `Umayrah al-Asadi had eight wives when he embraced Islam. the Prophet told him to choose four and release the rest. Another report in Imām Shafe`i's *Musnad* (as also in Bukhari and Muslim) says that Nawfal b. Mu`awiyah al-Dayli had five wives when he embraced Islam. The Prophet told him to retain four and divorce the fifth (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

Majid quotes: "When we see thousands of miserable women who

crowd the streets of Western towns during the night, we must surely feel that it does not lie in Western mouth to reproach Islam for its polygamy. It is better for a woman, happier for a woman, more respectable for a woman, to live in Mohammadan polygamy, united to one man only, with the legitimate child in her arms surrounded with respect than to be seduced, cast out in the streets - perhaps with an illegitimate child, outside the pale of law - unsheltered and uncared for to become a victim of any passer-by, night after night, rendered incapable of motherhood, despised of all" (Mrs. Annie Besant).

A recent article on health says the following: "In Bombay (commercial hub of India) alone there are 100,000 sex workers. Half of them are already infected by the AIDS virus. I asked the women how many men they entertained each night. Three or four, they told me" (Peter Jaret: *Viruses*, National Geographic, July 1994: Au.).

Sabuni adds: In 1948 the "Young Men's Association" of Germany had counselled its members to marry more than one woman to solve the problem of excessive women as a result of the second world war.

Finally, at the time of this writing, in New York alone it is estimated that there are a million women who do not hope to ever get married (Au.).

Multiple Wives in the Bible:

The first instance of polygamy/bigamy in the Bible was that of Lamech in Genesis 4:19: "Lamech married two women." Several prominent men in the Old Testament were polygamists. Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, and others all had multiple wives. In 2 Samuel 12:8, God, speaking through the prophet Nathan, said that if David's wives and concubines were not enough, He would have given David even more. Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines.

And, since Jesus Christ constantly referred to the validity of the Law as in the Old Testament, it can be assumed with fair accuracy that he did not have any objection to polygamy. Mormons in fact, a Christian sect, believes in polygamy (Au.).

15. The statutory equal treatment required pertains to matters involving maintenance and provision of material and physical needs. The heart's inclination is beyond control,

and hence forgiven, so long as no injustice is committed, as the Qur'an itself has said (in verse 129 of this chapter),

وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ
[النساء : ١٢٩]

"But you will never be able to do absolute justice to the women, even if you were to be eager." Therefore, it is sufficient if one is not inclined altogether toward one to the neglect of the others, as said the Qur'an in the same verse cited above:

فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ [النساء : ١٢٩]

"But do not completely incline (toward one)" - Shafi'.

16. This is so because you do not have to give your slave girls dower (marriage itself is their dower because it promises them freedom: Au.), and she is entitled to half the rights as compared to a free woman (Thanwi).

17. Since the *ta'ulu* of the original has been explained as meaning "incline" by Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, 'Ikrimah, Suddi and others, another rendition of the phrase could be: "in order that you might not incline (toward one of them to the neglect of

[4] And hand over to the women their dower:¹⁸ a free gift.¹⁹ However, if they are pleased to offer you any of it, of their own accord, then you might consume it in good cheer.²⁰

وَأْتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً فَإِن طِبْنَ لَكُمْ
عَن شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ تَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيئًا ﴿٤﴾

others)” - Ibn Jarir.

18. The general interpretation is that in the pre-Islamic times the dower was taken away by the father or the trustee to the denial of the bride herself. Allah forbid this and ordered that the women (and not others) be given their dower (Zamakhshari, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

Majid quotes: “*Sidaq* of a wife, ‘a dowry or nuptial gift’ is, in Islamic law, either a sum of money or other form of property to which the wife becomes entitled by marriage. ‘It is not a consideration proceeding from the husband for the contract of marriage, but it is an obligation imposed by the law on the husband as a mark of respect for the wife as is evident from the fact that the non-specification of dower at the time of marriage does not affect the validity of marriage.’ (Abdur Rahim) And, ... *Sidaq* in Islam is not to be confused with the price of the bride or the purchase-money so customary in the ancient world... ”Notwithstanding the prohibition in the Laws of Manu,

marriage by purchase is found to this day even among the high castes, and is frequently practiced among the Sudras” (Westermarck, *Short History of Marriage*, pp. 166-169).

19. The word *nihlah* has been variously interpreted. One meaning is in the translation. In addition, it has been explained as an “obligation” by authorities such as `A'isha, Qatadah, Ibn Jubayr, as well as “dower” by Ibn `Abbas (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

Alusi writes: The term *nihlah* literally means a gift. The dower given to the wife cannot be said to be the price of pleasure that a man draws from sexual union with her, for she has an equal share of it, if not more. So nothing is due to her that way. In fact, she is, in addition, provided for by the husband. Therefore, *Sidaq* can only be a gift, hence the use of the term *nihlah*, although our *Shar`* has made such gift-offering obligatory and a condition of marriage: and hence the other interpretations. Further, (as pointed out by other com-

mentators), the words “Hand over to the women their dower” hold the direct implication that *Sidaq* is the woman’s own property over which the parents have no right whatsoever, as against the general concept and practice in some parts of the Arab world today.

Asad writes: “The expression *nihlah* signifies the giving of something willingly, of one’s own accord, without expecting a return for it (Zamakhshari). It is to be noted that the amount of the marriage-portion, or dower, which the bridegroom has to give to the bride has not been circumscribed by the Law: it depends entirely on the agreement of the two parties, and may consist of anything, even a mere token. According to several authentic Traditions recorded in most of the compilations, the Prophet made it clear that “even an iron ring” may be enough if the bride is willing to accept it, or, short of that, even “the imparting of thy bride of a verse of the Qur’ān.”

That said, the Qur’ān has not set an upper limit either. It says, in this same *Surah*, verse 20:

{وَأْتَيْتُمُ إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا
أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ بُهْتَانًا وَإِنَّمَا مُبِينًا} [النساء: ٢٠]

“... even if you have given them a heap

(of gold or property), do not take any of it back (at the time of separation)” - Au.

20. In view of the construction of the sentence, with the words *tibna* and *nafsan* occurring in it, many scholars have judged that if a woman demands back a gift she once made, (out of the dower), it has to be returned. In fact, ‘Umar wrote to his judges across the country: “Women give both out of love as well as out of fear. Therefore, any woman who gives and then wishes that what she gave be returned, then, let it be returned.” Accordingly, when a case was presented to Qadi Shurayh, of a woman who had given a gift and then was demanding it back, he judged that it be returned. The husband remonstrated: “Has not Allah said:

فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَرِيئًا
[النساء: ٤]

‘If they are pleased to offer any of it, of their own accord, then you might consume it in good cheer?’”

Shurayh replied: “Had she been pleased to give it, she would not be demanding it back.” It is also reported of a man of the Abu Mu’it family that a woman gave back her husband a 1000 Dinars, which was her dower. After a month or so, the

[5] Do not hand over to the foolish²¹ property that Allah has made a means of subsistence for you.²² However, (meantime) provide (those of) them (in your care) and clothe them out of it and explain to them in kind words (the reasons for not handing over the property).²³

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَامًا وَارْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ﴿٥﴾

man divorced her. The woman went to Marwan b. al-Hakam, demanding back the sum. Marwan b. al-Hakam also ruled that the sum should be returned to her despite the man's protest that she had given it to him of her own accord and in good cheer (Zamakhshari, Razi).

Ibn al-'Arabi has ruled, however, (in the case of a wife returning her dower to the husband), that if he has consumed it and is left with nothing then she cannot demand it back (Qurtubi).

As against the above, Alusi quotes Ibn Hubayrah to the effect that there is no difference of opinion among the scholars of the four schools of *fiqh* that what man and wife gift to each other are theirs and non-returnable.

Mufti Shafi' presents a point: In many parts of the world, women are quite certain that they will not get their dower. They also realize that if they insist to be paid it might lead to

various family problems. Therefore, they have no choice but to forgive. But such forgiving is null and void. The amount is due to them all the same. In fact, this *tib 'l-nafs* is applicable to other areas of life also. For instance, if a man is pressurized into donating for a cause, his money is not lawful to the organization that collects it. It must be returned to him because of the missing *tib 'l-nafs*.

21. In the opinion of Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Hasan, Suddi, Dahhak and others, both women (with no experience in handling finance) and immature orphans are covered by the term "foolish" here (Ibn Jarir).

22. Wealth and property are of such importance in Islam that according to a *hadith* in Bukhari and Muslim:

يَقُولُ مَنْ قُتِلَ دُونَ مَالِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

"Whoever lost his life in the defence of his property is a martyr."

There is nothing wrong in being rich.

[6] And test the orphans well when they reach the age of marriage, and, only if you perceive in them sound judgment, deliver to them their property.²⁴ But (meanwhile) consume it not wastefully and hastily in fear that they will grow up (and lay claim to their property). He (of the trustee) who is rich might desist (from service charges).²⁵ However, he who is poor may take (of it) in a just and goodly manner.²⁶ And then, when you deliver to them their property take witnesses over them, although, Allah suffices for a Reckoner.²⁷

وَابْتُلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ
فَإِنْ آتَيْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ
أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَنْ
يَكْبُرُوا وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ وَمَنْ
كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ
إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فَأَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ
حَسِيبًا ﴿٦﴾

A *hadith*, in *Mishkat*, says:

لَا بَأْسَ بِالْغَنِيِّ لِمَنْ اتَّقَى اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

“There is no harm in wealth for him who fears Allah, the Exalted” (Shafi’).

23. The above translation is the preferred meaning. Ibn `Abbas has, however, treated the verse as not specifically addressed to the trustees of the orphans, rather a general piece of advice to the master of a house. It is saying: “Do not hand over your wealth - a means of your subsistence - to your wives and children who might spend it away freely. Rather, hold it with yourself and let yourself be the one to look after their daily needs. Otherwise, a situation will arise when you will have to seek financial help of them” (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

24. It is not being said that the orphan be handed over his property the day he matures; rather, that it should be done only when he evinces soundness of mind and the capability to independently conduct his financial affairs. This is the opinion of Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Suddi, Qatadah and others. (Ibn Jarir adds: Even if he might prove to be a corrupt person). As for puberty itself, with which he is qualified to be handed back his property (the condition of mental maturity met), it is either the age of fifteen or growth of the pubic hair. The Prophet applied that rule on the day of Uhud. He prevented those boys who were less than fifteen years of age from participating in the battle. There is no difference of opinion among the scholars over this. However, whether the growth

of pubic hair is a sign of maturity is a contested point. The majority believe it is. Speaking about the Day when Sa'd b. Mu'adh had judged about the Jews of Banu Qurayzah that the adults be put to death and minors be taken slaves - 'Atiyyah al-Qurazi says, in a *hadith* of Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah and Tirmidhi, who adjudged it *hasan*:

عَرَضْنَا عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَوْمَ قَرْيَظَةَ
فَكَانَ مَنْ أَتَيْتُ فُتِيلًا وَمَنْ لَمْ يَنْبُتْ خُلِّي سَبِيلَهُ فَكُنْتُ
مِنْ لَمْ يَنْبُتْ فَخُلِّي سَبِيلِي.

“We were presented to the Prophet. He ordered that we be checked for our pubic growth. Those who had begun to grow them were put to death and the others spared. I was one of those who were spared.”

Similarly, during the reign of 'Umar when a boy falsely slandered a girl in his poetry, 'Umar ordered the authorities to check if he had grown his pubic hair, in order to determine if he could be administered the *Shari'ah* punishment for the crime. When the report was negative, he spared him the punishment (Ibn Kathir).

According to Abu Hanifah, someone who has achieved maturity might first be tried out with some money (or property) to handle at

the age of seventeen. (That according to him is the age of maturity for boys: Qurtubi. Alusi says however that according to Abu Hanifah it is the completion of eighteen years of age for boys and seventeen for girls). Nonetheless, at that age his abilities might be checked. If he fails the test, he might not be handed over his property. However, he must be given the custody of his property whether or not he attains the ability to handle it, once he is twenty-five, after which no significant change is expected in the personality. But his students differed with him and have ruled that if a man does not show maturity, he might never be allowed to handle affairs of his property (*Kashshaf*). This is also the opinion of Imām Shafe'i (Razi).

25. Sha'bi has said that if the trustee is rich then the property of the orphan is like blood and carrion to him (Ibn Kathir).

26. According to 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, Ibn 'Abbas, Sa'id ibn Jubayr, Mujahid, Sha'bi, and Abu al-'Aliyyah, such taking from the property of the orphan should be treated as loans, payable whenever the trustee can afford. Sa'id ibn Jubayr has added that if he can never repay, let him seek forgiveness of the

orphan before death. However, others such as, 'A'isha, Ibn 'Abbas, Abu al-'Aliyyah, Hasan, 'Ata', and Sha'bi have ruled that the permission here is for such things as are necessary for the trustee's sustenance such as staples, fruits, vegetables, milk and other dietary articles: one might partake of them to the minimum of his needs, (as his charges for looking after the property), but he is not allowed to take anything else, say gold or silver from the property of the orphan except as loans. This is based on a *hadith* according to which the uncle of Thabit b. Rifa'ah went to the Prophet enquiring about what was lawful to him of the property of the orphan. The Prophet told him:

كُلْ مِنْ مَالِ يَتِيمِكَ غَيْرَ مُسْرِفٍ وَلَا مُبَدِّرٍ وَلَا مُتَأْتِلٍ
مَالًا وَمِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ تَقِيَّ مَالَكَ بِمَالِهِ

“You may partake of the orphan's wealth without wasting, without overspending, without saving (for yourself) and without sacrificing his wealth for yours.”

Accordingly, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, 'Ata' ibn abi Rabah and others have said that what someone in need partakes of the property of an orphan is not returnable, even if he subsequently becomes rich (Ibn Jarir).

Imām Shafe'i is also of the opinion

that whoever looks after the property of an orphan might draw suitably for himself from it, as his wages, the reimbursement of which is not obligatory. He is supported in this view by 'Ata', 'Ikrimah, Ibrahim Nakha'i, 'Atiyyah and Hasan al-Busri (Ibn Kathir). Their opinion has in support the *hadith* (*sahib*: S. Ibrahim) in Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban in his “*Sahib*” and Ibn Marduwayh in his “*Tafsir*,” which says that,

إِنِّي فَقِيرٌ وَأَنْتَ لِي شَيْءٌ وَبِي يَتِيمٌ ، فَقَالَ : كُلْ مِنْ
مَالِ يَتِيمِكَ غَيْرَ مُسْرِفٍ وَلَا مُبَدِّرٍ وَلَا مُتَأْتِلٍ وَمَنْ
غَيْرِ أَنْ تَقِيَّ مَالَكَ

A man enquired the Prophet: “I do not have any means of sustenance. But I have an orphan under my care.” He replied: “You might partake of the orphan's property without wasting or squandering it, neither spending away the principal itself, nor saving your property at the cost of his.”

Nonetheless, as a precaution, if one returns what he had charged, when he comes in possession of the means, it would be better for him' as 'Umar said, according to a report of trustworthy narrators:

إِنِّي أَنْزَلْتُ نَفْسِي مِنْ هَذَا الْمَالِ بِمَنْزِلَةِ وَالِي الْيَتِيمِ، أَنْ

[7] Men have a share in what the parents and the kinsmen leave.²⁸ And (so) have women²⁹ a share in what the parents and the kinsmen³⁰ leave³¹ - out of whatever little or much it be³²: a share determined (by Allah).

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

استغنيت استعففت، وإن احتجت استقرضت، فإذا
أيسرت قضيت.

“I treat what I take from the property of the state on the same basis as I treat the property of an orphan. When I have my own means, I do not draw from it. If I am in dire need, I take from it as a loan. But if I have means, I return it” (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

Ibn Jarir himself, who was a jurist, prefers the former opinion, i.e., what the trustee takes, even if forced to do so because of poverty, should be treated as loans and returned later (Au.).

27. Hence the Prophet’s advice to Abu Dharr:

يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ إِنَّي أَرَاكَ ضَعِيفًا وَإِنِّي أَحِبُّ لَكَ مَا أَحِبُّ
لِنَفْسِي لَا تَأْمُرَنَّ عَلَى اثْنَيْنِ وَلَا تَوَلَّيَنَّ مَالَ يَتِيمٍ

“Abu Dharr! I perceive weakness in you. Indeed, I approve for you what I approve for myself. (I advise you), not to accept to be an amir over two people and not to take charge of an orphan’s prop-

erty” (Ibn Kathir). The *hadith* is in Muslim. (H. Ibrahim)

“Allah suffices”: These words imply that although it is desirable to have witnesses on one’s side while the property is being handed over and accounts settled, it is not obligatory since “*Allah suffices for a Reckoner*” (Alusi, Shabbir).

28. These verses impart knowledge of the Islamic discipline known as “*Ilm ‘l-Fara‘id.*” It is a corner stone of the religion of Islam and is considered to be one of the best and mother of all knowledge. Some scholars have said that it is one-third or even half of the knowledge of the *Shari‘ah*. It will also be the first discipline to be lost by the *Ummah*. Ibn Mas‘ud has said: “Why should he, who does not have knowledge of the *Fara‘id*, Divorce-rules, and Hajj, be not considered a bedouin?” (Qurtubi).

Majid writes: “Says MacNaughten, the author of Principles and Precedents of Mohammedan Law in his Preliminary Remarks:- ‘In these pro-

visions we find ample attention paid to the interest of all those whom nature places in the first rank of our affections and indeed it is difficult to conceive any system containing rules more strictly just and equitable.' And Rumney, the annotator of *Sirajiyya*, a Muslim book of the law of inheritance, observes:- 'The Mohammedan Law of Inheritance comprises beyond question the most refined and elaborate system of rules for the devolution of property that is known to the civilized world.' (Mahmudullah, *The Muslim Law of Inheritance*, Preface, p. i, Alahabad 1934)."

What is to be noted, as a miracle of the Qur'an, that the basis for the whole complicated structure pertaining to the Law of inheritance, which bogs down the mind of even the mathematically educated person of today, has been stated in just three verses: two here and one at the end of the chapter (Au.).

29. In inheritance, the central principle is "nearness" in relationship and not the "need" of the relatives. Hence an orphaned grandson will not get a share in the presence of the sons of the deceased. He is not as near to the grandfather as the sons are. If needy, he is taken care of by other means (*Ma'arif*).

30. Separate mention of women is for emphasis. Otherwise the verse could also have been worded as "Men and women have their share ..." (*Ma'arif*).

31. Qatadah and Ibn Zayd have said that among pre-Islamic Arabs only adult males inherited from a deceased, to the exclusion of females and non-adults. Allah (*swt*) revealed this verse. `Ikrimah has reported that an Ansari woman known as Umm Kuhhah came to the Prophet (*saws*) to complain that her husband had died, left children behind but she was being denied any share in the inheritance. Her cousin who was accompanying her rejoined:

فقال عم ولدها: يا رسول الله، لا تركب فرساً، ولا تحمل كلاً ولا تنكى عدواً، يكسب عليها ولا تكتسب! فنزلت: "للرجال نصيب مما ترك الوالدان والأقربون وللنساء نصيب مما ترك الوالدان والأقربون مما قلّ منه أو أكثر نصيباً مفروضاً". خرجه الحافظ ابن حجر في الإصابة في ترجمة أم كحة

"O Apostle of Allah, does someone who does not ride a horse, does not carry fodder, cannot fight the enemy, has to be laboured for and cannot labour for herself (should she be given a share)!?" In response Allah revealed: "Men have a share in what the parents anduntil the end of the verse" (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi). This last re-

[8] However, if there appear at the time of division (distant) relatives,³³ orphans or (other) poor persons, then make provision for them out of it, and speak to them in a kindly manner.³⁴

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

port is in Ibn Marduwayh as well as Ahmad (Ibn Kathir).

Majid adds: “Women and minor males were denied inheritance not only in the pagan Arabia but in the law of the Bible also, ‘women appear to have been universally and in every respect regarded minor so far as the rights of property went ... Only sons, not daughters, still less wives, can inherit’ (EB, cc. 2724, 2728).”

32. This implies that everything, however meagre of value, such as personal belongings, must be divided (unless common consent waives them off: Au.), and not kept back by someone undertaking the division (*Ma`arif*).

33. If the first verse of this set barred the distant relatives from inheriting a deceased, by the second verse they were again brought in as deserving of at least a gift (*Ma`arif*).

34. Although there have been several explanations, the most plausible seems to be that even though in Allah’s own division of the inheritance,

there is no legal share for the distantly related, the orphans or the poor, but if they happen to drop in at the time of division, in hope of receiving something as a gift, then do not turn them away disappointed.

(Ibn `Abbas’ opinion in Bukhari is that the verse is not abrogated, - as some have expressed the opinion - rather it is muhkam: Qurtubi). Further, the verse seems to be saying: ‘While dealing with these people do not be rough, rather be kind and considerate.’ Some of the *Salaf* used to slaughter a goat and feed the visitors, while others have recommended that articles such as furniture or utensils that cannot be sold off might be gifted to them (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Kathir adds: The inheritors should not behave like the “People of the Orchard” whose story has been narrated (in ch. 68 verses 17-33) who resolved to gather the fruits early in the morning before a destitute would show up. Allah destroyed their fruit as punishment for withholding the right of the poor. Hence it has

[9] And let the people fear (destitution for others) as they would be worried on account of their own children, were they to leave them behind weak. Therefore, fear Allah and say appropriate words (to the one about to die).³⁵

وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ
ضِعْفًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا
قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٩﴾

been said that although no share has been settled by Allah in favour of the distantly related, the orphan or the poor, if they happen to be present at the time of division they should be given something or the other (Ibn Kathir).

Nevertheless, such bestowal has to be done out of the share of the adults, since nothing can be taken away from the share of the minor without his or her consent obtained after attainment of maturity alone (Thanwi's parenthetical note expanded).

35. Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah, Suddi, Sa'id ibn Jubayr, Dahhak and Mujahid have said that this verse is addressing those who are present around a dying man encouraging him to bequeath his wealth, or a part of it, to charitable works before his death. They are told not to do that and fear for the man's children what they would fear for their own children, i.e., poverty (Ibn Jarir).

Accordingly, when the Prophet visited Sa'd at his death-bed, Sa'd asked

him if he could bequeath two-thirds of his wealth in view of his daughter being the sole heir. He said no. Sa'd asked whether he could bequeath one half. The Prophet again said no. When Sa'd asked if he could bequeath one third, the Prophet told him: "You could. But even one-third is a lot." Then he added: "That you leave behind your dependents rich is better than leaving them poor stretching their hands before the people." The *hadith*, as in Bukhari, is as follows:

سَعْدُ بْنُ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ جَاءَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَعُوذُنِي وَأَنَا بِمَكَّةَ وَهُوَ يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يَمُوتَ بِالْأَرْضِ الَّتِي هَاجَرَ مِنْهَا قَالَ يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ ابْنَ عَمْرَاءَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَوْصِي بِمَا لِي كَلِّهِ قَالَ لَا قُلْتُ فَالْشَّطْرُ قَالَ لَا قُلْتُ التُّلْتُ قَالَ فَالتُّلْتُ وَالتُّلْتُ كَثِيرٌ إِنَّكَ أَنْ تَدَعَ وَرَثَتَكَ أَعْيَابَ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَنْ تَدَعُهُمْ عَالَةً يَتَكَفَّفُونَ النَّاسَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ

Therefore, Ibn `Abbas used to say that if the people would remain within one fourth while bequeathing, it would be better for them since the Prophet said: "Even one third is a lot." The report is in Bukhari and Muslim

[10] Lo, those who devour property of the orphans wrongfully devour not but fire into their bellies.³⁶ Soon they shall be roasting in a blazing Fire.

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

(Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

But some other scholars have said that it is the opposite that is meant by the verse. That is, a man might be making a will in favour of the poor but those present might discourage him saying, 'leave it all to your children,' thus harming the poor. Ibn `Atiyyah has said that the two opinions are reconcilable. Sometimes the situation demands this, sometimes that. One has to fear Allah, and offer the best advice in every situation (Qurtubi).

The earlier opinion (of the first generation scholars) could be influenced by the fact that the earliest Muslims cared as much for the poor, the widow and other weak elements of the society, as for their own children, and were likely to even forego the needs of their own children and bequest the maximum the *Shari'ah* has allowed, in favour of others. But, with the passage of time children became dearer, to the neglect of the weaker elements, and hence the change in the opinion (Au.).

wrongfully devoured the wealth of the orphans will rise from his grave in a condition that flames would be leaping out of his mouth, ears and eyes. Anyone who saw him would know that this man used to devour property of the orphans. Abu Sa`id al-Khudri (*ra*) has reported the Prophet as having seen (during his *mi`raj*) some people with lips as large as those of a camel, being pulled by those lips. They were fed with stones of fire that entered the mouth and came out from the rear. He asked Jibril about them. He was told that they were people who used to devour wealth of the orphans (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

The *hadith* is as follows:

« انطلق بي إلى خلق من خلق الله كثير ، رجال كل رجل منهم له مشفران كمشفر البعير ، وهو موكل بهم رجال يفكون لحي أحدهم ، ثم يجاء بصخرة من نار فتقذف في في أحدهم حتى تخرج من أسفله ، وله خوار ، وصراخ ، فقلت : يا جبريل من هؤلاء ؟ » قال : هؤلاء (الذين يأكلون أموال اليتامى ظلما إنما يأكلون في بطونهم نارا وسيصلون سعيرا. (تفسير ابن ابي حاتم)

36. Suddi has said that a man who

A *hadith* in the *Sahihayn* narrated by

[11] Allah enjoins you concerning your children:³⁷ to the male a portion equal to that of two females.³⁸ But if they were to be only females above two,³⁹ then for them two-thirds of what the person (male or female) leaves.⁴⁰ But if she be the only (daughter, without any sons) then her share is a half.⁴¹ As for the parents, to each of them a sixth of what he leaves - if he has children.⁴² But if he has no children (nor brothers or sisters) and the parents alone are the sole heir, then his mother shall have a third (and the father two-thirds).⁴³ (However), if he had brothers (or sisters) then to his mother a sixth:⁴⁴ after (execution of) any bequest⁴⁵ that he might have bequeathed, or debts (that he might have incurred).⁴⁶ Your parents and your children: you know not which of them is of greater benefit to you.⁴⁷ These are (portions) ordained by Allah. Verily Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.

يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ
حَظِّ الْأُنثِيَيْنِ فَإِنْ كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ
فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا
النِّصْفُ وَلَا بُوَيْهَ لِكَلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا الشُّدُسُ
مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِنْ كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلَدٌ
وَوَرَثَتْهُ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ
فَلَأُمِّهِ الشُّدُسُ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا
أَوْ دَيْنٍ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ
أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا فَرِيضَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١﴾

Abu Hurayrah reports the Prophet as having said:

« اجْتَنِبُوا السَّبْعَ الْمُؤْبِقَاتِ ». قَالُوا : يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ
وَمَا هُنَّ؟ قَالَ : « الشِّرْكُ بِاللَّهِ وَالسِّحْرُ وَقَتْلُ النَّفْسِ
الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَكْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَكْلُ مَالِ الْيَتِيمِ
وَالنَّوَالِي يَوْمَ الرِّحْفِ وَقَذْفُ الْعَافِيَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ »

“Avoid the seven destructive ones.” He was asked: “What are they?” He replied: “Attributing partners to Allah, magic, murder of a person that Allah has forbidden save by right, partaking of usury, devouring of the orphan’s wealth, running away from the

battle-field on a day of heavy fighting and slandering chaste believing women” (Qurtubi in brief, Ibn Kathir).

37. It is reported by Jabir, in the *Sahihayn* as well as all the other six canonical works, that

عَنْ جَابِرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ عَادِنِي النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَبُو بَكْرٍ فِي بَيْتِي سَلِمَةَ مَا شِيبَنِي فَوَجَدَنِي
النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَا أَعْقِلُ شَيْئًا فَدَعَا بِمَاءٍ
فَتَوَضَّأَ مِنْهُ ثُمَّ رَشَّ عَلَيَّ فَأَقْفَشْتُ فَقُلْتُ مَا تَأْمُرُنِي أَنْ
أَصْنَعَ فِي مَالِي يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَتَرَكْتُ { يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ
فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ { صحيح البخاري

“The Prophet and Abu Bakr visited me on foot. I was unconscious. The Prophet asked for water, made ablution and sprinkled water on my face. When I came to myself I asked him: “What shall I do with my property, O Messenger of Allah?” In response these verses were revealed (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani and others).

38. Note how the importance of the female's share has been highlighted by making them the basis of calculation: “To the male twice that of the female” (*Ma`arif*).

That is, the male's share cannot be determined without first assessing the share of the female (Au.).

Majid writes: “... the inequality between the share of a son and that of a daughter in the law of Islam is more apparent than real. ‘The share of the daughter is determined not by any inferiority inherent in her but in view of her economic opportunities, and the place she occupies in the social structure of which she is a part and parcel... While the daughter, according to Mohammedan Law, is held to be full owner of property given to her both by the father and the husband at the time of her marriage; while, further, she absolutely

owns her dower-money which may be prompt or deferred according to her own choice, and in lieu of which she can hold possession of the whole of her husband's property till payment, the responsibility of maintaining her throughout her life is wholly thrown on the husband.’ (Dr. Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 236-237).”

39. Allah has stated the rules for a single female child and above two, but what when they are two? The answer is provided by the *Sunnah* (Ibn Jarir).

Ahmad, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah have various versions of the following *hadith*:

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ جَاءَتْ امْرَأَةٌ سَعْدِ بْنِ الرَّبِيعِ بِابْنَتَيْهَا مِنْ سَعْدٍ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَتْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَاتَانِ ابْنَتَا سَعْدِ بْنِ الرَّبِيعِ قُتِلَ أَبُوهُمَا مَعَكَ يَوْمَ أُحُدٍ شَهِيدًا وَإِنَّ عَمَّهُمَا أَخَذَ مَا لَهُمَا فَلَمْ يَدَعْ لَهُمَا مَالًا وَلَا تَنْكِحَانِ إِلَّا وَهَهُمَا مَالٌ قَالَ يَقْضِي اللَّهُ فِي ذَلِكَ فَتَرَكْتُ آيَةَ الْمِيرَاثِ فَبَعَثَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى عَمَّهُمَا فَقَالَ أَعْطِ ابْنَتَيْ سَعْدِ التُّثْمَيْنِ وَأَعْطِ أُمَّهُمَا التُّمْنَ وَمَا بَقِيَ فَهُوَ لَكَ قَالَ أَبُو عَيْسَى هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ

“The wife of Sa`d ibn al-Rabi` came to the Prophet and said, ‘Messenger of Allah. These two are the daughters of Sa`d b. Rabi`. Their father fought with

you at Uhud and was martyred there. Their uncle has taken away all that he left, sparing nothing for them. And I do not think they can get married unless they have some wealth." The Prophet told her: "Allah will judge in this affair." Accordingly, the verses concerning inheritance came down. The Prophet sent for their uncle and when he showed up he told him: "Hand over a third each to the two girls, an eighth to their mother and the rest is yours" (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

40. If they are two (following the *Sunnah*: Au.) or above two (following Qur'anic text here: Au.) then they will equally share two thirds of the property. The rest of the one third will be divided among other closely related persons (such as parents, husband or wife: *Ma'arif*). But if there are no such closely related people, then the rest will also be returned to them (Thanwi).

41. If the deceased left only one daughter, then she gets a half of the deceased person's property and the other half goes to other closely related persons. In the absence of the closely related the other half is also returned to her (Thanwi).

42. If the deceased leaves behind children as well as parents, then each of the parents gets one sixth of the property. The rest is divided among the wife (or husband) and children. In some cases, some wealth might still be left. If so, it will go to the father (who becomes an *'asabah*) - *Ma'arif*.

43. If the deceased leaves behind no children, no wife (or husband), brothers or sisters, then the mother gets a third and the father the rest. However, if the deceased has left either a wife or a husband (but no children) then the wife or husband get their allotted share and the rest is divided among the parents: one-third to the mother, two-thirds to the father (Thanwi, *Ma'arif*).

44. If the deceased left no children but had brothers and sisters (whether from the same father and mother, or from the same father but different mothers), then the mother will get a sixth, and the father the rest (Thanwi), but that on the condition that the brothers and sisters are more than one in number (*Ma'arif*). That is, if the deceased had only one brother or sister then the mother gets one-third and the father the rest (Au.).

Obviously, in this case, since the

brothers and sisters of the deceased are under the care of their father, he gets a larger share of the wealth left, which again returns to his children with his own death (Au.).

45. If the deceased bequeaths more than one third of his wealth, it will not be acted upon. It will be accepted only for one-third (*Ma`arif*).

46. `Ali ibn abi Talib and Mujahid have said that although bequest has been given precedence over debt in order of mention, it is debt which will be paid off first and earlier to acting on the bequest. This was the practice of the Prophet. That is, if nothing is left after clearing the debts then there will be no acting on the bequest and no division among the heirs (Ibn Jarir).

`Ali's statement is in Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, and is fairly reliable (Ibn Kathir).

Sayyid writes: The importance of paying back people's debts can be gauged from the following:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي قَتَادَةَ عَنْ أَبِي قَتَادَةَ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَهُ يُحَدِّثُ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَامَ فِيهِمْ فَذَكَرَ لَهُمْ أَنَّ الْجِهَادَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْإِيمَانَ بِاللَّهِ أَفْضَلُ الْأَعْمَالِ فَقَامَ رَجُلٌ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ قُتِلْتُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ تُكَفَّرُ عَنِّي خَطَايَايَ فَقَالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَعَمَّ إِنْ قُتِلْتَ فِي

سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْتَ صَابِرٌ مُحْتَسِبٌ مُقْبِلٌ غَيْرٌ مُدْبِرٌ ثُمَّ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَيْفَ قُلْتَ قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ قُتِلْتُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَتُكَفَّرُ عَنِّي خَطَايَايَ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَعَمَّ وَأَنْتَ صَابِرٌ مُحْتَسِبٌ مُقْبِلٌ غَيْرٌ مُدْبِرٌ إِلَّا الدَّيْنَ فَإِنَّ جِبْرِيْلَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ لِي ذَلِكَ. (مسلم)

Abu Qatadah (*ra*) says a man came to the Prophet and asked, "Messenger of Allah, do you think if I am killed in the way of Allah, would all my sins be expiated?" He replied, "Yes, on the condition that you stay firm (in the battle-field), are hopeful of rewards, are advancing, and not retreating." A little while later he asked: "What was it you asked?" The man repeated his question. The Prophet told him, "Yes, save for debts. Jibril came to me just now and added these words (to my previous answer)." The *hadith* is in Muslim, Tirmidhi and Nasa'i.

Abu Qatadah reports another *hadith* according to which the Prophet arrived (to attend the funeral of a man) but said:

(صلوا على صاحبكم . فإن عليه دينا) فقال أبو قتادة أنا أتكفل به . قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم (بالوفاء ؟) قال بالوفاء . فصلى عليه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

"Pray over your brother. (I shall

[12] And for you is one-half of what your wives leave, if they have no children.⁴⁸ But if they have children⁴⁹ then for you is a fourth of what they leave:⁵⁰ (but that only) after (the payment in accordance with) any bequest that she might have bequeathed, or debts. And for them (i.e., your wives) is a fourth of what you leave⁵¹ if you do not have children.⁵² But if you have children, then for them an eighth of what you leave,⁵³ after (execution of) any bequest that you might have bequeathed, or debts. But if a man or woman who is to be inherited were to have no one in the direct line,⁵⁴ but have a (half)⁵⁵-brother or a sister then to each of them a sixth.⁵⁶ But if they are more numerous than that, then they share among themselves one-third⁵⁷ (equally) after (execution of) any bequest that he might have bequeathed, or debts without a harm (through his bequest).⁵⁸ (This is) A commandment of Allah. Allah is All-knowing, All-clement.

[13] These are Allah's bounds. Whoever obeys Allah and His Prophet, He shall admit him into gardens underneath which rivers flow, dwelling in it forever. That is the great success.

وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوَصِّينَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ الثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُم مِّن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ تُوصُونَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ وَإِن كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورَثُ كَلَالَةً أَوْ امْرَأَةٌ وَلَهُ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ فَإِن كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِن ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاء فِي الثُّلُثِ مِّن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَى بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرِ مُضَارٍّ وَصِيَّةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ خَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَن يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾

not, since) he has left debts behind him.” Qatadah says, I said, “I shall pay for them, Messenger of God.” the Prophet said: “Is that a firm promise?” I said, “That’s a firm promise.” At that, the Prophet Prayed over him.”

47. Ibn `Abbas has said that this ‘being of benefit’ will be in the Hereaf-

ter, when it is the nearest of kin who will intercede for another. But Mujahid and Suddi have said that ‘being of benefit’ is in this world itself. Ibn Zayd has said that both have been included (Ibn Jarir).

48. The husband will get a half of what the wife leaves, if she has no children. The other half will go to

her parents, brothers and sisters (*Ma`arif*).

49. Whether such children are by the last husband, or a previous husband (Shabbir).

50. If the wife leaves behind children, whether by the present husband or from a previous one, he gets only a quarter and the rest goes to her parents and children (*Ma`arif*).

51. Majid observes: "In this point at least, the Qur'anic legislation is acknowledged to be 'in advance of not only the greater number of barbarous societies' but also 'the Bible.' For, it recognizes 'the right of a widow to inherit from her husband... The Bible was less kind to the widow. It does not place her among her husband's heirs. The Jewish widow was a charge on her children, or, if she had none, on her own family' (Lactourneau, *Evolution of Marriage*, pp. 259-260)."

52. Sa'id b. Mansur, Hakim and Bayhaqi have reported Ibn Mas'ud as saying that 'Umar was asked about a deceased who had left no children. He said his wife would get one fourth of the total, his mother one third of what was left, and the rest would go to his father (Shawkani).

53. Accordingly, the Prophet gave an eighth to Umm Kuhhah. From what remained he gave one half to the only son of the deceased, dividing the rest between the two daughters. He gave nothing to the cousins of the deceased who had originally taken away all of it forcing Umm Kuhhah to apply to the Prophet -Alusi, *Ma`arif*.

54. *Kalalah*: "Direct line" is the literal meaning of the word. It is reported that Abu Bakr said: "I interpret *Kalalah* as a (male or female: Au.) who has no parents, no grandparents and no children. If I am right in my interpretation, it is from Allah, but if wrong, it is from Satan." Later, when 'Umar succeeded him he said, "I feel ashamed that I should oppose Abu Bakr." So he also interpreted the word as someone with no parents and no children. That is also the interpretation of Ibn 'Abbas, Sulaym b. 'Abd, Hakam, Ibn Zayd and Qatadah (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi). This is also the opinion of 'Ali, Ibn Mas'ud, Zayd ibn Thabit, Sha'bi, Nakha'i, Hasan, Jabir, and Zayd ibn al-Hakam. It is also the opinion of the seven jurists of Madinah, of the four *fugaha'*, and the great majority of the ancients and the moderns (Ibn Kathir).

Notwithstanding that, there are several other minority opinions about who a *Kalalah* is. But it might be noted that although there are several opinions about how a *Kalalah* is to be defined, and that even 'Umar was not sure who exactly a *Kalalah* was; in other words, of the several possible applications, which one is to be called *Kalalah* .. although that is true, but there is no difference in opinion that given a case, how inheritance should be divided. Many people who do not understand this point, imagine that the inheritance laws are unclear. They do not understand that it is only the term which is not clear as to whom it is applicable.

In simpler ones, the term *Kalalah* might be applicable to one or another of those mentioned, but how the wealth is to be divided, is a thing agreed. One might see "*Fat-h al-Mulhim*" of Shabbir Ahmad 'Uthmani for clarifications (Au.).

55. The following might be kept in mind as a general rule: So long as a father or a son of the deceased is alive, brothers or sisters, (real, consanguine or half), do not have any share in the inheritance. It is only in the absence of the father or son that the brothers and sisters of the deceased become eligible. Now, brothers and sisters are

of three kinds: i) Real, (*'ayni*: common father and mother); ii) Consanguine (*'allati*: common father); and iii) Half, or Uterine (*akhyafi*: common mother). By common consensus this verse is speaking of the last type. And the rule is that so long as the *'ayni* or *'allati* brothers or sisters are alive the *'akhyafi* will get nothing. Again, while deciding a share, it is the *'ayni* who get preference, then come the *'allati*. The share of the full and consanguine brothers and sisters has been defined at the end of the *Surah* (Shabbir).

56. If a person dies having left neither parents, grandparents nor children, but a brother or sister from the same mother, then whether it is one sister or one brother they will get a sixth. That is, if it is a brother he will get one sixth alone (and not one third). This is by consensus of the jurists of all times. Further, that the brother or sister has to be of the same mother is also by consensus of the scholars. The proof of this is in the verse about inheritance that will come at the end of the *Surah*, where it is speaking of the share of the real and consanguine brothers and sisters (*Ma'arif*).

Qurtubi has stated that there is no other case in the law of inheritance of the males and females getting

[14] (As against that) whoever disobeys Allah and His prophet, and transgresses His limits, He will usher him into a Fire in which he shall dwell forever and shall face a humiliating chastisement (there).⁵⁹

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

equal share and not the usual 2:1.

57. If the brothers and sisters are more than one, then they will equally share in one third. The rest will go to the husband or wife. If they are absent then the rest will also be returned to the brothers and sisters. In this specific case also the usual rule of 2:1 will not be observed, rather the available amount will be divided equally among the males and the females (Thanwi).

58. Ibn 'Abbas has said that it is a major sin to try and harm an inheritor through a will. It is said that when Masruq visited a man who was in his death bed and making a will, he told him: "Be just, and do not be misguided" (Ibn Jarir).

59. Appearing as these words do, do they imply that he who did not obey Allah and His Prophet in matters of division of inheritance stands condemned to everlasting punishment in Hell-fire? The answer is yes, if such disobedience is out of belief

that Allah was not just in His division (Ibn Jarir).

Legal Points:

- 1. The law of inheritance is not applicable to Prophets. Abu Bakr has related a *hadith* to this effect. Hence, what the Prophet left of the orchard at *Fadak* was not divided among his heirs (Razi, Thanwi); which is a point of contention of the Shi'ah against the Sunnis (Au.).
- 2. There are three kinds of heirs. The *As-hab 'l-Fara'id*, the *'Asabat*, and the *Dhu 'l-Arham*. The *As-hab 'l-Fara'id* have the first right to inheritance. After they have received their share, the remaining is divided among the *'Asabat*. If there is no one from among the *'Asabat*, then the share is returned to the *As-hab 'l-Fara'id*. And, if both the *As-hab 'l-Fara'id* and *'Asabat* are absent, then the wealth is divided among the *Dhu 'l-Arham*. Details should be seen in *Fiqh* books (Shabbir, *Ma'arif*).
- 3. Sometimes a person can

both be of the *As-hab 'l-Fara'id* as well as one of the *'Asabat* (and might receive two shares: *Ma'arif*). The *As-hab 'l-Fara'id* are five: i) Children (real brothers and sisters), ii) parents (father and mother), iii) husband, iv) wife, v) consanguine brothers and sisters (of common father) - Shabbir.

- 4. Some *fiqh* books state the combined figure of 17 as the *As-hab 'al-Fara'id* and *'Asabat*, (since one can be both in certain situations), as follows: i) son, ii) son of son how low so ever, iii) father, iv) grandfather how high so ever, v) brother, vi) son of the brother, vii) uncle or brother of the father, viii) son of such an uncle, ix) husband, x) master who freed his slave, xi) daughter, xii) daughter of the son of the deceased, xiii) mother, xiv) grandmother from both sides, xv) sister: full, consanguine or uterine, xvi) wife, and xvii) freed slave girl. (Doi and Ahmad 'Isa in *Fiqh al-Muyassar*)

- 5. *Dhu 'l-Arham* would include daughter's children, sister's children, aunts (from both sides), uncles from the mother's side and others (*Ma'arif*).

- 6. The law of inheritance will apply to all kinds of property, movable or immovable, cash, shares or any other, including personal belong-

ings, to the last item, unless otherwise agreed to by common consent.

- 7. Age is no bar to inheritance.

- 8. Unborn child has also a share. Therefore it is desirable that the division be postponed until birth (*Ma'arif*).

- 9. A divorced woman, but still in *'iddah* (waiting period) also deserves her share. But if a woman has claimed separation (*khul'*) then she will not get a share even if she is in *'iddah* (*Ma'arif*). Obviously, a separated husband has no right in the property of his former wife (Au.).

- 10. An unbeliever cannot inherit a believer nor can a believer inherit an unbeliever.

- 11. If a man leaves behind more than one wife, then the share stated by the Qur'an will be divided equally among them (*Ma'arif*). That is., if one would have got one third, then the two will get one sixth each (Au.).

- 12. A murderer by intent will get no share from his victim.

- 13. Apart from the very basic needs of a coffin, nothing more can be spent on the funeral etc., from the wealth of the deceased before di-

vision. The prohibition would also include the meal etc. offered to the condolence visitors. Any expending from the wealth of the deceased needs the approval of all the inheritors, except the non-adults from whose share nothing can be taken until they achieve maturity and give their consent. It is reported that a scholar visited a dying man. The man died even as he was there. As soon as he was dead, he put off the lamp and offered his own money for buying another. When asked, he explained that the lamp belonged to the deceased, and after his death to the heirs. It could not be used without their permission (*Ma`arif*).

- 14. *Mahar* (dower) is also considered as debt if unpaid. It will have to be given away before execution of the will, and hence before any division. In fact, if the payment of dower consumes all that was left then no division will take place (*Ma`arif*).

- 15. Bequest in favour of someone who is a legal heir is inadmissible and will be ignored. A *hadith* in Abu Da'ud explicitly states this. However, if all the adult inheritors agree to an increase of the share of

anyone among themselves following a bequest, or otherwise, then that is allowable. But the share of the minors cannot be reduced (*Ma`arif*).

- 16. All points stated by Alusi, Thanwi, Shabbir and *Ma`arif* reflect, unless mentioned otherwise, the Hanafiyy viewpoint.

- 17. The notes herewith are only to afford the reader a sketchy idea of the Islamic law of inheritance. A simple chart below (one of 20 that could be presented) might offer some more help. For further information the reader might consult "*Shari`ah the Islamic Law*" by Abdur Rahman I. Doi, or *Fiqh* books. All the same, it is a fairly complicated subject, mastered, during the time of the Companions by four: `Ali, Ibn `Abbas, Ibn Mas`ud and Zayd. Today also only a few scholars gain expertise in it. Therefore, no one should attempt to divide inheritance in the light of what is stated here. That should only be undertaken by an expert (Au.).

Note that the chart below follows the Hanafiyy Law:

Name of the heir whose share is to be determined	Quantity of share	Conditions under which the particular share is due
Husband	1 / 2	When the deceased leaves no children
Wife	1 / 4	- do -
Husband	1 / 4	When the deceased leaves children
Wife	1 / 8	- do -
Daughter	1 / 2	When the deceased leaves a single daughter and no son
Daughters	2 / 3	Shared equally when the deceased leaves two or more daughters but no son
Father	1 / 6	When the deceased leaves children
Mother	1 / 6	When the deceased leaves children
Grandfather	1 / 6	When the deceased leaves children but no father
Grandmother	1 / 6	When the deceased does not leave mother.

[15] Such of your women⁶⁰ as commit⁶¹ an indecency⁶² let four of you testify against them.⁶³ If they do testify then detain them in the homes until death overtakes them⁶⁴ or Allah appoints for them a way.⁶⁵

وَاللَّاتِي يَأْتِينَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ فَاسْتَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّى يَتَوَفَّاهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا

﴿١٥﴾

60. After Allah had demonstrated His kindness to women in the previous verses, He came down hard upon (the morally corrupt ones of) them in these verses so that they might not imagine that their waywardness will be tolerated (Razi, Qurtubi, Shawkani).

61. A literal translation of *ya'tina l-fahishata* should be: "... (Such of the women who) go to indecency;" and the point in the choice of words, says Razi, suggests that indecencies are not easily available to women. They have to go looking for them.

62. According to Abu Muslim al-Asfahani, the allusion is to lesbians (Razi).

But there is no consensus of opinion over this issue (Au.).

63. (The four witnesses should) be males, adults (not children), free men (not slaves), of sound mind ... Muslims not infidels .. (whose testimony should be) ocular, not conjectural

known in modern legal phraseology as 'circumstantial.' Every possible safeguard is taken against hasty and false accusation (Majid).

Scholars have emphasized that for a testimony to be acceptable the witnesses must say that they saw the very act as clearly as a piston in a cylinder. Imām Abu Hanifah has added the condition that the husband cannot be one of the four witnesses (Qurtubi).

Zuhri has said that it has been the practice since the time of the Prophet and his two successors that women's testimony was not acceptable in cases involving a capital punishment (Manar).

Shafi` adds: It is said that as against the usual two in all other matters requiring witnesses, four are required as a sure evidence for adultery. It is perhaps because adultery requires two persons, and the capital punishment is executed on two, hence the

number of witnesses has been doubled.

64. The reference is to those women, married or otherwise, who commit adultery. At the time this verse was revealed the order was to detain them in their homes until death overtook them.

Thanwi states the Hanafiyy viewpoint that the rule regarding detaining such women retained in their homes stands abrogated.

65. The way shown later was the capital punishment prescribed in verse (24: 2) which said:

الرَّائِيَةَ وَالزَّانِيَةَ فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ

“The fornicatress and the fornicator, give them a hundred lashes each,” which was for the unmarried (*ghayr muhsan*) while it was stoning to death for the married (*muhsan*) - Ibn ‘Abbas, Mujahid, Qatadah, ‘Ata’, Ibn Zayd and Dahhak (Ibn Jarir).

Suddi has added that in case of adultery, the husband used to claim back his dower. But when punishment was prescribed by the Qur’an, he only got what was due to him by inheritance.

‘Ubadah b. Samit has reported:

عَنْ عُبَادَةَ بْنِ الصَّامِتِ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ إِذَا نَزَلَ عَلَيْهِ الْوَحْيُ كَرَبَ لَهُ وَتَرَبَّدَ وَجْهُهُ وَإِذَا سُرِّيَ عَنْهُ قَالَ حُدُّوا عَنِّي حُدُّوا عَنِّي ثَلَاثَ مَرَارٍ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِهِنَّ سَبِيلًا النَّيِّبَ بِالنَّيِّبِ وَالْبِكْرَ بِالْبِكْرِ النَّيِّبُ جَلْدُ مِائَةٍ وَالرَّجْمُ وَالْبِكْرُ جَلْدُ مِائَةٍ وَتَفِي سَنَةٍ

Whenever revelation descended on the Prophet he lowered his head, and so did his Companions. (On one occasion) he raised his head (after a revelation) and said: “Allah has shown a way for them: for the married with the married and the virgin with the virgin. As for the married, she should be given lashes and then stoned to death. As for the virgin she should be given lashes and then expelled” (Ibn Jarir). The *hadith* is in Musnad Ahmad and with some variations in Muslim and Abu Da’ud also (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

Thus, this *hadith* explained that it is speaking of the unmarried (Au.).

It is reported of ‘Umar (*ra*), in a *hadith* of Bukhari, that he said: “Surely, Allah commissioned the Prophet with the Truth, sending down a Book to him. There used to be verses in the revelation that ordered stoning to death. Accordingly, the Prophet stoned them to death and we do that after him. The com-

[16] As for the two of you⁶⁶ who commit it, punish them both.⁶⁷ If they repent and make amends, then leave them alone.⁶⁸ Surely, Allah is Oft-turning,⁶⁹ Most Merciful.

وَالَّذَانَ يَأْتِيَاهُمَا مِنْكُمْ فَاذُوهُمَا فَإِن تَابَا
وَأَصْلَحَا فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٦﴾

mandment for stoning to death, (in the original revelation), was in the Book of Allah, until its recitation, (and not the commandment itself), was abrogated. It is applicable to the married men and women” (Shafi’). Details will follow in *Surah al-Nur*.

However, Ibn Jarir adds, in practice the Prophet did not give the married lashes before stoning to death. (As in the case of Ma`iz Aslami and the Ghamidi woman: Ibn Kathir). As for expelling the criminal, it is for one year, with the differences in opinion whether a woman should be expelled or not (Qurtubi).

According to a *hadith* in Nasa’i’s (*Abwab Shurb al-Khamr*) `Umar expelled a man for drinking wine. In his anger the man went and joined the Romans, adopting their faith. `Umar then said: “I shall not expel anyone after this” (Au.).

66. There is some difference in opinion whether the two alluded to are: “two unmarried persons” (Suddi), “two men” (Mujahid), or “the pair, man and woman” (`Ata’, `Ikrimah

and Hasan al-Busri: Ibn Jarir). If it is “two men” then obviously the allusion is to sodomy, about which the Prophet has said:

”مَنْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ يَعْمَلُ عَمَلُ لُوطٍ فَاقْتُلُوا الْفَاعِلَ
وَالْمَفْعُولَ بِهِ“ (ابوداؤد, ترمذي, ابن ماجه)

“When you discover two people doing what the people of Lut used to do, kill them both: the active as well as the passive” (Ibn Kathir).

A man sodomizing his wife is also strictly prohibited. A *hadith* says:

لَا يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَى الرَّجُلِ يَأْتِي امْرَأَتَهُ فِي ذُبْرِهَا

“Allah will not look at a man who sodomized a woman” (Shafi’).

67. Accordingly, they used to be punished either with verbal insults, (Mujahid and Suddi) or physically assaulted (Ibn `Abbas), varying from person to person. However, according to the majority of the *Salaf*, this verse was also abrogated by the verse referred to above, i.e., 24: 2 (Ibn Jarir).

Nonetheless, according to many

[17] Surely Allah's turning is toward those⁷⁰ who commit evil in ignorance⁷¹ but repent soon after.⁷² It is toward such that Allah turns.⁷³ Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.

إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا



scholars of the later generation the verse under discussion is not abrogated (by 24: 2), since both the punishments of a minor and major kind followed by the capital punishment of stoning to death can be prescribed together to the same defaulter (Shawkani). However, detaining in the house stands abrogated by consensus (Qurtubi).

So far as combining the two punishments is concerned, we have the case of Shuraha al-Hamdaniyyah who was brought before `Ali. He ordered that she be given a hundred lashes and then stoned to death, saying: "I have lashed her following the Book of Allah and stoned her following the *Sunnah* of the Prophet." This is the position adopted by Hasan al-Busri and others (Qurtubi).

68. Accordingly, the Prophet said in a *hadith* of the *Sahihayn*:

إِذَا زَنَتْ أَمَةٌ أَحَدِكُمْ فَمَبْيُتَنَ زَنَاهَا فَلْيُجْلِدْهَا الْحَدَّ وَلَا يَمْرُؤَ عَلَيْهَا

"If one of your slave girls forni-

cates, give her lashes; but subsequent to that do not taunt her" (Ibn Kathir).

69. That is, Allah is oft-turning to His slaves with what they desire to receive from Him, if they are oft-turning to Him with what He demands of their obedience (Ibn Jarir).

Qurtubi remarks: As for the opinion that he who continued in sins after repentance, did not repent at all, well, it is the opinion of the *Mu`tazilah*. The *Ahl al-Sunnah* say that repetition does not nullify earlier repentance.

70. Majid writes: "Repentance has for its elements:-

- (i) enlightenment of the heart,
- (ii) detestation of the sin,
- (iii) a resolve to avoid it in future,
- (iv) an earnest crying for God's forgiveness."

Adds Shafi': Compensation for the

wrongful act is also an essential feature of repentance. If it is the missing of *salah*, or fasts, the repentant should repeat them. If the right of other human beings is involved, it should be restored, (such as, for instance, restoration of the money or article usurped: Au.)

71. Qatadah has said that the Companions were unanimous that every sin, whether intentional or unintentional, falls under *jahalalah* of the original here; and hence, many have said that so long as a man continues in his sin, he is a *jahil*, until he gives it up (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Razi writes: Yusuf had said (12: 33):

{ أَصْبُ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَأَكُنْ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ } [يوسف: ٣٣]

“(Lest) I should incline toward them and thus become of the jahilun.”

In the same chapter he said (verse 89):

{ هَلْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ يُّوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ إِذْ أَتَيْتُمْ جَاهِلُونَ } [يوسف: ٨٩]

“Do you realize what you did with Yusuf and his brother while you were jahilun?”

72. According to Ibn `Abbas, Dahhak, `Ikrimah, Ibn Zayd and others, the time limit of *min qaribin* is up to the moment of death. Once a man sees the angels of death, the time is

up. This is in view of the *hadith* of Abu Qilabah (in *Musnad Ahmad*: Ibn Kathir) who said:

وَعَزَّتْكَ لَا أَرَأَى أَعْوَيْهِمْ مَا دَامَتْ أَرْوَاحُهُمْ فِي أَجْسَادِهِمْ. فَقَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: وَعَزَّتْكَ وَجَلَالِي، لَا أَرَأَى أَعْفِرُ لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَعْفَرُونِي

“(When Allah cursed Iblis) he said, ‘By Your Greatness! I shall keep deviating them so long as their soul is in their body.’ Allah replied, ‘By My Greatness! I shall not cease forgiving them so long as they keep seeking My forgiveness.’”

Another *hadith* (of Ibn `Umar in Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah with the former declaring it *hasan gharib*: Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir) makes it all the more clear:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَقْبَلُ تَوْبَةَ الْعَبْدِ مَا لَمْ يَغْرَعِرْ

“Allah accepts the repentance of a slave until (he starts) gurgling (in the throat, near death)” - Ibn Jarir.

It is also true of nations. After they have seen irrefutable signs, their belief does not avail them, as said Allah in (6:158):

{ يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ تَفَسُّا إِيمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيمَانِهَا خَيْرًا } [الأنعام: ١٥٨]

“The day when some of the signs of

[18] Repentance is not of those who commit evils (upon evils)⁷⁴ until when death appears before one of them he cries out: 'Now I repent,' nor of those who die in the state of disbelief; for them We have prepared a painful chastisement.

وَلَيْسَتْ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْآنَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارًا أُولَٰئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٨﴾

your Lord appear, the belief of a soul that had not believed earlier, or had not earned a good deed in its faith, will be of no avail to it" (Ibn Kathir).

Thanwi remarks: There are two states before death. One in which a person feels - say in a sickness - that he might not recover, rather might die soon. This is known as the moment of *ya's*. Repentance at this stage, whether from sins, or from *Kufr* itself, is acceptable. Another is that state in which the Hereafter begins to (in the words of Majid) unfold itself before him. This is termed as the moment of *ba's*. At this stage repentance of no kind is acceptable.

In other words nearness of death is no bar to acceptance of repentance. It is the observation of clear signs of death which makes it unacceptable (Razi).

That said, says Rashid Rida in *Manar*,

how many people have not been misled to believe that they would repent before death, but despite prolonged lives, death did not give them that opportunity.

73. The meaning of Allah turning to them is that He guides them to good deeds and accepts their turning to Him (when they repent) - Ibn Jarir.

74. It is not necessary that those alone are the subjects of this verse who commit sins upon sins. Rather, if one commits a single sin, but does not repent, he is equally counted as one of those who insist on the sin (*israr*). As to the question about someone who did not repent his sins, or did so only in moments of *ba's*, will he be forgiven in the Hereafter? The answer is that it will entirely depend upon Allah's mercy (Thanwi).

75. The kurhan of the original can

[19] Believers, it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will,⁷⁵ nor should you hinder them (from re-marrying) in order to take away a part of what you (or your relatives) have given them,⁷⁶ unless they commit a flagrant indecency;⁷⁷ (otherwise) treat them fairly.⁷⁸ For if you dislike (one of) them then it might be that you dislike a thing but Allah has placed a lot of good in it.⁷⁹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا
النِّسَاءَ كَرْهًا وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ
مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ
وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ
فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ
خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾

also be understood as “forcibly.” Further, it is not the inheriting “from women” that is the subject of the verse, as a contemporary commentator has thought. Rather, it is inheriting “them” (Au.).

In the days of Ignorance, (especially in Madinah), the nearest of kin used to get the deceased man’s wife as inheritance. He - a brother-in-law, a son, or a relative - claimed her as his, by simply throwing a piece of cloth over her head as soon as her husband died (Razi), declaring her his property. Thereafter he treated her as he wished, letting her marry a second time or detaining her for life, in order to inherit her wealth, or alternatively, she released herself by paying him some money. The case of Kubaysha bint Ma`mar, whose husband Abu Qays b. al-Aslat had died, and who was being claimed by her son, was brought to the notice of the Prophet.

Allah revealed this verse: Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah, Dahhak, Ibn Zayd, Hasan al-Busri (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Shawkani). Ibn `Abbas’s opinion is in Bukhari, Abu Da`ud, Nasa’i and others (Ibn Kathir).

(The report of Kubaysha is in Nasa’i, Ibn abi Hatim and others: Shawkani; as well as in Ibn Marduwayh: Ibn Kathir).

Majid notes: “Even in Greco-Roman civilization, the married woman at Athens ‘was part of the paternal patrimony,’ and ‘the dying husband could leave her by will to a friend, with his goods and by the same title’ (Letourneau, *Evolution of Marriage*, p. 261). ‘The widows ... were regarded as part of the estate, and as such passed ordinarily into the hands of their husbands’ heirs’ (Roberts, *Social Laws of the Quran*, pp. 62-63) ... One verse of the Qur`an was sufficient, as by one stroke, to sweep

aside all such barbaric customs - a reform of truly revolutionary nature.”

76. This part of the verse is addressing the Muslims. They are being told that they ought not to make the lives of their wives miserable in order to force them to relinquish a part of their dower or return the articles gifted to them, to free themselves. This is the opinion of Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah, Sa`id, Suddi, Dahhak and others (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

77. That is, if a woman commits a grave indecency then it is permissible for the husband to claim a part or whole of the dower and release her (Ibn Jarir).

A husband can resort to this despite the wife's unwillingness and hence the addition of the word *kurhan* to the original (Qurtubi).

As for the term *fahisha*, it has been variously understood. Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Dahhak, and `Ata' have said that if a woman detests her husband, or disobeys him, he can claim back the dower. But Suddi and Hasan al-Busri have said that by *fahisha* the allusion is to adultery (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

In this connection we have a *hadith* of the Prophet which says:

اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِي النِّسَاءِ فَإِنَّكُمْ أَخَذْتُمُوهُنَّ بِأَمَانَةِ اللَّهِ
وَاسْتَحْلَلْتُمْ فُرُوجَهُنَّ بِكَلِمَةِ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ
أَنْ لَا يُوطِئَنَّ فُرُوشَكُمْ أَحَدًا تَكْرَهُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ فَعَلْنَ
فَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ضَرْبًا غَيْرَ مُبْسِحٍ وَهُنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ رِزْقُهُنَّ
وَكَسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

“Fear Allah with respect to women, for, you take them as a trust of Allah, making them lawful unto yourselves by a word of Allah. It is your right that they do not allow anyone to enter your house someone you do not approve of. (According to another version: ‘They do not disobey you in generally recognized affairs of importance: *al-ma`ruf*). If they do that then beat them - lightly. And it is their right upon you that you feed and clothe them in an equitable manner” (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Sirin has said that the allegation of adultery has to be well proved for the husband to seek *khul`* on that basis (*Kashshaf*).

78. The Prophet (*saws*) has said:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي

“The best of you are those who are best with their wives, and I’m the best of you in treating my women-folk.” The Prophet himself used to treat his wives well. He even raced

[20] Further, if you wish to take a wife in place of another and you have given one of them a heap (of wealth),⁸⁰ do not take back any of it. Will you take it by way of false slander⁸¹ and manifest sin?⁸²

وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَآتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ بُهْتَانًا وَإِنَّمَا مُبِينًا ﴿٢٠﴾

with `A'isha in the field, once losing to her and, in a re-try after a spell, winning. At times he and his wives gathered in someone's house and shared a dinner together. Then they would depart and he would spend some time conversing with the wife he was to spend the night with before going to bed (Ibn Kathir).

Also see note 3 of this *Surah*.

79. The allusion is to personal reasons of dislike (and not moral) - *Kashshaf*. Accordingly, a well known scholar, Abu Muhammad ibn abi Zayd, had a wife who used to mistreat him awfully but he would not divorce her saying: "I am someone on whom Allah has showered His mercy in a variety of ways. Now it is possible that Allah is punishing me at her hand because of some of my sins. If that is so then I am afraid other forms of punishment will descend on me if I divorced her" (Qurtubi).

80. Thus the verse sets no upward limit to the amount of dower (Au.).

The incident of `Umar is well known in this connection. He was once delivering a sermon on the dangers of high dower and recommending that the amount be limited to 400 Dirhams, when an old woman got up and told him: "Fear Allah `Umar. He has said: 'Even if you have given them a heap (of wealth).'" `Umar retracted his words hastily, saying: "Everyone seems to know better than `Umar." (According to other versions: "If not for this old woman, `Umar would have been destroyed": au.) - *Kashshaf*, Razi, Qurtubi and Ibn Kathir. Shawkani takes it from Suyuti who has said that the report is of good isnad.

The Arabic version is as follows:

وروي " أن عمر خطب ناهيا عن المغالاة في الصداق زيادة على أربعمائة فقالت امرأة من قريش أما سمعت الله تعالى يقول وآتيتهم إحداهن قنطارا فقال عمر كل أحد أعلم وأفقه من عمر "

81. Thanwi has pointed out that to demand from a woman monetary compensation for separation, is itself a slander. Even if she is innocent,

[21] How can you take it when each of you has been in privy with the other,⁸³ and when they have taken from you a solemn compact?⁸⁴

وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا ﴿٢١﴾

[22] And marry not those of the women whom your fathers (or grandfathers) took in marriage,⁸⁵ except for what happened in the past. That surely was an indecency, a hateful thing,⁸⁶ and an evil way.⁸⁷

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٢﴾

people around would think that there must be something fishy for the husband to demand a sum for her release.

cret? (Zamakhshari).

82. In pre-Islamic times when husbands wanted to get rid of a wife and at the same time make some money out of the affair, they falsely alleged that their wives had been unfaithful. So they sent them away on false charges and impounded their dower also (Razi in effect).

84. The solemn compact has been explained by Qatadah, Dahhak, Suddi and Muhammad b. Sirin as the conditions stated in verse (2: 229):

فَإِنْسَاكُ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٍ بِإِحْسَانٍ [البقرة : ٢٢٩]

“Honorable retention or release with kindness,” understood at the time of betrothal. But Mujahid, Muhammad b. Ka`b and Ibn Zayd have said that it is marriage itself which is the solemn compact (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

83. Technically, if the pair have been alone in a room together for a while, then that is being in privy, whether they went any further or not. Abu Hanifah has said that with that full dower upon the man and the waiting period for the woman become obligatory, although other scholars have modified opinions (Qurtubi).

The promise made by a man that he will pay the dower is also a solemn pact made at the time of the marriage (Thanwi).

It is said that the companionship of anyone for 20 days converts him to a relative. What about one’s spouse from whom nothing is held in se-

85. Ibn `Abbas has said that the pre-Islamic Arabs used to marry their fathers’ wives (though not real mothers: Au.) and keep in their marriage two real sisters at a time. Allah prohibited the practice by this verse.

Ibn `Abbas has also added that by this dictum such a woman is also prohibited whom one's father or son married, whether they went in or not (Ibn Jarir).

The rule now is that if someone marries a wife of his father, he is to be killed and his wealth transferred to the public treasury, as says a report (in Ahmad) of Bara' b. `Azib who says his uncle was sent by the Prophet (*saws*) to behead a man who had married his father's wife, and to confiscate his wealth (Ibn Kathir). This *sahih* report is in Ahmad, Ibn Majah, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud and others (S. Ibrahim).

The Arabic version is as follows:

عَنِ الْبَرَاءِ قَالَ لَقِيتُ حَالِي وَمَعَهُ الرَّايَةُ فُكُلْتُ أَيَّن
تُرِيدُ قَالَ بَعَثَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى
رَجُلٍ تَزَوَّجَ امْرَأَةً أَبِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَنْ أَضْرِبَ عُنُقَهُ أَوْ
أَقْتُلُهُ وَأَلْحَدَ مَالَهُ

Imām Abu Hanifah has said that even that woman is prohibited to a son who ever had an affair with his father (Razi, Thanwi).

86. The word in the original is *maqt*. Literally it is used for a hateful thing. Marriage to the father's wives in pre-Islamic times was also called marriage of *maqt* (*Kashshaf*).

87. Imām Razi says that there are

three kinds of "the despicable:" first, declared so by reason, second, declared so by Revelations and third, that which is treated so by the common people. The word "indecency" (*fabisha*) alludes to the first kind, the words "a hateful thing" (*maqt*) alludes to the second kind and the words "an evil way" (*saa'a sabila*) alludes to the third kind.

Legal Points

- 1. Only an Islamic state can prescribe the capital punishment of death. Individuals or communities cannot (Thanwi).
 - 2. Regarding the husband demanding the return of the dower from his adulteress wife, that was the rule in the beginning of Islam. The rule now (according to the Hanafiyyah: Au.) is that dower is due to the adulteress wife also (even if the crime is proved: Au.) - Thanwi.
 - 3. A husband can only claim back a part or whole of his dower if the wife is recalcitrant. However, if he disapproves her for some other reason, then he cannot impose such conditions for separation (Thanwi).
88. That is, forbidden in marriage.
- "... Marriage with them would be not only sinful but also illegal - null

[23] Forbidden unto you⁸⁸ are your mothers,⁸⁹ daughters,⁹⁰ sisters,⁹¹ paternal aunts,⁹² maternal aunts,⁹³ brother's daughters, sister's daughters, foster mothers who gave you suck, foster sisters by the suck,⁹⁴ your mothers in law,⁹⁵ step daughters who are in your care⁹⁶ - of those women with whom you have consummated the marriage,⁹⁷ however, if you have not consummated the marriage, then there is no harm,⁹⁸ - wives of those of your sons who are of your loins,⁹⁹ and that you should bring together (in wedlock) two sisters,¹⁰⁰ save for what is of the past. Surely Allah is All-forgiving, All-merciful.

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخْوَاتُكُمْ وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ اللَّائِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخْوَاتُكُم مِّنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبَائِكُمُ اللَّائِي فِي حُجُورِكُم مِّن نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّائِي دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَخَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ وَأَن تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾

and void ab initio - creating in fact, as in law, no civil rights and obligations whatsoever (Majid).

89. Also included are grand mothers and above, how so high, of all kinds, real, consanguine or uterine, both from the mother's side as well as the father's (Shawkani, Thanwi).

90. Also included are grand daughters and below how so low (Shawkani). As for a daughter born out of adultery, except for Imām Shafe`i, the rest of the three *fuqaha`* are of the opinion that she is also as unlawful as a legal daughter is (Ibn Kathir).

91. Also included are sisters by the father or mother (Shawkani).

92. It is also unlawful - in view of a

hadith reported by Ibn `Abbas - for a man to keep together in wedlock a woman and her aunt - maternal or paternal, real, consanguine or uterine (Qurtubi, Shawkani, Shafi`).

93. Such are four in total: father's sisters, his brother's wives, mother's sisters and her brother's wives (Shawkani).

94. "Whether it is their mothers who have suckled you or it is your mothers who have suckled them" (Majid).

A *hadith* in the *Sahihayn* reports `A'isha (*ra*) as saying that the Prophet said:

“يَحْرُمُ مِنَ الرِّضَاعَةِ مَا يَحْرُمُ مِنَ النَّسَبِ”

“Fostering makes unlawful what descent would make unlawful”

(*Kashshaf*, Ibn Kathir).

That is, foster mother, grand mother, daughter, an aunt, and all others are as unlawful to the fostered person as his real mother, daughter and others stated herewith, except for two:

1. A man cannot marry his brother's sister by descent (if the brother is by the same father but by another mother: Au.) but he can marry a brother's sister by fosterage (if the brother is by the same foster father but by another mother: Au.), since, the barrier in case of descent is the father's sexual intercourse with his mother.

2. He cannot marry his brother's mother by descent (if the brother is by the same father but another mother: Au.), but he can marry a brother's mother by fosterage (if the brother is by the same foster father but by another mother: Au.), since, in descent the barrier was his father's sexual intercourse with his foster brother's mother (*Kashshaf*).

However, according to a *hadith* quoted by `A'isha in Muslim,

لا تحرم المصّة و المصتان

“It is not one or two gulps (or sucks) that turn a woman into a foster mother.”

It is five gulps (or sucks) that make a woman foster mother. The Prophet (*saws*) had ordered Sahlah bint Suhayl to give Salem five sucks in order that he could freely enter her house. Further, the great majority of the jurists are of the opinion that fostering is considered fostering proper, only before a child is 2 years or less of age; but after that no (Ibn Kathir). See *Al-Baqarah* verse 233 for more details (Au.).

95. Some women become permanently unlawful due to a marriage, such as, for example, a mother in law. But others are unlawful only so long as one is married to a woman, such as her sisters, aunts, nieces, etc. These become lawful with the death or divorce of the wife (Shabbir).

96. There are differences in opinion over the exact implication of the words: “*in your care*.” One opinion is that these words do not lay a condition, rather, have been added following the general practice, in vogue at that time, of taking step-daughters in one's care after marrying her mother (accordingly, every step-daughter is prohibited regardless of whether she is in one's care or not: Au.) - Razi.

While it is not uncommon at all in the West for parents to have sex with their step sons or daughters, cases are

reported of even real daughters been molested by their fathers. When a case was brought up before the law court in southern Italy, of a man who had been molesting his several legal daughters, the defence lawyer argued that it was a common practice in the social milieu of the accused, and hence not a crime. Recently an American Senator described to a hushed full House how her father sexually molested her in her youth (Au.).

97. Therefore, if a man marries a woman and divorces her before the marriage is consummated, it is lawful for him to marry her daughter. In other words, merely a marriage contract with a woman does not make her daughter unlawful. It is, according to some, consummation that makes her unlawful, while, according to others, it is privy in which the man uncovers the woman, even if intercourse does not take place, that affects it (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Imām Malik, Abu Hanifah, Awza'i and Al-Layth have said that even if the man touches a woman with lust, her daughter is prohibited to him. But other scholars have expressed slightly different opinions

(Shawkani).

98. In contrast, there is difference of opinion among the Companions, over those mothers whose daughters have been wedded but consummation did not take place, whether they are equally unlawful. According to the great majority, the case is "unclear" and hence such alliances should be avoided (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

99. Accordingly, adopted son's wives are not prohibited (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

100. Hence, if a person embraces Islam and has two sisters as his wives, he will be required to divorce one as the Prophet ordered a Companion to do. The *hadith* is in Tirmidhi, of *hasan* status, as also in Abu Da'ud (Ibn Kathir).

Adds Shafi': The *fuqaha'* have laid down a formula viz., every such two women are unlawful to a man to keep together in wedlock, where, if one of them were to be a male, he would be prohibited from marrying the other.

101. The term "*muhsanah*" signifies literally "a woman who is fortified [against unchastity]", and carries

[24] Also (forbidden unto you are) women who are (already) married,¹⁰¹ save for what your right hands possess.¹⁰² (Such is) Allah's legislation for you. However, lawful unto you are all (other categories) beyond those (mentioned herewith) - that you might aim with your wealth honest wedlock, and not debauchery. Therefore, such of them as you enjoy thereby, hand them over their marriage portion as a duty.¹⁰³ And there is no sin upon you in agreeing together (with your spouses), after the dower (was settled).¹⁰⁴ Surely Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ
 أَيْمَانُكُمْ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأُحِلَّ لَكُمْ مَا
 وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ
 غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ
 فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ
 فِيهَا تَرَاضِيئُكُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
 كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٢٤﴾

three senses: (1) "a married woman", (2) "a chaste woman", and (3) "a free woman" (Asad).

Occurring as it does, there have been several interpretations of the word. The majority opinion is that those Muslim women are meant who are already married to someone (Au.).

Majid adds: "This repudiates extreme communist doctrine that, within the community, every woman may be the wife of every man, and any man could cohabit with any woman, as also the custom in many savage tribes of lending and exchanging wives. 'The custom of lending wives is wellnigh universal among savages.' (ERE, I, p. 125)".

The use of the word "savages" by the Encyclopaedia is ironic, for in many

parts of the civilized world today, such practices are not as scarce as one would imagine (Au.).

102. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri has reported (in a *hadith* of Muslim, Abu Da'ud and Nasa'i: Ibn Kathir), that the Muslims took pagan women as prisoners in the battle of Awtas (Ghazwatu Hunayn: Au.). They were uncertain about those women being lawful to them. Allah revealed this verse. Thus sexual relationship with them was declared lawful on condition of completion of one menstrual cycle prior to intercourse (Ibn Jarir).

103. Ibn 'Abbas, Ubayy b. Ka'b, Sa'id b. Jubayr and Suddi have, on the basis of this verse, argued about the validity of *mut'ah* marriage. But the rest of the Companions were of the opinion that *mut'ah* marriage,

which was more than once made lawful and then declared unlawful during the life of the Prophet, is now invalid and unlawful. The consensus is based on a Qur'ānic verse as well as several *ahadīth*. The verse in question is (23: 5-6):

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِغُرُوبِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ (٥) إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ
أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ [المؤمنون
٥ : ٦]

“Those who guard their chastity, save against their wives or what their right hands own, such indeed are free of blame.”

One of the *ahadīth* is in the *Sahihayn* which reports `Ali as saying that,

عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَهَى عَنْ مُتْعَةِ النِّسَاءِ يَوْمَ حَيْبَرَ
وَعَنْ أَكْلِ لُحْمِ الْخُمُرِ الْإِنْسِيَّةِ.

“The Prophet forbade *mut`ah* marriage and meat of the domestic donkey on the day of Khyber campaign.”

Muslim has another *hadīth* which reports that on the day of the fall of Makkah the Prophet said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي قَدْ كُنْتُ إِذْنْتُ لَكُمْ فِي الْإِسْتِمْتَاعِ
مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ حَزَمَ ذَلِكَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
فَمَنْ كَانَ عِنْدَهُ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْءٌ فَلْيُخَلِّ سَبِيلَهُ وَلَا تَأْخُذُوا
بِمَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا

“People. I used to allow you

mut`ah marriage. But Allah has now made it unlawful until the Day of Judgment. Therefore, if there is anyone who has contracted such a marriage, let him terminate it. But do not take back whatever you have given them.”

Muslim has another report according to which *mut`ah* was declared unlawful during the Farewell Hajj (Ibn Kathir). The Arabic text is as follows:

عَنْ الرَّبِيعِ بْنِ سَبْرَةَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَهَى يَوْمَ الْفَتْحِ عَنْ مُتْعَةِ النِّسَاءِ.
صحيح مسلم

`Umar (*ra*) in fact is reported to have said:

لَا أُوتَى بِرَجُلٍ تَزَوَّجَ امْرَأَةً إِلَى أَجَلٍ إِلَّا رَجَمْتُهُ

“I shall not find a man contracting a *mut`ah* marriage but shall stone him to death.” (*Kashshaf*)

About Ibn `Abbas himself, it is reported that a little before his death he withdrew his opinion about the validity of *mut`ah* marriage when he came to know of the abrogating commandment (*Kashshaf*, Shawkani). Muslim's *hadīth* shows that it was `Ali who convinced him of the abrogation (Shafi').

Shafi' comments: Indeed, there is a

narration to this effect by no less a person than Ibn `Abbas himself in Tirmidhi. It goes like this: "Ibn `Abbas said,

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ إِنَّمَا كَانَتْ الْمُتْعَةُ فِي أَوَّلِ الْإِسْلَامِ
كَانَ الرَّجُلُ يَتَقَدَّمُ الْبَلَدَةَ لَيْسَ لَهُ بِهَا مَعْرِفَةٌ فَيَسْتَرْجِعُ
الْمَرْأَةَ بِقَدْرِ مَا يَرَى أَنَّهُ يُقِيمُ فَتَحْفَظُ لَهُ مَتَاعَهُ وَتُصَلِّحُ
لَهُ شَيْئُهُ حَتَّى إِذَا تَرَكَتْ الْآيَةَ إِلَّا عَلَى أَرْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ
مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانَهُمْ قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ فَكُلُّ فَتْحٍ سِوَى
هَذَيْنِ فَهُوَ حَرَامٌ

Muta`ah was lawful in early days of Islam when a man came to a place where he knew no one and so he would marry a woman for the period of his stay so that she could look after his things and attend to some of his affairs, until the verse came down (23: 5-6): "... *Save with their spouses and what their right hands possess.*" Ibn `Abbas then added, "Therefore all kind of sex save with these two categories is forbidden."

Mufti Shafi` also writes: As the *mut`ah* marriage, in which one marries for a short while by paying a price and spelling out the term "*mut`ah*", any temporary marriage is also unlawful, in which a period is specified (even if of several years: Au.) after which the pair would part company.

Misyar marriage comes close to the above, and it is prohibited by consensus. In our own times, some *Fuqaha`* allowed a certain kind of Misyar marriage on certain conditions, but they were widely criticized and so they withdrew the permission (Au.).

104. That is, there is no sin upon either of the two, husband and wife, if after marriage they agree upon either increase or decrease in the dower amount, or on deferring its payment, or the wife forgiving it altogether (Ibn Jarir).

[25] Any of you who has not the means to marry believing free women, (may marry) those of the believing slave-girls¹⁰⁵ that your right hands possess.¹⁰⁶ Allah is aware of your faith, some of you are of the others. So marry them with the leave of their masters and hand them over their marriage portion honorably, (seeking them in), wedlock, neither open debauchery nor secret sexual promiscuity.¹⁰⁷ Then, after the wedlock,¹⁰⁸ if they commit an indecency (i.e., adultery) then prescribed for them, as punishment, is half of what is (stipulated) for free women.¹⁰⁹ This is for those of you who fear (falling into) sin.¹¹⁰ But, were you to observe self-restraint, (and avoid marrying them) then, that would be better for you.¹¹¹ Surely Allah is All-forgiving, All-merciful.

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكَحِ
الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنْ فِتْيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ
بِإِيمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَانْكِحُوهُنَّ
بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرِ مُسَافِحَاتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ
أَحْدَانٍ فَإِذَا أُحْصِيَ فَإِنْ أَتَيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ
فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ
الْعَذَابِ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ حَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ
وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ
﴿٢٥﴾

[26] Allah desires to make clear to you and guide you along the paths of those who have gone before you, and to turn toward you (in mercy); Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

[27] And Allah desires to turn toward you while those who follow their lust, desire that you swerve away wholly.

وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ
يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا
﴿٢٧﴾

105. Majid states: "A bondwoman at the time of her capture must be an unbeliever. 'Though the creation of the status of slavery is a public right, once it has been brought about, it becomes transmitted into a private right in the nature of property. Hence though a Muslim cannot be made a slave, yet if an infidel becomes Muslim, he still remains a slave, for oth-

erwise the proprietary rights of the master would be affected'" (Abdur Rahim).

Mawdudi comments: Many misunderstandings seem to persist about the right to have sexual relations with one's slave-girls. It is pertinent to call attention to the following regulations of Islam:

(1) Islam does not permit soldiers of the Islamic army to have sexual relations with women they capture in war. Islamic Law requires that such women should first be handed over to the government which then has the right to decide what should be done with them. It may either set them free unconditionally, release them on payment of ransom, exchange them for Muslim prisoners of war held by the enemy or distribute them among the soldiers. A soldier may have sexual relations only with that woman who has been entrusted to him by the government.

(2) Even then, he may not have sexual relations with her until at least one menstrual period has expired: this in order to establish that she is not already pregnant.

(3) Only that person to whom a female captive has been entrusted has the right to have sexual relations with her. ... Moreover, once such a woman has given birth to a child she may not be sold to anyone, and on the death of her master she automatically becomes a free person.

(4) If a master allows the woman to marry someone else he ceases to have the right to sexual relations with her but retains the right to have her serve him in other ways.

(5) Although the Law has fixed the maximum number of wives at four, it has set no limit with regard to the slave-girls. The Law does not lay down a limit in order to encourage people to accumulate huge armies of slave-girls, and thereby turn their homes into dens of sexual enjoyment. Rather, the Law does not define the limit because the effects of war and the total number of female captives that would have to be disposed of after a certain war are unpredictable" (abridged).

There are one or two other points that are lost sight of when discussions about slave-girls take place. One of them is the fact that it is not the aristocratic ladies who were taken captives in wars who shudder at the idea and have a repulsive feeling for a religion that allows it. The rules of war in those days were well known and respectable ladies stayed away from the battlefields, never participating in any activity of war. In fact, even the commoners of the female society stayed away. It was always the lowest of the low, the poorest of the poor, the unsupported of a male, that agreed to accompany men to the battle fields. (This could be a reason why, perhaps, Islam disapproved of Muslims marrying slave-girls). In fact, most women who went into the

battle-fields could already be slaves, to whom the prospect of a change of masters would not sound dreadful at all. In some cases it could even be welcome. The oppressed ones among them could even be trying to "fall" into enemy hands so they could get rid of their tyrannical masters. And, if the enemy lands happened to be richer, its people generally more affluent, and, additionally, more civilized, then surely slave-girls would be more than willing to fall into enemy hands. As for sexual relations with their masters, little difference it would make to them. Did they not have sexual relation with their past masters? Were they not sent by their masters to visiting friends for their gratification?

Again, the fact should be kept in sight that the whole affair - of Muslim masters having sex with their slave-girls - has a human dimension to it. It is not possible that a man has prolonged sexual relations with a woman, exclusively his, and he does not find softness for her creeping in his heart. And, if the slave-girl happened to adjust herself quickly to the manners, etiquette and culture of her master, surely he would not find it easy to part company with her. If he sold her, it would be like giving away

a piece of his heart. Thus, by allowing masters to have sexual relations with their slave-girls, prohibiting all others to have similar relations with her, Islam took the lowest of the low - the side-walk and slum dwellers of non Muslim societies - and integrated them into a far more superior society, where they found not only a permanent shelter, two square meals a day, satisfaction of their sexual urges, but also some respect and a little love. There was some good reason why Islam spread so fast in its early days (Au.).

106. That is, such a man might marry Muslim slave-girls owned by others, and not - as goes the unanimous opinion - his own slave-girls since if he marries one of them the two rights - of a wife and of a slave-girl - will overlap and clash with each other (Shawkani).

However, if he does wish to marry his slave-girl, he should first free her and then marry her, if she would agree. The Prophet has encouraged that a man educate his slave-girl, free her and then marry her (Au.).

Shabbir writes: If a man has a free woman in marriage, it is unlawful for him by consensus of opinion that he marries a slave-girl.

Adds Shafi': Slaves were technically only those in earlier times who were taken prisoners in the battle-fields. With the abandonment of *jihad* by the *Ummah*, there is no way a person can be made a slave now. Those children who are sold out by their parents (for economic reasons) do not become slaves (and the transaction is illegal).

107. The translation follows the explanation offered by Ibn 'Abbas, Suddi, Mujahid, Qatadah and Dahhak who have explained (Tabari, Ibn Kathir) *muhsinat* as free, chaste women, *musafihat* as prostitutes and *muttakhidhat akhdan* as those who have secret boy friends (Au.).

108. There is some difference of opinion among the *Salaf* over the meaning of the term *uhsinna*: whether it means their acceptance of Islam, which happens to be the opinion of Ibn Mas'ud, Sha'bi and Suddi, (as well as of Ibn 'Umar, Anas, Aswad b. Yezid, Zirr b. Hubaysh, Sa'id b. Jubayr, 'Ata', Ibrahim Nakha'i: Ibn Kathir), or, it is their being married which is the opinion of Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Sa'id ibn Jubayr, Hasan and Qatadah) - Ibn Jarir.

As for an unmarried slave girl, the punishment of lashes for fornication

is rescinded. This is the opinion of Ibn 'Abbas and Sa'id b. Jubayr. She might be punished by the judges in ways other than lashes (Ibn Kathir).

109. Qurtubi writes: "This (halving of the punishment) is because punishments are proportionate to blessings conferred. The Prophet's wives were, for instance, told (33: 30):

{ يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ مَنِ يَاْتِ مِنْكُنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ
يُضَاعَفْ لَهَا الْعَذَابُ ضِعْفَيْنِ } {الأحزاب: ٣٠}

"O wives of the Prophet, whoever of you comes with a clear indecency shall face a twofold punishment." That is, when blessing was increased, punishment was also increased. Following this rule, when blessings of slave-women were decreased, their punishment was also decreased."

Majid states: "... (Since slave-women) do not have the same advantages of sound education, good upbringing, etc., as the respectable free women enjoy, (they) are therefore not subject to the same degree of responsibility. The corruptions of life under which a slave has to work and live makes it plain that, while purity is always hard to attain, slavery makes it far more difficult."

Abu Hurayrah and Zayd b. Khalid have reported that the Prophet was

asked about an unmarried slave girl who commits fornication. He said:

إِنْ زَنَّتْ فَاجْلِدُوهَا ، ثُمَّ إِنْ زَنَّتْ فَاجْلِدُوهَا ، ثُمَّ إِنْ زَنَّتْ فَاجْلِدُوهَا ، ثُمَّ إِنْ زَنَّتْ فَاجْلِدُوهَا « قَالَ : فَمَا أَدْرَى فِي النَّالَةِ أَوْ فِي الرَّابِعَةِ : « فَيَبِعُوهَا وَلَوْ بِضَفِيرٍ

“Whip her. If she repeats, whip her again. If she repeats, whip her again. And if she repeats” - he said either the third or fourth time - “sell her away, even if it is for a piece of rope” (Ibn Jarir).

The above *hadith* is in the *Sahihayn* (Ibn Kathir).

As for what exactly is the punishment, the answer is, it is fifty lashes (since the punishment of stoning to death cannot be halved: *Kashshaf*). According to a report in Muslim, a slave-girl of the Prophet committed adultery. The Prophet ordered `Ali to whip her fifty times. He found her having post-pregnancy bleeding. He reported it to the Prophet who ordered that he wait until she recovers (Ibn Kathir).

110. The word used in the original is *`anata* which is employed for any

harm, physical or spiritual, as said Allah in (3: 118):

{وَدُّوا مَا عَنِتُّمْ} [آل عمران: ١١٨]

“They desire that which will cause you harm” (Ibn Jarir).

111. It is reported of the Prophet by Abu Hurayrah that he said:

الحرائر صلاح البيت والإماء هلاك البيت

“Free women build the house while slave-women destroy it” (*Kashshaf*, Qurtubi).

The above *hadith* has a narrator in the chain who allegedly lied (Au.).

Thanwi remarks: There are several problems in marrying a slave-girl. One, the offspring of a slave-girl are also slaves which would mean enslaving one's own offspring. Two, a slave-girl is owned by someone else. There might be a clash of interest between the master and the husband. Third, the master might sell her off any-time to someone else. And fourth, she cannot observe full *hijab* which would be irksome to the husband.

[28] *And Allah desires to lighten you,¹¹² for man has been created weak.¹¹³*

﴿ ٢٨ ﴾ ضَعِيفًا

112. Ibn `Abbas is reported to have said that there are eight verses within this *Surah* which are better for this *Ummah* than everything upon which the sun rises or sets:

١ - يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ [النساء : ٢٦]

1) Allah desires to make things clear for you (verse 26).

٢ - وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ [النساء : ٢٧]

2) Allah desires to turn to you (verse 27).

٣ - يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ [النساء : ٢٨]

3) Allah desires to lighten you (verse 28).

٤ - إِنْ جَاءْتُمْ بِكِبَائِرٍ مَا تَنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ [النساء : ٣١]

4) If you avoid major sins which you are being forbidden We shall expiate your sins (verse 31).

٥ - إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ [النساء : ٤٠]

5) Allah does not do wrong even by an atom (verse 40).

٦ - إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ [النساء : ٤٨]

6) Allah will not forgive that He be associated with, but will forgive whom

He will, anything less than that (verse 48).

٧ - وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ تَنَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا [النساء : ١١٠]

7) Whoever wrongs or oppresses himself then seeks Allah's forgiveness, will find Allah very forgiving, very kind (verse 110), and

٨ - مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَدَابِكُمْ [النساء : ١٤٧]

8) What will Allah gain by punishing you? (verse 148)? - *Kashshaf*, Razi, Shawkani.

113. This weakness is especially apparent in matters involving women. Sa`id b. al-Musayyib has said: "Shaytan never gives up the hope of destroying a man with the help of women. I am past eighty, blind of one eye and weak of another ('and incapable of sex': Qurtubi), yet it is women that I fear most" (*Kashshaf*).

The Connection

When Allah had spoken of matters pertaining to a physical need, i.e., marriage, He followed it up with matters pertaining to material needs, i.e., wealth and how it is used (Razi).

[29] Believers! Do not devour each other's property wrongfully,¹¹⁴ save by way of trade between you¹¹⁵ by (mutual) consent.¹¹⁶ And do not kill one another.¹¹⁷ Surely Allah is Compassionate to you.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ
بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنِ
تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

114. `Ikrimah and Hasan Basri have said that when this verse was revealed some of the Companions refused to eat in each other's house when invited, on grounds that it was the right of the poor, until Allah revealed another verse which cleared the way for them. It said (24: 61):

{وَلَا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَنْ تَأْكُلُوا مِنْ بُيُوتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ
آبَائِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ} [النور: ٦١]

“(There is no sin) upon you that you eat from your own house, from the house of your fathers, or the house of your mothers ... until the end of the verse (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

Majid adds: “Every believer's property is his own. Islam totally rejects the communistic doctrine of the state ownership of all property.”

115. That is, not by way of gambling, usury, theft, false testimony and the like but by trade, making, if one can, a thousand out of a single Dirham (Suddi: Ibn Jarir).

It is reported that Ibn `Abbas heard a man say to another, “I buy this piece

of cloth from you now. But if I do not like it, I shall return it along with one Dirham.” Ibn `Abbas responded, “This is the wrongful devouring of property that Allah has alluded to when He said: “*Believers. Do not devour each other's property wrongfully*” (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Qatadah said: “We used to hear (from our elders) that an honest trader will be one of the seven in the shade of the ‘*Arsh* on the Day of Judgment” (Ibn Jarir).

116. What is meant by the word *taradin* is that the exchange of money or goods should be by free consent in trade, gifts, etc. (Mujahid: Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir). In trade *taradin* is generally understood as having been achieved, once, after the deal is discussed, accepted, and the two, buyer and seller, have parted company. So long as they are in the same assembly, they have the right to withdraw from the deal. The deal is “done” once they part company. Accordingly, it is reported that once in the presence

of `Ali (ra) a girl bought a Dirham worth of grapes, but, after having received them, returned them saying, "I do not need them, give me back my Dirham." The trader refused. `Ali intervened and compelled him to return the Dirham to her (Ibn Jarir).

In fact, there is a *hadith* to this effect. It says: "The two have the choice so long as they do not part company" (Ibn Jarir). A similar *hadith* is in Bukhari (Ibn Kathir).

117. Some scholars have understood this verse as saying: "Do not kill yourselves." (That is, do not commit suicide). An incident is quoted in this connection:

عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْعَاصِ قَالَ اخْتَلَمْتُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ بَارِدَةٍ فِي غَزْوَةِ ذَاتِ السَّلَاسِلِ فَأَشْفَقْتُ أَنْ اغْتَسَلْتُ أَنْ أَهْلِكَ فَسَيَّمَمْتُ ثُمَّ صَلَّيْتُ بِأَصْحَابِي الصُّبْحَ فَذَكَرُوا ذَلِكَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ يَا عَمْرُو صَلَّيْتُ بِأَصْحَابِكَ وَأَنْتَ جُنُبٌ فَأَحْبِرْتُهُ بِالَّذِي مَنَعَنِي مِنَ الْإِغْتِسَالِ وَقُلْتُ إِنِّي سِعَعْتُ اللَّهَ يَهْمُولُ لَمْ وَلَا تَفْتَلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا { فَضَحَكَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَلَمْ يَقُلْ شَيْئًا . سنن أبي داود

It is reported of `Amr b. al-`As that one night, when he was leading a group of people during the Dhat al-Sulasil campaign, he experienced a wet dream. It was a bitterly cold night. He was afraid that he would harm himself if he bathed. So he

wiped himself with dust and led the people in the *fajr* Prayers. The next day he reported the matter to the Prophet. He asked, "Amr, did you lead them in Prayers while you were in the state of major impurity?" `Amr replied, "Messenger of Allah, I was afraid I would kill myself in that cold night. Has not Allah said: 'Do not kill yourselves?'" At that the Prophet smiled (and did not pursue the matter any further) - Razi, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir, Alusi.

The report is classified as authentic by Albani (S. Ibrahim).

Accordingly, the commentators have quoted from the Prophet a *hadith* of the *Sahihayn* which says:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ بِحَدِيدَةٍ فَحَدِيدَتُهُ فِي يَدِهِ يَتَوَجَّأُ بِهَا فِي بَطْنِهِ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَمَنْ شَرِبَ سَمًا فَقَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ فَهُوَ يَتَحَسَّاهُ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَمَنْ تَرَدَّى مِنْ جَبَلٍ فَقَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ فَهُوَ يتردَّى فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا. صحيح مسلم

"Whoever killed himself with steel will have that steel in his hand piercing his stomach with it in the Fire of Hell, for ever and ever, abiding therein. He who drank poison and killed himself will be drinking it in the Fire of Hell, for ever and ever, abiding

[30] Whoever does that¹¹⁸ in transgression and injustice, him We shall soon admit into a (great) Fire. That is easy for Allah.

وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ غُدُوًّا وَظُلْمًا فَسَوْفَ نُصَلِّيهِ نَارًا وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾

[31] If you abstain from the major (sins) that you are being forbidden,¹¹⁹ We will acquit you of your (minor) sins¹²⁰ and allow you (into Paradise) a felicitous entry.

إِنْ تَحْتَبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا نَنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٣١﴾

therein. Whoever threw himself from a cliff and died, will be falling (from a cliff) in the Fire of Hell, for ever and ever, abiding therein.”

(Ibn Kathir).

118. To what is the allusion by the word “that?” Ibn Jarir says it refers to all that has been prohibited verse 19 onwards: “Believers, it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will....”

119. It is reported that in Egypt some people asked `Abdullah ibn `Amr: “We find things ordered in the Qur`ān but people not practicing them?! (`Abdullah did not have an answer), so they (along with `Abdullah) decided they would ask `Umar (and came down to Madinah). While in Madinah they were chanced upon by `Umar himself. He asked `Abdullah: “When did you come?” He gave him the answer.

He asked: “Had you permission to come here?” He did not know how to answer that question. He said: “O Leader of the believers. Some people came to me in Egypt and wanted explanation for things ordered by the Qur`ān but people not practicing them. So we came here to consult you.” He said: “Assemble your men.” He gathered his companions. `Umar picked up the least prominent of them and said: “Tell me, have you read the whole of the Qur`ān?” He said: “Yes.” He asked him: “Did you let your inner self live by it?” The man said: “Had I said yes, surely `Umar would have cross-questioned me. So I said, no.” `Umar then asked: “Did you make your sight live by it? Did you live by it in your spoken word? Did you live by it in other affairs? and so on.” Then he went on to the next man until he reached the last and repeated his questions. Then he said to himself: “May your mother lose you `Umar? Do you believe

you can make people live entirely by the Qur'ān? Surely Allah had in His knowledge that there would be sins." Then he recited: "If you avoid major (sins) that you are being forbidden, We will acquit you of your (minor) sins." Then he asked: "Do the Madinans know what you have come here for?" They said, "No." He said: "Had they known, surely I would have admonished them with you as an example" (Ibn Jarir). The report is *sahih* and its contents sound (Ibn Kathir).

Major Sins

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud has been widely reported as saying that the reference by "major sins" at this point is to verses from 1 to 30 of this *Surah*. However, others, such as `Ali, `Ubaydah ibn Numayr and Mujahid have said that the great (or major) sins are seven: Associating partners with Allah, devouring orphans' property, consuming usury, slandering chaste women, running away from the battle-field, renouncing hijrah and committing murder. Yet, it is also reported of Ibn Mas`ud that the major sins are four: "Associating partners with Allah, to be unmindful of Allah's makr, to despair of Allah's mercy and, to lose hope of Allah's clemency" (The report is trustwor-

thy: Ibn Kathir). But Ibn `Abbas has said that major sins are all those that Allah has forbidden: close to seventy (according to another version 'seven hundred:' Shawkani); and the general rule that he applied is: it is every sin after which a threat of punishment was added, or disapproval expressed in strong terms. Mujahid, Sa`id ibn Jubayr, Hasan and Dahhak are with him. The Prophet himself answered variously on various occasions when asked about major sins (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Kathir adds: A *hadith* that is in Nasa'i, Ibn Hibban and Hakim (who said it met with the authentication requirements of Bukhari and Muslim) reports Abu Hurayrah and Abu Sa`id as saying:

حَطَبَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَوْمًا فَقَالَ
وَالَّذِي تَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ ثُمَّ أَكَبَّ فَأَكَبَّ كُلُّ
رَجُلٍ مَنَّا يَبْكِي لَا نَدْرِي عَلَى مَاذَا حَلَفَ ثُمَّ رَفَعَ
رَأْسَهُ فِي وَجْهِهِ الْبُشْرَى فَكَانَتْ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْنَا مِنْ حُمُرِ
النَّعَمِ ثُمَّ قَالَ مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ يُصَلِّي الصَّلَاةَ الْحَمْسَ
وَيَصُومُ رَمَضَانَ وَيُخْرِجُ الزَّكَاةَ وَيَجْتَنِبُ الْكِبَائِرَ السَّبْعَ
إِلَّا فَتِحَتْ لَهُ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ فَيَقِيلُ لَهُ إِذْخُلَ بِسَلَامٍ

"One day the Prophet stood up for a sermon. He began by saying, 'By Him in whose hands is my soul.' He said that three times. Then he bent forward and we all bent forward weeping, not knowing what it was that he

had sworn for. Then he raised his head and his face was bright. That face was dearer to us than red camels. He said, "There is no one who Prayed five times, fasted in *Ramadan*, paid the *Zakah* and abstained from the seven major ones but the gates of Paradise will be opened for him and he will be told, 'Enter in peace.'"

The *Sahihayn* have another *hadith* that has Abu Hurayrah reporting him:

عن أبي هريرة؛ أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "اجْتَنِبُوا السَّبْعَ الْمُوبِقَاتِ" قيل: يا رسول الله، وما هُنَّ؟ قال: "الشِّرْكُ بِاللَّهِ، وَقَتْلُ النَّفْسِ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ، وَالسِّحْرُ، وَأَكْلُ الرِّبَا، وَأَكْلُ مَالِ الْيَتِيمِ، وَالتَّوَلَّى يَوْمَ النُّحْفِ، وَقَذْفُ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ الْغَافِلَاتِ" بخاري و مسلم

"Stay away from the seven destructive ones." It was asked: "What are they, O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "To associate partners with Allah, killing of a person save by law, magic, partaking of usury, devouring the orphan's property, running away from the battle-field and slandering chaste women."

Another *hadith* in Ibn Mardawayh has "misbehavior with the parents" in place of "magic."

The *Sahihayn* have yet another *hadith*

which reports the Prophet as having said:

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: "ألا أنبئكم بأكبر الكبائر؟ قلنا: بلى يا رسول الله. قال "الإشراك بالله، وعقوق الوالدين" وكان متكئاً، فجلس فقال "ألا وشهادة الزور، ألا وقول الزور" فمأزال يكرها حتى قلنا: ليته سكت.

"May I not tell you about the greatest of the great sins?" We said, "Why not, O Messenger of Allah." He said, "They are: associating partners with Allah, mistreating the parents, and ... he straightened up from the reclining position to say ... and false testimony." He kept repeating the words until the narrator, Abu Bakr, says, "I wished he would stop."

Imām Ahmad has recorded `Abdullah ibn `Amr b. al-`As as including intoxicant drinks.

Bukhari has another *hadith* which reports the Prophet as having said:

إن أكبر الكبائر أن يسب الرجل والديه قالوا يا رسول الله وكيف يسب الرجل والديه قال يسب الرجل الرجل فيسب أباه فيسب أباه ويسب أمه فيسب أمه

"The greatest of the major sins is to curse one's parents." He was asked: "How could a man curse his parents?" He replied: "A man

curses another's father. In retaliation the other man curses his father. He curses his mother and the other man curses his mother."

A *sahih* report in Ibn Abi Hatim comes from `Umar. He said that to combine two Prayers is one of the major sins. (That is, not to do a particular Prayer on time, intentionally, and then combine it with the following one: Au.). In one *sahih* report Ibn `Abbas has also reckoned harming someone by one's will as one of the major sins. `Ali has included parting away from the community and breaking allegiance as also of major sins. Accordingly, there were many among the Companions such as Ibn `Abbas, who felt that major sins are not seven, rather, more than seventy. Dhahabi has also listed more than seventy in his book on this subject. Imām Malik b. Anas has even been reported as saying that denigrating the Companions is *Kufr*.

Finally, it might be noted that there is no major sin with repentance and a minor sin is major if repeatedly indulged in. And, before we end, we might quote that *hadith* of the Prophet which is in Abdul Razzaq and Tirmidhi, who grades it *hasan sahih*, in which he said:

شَفَاعَتِي لِأَهْلِ الْكِبَائِرِ مِنْ أُمَّتِي

"My intercession will be for those of my *Ummah* who committed major sins."

The import of this *hadith* has the support of other *sahih ahadith* on this topic.

Ibn Kathir's quotation ends here.

120. Such acquitting however is conditional to performing the obligations of Islam, as says a *hadith* of Muslim:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم-
كَانَ يَقُولُ: الصَّلَاةُ الْخَمْسُ وَالْجُمُعَةُ إِلَى الْجُمُعَةِ
وَرَمَضَانُ إِلَى رَمَضَانَ مُكَفِّرَاتٌ مَا بَيْنَهُنَّ إِذَا اجْتَنَبَ
الْكَبَائِرَ.

"Five time Prayers, Friday to Friday, and *Ramadan* to *Ramadan* acquit one of what is between them provided the major sins are avoided" (Qurtubi).

In fact, adds Thanwi, to neglect the obligations, such as, for example, not to Pray, is itself a major sin. And the opinion of the *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama`ah* with regard to major and minor sins is as follows: "An off-chance of punishment exists for minor sins (although threats have not been explicitly stated), and an off-chance of forgiveness exists for major sins (although punishment has been explicitly promised)."

[32] Covet not that by which Allah has preferred some of you over the others.¹²¹ For men is a share from what they earn, and for women a share from what they earn. Ask Allah of His bounty.¹²² Verily, Allah is Aware of all things.¹²³

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى
بَعْضٍ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبُوا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبْنَ وَأَسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٢﴾

It might also be noted, as Ibn Hajr has pointed out, that although the ancients have divided sins into major and minor ones, they have not listed the minor ones. This is because no sin is minor in comparison to Allah's greatness. His disobedience, however minor, is a great sin. Further, the fact of a sin being major or minor will depend on the sinner's condition, his intention etc. Hence some have said - such as Abu Ishaq Al-Isfara'ini, Qadi Abu Bakr al-Baqilani and Imām al-Haramayn - that in reality there are no major or minor sins. They are major and minor only in comparison with each other. Otherwise, by itself, every sin is a major sin (Alusi, Shawkani).

Nevertheless, most scholars recognize some sins as Major. Accordingly, Mufti Shafi` has added the note that while minor sins are acquitted by good deeds, major sins have to be repented for. In fact, someone who does not repent his major sins, is likely to be questioned for his minor

sins also.

121. Qaffal has said that when Allah forbade the taking of life and property of the people wrongfully in the previous verses, He followed it up by showing the way in which it will become easy to live by the rule as follows: it is by not coveting what others have been given. It can also be said that while the previous verse forbids coveting other's wealth or property physically, the following verses forbid the heart and soul to attempt it, so that both, the open and the concealed deeds, could be reformed (Razi, Alusi).

Tamanni (coveting) in the Islamic sense is to wish that one be given what another has in his possession (in the sense of the ownership being transferred: Au.), such as, wealth, a house, a beautiful wife and so on. (In other words it is hasad: Alusi). Rather, one may pray to Allah in words: "O Lord, grant me what will be of benefit to me in both the worlds," (Razi), or "Grant me the like of what

another man has got” (Alusi).

It is reported that Umm Salamah complained to the Prophet in words: “O Messenger of Allah, we do not take part in *jihad* to attain martyrdom, and get only half of the male’s share in inheritance.” In response, Allah revealed this verse (Ibn Jarir, *Kashshaf*, Razi, Qurtubi). The report is in Ahmad (Ibn Kathir). The report is also in Tirmidhi, Hakim, Ibn Abi Hatim, Bayhaqi and others (Shawkani).

Further, that *hadith* of Bukhari does not contradict this verse which reports the Prophet as having said:

عَبَدَ اللَّهُ بِنَ مَسْعُودٍ قَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَا حَسَدَ إِلَّا فِي اثْنَتَيْنِ رَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا فَسُلِطَ عَلَى هَلَكَتِهِ فِي الْحَقِّ وَرَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْحِكْمَةَ فَهُوَ يَمْضِي بِهَا وَيَعْلَمُهَا

“Envy is not (allowed) save of two. One, of a man whom Allah gave wealth and he is bent upon destroying it for good purposes, and a man whom Allah gave wisdom so that he judges by it and teaches it.”

In this *hadith* hasad (envy) has actually been used in the sense of ghibtah, which is to wish for what another has, without wishing that the other person be deprived of the thing (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

Majid comments: (The allusion in this verse seems to be to women coveting equality with men). “That in the scheme of life the role of the male is different in many fundamentals from that of the female is recognized by the modern science of Biology and Psychology alike. “The desires and conduct of the two sexes are not similar, but are complementary and reciprocal. In courtship the male is active; his role is to court, to pursue, to possess, to control, to protect, to love. The role of the female is passive ... Consequent on this fundamental difference are certain others. For pursuit, greater ardor is necessary than for mere reception; and the courting activity of the male is throughout the animal kingdom, more ardent than that of the female; and this greater ardor is connected with certain other differences.’ (Mercier, *Conduct and Disorders Biologically Considered*, pp. 289-290). ‘It is generally true that the males are more active, energetic, eager, passionate, and variable; the female more passive, conservative, sluggish, and stable’ (Thompson and Geddes, *Evolution and Sex*, p. 289). ‘Man perhaps even down to the protein molecules of his tissue cells, is biologically different from women. From the very moment of sex formation in the embryo, the biological

[33] To everyone We have appointed heirs to that which the parents and kinsmen leave. As for those with whom you have sworn compact, give them their share.¹²⁴ Verily Allah is witness over all things.

وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِيَّ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ
وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدْتُمْ أَيْمَانَكُمْ فَآتُوهُمْ
نَصِيبَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
شَهِيدًا ﴿٣٣﴾

dusting of the sexes develops along entirely divergent paths ... We must recognize the unquestionable existence of the biological inequality of the sexes. It goes deeper and is of far greater import than it would appear to those not familiar with natural sciences' (Nemilove, *Biological Tragedy of Women*, pp. 75-78)."

A recent research conducted in the United States shows that while answering certain questions men used only one side of the brain, women used both the sides of their brain to answer the same set of questions, although the answers did not always vary (Au.).

122. It is reported of the Prophet that he said:

سَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يُحِبُّ أَنْ يُسْأَلَ
وَأَفْضَلُ الْعِبَادَةِ أَنْ تَنْتَظِرَ الْفَرْجَ

"Seek Allah's bounty. He loves that He be asked. And, the best of devotions is to wait for an opening" (Ibn Jarir).

The *hadith* is in Tirmidhi, (Qurtubi) and other books and is of good status (Ibn Kathir). Although Albani has classified it *da'if*, (no. 492) Shawkani has stated that one version is near to being trustworthy (Au.).

123. Therefore, following His complete knowledge of everything, He has bestowed upon people abilities and propensities, in different measures, in accordance with their needs (Alusi).

124. Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah, Hasan al-Busri and Qatadah have said that in pre-Islamic days some people who were not related to each other by blood struck a deal with each other that they would inherit each other. This verse initially approved of the practice, and instructed that they be given their share in accordance with their compact. However, the permission was later revoked by the verse (33: 6):

وَأُولُو الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ
[الأحزاب : ٦]

[34] Men are the protectors and managers (of the affairs) of women,¹²⁵ for that Allah has given some of them preference over the others¹²⁶ and for that they expend (on them) of their wealth.¹²⁷ So righteous (women) are devotedly obedient, guardians in the (husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard.¹²⁸ As for those of whom you (strongly) fear recalcitrance,¹²⁹ admonish them and (next), abandon them in their beds,¹³⁰ and (if that measure fails) beat them.¹³¹ If thereupon they obey you,¹³² then do not seek any way against them.¹³³ Verily, Allah is All-high, All-great.¹³⁴

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنِ اطَّعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٣٤﴾

“And those related by womb are closer to each other than others by the decree of Allah.”

Therefore, inheritance is now only possible by way of kinship as confirmed by several *ahadith* (such as in Muslim: Ibn Kathir) that after Islam there is no inheritance by way of compact. Others have said that it refers to the “brotherhood” ties that the Prophet had instituted early in Madinah. In those days they inherited each other. This verse approved of the early practice, but later it was abrogated by verse 6 of chapter 33 quoted above (Ibn Jarir). This last statement is that of Ibn `Abbas and is in Bukhari.

Nevertheless, it is still valid for other compacts that the people strike be-

tween themselves. They should keep them. In this sense the verse is not abrogated (Ibn Kathir).

125. “The expression *qawwam* is an intensive form of *qa'im* (“one who is responsible for” or “takes care of” a thing or a person). Thus, *qama 'ala l-mar'ah* signifies “he undertook the maintenance of the woman” or “he maintained her” (see Lane VIII, 2995). The grammatical form *qawwam* is more comprehensive than *qa'im*, and combines concepts of physical maintenance and protection as well as of moral responsibility” (Asad).

Hasan, Qatadah, Suddi and Ibn Jurayj have reported that,

عن قتادة قال، حدثنا الحسن: أن رجلا لطم امرأته، فأتت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، فأراد أن يُقَصِّصَهَا

منه، فأَنْزَلَ اللهُ: “الرجالُ قَوَامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ”، فَدَعَا النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَتَلَاها عَلَيْهِ، وَقَالَ: أَرَدْتُ أَمْرًا وَأَرَادَ اللهُ غَيْرَهُ. (ابن جرير)

A man slapped his wife. (It was Sa`d b. Rabi` : *Kashshaf*, Razi, Ibn Kathir). She complained to the Prophet. He judged that she slap him back. After they had left this verse was revealed. The Prophet called him back, recited this verse to him and said: “I had desired something, but Allah desired something else” (Ibn Jarir).

According to another version the Prophet said: “I desired something, but what Allah desired is better” (Qurtubi).

“Hence,” Zuhri has ruled, “there is no retribution (*qisas*) between a man and his wife except if the man kills her in which case he will be killed in retaliation” (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Kathir adds: Accordingly, a woman cannot be the head of a state. The Prophet has said in a *hadith* of Bukhari:

لَنْ يَفْلِحَ قَوْمٌ وَلَوْ أَمَرَهُمْ امْرَأَةٌ

“That nation will not prosper which is headed by a woman.”

Majid notes: “Compare the attitude of the Bible toward woman:- ‘Unto

the woman he said ... thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.’ (Gr. 3: 16). ‘Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, ... and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing’ (Eph. 5: 22-24).”

126. Men enjoy superiority over women in both aspects: mental as well as physical (Razi).

127. When Umm Salamah complained that men have been given preference over them in certain matters, Allah revealed this verse to tell them that it was true, but in return men have been given additional responsibilities by making them managers of their affairs and by making them expend on women. Thus equality was maintained (Razi).

Alusi comments: The superiority of men over women is by virtue of two facts: first, by virtue of Allah’s grant (“for that Allah has given some of them preference over the others”), and second, by virtue of their own efforts (“for that they expend [on them] of their wealth”).

Therefore, if a man cannot support his wife, separation would be

ordered, except that, according to Abu Hanifah, respite will be allowed in view of verse 280 of *Al-Baqarah* which says:

{ وَإِنْ كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ } [البقرة]:
[٢٨٠]

“If he were to be in straitened circumstances then (allow him) respite until easy circumstances” (Qurtubi, Alusi).

128. Abu Hurayrah has reported the Prophet:

خير النساء امرأة إذا نظرت إليها سرتك ، وإذا أمرتها أطاعتك ، وإذا غبت عنها حفظتك في نفسها ومالك.

“The best of women is she who, when you look at her, pleases you, when you order her, she obeys, and, when you are out of sight, she guards herself and your property.” Then he recited this verse (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

There are varied opinions about the *hadith*: some scholars accepting, some others doubtful (Au.).

It is also reported by Ahmad through `Abdul Rahman ibn `Awf that the Prophet said:

عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَوْفٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا صَلَّتْ الْمَرْأَةُ حَمْسَهَا وَصَامَتْ شَهْرَهَا وَحَفِظَتْ فَرْجَهَا وَأَطَاعَتْ زَوْجَهَا قَبِلَ لَهَا

ادْخُلِي الْجَنَّةَ مِنْ أَيِّ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ شِئْتَ

“If a woman Prays five times, fasts in *Ramadan*, guards her chastity and obeys her husband, she will be told to enter Paradise by the door of her choice” (Ibn Kathir).

The *hadith* is also in Abu Da’ud and Tirmidhi (Ibn Ibrahim); it enjoys a *Hasan* status.

129. If a woman begins to answer back to her husband in a manner she did not earlier, or changes her attitudes toward him, then she has begun to evince the first “signs” of nushuz (Razi).

Hammudah `Abd al-`Ati gives us some more details: “Nushuz is manifested by the wife’s aversion to her husband, hatred toward him, disinterest in his companionship ... Jurists differ over what exactly constitutes recalcitrance (nushuz). For example, some hold that a fit and healthy wife who denies here bed to her husband is refractory and thus loses her right to maintenance. Others are of the opinion that maintenance is not a function of sexual accessibility, but is the result of a marriage contract that confines her to her husband’s home. And, so long as she confines herself, and does not leave the home without

his consent, she is obedient, and her right to maintenance stands valid” (*Family Structure in Islam*, p. 158).

The fact, however, that cannot be lost sight of is that quite a few of the husband and wife quarrels result not only from the wife not giving her dues, but also from exorbitant demands made on her by the husband. *Nushuz*, therefore, has to be well-established before any corrective measures are resorted to. Further, disobedience has to be well understood. It does not involve day to day affairs, but major moral issues (Au.).

The Prophet has said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَوْ كُنْتُ أَمْرًا أَحَدًا أَنْ يَسْجُدَ لِأَحَدٍ لِأَمْرَتِ الْمَرْأَةِ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِزَوْجِهَا قَالَ أَبُو عَيْسَى حَدِيثُ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ غَرِيبٌ. (الترمذي)

“If I were to allow anyone to prostrate himself before another, I would order the woman to prostrate herself to her husband, in view of his great rights upon her.”

Tirmidhi himself declared the above *hadith hasan* (a kind of weak report) but a few other versions improve on its acceptability (Au.).

In another *hadith* preserved by

Bukhari he said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا بَاتَتْ الْمَرْأَةُ مُهَاجِرَةً فِرَاشَ زَوْجِهَا لَعَنَتْهَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى تَرْجِعَ

“If a woman abandons her husband's bed, angels curse her until the morning until she returns” (Ibn Kathir). Another report adds the words: “Until she goes back to him and places her hand into his” (Qurtubi).

130. Ibn `Abbas and some others have said that the meaning of “abandoning them in their beds” is to abandon sex with her, even if the two sleep together. However, Suddi, Dahhak, and even Ibn `Abbas, (according to another narration), have said that he might have sex with her, but not talk to her and sleep with his back to her (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

The Prophet was asked by some people as to how should they deal with their women. He replied:

أَنْتِ حَرْثُكَ أَنْتِ شِئْتِ وَأَطْعَمْتِهَا إِذَا طَعَمْتِ وَأَكْسَمْتِهَا إِذَا أَكْسَمْتِ وَلَا تَقْبَحِ الْوَجْهَ وَلَا تَضْرِبِ.

“Go into your tilth the way it pleases you. Feed her when you feed yourself, clothe her when you clothe yourself, do not find fault in her face, and do not hit

them.” The *hadith* was declared *Sahih* by Albani.

Sayyid states: “The bed is a site of attraction and seduction, where, the recalcitrant wife rises to the peak of her power. Therefore, if the husband can overcome his urges against the temptation, then, the rebellious woman would have lost her most effective tool by which she overpowers him, and would be - expectedly - more willing thereafter to make peace with the defiant person ... in the face of this strong will power demonstrated in the most difficult place and situation ... except that there are rules for this kind of measure also, i.e., the measure of abandoning in the beds. Such abandoning should not be an open one, nor in any other place save in the privacy of the two, husband and wife. It should not be before the children which will give rise to evil and corruption among them also, nor should it be before strangers, which will be a cause of disgrace to the woman, stirring her emotions and strengthening her recalcitrance. The aim is to cure recalcitrance and not to humiliate the woman or spoil the children.”

131. The Prophet (*saws*) is reported to have said that such beating should be light and the face should be avoided. According to `Ata' and Hajjaj, the “light beating” spoken of by

the Prophet is one that will leave no mark. Ibn `Abbas has said: “Beat her up lightly. Do not go about breaking her bones. If she reforms herself, let her go. If she does not, you can claim back your dower (and part company with her)” (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

`Ata' says he asked Ibn `Abbas about what constitutes light beating. He replied: “For example, with a *miswak* (tooth brush)” - Ibn Jarir.

Abu Da'ud and Ibn Majah have reported that when the Prophet ordered:

عَنْ إِبْنِ أَبِي عُبَيْدٍ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي دُبَابٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- «لَا تَضْرِبُوا إِمَاءَ اللَّهِ». فَجَاءَ عُمَرُ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- فَقَالَ ذَرِينِ النِّسَاءَ عَلَى أَزْوَاجِهِنَّ. فَرَحَّصَ فِي ضَرْبِهِنَّ فَأَطَافَ بِأَلِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- نِسَاءً كَثِيرًا يَشْكُونَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- لَقَدْ طَافَ بِأَلِ مُحَمَّدٍ نِسَاءً كَثِيرًا يَشْكُونَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ لَيْسَ أَوْلَيْكَ بِخِيَارِكُمْ

“Do not beat Allah’s slaves,” `Umar came to him and said, “Women have begun to take advantage.’ Upon this the Prophet allowed them to beat them. But then women began coming in to the Prophet’s wives with reports of brutality. The Prophet said: “My wives have begun to receive complaints of wife-beating. Surely these men are not the best

of you” (Ibn Kathir).

Substantiating the above *hadith*, Imām Shafe’i has ruled that although beating (one’s recalcitrant wife) is *mabah* (permissible), not doing so is preferable (Razi).

Again, in case of a wife’s rebellious attitude, the steps must be followed in the same sequence, viz., admonition, abandoning them in their beds and finally beating, not resorting to the last, first – all in situation of moral failures or completely abusive behaviour, not when they are in their periods (when extra hormones are released and they are irritative, but in normal circumstances (Au.).

(Some of those reasons that give the husband the right to beat his wife can be inferred from *ahadith*. One is in Muslim. It states:

عن جابر بن عبد الله فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِي النِّسَاءِ
فَإِنَّكُمْ أَخَذْتُمُوهُنَّ بِأَمَانِ اللَّهِ وَاسْتَخَلَلْتُمْ فُرُوجَهُنَّ
بِكَلِمَةِ اللَّهِ وَلَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ أَنْ لَا يُوطِئَنَّ فُرُشَكُمْ أَحَدًا
تَكَرَّهُوْنَهُ فَإِنْ فَعَلْنَ ذَلِكَ فَاصْرَبُوهُنَّ صَرْبًا غَيْرَ مُبْرَحٍ

“Fear your Lord in matters of your women. It is by Allah’s trust that you have taken them and made them lawful unto yourself by Allah’s word. It is your right that they should not allow anyone that you disapprove of to

enter your home. If they do that, then beat them up, lightly.”

There are some reports which say that one may beat the women if they “disobey in the generally recognized rights (*ma`ruf*): a light beating.” For instance, the following:

ولا يعصينكم في معروف فإن فعلن ذلك فليس لكم
عليهن سبيل ولهن رزقهن وكسوتهن بالمعروف فإن
صربتم فاصربوا ضرباً غير مبرح

But *ahadith* in such words (i.e., disobey in the generally recognized rights) are weak.

Finally, it will all depend on what kind of woman it is, since, for a cultured woman even a mild reproach is enough, which will not do for a coarse woman (Qurtubi).

Alusi comments: It is said that four things give the husband the right to beat his wife. First, her refusal to adopt a pleasing look, if the husband insists on it, second, her refusal to come to the bed when he demands, third, her refusal to Pray (according to another version, wash herself), and fourth, her sauntering outside of the house without a good reason.

The above, however, is Alusi’s personal opinion, and reflects the culture of his times (Au.).

It is also agreed that a rebellious woman loses her right to maintenance (Qurtubi); and that one might not have intercourse with a wife the day he beats her.

The *Sahihayn* have a *hadith* which ends in words:

لَا يَجِلُّ أَحَدُكُمْ امْرَأَتَهُ جَلَدَ الْعَبْدِ ثُمَّ يُجَامِعُهَا فِي آخِرِ
الْيَوْمِ

“Let not one of you whip his wife the way he would whip his slave and then have intercourse with her at the end of the day.”

The voracious reader Majid adds some interesting notes that might be referred to in the original. Here are a few excerpts. “In certain stages of society this beating is even sought and keenly desired. ... ‘The spread of flagellation-mania among people of every rank and age in English society affords further evidence that it was a specific national quality and not a passion limited to a small circle of sensualists and the like’ (Bloch, *Sexual Life in England*, p. 322). Nietzsche’s saying is well known:—”When you go to a woman forget not your whip.” “In Slavic countries beating the woman is a part of man’s regular love procedure.” “The peasant women in some parts of Hungary do not think they are loved by their

husbands until they have received the first box on their ear; among the Italian community a wife if not beaten by her husband regards him as a fool’ (Havelock Ellis, quoted in ERE. VIII, p. 156). Further, it is contended by Freud and his disciples that masochism is part and parcel of feminine nature. ‘Helene Dentach has elaborated Freud’s assumption and generalized it in calling masochism the elemental power in feminine mental life. She contends that what woman ultimately wants in intercourse is to be raped and violated, what she wants in mental life is to be humiliated; menstruation is significant to woman because it feeds masochistic fantasies; childbirth represents the climax of masochistic satisfaction’ (Horney, *New Ways in Psychoanalysis*, p. 110).”

With reference to the above, this writer would like to add the following. Although it might be true that women in general respect brute force, some of them unwilling to correct their ways without experiencing some harsh measures from their husbands, and, it could also be true that full sexual satisfaction of a minority of them could lie in being treated violently, the following basic points must not be lost sight of. Firstly, examples that are normally cited, of

physical assaults on women, in and out of psychoanalysis literature, are taken from non-Muslim peoples. Secondly, they come from wild races, if not savages: those who get drunk on every occasion, behave bestially, speak foul, quarrel with their drinking mates, and, back home, beat their wives. Thirdly, centuries of practices might lend justification to the practices of wife-beating; but such justification holds good for those societies alone, where they are prevalent, and not for others, even if the others happen to be of the same faith, share the same culture or are of the same racial stock. Fourthly, such prolonged practices do affect the psychology of the victims, in this case the women, who might quite keenly look forward to the occasion of violence, and feel something amiss if not given a sound thrashing now and then. This phenomenon lingers in the West even now, where some women prefer to be whipped before sexual intercourse. Extreme cases of women hysterically demanding harder and harder strikes during those sessions have been reported. Yet, and despite all that, it cannot be said that the demand for cruel treatment or gratification in suffering pain, is in the nature of women. As for Sigmund Freud, it is undeniable that

from the Islamic point of view he was one of the most pervert scholars of the twentieth century. His pervert thinking apart, the people that he observed and whose behavior he analyzed, were sick and abnormal. The theories that he developed cannot be applied to the healthy without grave error. Hundreds of shelters for the "battered wives" set up today by the state in Germany, housing tens of thousands of women who cannot put up with the physical abuse they are subjected to by their husbands, are perhaps one of the several gifts of the philosopher from his grave. The examples, practices, theories, and philosophies, therefore, that are quoted in justification of wife-beating, or for masochism, are neither relevant to Muslims, nor acceptable. Islam has curbed certain violent tendencies both in the active male as well as the passive female, by self-discipline and a few ascetic practices (such as low diet, short sleep and others), or has sanctioned an outlet to them by way of *jihad* and its rigors. On the social level, Islam is nothing if it will not hone down a brute into a civilized person with aristocratic leniency. Once Muslim, the same Germans would certainly evince very different social attitudes. Therefore, our last words on the subject remain those

of the Prophet who said, censuring men who beat their wives, "Those are not the best of your men" (Au.).

132. Thawri has said that if she responds to the call to the bed, she has obeyed, even if she hates her husband. Sufyan has added: "If they obey you that is enough. Do not seek to be loved also, because that is something beyond their power (Ibn Jarir).

Yusuf Ali sums up: "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, sexual relations may be suspended; (3) if this is not sufficient, some light physical correction may be administered: but Imām Shafē'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."

Sayyid writes: "With regard to what has been ordained as the corrective measures, they are from none else but Him who has created and who knows His creation better than anyone else. Therefore, every argument after the words of the All-knowing is rebellion against the choice of the

Creator. It amounts to refusal to submit, and leads to an opening that is an exit from the domain of faith into the domain of disbelief."

133. That is, do not find fault with her (Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah: Ibn Jarir).

Yusuf Ali states a point: "Temper, nagging, sarcasm, speaking at each other in other people's presence, reverting to past 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 (*swt*), Who is high above us, but Who watches over us. How petty and contemptible will our little squabbles appear in His presense!"

134. That is, if you have an upper hand over women, do not take undue advantage of it. After all, Allah has the upper hand over you, yet He does not overload you, forgives you your sins, and does not expose your fault to the people (Razi).

Sayyid adds: In all surprise, when there was neither any demand from the new adherents, men or women, nor was there any ideas about liberation of women being aired by any rightist group, anywhere on the globe, Islam gave women the rights that no other system has given them.

Blind to divine guidance, the West merely made them equal to men in law, completely ignoring the fact of they being the weaker of the two sexes need special protective measures, declared as law.

The most that Islam has demanded of a wife is to allow her husband free access to her. Said the Prophet:

وَلَا تُؤَدِّي الْمَرْأَةُ حَقَّ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَيْهَا كُفْلَهُ حَتَّى
تُؤَدِّيَ حَقَّ زَوْجِهَا عَلَيْهَا كُفْلَهُ حَتَّى لَوْ سَأَلَهَا تَفْسَهَا
وَهِيَ عَلَى ظَهْرٍ قَتَبٍ لَأَعْطَتْهُ إِيَّاهُ - رجاله رجال
الصحيح خلا المغيرة بن مسلم وهو ثقة: مجمع الزوائد
(٥٦٥ / ٤)

A woman would not be considered as having fully discharged Allah's right on her, until she discharges her husband's rights upon her to the extent that if he asks for her, and she is on a beast, she offers herself to him.

On the other hand, a *hadith* much quoted but not as much understood says:

عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: سُئِلَ النَّبِيُّ
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَيُّ النِّسَاءِ خَيْرٌ؟ قَالَ: "الَّتِي
تَسْرُهُ إِذَا نَظَرَ إِلَيْهَا، وَتُطِيعُهُ إِذَا أَمَرَ، وَلَا تُخَالِفُهُ فِيمَا
يَكْرَهُ فِي نَفْسِهَا، وَلَا فِي مَالِهِ" (تعليق الذهبي في
التلخيص: على شرط مسلم)

The Prophet was asked, "What woman is the best?" He an-

swered, "She, who pleases him (the husband) when he look at her; who obeys when ordered, and, does not oppose him in (affairs concerning) herself or his wealth."

That is, she keeps herself as good looking as possible, obeys him in what is commonly recognized as good and virtuous, and does not antagonize him over her own up-keep, nor spends off unnecessarily from his wealth.

Much is made of "obedience to the husband." But it is loose cotton. When the cotton stuff is lifted from *hadith* and *Fiqh* books, it is turned into iron filings by the pseudo-macho king-husband who could not build his empire outside, and so, tries to build it at home. Rarely does this class seem to be wanting to know what exactly 'obedience' involves.

Obedience to the husband does not involve day to day affairs, but rather, moral issues. Does a wife's refusal to change window drapes following the husband's command constitute disobedience? Does her refusal to go out with her husband visiting his friends or kin constitute disobedience? Is she supposed to obey her husband if he tells her that he does not approve of

her attending an Islamic lecture? In all cases, the answer is an emphatic no.

It must be clearly understood that *Ita'ah* (obedience) to the husband, is always accompanied by *fi alma'ruf* (in goodly matters). So, if the husband demands that she does not watch films, or play music, or loiter about engaged in window shopping in the commercial centres unveiled, then alone it is that she is bound by the *Shair'ah* to obey him.

Wife's Rights

The following from a *Fiqh* book needs attention:

حقوق النكاح الواجبات لزوجته: على الزوج بالتمكين سبع لوازم: طعام وأدم ثم سكنى وكسوة وآلة تنظيف متاع وخادم. (بغية المسترشدين ص: ٥١٣ - عبد الرحمن بن محمد بن حسين بن عمر باعلوي - دار الفكر)

Duties incumbent (upon the husband) after marriage in favor of the wife are seven of obligatory nature: Food, side-dish, housing, clothes, cleansing articles, some furnishing, and a servant.

Hanafiyy scholars have further clarified:

قال الحصكفي رحمه الله - من الأحناف - : وكذا

تجب لها السكنى في بيت خالٍ عن أهله وأهلها بقدر حالهما كطعام وكسوة وبيت منفرد من دار له غلق ومرافق ومراده لزوم كنيف (أي : بيت خلاء) ومطبخ كفاهما لحصول المقصود. أ.هـ. - وعلق ابن عابدين فقال : والمراد من (الكنيف والمطبخ) أي : بيت الخلاء وموضع الطبخ بأن يكونا داخل البيت (أي : الغرفة) أو في الدار لا يشاركهما فيهما أحد من أهل الدار. أ.هـ. - فتاوى الإسلام سؤال وجواب (ص: ٦٠٢٨)

Haskafi of the Ahnaf said: The accommodation that is her right should be in a house without any of his or her relatives sharing it, of the quality that both can afford, like (what they can afford of) food and clothes. It has to be a separate quarter with its own entrance, with amenities like washroom, kitchen etc. to serve the basic needs. Ibn `Abideen added that the washroom and kitchen should be within the house, others of the (extended) family not sharing it.

The following is from the most extensive, universally acknowledged, powerful book of *Fatwas* ever produced. Titled as *Fatawa `Alamgiriyyah*, alternatively *Fatawa Hindiyyah*, this is a massive compendium produced on the request of Aurangzeb, the Moghul Emperor of the 17-18th century:

وإن قلت : لا أطبخ ، ولا أحبز قال في الكتاب :

لا تُجْبَرُ عَلَى الطَّبْخِ وَالْحَبْزِ ، وَعَلَى الرَّوْحِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَهَا بِطَعَامٍ مُهَيَّأً أَوْ يَأْتِيَهَا بِمَنْ يَكْفِيهَا عَمَلِ الطَّبْخِ وَالْحَبْزِ قَالَ الْفَقِيهَ أَبُو اللَّيْثِ - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى - إِنْ اِمْتَنَعَتْ الْمَرْأَةُ عَنِ الطَّبْخِ وَالْحَبْزِ إِذَا كَانَ مِنْ بَنَاتِ الْأَشْرَافِ لَا تَحْتَدِمُ بِنَفْسِهَا فِي أَهْلِهَا ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ مِنْ بَنَاتِ الْأَشْرَافِ لَكِنَّ بِهَا عِلَّةٌ تَمْنَعُهَا مِنَ الطَّبْخِ وَالْحَبْزِ أَمَا إِذَا لَمْ تَكُنْ كَذَلِكَ فَلَا يَجِبُ عَلَى الرَّوْحِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَهَا بِطَعَامٍ مُهَيَّأً كَذَا فِي الظَّهْرِيَّةِ قَالُوا : إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْأَعْمَالُ وَاجِبَةٌ عَلَيْهَا دِيَانَةً ، وَإِنْ كَانَ لَا يُجْبِرُهَا الْقَاضِي كَذَا فِي الْبَحْرِ الرَّائِقِ ، وَلَوْ اسْتَأْجَرَهَا لِلطَّبْخِ وَالْحَبْزِ لَمْ يُجْزَ لَهَا ، وَلَا يُجْزَى لَهَا أَخْذُ الْأُجْرَةِ عَلَى ذَلِكَ كَذَا فِي الْبَدَائِعِ . - الفتاوى الهندية (١١ / ٣٧٨)

If she said, 'I shall not cook nor will I bake bread; it is stated in the book (but it is not clear which book: Au.) that: She cannot be forced to cook or bake. It is the duty of the husband to bring her ready-made food or bring her someone who can do the cooking and baking for her. Abu al-Layth, the *Faqih* said, 'If the wife refuses to cook and bake, it is obligatory upon the husband to fetch her ready-made food. This is the case if she is of an affluent family amongst whom she was not used to serving; or, alternatively, if she is not of an affluent family, but suffers some deficiency which prevents her from cooking and baking. On the other hand if she is from a poor

family, then it is not an obligation upon her husband to bring her ready-made meals. This is how it is stated in *Zabiriyah*' (an important *Fiqh* book).'

The scholars said, 'These duties (cooking and baking) are obligatory on her from the point of view religiousness (morality). A Qadi cannot force her to do it. This is how it is stated in *Bahr al-Raiq* (another Hanafiyy *Fiqh* book). If he hires her (although a wife) for cooking and baking, it is not right of her to do that, nor is it right on her part to accept wages for it.'

Wife's services to the Husband

The jurists have differed over the obligation of a wife serving her husband. The following is from a product of long years, *the Encyclopedia of Fiqh* prepared in Kuwait:

اِخْتَلَفَ الْمُفْقَهَاءُ فِي وُجُوبِ خِدْمَةِ الرَّوْحَةِ لِزَوْجِهَا . فَذَهَبَ الشَّافِعِيُّ وَالْحَنَابِلَةُ وَبَعْضُ الْمَالِكِيَّةِ إِلَى أَنَّهُ لَا يَجِبُ عَلَى الرَّوْحَةِ خِدْمَةُ زَوْجِهَا ، وَالْأَوَّلَى لَهَا فِعْلٌ مَا جَزَتْ الْعَادَةُ بِهِ . وَذَهَبَ الْحَنَفِيُّ إِلَى وُجُوبِ خِدْمَةِ الْمَرْأَةِ لِزَوْجِهَا دِيَانَةً لَا قِضَاءً . وَذَهَبَ الْمَالِكِيُّ إِلَى أَنَّهُ يَجِبُ عَلَى الْمَرْأَةِ خِدْمَةُ زَوْجِهَا فِي الْأَعْمَالِ الْبَاطِنَةِ الَّتِي جَزَتْ الْعَادَةُ بِقِيَامِ الرَّوْحَةِ بِمِثْلِهَا إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنْ أَشْرَافِ النَّاسِ فَلَا يَجِبُ عَلَيْهَا الْخِدْمَةُ ، إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ زَوْجُهَا فَقِيرَ الْحَالِ - الموسوعة الفقهية الكويتية (٣٠ / ١٢٦)

The Shafi'yyah, the Hanabilah,

[35] And if you fear a breach between the two, then send forth an arbiter from his family and an arbiter from her family.¹³⁵ If the two desire to set things right, Allah will cause their reconciliation. Verily Allah is All-knowing, All-Aware.

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا
مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا
إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

and a few of the Malikiyyah have ruled that a woman is not obliged to serve her husband (i.e. attend to his personal needs). The better course is that she follows the customs (of her society). The Hanafiyyah say that it is a demand of religiousness (morality) not enforceable by law. The Malikiyyah have thought that a wife is bound to serve her husband in affairs concealed (from public), such as those which the custom of her society dictates. However, if she belongs to an affluent family, then she is not bound to serve her husband, unless the husband is too poor (to employ a servant).

In both instance above, the 'religiousness' refers to, not a religious duty, but an act which is evidence of a person's efforts to be as close to the word and spirit of religious requirements as possible, especially where a specific command has not been issued (Au.).

135. The two will have the power to bind or release. It is said that `Ali appointed two arbiters and told them that the remaining together of the disputants or splitting them up depended on their judgment. Upon this the woman said she was prepared to accept what they decided. But the man said he would accept their decision only if they judged in favor of the two remaining together, but if they advised that they be separated, he would not accept the decision. `Ali refused the man's condition and said he will have to accept their decision either way, just as the woman had accepted. (Qurtubi says this is a *sahih* report. But he also points out that Abu Hanifah has drawn the implication that the two cannot be separated without the consent of both). Ibn `Abbas, Muhammad b. Sirin, Sa'id b. Jubayr, Shurayh are also of the same opinion (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

Yusuf Ali comments: "An excellent plan for settling family disputes,

[36] Worship Allah¹³⁶ and associate not aught with Him.¹³⁷ Do good to the parents, the kinsfolk,¹³⁸ the orphans, the destitute, the neighbor who is of kin, the neighbor who is not of kin,¹³⁹ the companion at your side,¹⁴⁰ the wayfarer¹⁴¹ and those whom your right hands possess.¹⁴² Surely, Allah loves not such as him who is proud, boastful.

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

without too much publicity or mud-throwing, or resort to the chicaneries of the law... The arbiters from each family would know the idiosyncrasies of both parties, and would be able, with Allah's help to effect a reconciliation."

The Connection

"The previous verses were concerned with the family, its organization, the means of its preservation and those links and ties that strengthen it and lend firmness to its foundations. The present set of verses turn their attention to the human relations within the Muslim society, whose scope is larger than the scope of the family, starting with the rights of the parents, on to relationship with the others of the society, in order that the feelings of love and understanding that are generated within the family, may spill out into the larger family, that of the humankind, expanding

on from the narrower confines of the closed society - the family - to the open and wider society - the humanity in general" (Sayyid Qutb).

136. When Allah spoke of the husband and wife affairs, and how their affairs could be set right, He followed it up with ten of those commandments that pertain to the general welfare (Au.: with a point taken from Razi).

Shirk and Riya'

Qurtubi writes: The statement, "Worship Allah alone" implies that everything that is attempted should be done for Him alone. Some of our scholars have said that if a man bathes to cool his body or fasts to give rest to his stomach and intends to please Allah by these actions, it will not please Allah, for he adulterated his intention. It has to be purely for Allah. The Prophet has said in a *hadith qudsi*:

أَنَا أَعْنَى الشُّرَكَاءِ عَنِ الشِّرْكَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ عَمَلًا أَشْرَكَ فِيهِ
مَعِيَ غَيْبِي تَرَكْتُهُ وَشِرْكُهُ

“Allah says, ‘I am the least in need of associates. If someone carries out a deed hoping to please Me and, along with Me, someone else, I relinquish My share also to the associate.’”

Dahhak b. Qays al-Fihri has reported another *hadith*. The Prophet said:

عن الضحاک بن قیس رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول
الله صلى الله عليه وسلم (إن الله تعالى يقول أنا
خير شريك من أشرك بي فهو لشريكي يا أيها الناس
أخلصوا أعمالكم لله فإن الله لا يقبل من العمل إلا
ما خلص ولا تقولوا هذا الله والرحم فإنه للرحم وليس
لله منه شيء ولا تقولوا هذا الله ولوجهكم فإنما هو
لوجهكم وليس لله فيه شيء

“Allah says, ‘I am the best of associates. If someone associates Me with another in a deed, I relinquish My share to the associate.’ People! Seek Allah’s pleasure alone with your deeds. Allah does not accept but the pure. Do not say, ‘This is for Allah and for my kinsfolk,’ for what is for kinsfolk is for them, without a share in it for Allah. And do not say, ‘This is for Allah and for the sake of your pleasure,’ for what is for your pleasure is for your pleasure, without a share in it for Allah.”

Ibn Hibban trusted one of the narrators whom a few others did not. Otherwise, the *hadith* has a good chain of narrators: Haythami (Au.).

Another report in Daraqutni says that:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ : قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - : ” يَجَاءُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِصُحُفٍ مَحْتَمَةٍ
فَتَنْصَبُ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللَّهِ - تَعَالَى - فَيَقُولُ تَعَالَى
لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ : أَلْقُوا هَذَا وَاقْبَلُوا هَذَا . فَيَقُولُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
: وَعَزَّتْكَ مَا رَأَيْنَا إِلَّا خَيْرًا . فَيَقُولُ تَعَالَى - وَهُوَ
أَعْلَمُ - : إِنْ هَذَا كَانَ لغيري ، وَلَا أَقْبَلُ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ
الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَّا مَا [كَانَ] ابْتِغْيَ بِهِ وَجْهِي ” .

A sealed record of deeds will be brought before Allah on the Judgment Day. He will say to the angels, “Accept this and reject this.” Angels will say, “O Lord. By Your Might, we do not see except good.” He will say, and He knows best, “It was for other than Me; and today, I shall not accept any of the deeds except that which was carried out for My approval.”

Association then, continues Qurtubi, is of three levels and all of them are forbidden. First, to associate with Allah’s Person. (To assert that there are more than one God). This will not be forgiven. Allah has said (4: 48):

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ
يَشَاءُ [النساء : ٤٨]

“Verily, Allah will not forgive that He be associated with, but might forgive whomsoever He will in anything less than that.”

A second level of association is to associate with Allah in His acts. That is, to believe that others besides Allah can create or produce things, events, or effects. And the third level is to associate with Him in deeds, (one of whose kinds) is to do things to show off to the people (*riya'*). This destroys one's deeds. Again, Sahal b. Tustari has said, *riya'* itself is of three levels. First: to do something to please someone else but declare that it is for Allah. This is hypocrisy, pure and simple. Second: to start doing something for Allah, but upon finding someone observing him, attempt to do it better. The third is to start doing something purely for Allah, to terminate it with that purity of intention, but when praised by the people for the deed, feel pleased about it.

Luqman was asked about the cure for *riya'*. He replied that it is in the concealment of deeds. As for Tustari's second level definition of *riya'*, it can be qualified, says Qurtubi, in the following manner: If a man does a thing for Allah from the beginning

to the end, not wishing that anyone know about it, yet Allah (Himself) exposes it to the people, and they admire him for it, then, if the man feels pleasure at having been guided by Allah to something that meets with the general approval, then that is not *riya'*. Allah has said (10: 58):

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا
يَجْمَعُونَ [يونس : ٥٨]

“Say, ‘(this is) by Allah's grace and kindness.’ So let them rejoice therein. It is better than what they amass.”

137. According to a *hadith* of Bukhari, Mu`adh b. Jabal reports that the Prophet asked him:

هَلْ تَدْرِي مَا حَقُّ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ قَالَ قُلْتُ اللَّهُ
وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ قَالَ فَإِنَّ حَقَّ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ أَنْ يَعْْبُدُوهُ
وَلَا يُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا ثُمَّ سَارَ سَاعَةً قَالَ يَا مُعَاذُ بْنُ
جَبَلٍ قُلْتُ لَبَّيْكَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَسَعْدَيْكَ قَالَ هَلْ تَدْرِي
مَا حَقُّ الْعِبَادِ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ قَالَ قُلْتُ اللَّهُ
وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ قَالَ أَنْ لَا يُعَدِّبَهُمْ. صحيح مسلم.

“Do you know what is Allah's right on the people?” He replied: “Allah and His messenger know best.” The Prophet said: “That they should not associate aught with Him.” Then, after a while he asked: “And do you know what is their right on Him if they comply with that?” Mu`adh replied: “Allah and His Messenger know best.” He said: “That He should

not chastise them” (Ibn Kathir).

138. The Prophet has said (in a *hadith* of Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and Ahmad: H. Ibrahim):

عَنْ سَلْمَانَ بْنِ عَامِرٍ الصَّيِّحِيِّ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الصَّدَقَةُ عَلَى الْمُسْكِينِ صَدَقَةٌ وَهِيَ عَلَى ذِي الْقَرَابَةِ اثْنَتَانِ صِلَةٌ وَصَدَقَةٌ. مسند احمد

Salman b. `Amir narrated: “Expending on the poor is one charity. But your expending on the poor who is related is twice the charity: one of joining the kin, and the other of common charity” (Ibn Kathir).

According to Shu`ayb al-Arna`ut, the above *hadith* is *Sahih li-Ghayrihi* (Au.).

139. The translation of this phrase is based on the opinion of Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah, Suddi, Mujahid and others (Au.). Ibn Jarir has added that the non-Muslim is also included, even if he is a pagan.

The *Sahihayn* have recorded the Prophet as having said that:

ما زال جبريل يوصيني بالجارِ حتى ظننتُ أنه سيورثه

Jibril kept on admonishing him about the rights of the neighbour until, “I thought he would include him in inheritance.”

Another report in Ahmad has an An-

sari say:

عَنْ رَجُلٍ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ قَالَ: حَرَجْتُ مِنْ أَهْلِي أُرِيدُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَإِذَا بِهِ قَائِمٌ وَرَجُلٌ مَعَهُ مُقْبِلٌ عَلَيْهِ، فَظَنَنْتُ أَنَّ لهُمَا حَاجَةٌ - قَالَ الْأَنْصَارِيُّ: لَقَدْ قَامَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى جَعَلَتْ أَرْثِي لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْ طُولِ الْقِيَامِ، فَلَمَّا أَنْصَرَفَ قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، لَقَدْ قَامَ بِكَ هَذَا الرَّجُلُ حَتَّى جَعَلْتُ أَرْثِي لَكَ مِنْ طُولِ الْقِيَامِ. قَالَ: ”وَلَقَدْ رَأَيْتَهُ؟“ قُلْتُ: نَعَمْ. قَالَ: ”أَتَدْرِي مَنْ هُوَ؟“ قُلْتُ: لَا. قَالَ: ”ذَاكَ جِبْرِيلُ، مَا زَالَ يُوصِينِي بِالْجَارِ حَتَّى ظَنَنْتُ أَنَّهُ سَيُورِثُهُ. ثُمَّ قَالَ: أَمَا إِنَّكَ لَوْ سَلَّمْتَ عَلَيْهِ، رَدَّ عَلَيْكَ السَّلَامَ“ الْمُسْنَدُ وَقَالَ الْهَيْثَمِيُّ فِي الْمَجْمَعِ: ”رَجَالَهُ رَجَالُ الصَّحِيحِ“.

Once I went to see the Prophet. I found him talking to a man. The two stood together so long that I feared the Prophet would develop pain in his legs. At last when the man left, I said, “Messenger of Allah, the man had detained you so long that I feared you would develop pain in your legs. The Prophet asked: “Did you see him?” I said yes. He asked: “Did you know who he was?” I said no. He said: “That was Jibril. He was admonishing me about the rights of the neighbour until I thought he would include him in inheritance. As for you, had you said salam to him, he would have returned your salam.”

Ahmad has another *hadith* reported by Miqdad b. al-Aswad according

to which once the Prophet asked his Companions

الْمُقَدَّادَ بْنَ الْأَسْوَدِ يُقُولُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِأَصْحَابِهِ مَا تَقُولُونَ فِي الرِّبَا قَالُوا حَرَّمَهُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ فَهُوَ حَرَامٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ قَالَ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِأَصْحَابِهِ لِأَنَّ يَزْيِي الرَّجُلُ بِعَشْرَةِ نِسْوَةٍ أَيْسُرَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَنْ يَزْيِي بِامْرَأَةٍ جَارِهِ قَالَ فَقَالَ مَا تَقُولُونَ فِي السَّرِقَةِ قَالُوا حَرَّمَهَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ فَهِيَ حَرَامٌ قَالَ لِأَنَّ يَسْرِقَ الرَّجُلُ مِنْ عَشْرَةِ أَهْبَاتٍ أَيْسُرَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَنْ يَسْرِقَ مِنْ جَارِهِ

“What do you think of fornication?” They said it was unlawful declared so by Allah and His Messenger, to remain so until the Day of Judgment. He said: “That a man should commit fornication with ten women is better than he should do so with his neighbour’s wife.” Then he asked, “What do you think of theft. They said it was unlawful, declared so by Allah and His Messenger and to remain so until the Day of Judgment. He said: “That a man should steal from ten homes is better than he should steal from the house of his neighbour.”

Finally, Ahmad has another report by Ibn Lahiy`ah which records the Prophet (*saws*) as having said:

إن أول خصمين يوم القيامة جاران

“The first two to dispute with each other (over each other’s

rights) on the Day of Judgment would be neighbours.”

As to which of the neighbours deserves priority, Bukhari has a *hadith* which says that `A`isha (*ra*) asked him:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ لِي جَارَيْنِ فِإِلَى أَيِّهِمَا أُهْدِي قَالَ إِلَى أَقْرَبِهِمَا مِنْكَ بَابًا

“I have two neighbours. To whom should I send a gift?” The Prophet replied: “One whose door is nearer” (Ibn Kathir).

Adds Qurtubi: As to who is a neighbour and who not, since the opinions vary, it can be said in general terms that those who can hear the adhan of the community mosque are neighbours of each other.

`Ali, Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Sa`id b. Jubayr, Mujahid, Suddi and Dahhak have said that by the phrase “the companion at your side,” the allusion is: a) to the companion in a journey: Someone with whom one goes hand in hand, b) to one’s wife; and, c) to one’s friend (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

However, most commentators have pointed out that every companion has his rights, even if he were to be in company for a couple of minutes (Au.).

141. Ibn *al-sabil* is anyone who is

on a journey, without access to his wealth, even if he is rich (Ibn Jarir).

142. That is, slaves (Ibn Jarir). Ibn Kathir adds: The Prophet kept admonishing about Prayers and slaves on his death-bed until his tongue could move. (The report is in Bukhari: H. Ibrahim).

Muslim has a *hadith* which says:

للمملوك طعامه وكسوته، ولا يكلف من العمل إلا ما يطيق

“Upon the master is the food and clothing of a slave and that he should not be loaded with work beyond his strength.”

Bukhari has a narration which reports the Prophet as having said:

إِذَا أَتَى أَحَدَكُمْ خَادِمُهُ بِطَعَامِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يُجْلِسْهُ مَعَهُ فَلْيَأْوِلْهُ لُقْمَةً أَوْ لُقْمَتَيْنِ أَوْ أَكْلَةً أَوْ أَكْلَتَيْنِ فَإِنَّهُ وَبِي عِلَاجُهُ

“When a servant of yours brings in food, then, if he cannot share the table with him, give him, at least, a gulp or two for the trouble he took.”

Qurtubi writes: Muslim has narrated:

عَنِ الْمَعْرُورِ بْنِ سُؤَيْدٍ قَالَ مَرَرْنَا بِأَبِي دَرٍّ بِالرَّبْدَةِ وَعَلَيْهِ بُرْدٌ وَعَلَى غُلَامِهِ مِثْلُهُ فَقُلْنَا يَا أَبَا دَرٍّ لَوْ جَمَعْتَ بَيْنَهُمَا كَانَتْ حُلَّةً. فَقَالَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ رَجُلٍ مِنْ إِخْوَانِي كَلَامٌ وَكَانَتْ أُمُّهُ أَعْجَمِيَّةً فَعَبَّرْتُهُ بِأُمِّهِ

فَشَكَانِي إِلَى النَّبِيِّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - فَلَقِيْتُ النَّبِيَّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - فَقَالَ « يَا أَبَا دَرٍّ إِنَّكَ امْرُؤٌ فِيكَ جَاهِلِيَّةٌ ». قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَنْ سَبَّ الرَّجَالَ سَبُّوا أَبَاهُ وَأُمَّهُ. قَالَ « يَا أَبَا دَرٍّ إِنَّكَ امْرُؤٌ فِيكَ جَاهِلِيَّةٌ هُمْ إِخْوَانُكُمْ جَعَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَحْتَ أَيْدِيكُمْ فَأَطْعِمُوهُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَالْبِسُوهُمْ بِمَا تَلْبَسُونَ وَلَا تُكَلِّفُوهُمْ مَا يَغْلِبُهُمْ فَإِنْ كَلَّفْتُمُوهُمْ فَأَعِينُوهُمْ »

Ibn Suwayd said, “We passed by Rabdha where Abu Dharr was residing. He was wearing a cloak (that happened to be one part of a two-piece suit), and the other worn by his slave. We suggested, “It would have been better if you had worn the two together.” He replied, “An argument arose between me and one of my brother Companions. His mother was a non-Arab and I taunted him over it. He complained to the Prophet. When I met him he said, ‘Abu Dharr. You are a man in whom there are traces of *jahiliyyah*.’ I said that it was normal that if a man insulted a people they insulted his parents. He said, “Abu Dharr. You are a man in whom there are traces of *jahiliyyah*. These are your brothers who have been placed under you by Allah. Therefore, feed them out of what you feed yourself, and clothe them out of what you clothe yourself.”

Some scholars have, in fact, contin-

[37] (Nor) Those who are niggardly,¹⁴³ bid other men to be niggardly, and conceal what Allah has bestowed on them of His bounty. We have prepared for the unbelievers an ignoble chastisement.¹⁴⁴

الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ
وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا
لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ﴿٣٧﴾

ues Qurtubi, gone to the extent of saying that a slave is superior to a free man in view of the *hadith* (declared *Sahih*: Au.):

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ إِذَا نَصَحَ لِسَيِّدِهِ وَأَحْسَنَ عِبَادَةَ رَبِّهِ لَهُ أَجْرُهُ
مَرَّتَيْنِ

“If a slave is loyal to his master, and does well in his devotions to Allah, he shall have double the reward.”

Muslim has another *hadith* reported by Abu Hurayrah which says:

قَالَ أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِلْعَبْدِ الْمَمْلُوكِ الصَّالِحِ أَجْرَانِ وَالَّذِي
تَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوْلَا الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْحُجُّ وَبِرُّ أُمِّي
لَأَحْبَبْتُ أَنْ أَمُوتَ وَأَنَا مَمْلُوكٌ

“The Prophet said, ‘A righteous slave shall have twofold rewards.’ Therefore, were it not for *jihad* in the way of Allah, Hajj and doing good to my mother, I would prefer that I (Abu Hurayrah) die as a slave.”

143. *Bukhl* is to be niggardly with what one possesses. In contrast *shubh* is to desire for oneself what another

man possesses however it might come, lawfully or unlawfully (Ibn Jarir).

Adds Thanwi: Since the usurpation of other’s rights occurs either out of pride or out of niggardliness, Allah censured the two.

144. Ibn ‘Abbas has said that this verse and the next two were specifically applicable to the Jews contemporary to the Prophet who advised the Ansar not to spend on the Prophet or his Companions, and concealed the knowledge of his advent imparted to them by their Scriptures (Ibn Jarir).

Nevertheless, adds Ibn Kathir, the verse is open in application to anyone who is niggardly and bears the other qualities that have been mentioned in these verses.

Yusuf Ali has a good point: “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

[38] (Nor) those who expend their wealth to show off to the people, believing not in Allah and the Last Day. And whoso has Shaytan as his companion - an evil companion he is.¹⁴⁵

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

[39] What would befall them if they were to believe in Allah and the Last day, and spend from what Allah has provided them? Allah has full knowledge of them.

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

[40] Surely, Allah does not wrong (anyone) even so much as by the weight of an atom.¹⁴⁶ Rather, if there were to be a good (deed) He shall double it up and shall bestow from Him a great reward.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِنْ تَكَ حَسَنَةً يضاعفها ويؤت من لَدُنْه أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

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.”

Allah has said (31: 16):

{ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِن تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ حَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَحْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ }
[لقمان: ١٦]

145. Qurtubi quotes a poetical line from an ancient poet whose hemistich says:

عن المرء لا تسأل وسل عن قرينه

‘Ask not what a man is. Ask what company he keeps.’

“My son. If it were to be a mustard seed hidden between the rocks, or in the heavens, or inside the earth, Allah shall bring it forth.”

In another chapter He said (99: 7-8):

{ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ (٧) وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ } [الزلزلة: ٧، ٨]

146. Yezid b. Harun has said that the *dharrah* of Arabic refers to something that is weightless. It is also used for a tiny red ant. Ibn `Abbas has been reported to have thrust his hand in sand and then blowing off the dust saying, ‘Each of them is a *dharrah*’ (Ibn Jarir, *Kashshaf*, Razi, Qurtubi).

“Then, whosoever did an atom’s weight of good shall see it. And whosoever did an atom’s weight of evil shall see it (also)” - Ibn Kathir.

‘Ata’ b. Yasar has reported the Prophet as having said:

عَنْ عَطَاءِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا خَلَصَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ مِنْ

النَّارِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَأَمِنُوا فَمَا مُجَادَلُهُ أَحَدِكُمْ لِصَاحِبِهِ فِي الْحَقِّ يَكُونُ لَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا بِأَشَدِّ مُجَادَلَةٍ لَهُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِرَبِّهِمْ فِي إِخْوَانِهِمُ الَّذِينَ أُدْخِلُوا النَّارَ قَالَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا إِخْوَانُنَا كَانُوا يُصَلُّونَ مَعَنَا وَيَصُومُونَ مَعَنَا وَيُحْجُونَ مَعَنَا فَأَدْخَلْتَهُمُ النَّارَ قَالَ يَقُولُ أَذْهَبُوا فَأَخْرِجُوا مَنْ عَرَفْتُمْ فَيَأْتُونَهُمْ فَيَعْرِفُونَهُمْ بِصُورِهِمْ لَا تَأْكُلُ النَّارُ صُورَهُمْ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَخَذَتْهُ النَّارُ إِلَى أَنْصَافِ سَاقَيْهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَخَذَتْهُ إِلَى كَعْبِيهِ فَيُخْرِجُونَهُمْ فَيَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ أَمْرَتِنَا ثُمَّ يَقُولُ أَخْرِجُوا مَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ وَزَنُّ قَلْبِهِ وَزَنُّ دِينَارٍ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ ثُمَّ مَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ وَزَنُّ نِصْفِ دِينَارٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَ مَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ قَالَ أَبُو سَعِيدٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يُصَدِّقْ بِهَا فَلْيَسْرَأْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِنْ تَكَ حَسَنَةً يضاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Abu Sa'id (al-Khudri) reported the Prophet: "When the believers would have escaped the Fire on the Day of Judgment, and come into peace, then none of you will be more persistent than they were in the world seeking his right, in comparison to those of the believers who will plead for their compatriots in Hell-fire. They will say, 'O our Lord. They used to Pray with us, fast with us, do Hajj with us and participate in *jihad* with us. But You have assigned them to the Fire!' Allah will tell them, 'Go in and bring out those you recognize.' They will go up to them and recognize them by their faces because the Fire would not have eaten their

faces. They will find a man burnt up to the middle of his calves, and another up to his knees. They will say, 'Our Lord, we have brought out those You ordered us.' They will be told, 'Go in and bring out anyone with a good (deed) the size of a gold coin.' It will go on until He will say, 'Go and bring out anyone with (faith) equal to that of a *dharrah*.'" Abu Khudri added, "If you do not believe, read this *ayah*: 'Surely, Allah does not wrong even so much as by an atom. Rather, if there were to be a good (deed) He shall double it up and shall bestow from Him a great reward'" (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

A report close to this is in the *Sahihayn* (Ibn Kathir).

Ibn Jarir and Qurtubi also relate the following: 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud is reported to have said: "On the day of Judgment a man or a woman would be held by his or her hand and it will be announced, 'People. This is so and so, son (or daughter) of so and so. Anyone who has a claim on him/her may come forward.' A woman (for instance) will joyfully come forward to claim her rights from her father, son, brother or husband. Ibn Mas'ud then recited (23: 101), 'That day there will be no kinship be-

[41] How then will it be when We shall bring forward a witness from every nation, and bring you (O Prophet) to witness against those (people)?¹⁴⁷

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

tween them nor will they help out each other.’ That day Allah will forgive of His own rights whatever He will, but not those of the rights of the people. However, when a man will be told to give the people their rights, he will say, ‘O Lord. The world has been destroyed. How can these people be paid back their rights?’ It will be said, ‘Take away his good deeds (and give them away to those he wronged).’ Accordingly, the people will be paid for the wrongs they suffered in equal measure. However, if the man happened to be a waliyy of Allah, his (remaining) *dharrah* of virtue will be multiplied manifold until with its help the man will enter Paradise. Ibn Mas`ud then recited, ‘Surely, Allah does not wrong even so much as by an atom. Rather, if there were to be a good (deed) He shall double it and shall bestow from Him a great reward.’ But, if the man were to be a wretched one (*shaqiyy*), the angel will say, ‘O Lord. His good deeds have exhausted but the claimants remain.’ It will be said, ‘Take their evil deeds and dump them upon him.’ Thereafter the man will be thrown into the

Fire.” Ibn Kathir adds: *Ahadith* of this meaning can be found in *Sahih* compilations.

147. Suddi has said that on the Judgment Day Prophets would arrive with followers in various numbers, some with only one, others with two, or ten. Lut will come with only two of his daughters. The Messengers will be asked: ‘Did you deliver your message?’ They will say, ‘Yes. We did.’ They will be asked, ‘Who will bear witness?’ They will say, ‘Followers of Muhammad.’ The followers of Muhammad will be asked, ‘Will you bear witness that these Prophets transmitted the message given them?’ They will say, ‘Our Lord. We bear witness that they transmitted the message.’ It will be asked, ‘Will someone testify to the truth of what you are saying?’ They will say, ‘Yes. Muhammad, on him be peace.’ So the Prophet will be called. He will testify that his *Ummah* spoke the truth and that the Messengers before him transmitted the messages. It is in this reference that Allah said: ‘How then will it be when We shall bring

[42] On that day when those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger, will wish that they were levelled with the earth. And they shall not be able to hide a word from Allah.¹⁴⁸

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَعَصَوُوا الرَّسُولَ
لَوْ تُسَوَّى بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ
حَدِيثًا ﴿٤٢﴾

forward a witness from every nation, and bring you (O Muslims) to witness against those (people)?' - Ibn Jarir.

Here is another report in this context:

عَنْ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَقَالَ لَهُ: "اقْرَأْ عَلَيَّ الْقُرْآنَ"، فَقَالَ ابْنُ مَسْعُودٍ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، اقْرَأْ عَلَيَّ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ؟ قَالَ: "فَإِنِّي أَحِبُّ أَنْ أَسْمَعَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِي"، فَقَرَأَ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى بَلَغَ: "فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا" [النساء: ٤١] فَأَعْرُوزَتْ عَيْنَا رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Ibn Mas`ud reports that once the Prophet said to him (they were then among the Banu Zufar, sitting on a rock along with Mu`adh ibn Jabal and others: Qurtubi): "Recite the Qur`an for me." Ibn Mas`ud asked, 'Messenger of Allah, should I recite the Qur`an to you, while the Qur`an was revealed to you?' He replied, 'Yes. It pleases me to hear it from someone other than me.' So Ibn Mas`ud began to recite *Surah al-Nisa'*, until when he reached this

verse, he looked up to find the Prophet in tears (Ibn Jarir, *Kashshaf*, Razi).

The *hadith* is in Bukhari and Muslim (Ibn Kathir).

Qurtubi adds: It is said that the Prophet cried on that occasion so hard that his beard was wet. It was the thought of heavy responsibility on him - of testimony - in a case involving Prophets and Messengers, that made him cry.

148. Ibn `Abbas has said that when the unbelievers will see the faithful entering Paradise on the strength of their belief in Allah, they will say to themselves that they shall not admit that they ever ascribed partners to Allah. So when asked, they would refuse to admit that they ever ascribed partners unto Allah. At this Allah will seal their mouths and give their limbs the power of speech. Thus they will not be able to hide a word from Allah and they will wish that they were swallowed by the earth (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

[43] Believers! Draw not near to Prayer while you are in a state of drunkenness, until you know what you are saying,¹⁴⁹ nor (in a state) requiring major ablution - unless trespassing (a mosque)¹⁵⁰ - until you have cleansed yourself. And, if you are sick¹⁵¹ or journeying, or one of you has come from the privy,¹⁵² or you have been in contact with women (requiring major ablution),¹⁵³ but do not find water, then resort to wiping your faces and hands with clean soil.¹⁵⁴ Verily Allah is All-pardoning, All-forgiving.¹⁵⁵

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّى تَغْتَسِلُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا عَفُورًا ﴿٤٣﴾

The connection

After Allah spoke of those measures that introduce peace in the family and society, now He speaks of an evil that can destroy the peace of both the family as well as the society (Au.).

149. Several incidents have been reported as context of revelation. One in Tirmidhi, rated *hasan sahih*, says that 'Abdul Rahman b. al-'Awf invited friends for dinner. 'Ali was one of them. As usual, it was followed by drinks since wine had not been prohibited until then. Subsequently, they stood up for Prayers. However, the leader recited the Qur'an wrong and Allah revealed this verse. Accordingly, they used to avoid drinking before the Prayers after the revelation of this verse, until Allah completely

prohibited all intoxicants (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir and others).

Sayyid Qutb points out that wine was so common among the Arabs, that the word *samar* which is, literally, 'to trade in any commodity,' had become synonymous with trading in wine. He quotes several pre-Islamic poetical pieces to prove the point.

Prohibition of wine was effected gradually, in stages, with 'Umar seeking a clearer injunction after every previous ruling pronounced by the Qur'an. This verse is the third in the sequence. See note 455 of *Surah Al-Baqarah* for detailed description.

Says Ibn Kathir: One of the implications of this verse is that a person should know what he is reciting in his Prayer. Accordingly, precaution

must be observed in situations where similar causes produce similar effects. Bukhari and Ahmad have a *hadith* which reports the Prophet (*saws*) as having said:

وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا نَعَسَ أَحَدُكُمْ وَهُوَ يُصَلِّي فَلْيَنْصَرِفْ فَلَيْتَمَّ
حَتَّى يَعْلَمَ مَا يَقُولُ

“When one of you feels sleepy during the Prayer, let him go (home) and sleep, until he knows what he is reciting.”

150. The translation “unless trespassing (a mosque)” is that of the phrase “*illa `abiri sabilin*” and is based on the interpretation of Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Hasan, Ibrahim al-Nakha`i, Sa`id b. Jubayr, Abu `Ubaydah, `Ikrimah, Hasan Busri and many others who have said that the verse purports to say: ‘Do not come near Prayers (and therefore do not enter the mosques: Au.) if you are in a state of major impurity, unless you have to, out of necessity, trespass a mosque if it happens to be the only way through, in which case you might hurry by without tarrying there.’

It was so revealed because some of the people’s doors opened into the Prophet’s mosque (Ibn Jarir).

The above is confirmed by that report in Bukhari which says that the

Prophet had ordered all doors leading to his mosque shut, save that of Abu Bakr.

As for trespassing by someone who needs a major ablution, or a woman in her periods, Abu Hanifah, Shafe`i and Malik have ruled that they might pass through without tarrying. If they have to perforce tarry, they must at least make a *tayammum* before doing so. Imām Ahmad, however, basing his opinion on the practice of some of the Companions, has ruled that if one requiring major ablution performs wudu he can even sit in the mosque (Ibn Kathir).

151. According to Ibn Mas`ud, Suddi, Sa`id ibn Jubayr, Mujahid, Dahhak and others it is those who have a broken bone or suffer wounds or the like who have been exempted from ablution (Ibn Jarir).

152. That is, if you have attended to a nature’s call (Ibn Jarir).

153. `Ali, Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and others have said that the allusion by “having been in contact with women” is to sexual intercourse. A variant opinion, that of Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Umar, Abu `Ubaydah, and some others, is that merely being in physical contact with women entails ablution. But the earlier interpretation is

stronger, in the light of reports that the Prophet kissed his wives and then offered Prayers without making fresh ablution. `A'isha told `Urwah that once the Prophet kissed one of his wives, went out and Prayed without making an ablution. `Urwah asked her, 'Who was it? Yourself?' She smiled (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Kathir adds: Although the *hadith* is in Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, some have doubted one of the narrators in the chain. Nevertheless, there are several reports coming from `A'isha as well as Umm Salamah to this effect.

Legal Points:

- 1. What entails a major impurity is not intercourse per se, rather, coming into contact of the two sexual organs, even if the man and the woman do not climax. There are *ahadith* to this effect in the *Sahihayn* (Qurtubi).
- 2. It is also prohibited to recite the Qur'an - save for one or two verses - while one is in the state of major impurity (Qurtubi).
- 3. A man in a state of major impurity is himself clean. He is only in that "state" (remaining physically clean) - Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir.

- 4. According to the Hanafiyyah if water is not available within (roughly) a radius of 1.5 km., *tayammum* is permissible, irrespective of the point whether the man is a traveller or not (Thanwi).

- 5. Except ashes, *tayammum* is possible with anything which the fire will not burn or melt (Thanwi).

- 6. There is no difference, save of intention, between *tayammum* made in lieu of wudu and *tayammum* made in lieu of *ghusl* (Thanwi).

154. `A'isha was the cause of revelation of these verses. It is narrated by her that once she was accompanying the Prophet in a campaign, known as the Dhat al-Jaysh campaign. On the way (at a place called Sulul: Qurtubi), she lost a necklace she had borrowed from someone. She reported to the Prophet. He ordered a search but it could not be found. (That delayed their departure and) the Prophet ordered that they camp there for the night. (It was not a watering place. By the morning, when water could not be found: Au.), some people began to blame `A'isha for the crisis. Abu Bakr entered the tent and found the Prophet sleeping with his head in `A'isha's lap. In his anger Abu Bakr began to poke `A'isha

in her ribs with a stick. `A'isha says: "It hurt me so badly, really. But I did not move from fear of disturbing the Prophet." So Abu Bakr went away. When the Prophet woke up he was informed about the non-availability of water around. Allah revealed this verse (legalizing *tayammum*) and Usayd b. Hudayr greeted Abu Bakr in words: "This is not the first blessing that you have caused to descend, O house of Abu Bakr" (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Kathir notes: The above report is in Bukhari, who adds that Abu Bakr also said some harsh things to `A'isha in that tent while prodding her with a stick. Later, the necklace was found under the very camel she was riding. According to another version, Usayd b. Hudayr told `A'isha: "May Allah reward you well. There is not a thing that happens to you causing you discomfort but Allah makes it a cause of some good to you and to the believers."

155. Abu Dharr has reported the Prophet, in a *hasan sahih hadith* of Tirmidhi, and *sahih* of Ibn Hibban, that

الصعيدُ الطَّيِّبُ طَهُورٌ الْمُسْلِمِ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدِ الْمَاءَ
عَشْرَ حَجَجٍ

"Clean dust is a source of purity for a Muslim, even if you do not find for ten consecutive years."

The Prophet has said in a *hadith* of Muslim,

فُضِّلْنَا عَلَى النَّاسِ بِثَلَاثٍ جُعِلَتْ صُفُوفُنَا كَصُفُوفِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَجُعِلَتْ لَنَا الْأَرْضُ كُلُّهَا مَسْجِدًا وَجُعِلَتْ ثَرَابُهَا لَنَا طَهُورًا إِذَا لَمْ نَجِدِ الْمَاءَ

"We have been given preference over other people in three things: Our (Prayer) rows have been given the same form as those of the angels, the whole of the earth has been allowed us to pray on, and its dust has been made a cleaning agent for us if we do not find water."

Another report in the *Sahihayn* lists five specialties. It says:

أَخْبَرَنَا جَابِرُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ أُعْطِيتُ خَمْسًا لَمْ يُعْطَهُنَّ أَحَدٌ قَبْلِي نُصِرْتُ بِالرُّعْبِ مَسِيرَةَ شَهْرٍ وَجُعِلَتْ لِي الْأَرْضُ مَسْجِدًا وَطَهُورًا فَأَيُّمَا رَجُلٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي أَدْرَكْتُهُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلْيُصَلِّ وَأَجَلَّتْ لِي الْمَغَامِرُ وَمَنْ تَحَلَّى لِأَحَدٍ قَبْلِي وَأُعْطِيتُ الشَّفَاعَةَ وَكَانَ النَّبِيُّ يُبْعَثُ إِلَى قَوْمِهِ خَاصَّةً وَبُعِثْتُ إِلَى النَّاسِ عَامَّةً

"I have been given five things that no one was given before me: I have been helped with fright to the distant of a month's travel; the earth has been declared clean and its soil a cleaning agent for me,

so that any of my *Ummah* arrives into the Prayer-time may Pray (wherever he is) war spoils have been made lawful to me while it was not so for anyone before me; I have been given the grace of intercession; and, Prophets used to be sent to a particular people, I have been sent to the entire mankind” (Ibn Kathir).

Sayyid comments: “There is something that needs attention here. Many people - who are undoubtedly good-intentioned - present the teachings of Islam assigning to them the wisdom that they perceive behind them, either those that are of practical nature, or those that modern knowledge has revealed. This of course is alright; but only within certain limits. For instance, quite often it is said that cleanliness is the wisdom behind ablution. Now, that might be so. But if it is said with certainty that, that “is” the reason, to the exclusion of other reasons, then, that is not free of risks and dangers. Someone might turn up and say that we do not stand in need of this old-fashioned practice. Today cleanliness is common. It is part of everyday routine. If this is the wisdom behind

ablution, we do not need it in this form.

“Similar are the things said about *salah*. Sometimes it is said that it has many physical movements that put all the limbs of the body to use. Or, that people get accustomed to organizing their affairs: for instance, their time, movements, or that of the group by lining up in rows in a congregation, or following a leader, and so on. Sometimes it is said that it is an occasion to meet the Lord with the help of recitations and supplications. Now, it is possible that some of these things might have been aimed at when *salah* was prescribed. But to say that this or that “is” the wisdom behind *salah*, is to trespass grounds overlaid with dangers. Some people have already appeared who say that they have no need for *salah* since modern ways of exercise suffice. Some others say that they do not need the *salah* as they can organize their lives without it. There are even those who say that we do not need the *salah*, for sufficient unto us is the meditation in privacy and peace of our homes... The dangers, therefore, (of such an approach in religion), are obvious.”

[44] Have you considered those who were given a portion of the Book?¹⁵⁶ They purchase error (at the price of guidance)¹⁵⁷ and desire that you should also lose the (right) way.

أَمْ تَرَى إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيحًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ
يَشْتَرُونَ الضَّلَالََةَ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَن تَضِلُّوا
السَّبِيلَ ﴿٤٤﴾

[45] Allah is aware of your enemies. Allah is sufficient as a Protector, and Allah is sufficient as a Helper.

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

[46] Of those who have adopted Judaism they displace the words (of the Tawrah) out of their context¹⁵⁸ and, say, 'We have heard (but whisper), 'We shall not obey,' (and say), 'Hear (us) - and may you not hear,¹⁵⁹ and (say) 'Ra'ina' with a twist of their tongue¹⁶⁰ reviling the (true) religion. Had they said, 'We hear and shall obey,' and 'Hear and regard us,' it would have been better for them and more upright; but Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so they believe not but a little.¹⁶¹

مِّنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُخْفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِ
وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَاسْمِعْ غَيْرَ مُسْمِعٍ
وَرَاعِنَا لِيَّا بِاللَّسِنَتِهِمْ وَطَعْنَا فِي الدِّينِ وَلَوْ
أَتَتْهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَاسْمِعْ وَانظُرْنَا
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَكِن لَّعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ
بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٤٦﴾

156. "By a portion of the Book" is meant *Torah*. The word 'Book' is used here in a generic sense" (Majid).

the reference could also be to quoting the *Tawrah* out of context (Ibn Kathir).

157. The verse refers to the Jews of the Prophet's time, who, despite recognizing the truth, opted to deny the Prophet and Allah's message (Ibn Jarir).

159. That is, 'may you (O Muhammad) lose the hearing power' - Ibn 'Abbas (Ibn Jarir). The words "*ghayru musma'in*" has two connotations. One, "may you not hear anything untoward," and the other, "may you not be able to hear." The Jews meant to use the word in the latter sense (*Kashshaf*).

Opting to live as Jews, despite a new prophet's appearance, amounted to purchasing error (Shawkani).

158. Mujahid has said that it refers to tampering with the *Tawrah* by the Jewish scholars (Ibn Jarir). But

160. They twisted the word *ra'ina* which means, "Pay attention to us," or "hearken to us," in such a way that

[47] O those who have been given the Scriptures, believe in that We have (now) revealed confirming that which is with you before We obliterate some faces¹⁶² and turn them upon their backs,¹⁶³ or lay Our curse upon them as We laid Our curse upon the Sabbath-breakers.¹⁶⁴ And Allah's intent is done.¹⁶⁵

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ آمِنُوا بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَطْمِسَ وُجُوهًا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِهَا أَوْ تَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّا أَصْحَابَ السَّبْتِ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا ﴿٤٧﴾

it would sound like they were saying, "O our shepherd." See *Al-Baqarah*, note 212 for further explanation.

161. 'But such little faith is not enough for salvation' (Qurtubi).

Another possible meaning is that the Jews do not believe save for a few of them. Sayyid offers his comments : "Allah spoke the truth. In the long history of Islam, the Jews did not enter into Islam save in a very small number: those for whom Allah allotted a share in the blessings and willed for them guidance because of the efforts they put in, in the way of blessing and guidance. As for the main body of Jews, fourteen centuries of war against Islam and Muslims have passed over their heads: from the time they were in the neighbourhood of Islam at Madinah, until this day. Their plotting against Islam has been a plotting that has no end, their hatred has never ceased, changing only in style, method and measures. There has not been a plotting that

anyone did against Islam in its entire history, including that of the Christian and the imperialistic world, in any kind or class, but either the Jews were behind it, or had a share in it."

162. *Tamasa* of the original is for wiping out traces of something from a surface. Hence (77: 8):

{فَإِذَا النُّجُومُ طُمِسَتْ} [المرسلات: ٨]

"When the stars will be effaced,"

or (36: 66):

{وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَطَمَسْنَا عَلَىٰ أَعْيُنِهِمْ} [يس: ٦٦]

"Had We wished We could have blinded their eyes."

Here, in the verse in question, the word alludes to wiping the face of all traces of the nose, eyes, lips, etc. (Qurtubi).

163. Some scholars have interpreted these words to mean that they, the Jews, ought to believe in this new Message, failing which Allah will make them blind of eye and turn them away from guidance. But since

[48] Verily Allah will not forgive that He is associated with, but (might) forgive whomsoever He will in whatever is less than that.¹⁶⁶ Whoever associated aught with Allah, has devised a heinous sin indeed.¹⁶⁷

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

the Qur'an is addressing those who are already away from guidance, the straight-forward meaning of disfiguring their faces by turning them backwards, as offered by Ibn `Abbas, `Atiyyah and Qatadah seems to be more plausible (Ibn Jarir).

Some scholars have said that since the disfiguring and turning of the faces backward has not happened, it has to happen to the Jews before the Day of Judgment (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir). But Thanwi says that it is not stated in the Qur'an that such disfiguring will surely occur. It has only stated the possibility. The punishment itself has been pronounced to emphasize the seriousness of their crime (Thanwi).

164. That is, transform them into apes: Qatadah, Hasan, Suddi and Ibn Zayd (Ibn Jarir).

165. That is, if Allah had willed it that they be transformed into apes, Allah's intent would be done, and no power would be able to avert His decision (Au.).

166. There is consensus of opinion that just as shirk is unforgivable, so is *Kufr* (Thanwi).

Ibn `Umar has been reported as saying:

عن ابن عمر قال: كنا أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لا نشك في قاتل النفس، وأكل مال اليتيم، وقاذف المحصنات، وشاهد الزور، حتى نزلت هذه الآية: { إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ } فأمسك أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم عن الشهادة

“We, the Companions of the Prophet, were never in any doubt about a murderer, a person who devours the property of the orphan, someone who bears false witness and he who severs the kinship (that they will be in the Fire, and were ready to testify against them) until Allah revealed: ‘Verily Allah will not forgive that He be associated with, but (might) forgive to whomsoever He will in whatever is less than that’ (Ibn Jarir).

This is a trustworthy report (Shawkani).

According to one version, Ibn `Umar said after the verse was revealed: "When we heard this verse, we gave up saying anything about such people, leaving the affair to Allah for judgment." Also, the Prophet is reported to have said: "My intercession will be in favor of those who committed major sins" (Ibn Kathir).

Ibn Kathir also quotes the following *ahadith* in clarification of the subject at hand. Ahmad has a *hadith* reported by `A'isha (*ra*) which says that the Prophet said:

الدواوين عند الله عز و جل ثلاثة ديوان لا يعبأ الله به شيئاً وديوان لا يترك الله منه شيئاً وديوان لا يغفره الله فأما الديوان الذي لا يغفره الله فالشرك بالله قال الله عز و جل { إنه من يشرك بالله فقد حرم الله عليه الجنة } وأما الديوان الذي لا يعبأ الله به شيئاً فظلم العبد نفسه فيما بينه وبين ربه من صوم يوم تركه أو صلاة تركها فان الله عز و جل يغفر ذلك ويتجاوز ان شاء وأما الديوان الذي لا يترك الله منه شيئاً فظلم العباد بعضهم بعضاً القصاص لا محالة (تعليق شعيب الأرنؤوط : إسناده ضعيف لضعف صدقة بن موسى)

"There are three categories of registers with Allah. First in which there is nothing that is of concern to Allah: a second in which there is nothing that He will leave unsettled; and a third which He will never forgive. Now, the one which He will never forgive is any kind of asso-

ciation with Him. Allah has said, 'Verily Allah will not forgive that He be associated with but (might) forgive to whomsoever He will in whatever is less than that.' The one that is of no concern to Allah are the kinds of deeds involving Allah and His slave such as Prayers, fasts, etc. Out of these Allah might forgive whatsoever He wishes. The third is the kind which involves a man's oppression of another. Retribution will be the only recourse in this case. There will be no escape."

(Although, a study of the corpus of Qur'an and *hadith* will lead to the same conclusion, this particular report has been termed weak by Shu`ayb al-Arna'u: Au.).

Another *hadith* in Ahmad (also in Muslim: Ibn Ibrahim), reports Abu Dharr as saying that the Prophet (*saws*) said:

مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ مَاتَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ إِلَّا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ قُلْتُ وَإِنْ زَنَى وَإِنْ سَرَقَ قَالَ وَإِنْ زَنَى وَإِنْ سَرَقَ قُلْتُ وَإِنْ زَنَى وَإِنْ سَرَقَ قَالَ وَإِنْ زَنَى وَإِنْ سَرَقَ عَلَيَّ رَغِمَ أَنْفُ أَبِي ذَرٍّ وَكَانَ أَبُو ذَرٍّ إِذَا حَدَّثَ بِحَدَا قَالَ وَإِنْ رَغِمَ أَنْفُ أَبِي ذَرٍّ

"There is not a man who said, 'There is no deity save Allah,' and died on it but Allah will ad-

mit him into Paradise.” I asked, “Even if he committed adultery and theft?” He replied: “Even if he committed adultery and theft.” I repeated: “Even if he committed adultery and theft?” He replied: “Even if he committed adultery and theft.” I repeated: “Even if he committed adultery and theft?” He responded: “Even if he committed adultery and theft.” Then the fourth time the Prophet added: “Even if Abu Dharr has some qualms about it.”

Bukhari and Muslim have another version of this *hadith* which reports Abu Dharr as saying:

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ حَرَجْتُ لَيْلَةً مِنَ اللَّيَالِي فَإِذَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَمْشِي وَحْدَهُ وَلَيْسَ مَعَهُ إِنْسَانٌ قَالَ فَطَلْتُ أَنَّهُ يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يَمْشِيَ مَعَهُ أَحَدٌ قَالَ فَجَعَلْتُ أَمْشِي فِي ظِلِّ الْقَمَرِ فَأَلْتَقْتُ فَرَّابِي فَقَالَ مَنْ هَذَا قُلْتُ أَبُو ذَرٍّ جَعَلَنِي اللَّهُ فِدَاكَ قَالَ يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ تَعَالَهُ قَالَ فَمَشَيْتُ مَعَهُ سَاعَةً فَقَالَ إِنَّ الْمُكْتَرِبِينَ هُمْ الْمُقْلُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِلَّا مَنْ أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ خَيْرًا فَتَفَحَّ فِيهِ بَيْمَنُهُ وَشِمَالُهُ وَبَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَوَرَاءَهُ وَعَمِلَ فِيهِ خَيْرًا قَالَ فَمَشَيْتُ مَعَهُ سَاعَةً فَقَالَ لِي اجْلِسْ هَا هُنَا قَالَ فَأَجْلَسَنِي فِي قَاعِ حَوْلِهِ حِجَارَةٌ فَقَالَ لِي اجْلِسْ هَا هُنَا حَتَّى أَرْجِعَ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ فَأَنْطَلِقُ فِي الْحَرَّةِ حَتَّى لَا أَرَاهُ فَلَبِثْتُ عِنِّي فَأَطَالَ اللَّبْثُ ثُمَّ إِنِّي سَمِعْتُهُ وَهُوَ مُقْبِلٌ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ وَإِنْ سَرَقَ وَإِنْ زَنَى قَالَ فَلَمَّا جَاءَ لَمْ أَصْبِرْ حَتَّى قُلْتُ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهُ جَعَلَنِي اللَّهُ فِدَاكَ مَنْ تَكَلِّمُ فِي جَانِبِ الْحَرَّةِ مَا سَمِعْتُ أَحَدًا يَرْجِعُ إِلَيْكَ شَيْئًا قَالَ ذَلِكَ جَبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَرَضَ لِي فِي جَانِبِ الْحَرَّةِ قَالَ بَشِّرْ أُمَّتَكَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ مَاتَ لَا

يُشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ قُلْتُ يَا جَبْرِيلُ وَإِنْ سَرَقَ وَإِنْ زَنَى قَالَ تَعَمَّ قَالَ قُلْتُ وَإِنْ سَرَقَ وَإِنْ زَنَى قَالَ تَعَمَّ وَإِنْ شَرِبَ الْخَمْرَ

“One night when I came out of my house I found the Prophet strolling alone. I guessed he wanted to be alone. So I kept walking in the shadows of the moonlight. But the Prophet spotted me and enquired, ‘Is that Abu Dharr?’ I said, ‘Yes, may I sacrifice my life for you.’ He said, ‘Come.’ We strolled together quietly for a while when he said, ‘The richest will be the poorest on the Day of Judgment, save he whom Allah gave wealth and he spent it in every direction: left, right, front, back doing good things therewith.’ We strolled again quietly for a while. Then he said, ‘Be seated here.’ He made a circle with the help of stones and said: ‘Remain in here until I return.’ He walked ahead into the craggy field until he disappeared. He remained unseen for quite a while. Then I heard him saying as he approached me, ‘Even if he committed adultery and theft!’ When he reached me I could not restrain myself. I asked him, ‘O Apostle of Allah. May I sacrifice my life for you. Who was

it speaking to you there in the craggy field, for I did not hear anyone replying to you?’ He said, ‘That was Jibril. He met me a little beyond that stony field. He told me to give the good news that whoever died in a state in which he associated not aught with Allah will enter Paradise.’ I asked him, ‘Jibril! Even if he committed adultery and committed theft?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ At that I again enquired, ‘Even if he committed adultery and theft?’ Jibril said, ‘Yes!’ I repeated, ‘Even if he committed adultery and theft?’ He said, ‘Yes. And even if he drank wine.’”

There is another report in Ahmad which has Abu Ayyub al-Ansari as saying that a man came to the Prophet (*saws*) and complained:

عَنْ أَبِي أَيُّوبَ الْأَنْصَارِيِّ قَالَ: «جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَقَالَ: إِنَّ لِي ابْنَ أَخٍ لَا يَنْتَهِي عَنِ الْحَرَامِ، قَالَ: وَمَا دِينُهُ؟ قَالَ: يُصَلِّي وَيُؤَخِّدُ اللَّهَ. قَالَ: اسْتَوْهَبَ مِنْهُ دِينَهُ، فَإِنَّ أَبِي فَابْتَاغَهُ مِنْهُ، فَطَلَبَ الرَّجُلُ ذَاكَ مِنْهُ فَأَتَى عَلَيْهِ، فَأَتَى النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَأَخْبَرَهُ، فَقَالَ: وَجَدْتُهُ شَجِيحًا عَلَى دِينِهِ، قَالَ: وَتَرَكْتُ: ” إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَعْفُرُ أَنْ يُشْرِكَ بِهِ وَيَعْفُرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ” (وأخرج ابن الضريس وأبو يعلى وابن المنذر وابن عدي بسند صحيح عن ابن عمر - فتح القدير)

“I have a brother. He does not give up committing the forbid-

den.” The Prophet enquired: “What’s his religion?” The man answered: “Well, he Prays and testifies to the oneness of Allah.” The Prophet told him: “Try and get him to give up his religion. If he declines then try and buy off his religion from him.” The man tried but without success. He came back to report: “I found that the man clings hard to his religion.” At that Allah revealed: “Verily Allah will not forgive that He be associated with but (might) forgive whomsoever He will in whatever is less than that.”

Finally, Imām Ahmad has preserved another report which says that once Abu Hurayrah told Ibn Jaws al-Yamami,

قَالَ أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- يَقُولُ «كَانَ رَجُلَانِ فِي بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مُتَأَخِّبَيْنِ فَكَانَ أَحَدُهُمَا يُذْنِبُ وَالْآخَرُ مُجْتَهِدٌ فِي الْعِبَادَةِ فَكَانَ لَا يَزَالُ الْمُجْتَهِدُ يَرَى الْآخَرَ عَلَى الذَّنْبِ فَيَقُولُ أَفَصِرُ. فَوَجَدَهُ يَوْمًا عَلَى ذَنْبٍ فَقَالَ لَهُ أَفَصِرُ فَقَالَ خَلِّبِي وَرَبِّي أُبْعِثَ عَلَى رَقِيبًا فَقَالَ وَاللَّهِ لَا يَعْفُرُ اللَّهُ لَكَ أَوْ لَا يُدْخِلُكَ اللَّهُ الْجَنَّةَ. فَغِيضَ أَرْوَاحُهُمَا فَاجْتَمَعَا عِنْدَ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ فَقَالَ لِهَذَا الْمُجْتَهِدِ أَكُنْتُ فِي عَالِمًا أَوْ كُنْتُ عَلَى مَا فِي يَدِي قَادِرًا وَقَالَ لِلْمُذْنِبِ أَذْهَبَ فَادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ بِرَحْمَتِي وَقَالَ لِلْآخَرَ أَذْهَبُوا بِهِ إِلَى النَّارِ ». قَالَ أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَتَكَلَّمُ بِكَلِمَةٍ أَوْ بَعَثْتُ دُنْيَاهُ وَأَخْرَجْتُهُ.

“There were two people among the Israelites brotherly to each

[49] Have you considered those who claim purity for themselves?¹⁶⁸ Rather, Allah purifies whom He will. And they shall not be wronged by a thread.¹⁶⁹

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْكُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ بِاللَّهِ يَزْكِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٤٩﴾

other. One of them was given to sins while the other given to devotions. Now, never would the devoted one see the other in sins but say to him, 'Look. Do not attempt that.' The other man would reply, 'Let me and my Lord. Have you been appointed an overseer over me?' One day the devoted one saw him doing something wrong. He told him, 'Woe unto you. Give up that, man.' He replied, as usual, 'Let me and my Lord. Have you been appointed an overseer over me?' The man told him, 'By Lord. Allah will never forgive you,' or he said, 'will never admit you into Paradise.'

The two died and they were brought before Lord of the worlds. He said to the devoted, 'Did you know Me? Or, had you any power over what My hands possess? Then He said to the sinner, 'Enter into Paradise by My mercy.' He said to the other, 'Take him away to the Fire.'

Abu Hurayrah added, "By Him in whose hands is my life, he uttered a

word wherewith he destroyed both this world and the Hereafter."

Quotes from Ibn Kathir end here.

167. "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" (Yusuf Ali).

168. The Jews and Christians used to claim that they were Allah's chosen people, beloved of Him, and as sinless as children. Allah refuted them with these words: Qatadah, Hasan, Dahhak and others (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

The verse could also be applicable to those who attest to their own purity and are praised in their faces. It is disapproved of in Islam that someone should attest to the piety of a person before Allah. (Allah has complete knowledge of every individual: Au.). *Sahih Muslim* has Miqdad b. al-Aswad as saying:

أَمَرْنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- أَنْ نَحْتَجِي فِي
وُجُوهِ الْمَدَاحِينَ التُّرَابَ.

“The Prophet ordered us that we throw dust in the face of those who praises (others in their face).”

The *Sahihayn* have another report which says that the Prophet heard a man praise another in his face. The Prophet told him:

وَيْلَكَ قَطَعْتَ عُنُقَ صَاحِبِكَ قَطَعْتَ عُنُقَ صَاحِبِكَ
مِرَارًا ثُمَّ قَالَ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَادِحًا أَخَاهُ لَا مَحَالَةَ
فَلْيُغْلِ أَوْ حَسِبُ فَلَانًا وَاللَّهِ حَسِيبُهُ وَلَا أُزْجِي عَلَى اللَّهِ
أَحَدًا أَحْسِبُهُ كَذَا وَكَذَا إِنْ كَانَ يَغْلِمُ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُ

“Woe unto you man. You have slaughtered your companion.” Then he added: “If someone has to perforce praise another, let him make it conditional, saying, ‘I believe he is so and so,’ and not attest his righteousness before Allah.”

Ahmad has reported ‘Umar as saying:

فَمَنْ قَالَ: إِنَّهُ مُؤْمِنٌ، فَهُوَ كَافِرٌ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: إِنَّهُ عَالِمٌ
فَهُوَ جَاهِلٌ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: إِنَّهُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، فَهُوَ فِي النَّارِ

“Whoever claimed that he is a believer, is an unbeliever, whoever claimed that he is a scholar, is an ignorant man, and whoever thought he is in Paradise is in

Fire.” A similar report is in Ibn Marduwayh (Ibn Kathir).

Adds Thanwi: Many *sufi shuyukh* seem to be suffering from this ailment (of overrating themselves).

Sayyid has the contemporary Muslim in mind. He says: “The case of those who claim Islam for themselves in our contemporary world is not dissimilar from that of the Jews. They believe that since they are of the *Ummah* of Prophet Muhammad (on whom be peace), there is no doubt that Allah will help them, that He will drive the Jews out of their lands, even if they keep flouting the rules of Islam, rejecting its way of life, refusing to submit to the Book of Allah: in their judicial, economic and social affairs, as also in the domain of habits and manners. This, while all that they have as their share of Islam is that they carry Muslim names and that they were born in dwellings that were once inhabited by Muslims: those inhabitants who used to live by Islam and accept Islam as their way of life. Allah expresses His surprise over the Jews of the Prophet’s time who claimed purity for themselves. But the affair of Muslims is more bewildering: touching the borders of amazement and astonishment.”

[50] Look then how they fasten lies upon Allah.¹⁷⁰ And that is enough of a manifest sin.

انظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ
وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٠﴾

[51] Have you considered those that were given a portion of the Book (but) they believe in sorcery¹⁷¹ and taghut¹⁷² and say about the pagans that they are better guided on the Way than the believers?¹⁷³

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ
يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ
لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
سَبِيلًا ﴿٥١﴾

169. The word in the original is “*fatil*” which is used both for the little dirt that collects at the joint between the fingers as well as for the thin fibre that is found in the groove of the date stone (Ibn Jarir).

الْعِبَائِفَةُ وَالطَّرْقُ وَالطَّيْرَةُ مِنَ الْجِبْتِ

“To divine things by the flight of birds, or by drawing lines, constitutes *jibt*” (Ibn Kathir and others).

170. The Jews and the Christians fasten a lie upon Allah when they say that they are His beloved, or will not enter Hell but for a couple of days, or that they are as sinless as a new born babe (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

171. Opinions vary over the word *jibt* of the original as to its exact connotation. `Ikrimah has said that *jibt* is used for *Shaytan* in the Abyssinian language. Ibn Jarir summarizes various opinions by saying that *jibt* (and the following word) *taghut* are generic terms by which are meant everything that is worshipped besides Allah. Abu Da’ud has a *hadith* which says:

172. `Umar, Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ata’, `Ikrimah, Sa`id b. Jubayr, Sha`bi, Hasan and `Atiyyah have said that the *jibt* of the original alludes to sorcery and *taghut* to *Shaytan*. However, in view of other interpretations offered by others of the *Salaf*, *jibt* and *taghut* can be interpreted as any object, living or non-living, that is worshipped besides Allah (as Imām Malik has said: Ibn Kathir), be they sorcerers, soothsayers, idols or *Shaytan*. Thus, at the time of revelation the words were applicable to Huyyiy b. Ukhtab, Ka`b b. al-Ashraf and others, which is another interpretation coming from Ibn `Abbas (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir). For *taghut* see also *Al-Baqarah* note 553 (Au.).

173. Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah, Suddi and others have reported that when Ka`b b. al-Ashraf visited Makkah the Quraysh asked him about themselves and the Prophet and his followers as to who was better guided, he said emphatically that they, the pagans, were better guided than the Muslims and that their religion was superior to Islam (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir). It is also reported that (in a second incident: Au.) Huyyiy b. Ukhtab (and 30 other Jews went to Makkah, seeking alliance with the Makkans against the Prophet: *Ma`arif*). During the talks (the Makkans insisted that the Jews prostrate themselves before their idols to prove their fidelity, and the Jews complied: *Ma`arif*), the Makkans asked them what they thought of them and the Prophet saying, "We are illiterate while you read the holy Scriptures. Give us your opinion of us and Muhammad." The Jews enquired: "What are you and what is Muhammad?" The Makkans said: "Well, We join the blood relations, sacrifice for God, water the pilgrims, free the slaves." The Jews asked: "And what is Muhammad?" The Makkans replied: "He is a weak man who cuts asunder blood relationship and has as his followers thieves of Ghifar tribe (meaning perhaps Abu Dhar Ghifari:

Au.)." The Jews told them that they were certainly better guided and that their religion was better than that of Muhammad (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani, *Ma`arif*).

It might be noted that neither the Quraysh nor the Jews were unaware of the true nature of the religion that the Prophet was preaching and the religion that the Quraysh were following (Au.).

Sayyid comments: "There is not much variation in the theme. The Jews say today: the pagans are better guided than the Muslims. They use all the means of media and propaganda that their hands possess, to plant doubts about Islamic movements appearing anywhere on the globe. They offer their unconditional support to the misguided people in their efforts to destroy those movements, exactly as they offered their whole-hearted help and support to the pagans of Quraysh against the Islamic movement of that time. Although in the modern times they have - following their perverted and cunning nature and guileful methods of the contemporary world - discreetly changed their techniques. Now they do not openly praise falsehood and its followers, rather, content themselves with planting doubts

[52] They are the ones upon whom Allah has laid His curse. And you shall not find a helper for him whom Allah has cursed.¹⁷⁴

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يَلْعَنِ اللَّهُ
فَلَنْ نَجِدَ لَهُ نَصِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾

and cynicism about the truth and its followers, in order to indirectly help falsehood in the destruction and defeat of the truth. For, in the contemporary world, open praise and commendation of falsehood is looked at with suspicion and might cast doubts on the conniving supporters of falsehood... Indeed, their cunning is of such order, that sometimes they even express their dislike and enmity of their own friends and affiliates speaking out hollow words against them in order to drive away all doubts about their own sincerity and impartiality. (But at heart they are with them, aiding them by all means possible)... It is the same plan, the same scheme, same methods and same objectives, because of which Allah loves them - but with curse, and anger, and lack of divine support - so that victory will never be theirs, even if they were to be able to muster the help of the whole world in their cause: 'These are the ones upon whom Allah has laid His curse. And you shall not find a helper for him whom Allah has cursed.'

174. Mufti Shafi` writes the following: *La`nah* (curse) implies that the one cursed is away from Allah's mercy and so has ignominy attached to his neck. We might enquire as to what other kind of people (apart from those mentioned in these verses) earn Allah's curse. A *hadith* of Muslim says that the Prophet cursed those who accept usury, give usury, register it, or bear testimony for it. In another *hadith* he said that the homosexuals stand accursed. In a third *hadith* he cursed those who manufacture wine, drink it, serve it or buy it. There are other acts that have earned the same kind of rebuke.

Since *la`nah* is a thing of such fearful consequence, Muslims have been advised not to curse. In a *hadith* of *Mishkat* the Prophet said:

لَيْسَ الْمُؤْمِنُ بِالطَّعَانِ ، وَلَا بِاللَّعَانِ ، وَلَا بِالْفَاحِشِ ،
وَلَا بِالْبِدْيِءِ ،

"A believer is not given to vituperation, cursing, ill-tongued, nor obscene."

In this context, there is another *hadith* in Abu Da'ud. It says,

[53] Or, have they a share in sovereignty? If that had been so they would not have given the people even so much as a particle.¹⁷⁵

أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذَا لَا يُؤْتُونَ
النَّاسَ نَقِيرًا ﴿٥٣﴾

[54] Or, are they jealous of the people for what Allah has bestowed upon them out of His grace?¹⁷⁶ Yet We gave Ibrahim's family the Book and the Wisdom and conferred upon them a great kingdom.¹⁷⁷

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ
مِّن فَضْلِهِ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ
وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ إِذَا لَعَنَ شَيْئًا صَعِدَتْ اللَّعْنَةُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ
فَتُعَلِّقُ أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ دُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَهْبِطُ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ
فَتُعَلِّقُ أَبْوَابَهَا دُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَأْخُذُ يَمِينًا وَشِمَالًا فَإِذَا لَمْ تَجِدْ
مَسَاعًا رَجَعَتْ إِلَى الَّذِي لَعَنَ فَإِنْ كَانَ لِذَلِكَ أَهْلًا
وَأِلَّا رَجَعَتْ إِلَى قَائِلِهَا. سنن ابى داؤد

When a man curses something (undeserving of it: Au.), his curse rises up to the heavens but, finding its doors locked, turns back toward the earth where it finds doors shut for it, then it goes to the right and left, but not finding an opening returns to the one cursed. But if it is not deserving of it, returns to the originator.

Hence, one should exercise great control over the use of the word. In fact, cursing even an unbeliever is not allowed, unless it is known for certain that he died on disbelief, such as Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab and others of their kind. Accordingly, it is stated in *Shami* (a standard Hanafiyy *fiqh* book) that Yezid cannot be cursed. Further, if one has to curse, he might

only curse in general terms, such as to say, 'May Allah curse the unbelievers,' or 'May Allah curse the liars,' etc. Once, winds blew away a man's mantle. He cursed the winds. The Prophet told him:

لَا تَلْعَنُهَا ، فَإِنَّهَا مَأْمُورَةٌ ، وَإِنَّ مَن لَعَنَ شَيْئًا لَيْسَ
لَهُ بِأَهْلٍ رَجَعَتْ اللَّعْنَةُ إِلَيْهِ

"Do not curse it, for it follows the orders given to it. If it is undeserving of a curse, the curse will come back to the originator."

175. The naqir of the original is for a tiny dot on a date pit stone (Ibn Jarir).

176. According to Mujahid and Qatadah, the allusion by 'those who were jealous' was to the Jews, while Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ikrimah added that by the word, 'the people' the allusion was to the Prophet. Some have thought they were jealous of the Arabs; although it seems to be appropriate that the allusion was to

the Prophet's Companions. Further, the word "*fadl*" (grace) refers to the Prophet and the revelation given him (Ibn Jarir). However, materially, the allusion could be to the Jewish jealousy of the Muslims over victories and upper hand granted to them (*Kashshaf*).

Some commentators have remarked that the reference is to the Jewish jealousy of Muslims of all time for having received the grace of the Qur'an and the Final Prophet (Alusi).

It is said that jealousy is the first sin committed in the heavens, when *Shaytan* showed it in the heavens against Adam (*asws*) and the first sin on the earth when Habil fell jealous to Qabil: one led to *Kufr* and the other to murder. The Prophet has said,

تفسير القرطبي (٢٤١ / ٥)

وهو يأكل الحسنات كما تأكل النار الحطب رواه أنس

i.e., "Jealousy eats away good deeds as the fire eats away wood." And, as a poetical piece say, "Leave the jealous to himself, for jealousy is fire, and fire eats itself when there is nothing for it to eat (Qurtubi).

Note that the previous verse spoke of the Jewish people's miserliness and this one of jealousy: both attributes highly damageable to the human soul (Alusi).

One has to appreciate the accuracy of the Qur'an. To this day the Jews are miserly, both in the material as well as spiritual sense. The state of Israel receives billions of dollars every year from several countries, but never gives out a penny to any other state; and, they bar people to the Lord of the world on pretext that He is the God of the Jews alone (au.).

177. Apart from prophethood, the progeny of Ibrahim was also given temporal powers and great kingdoms, such as that granted to Da'ud, Sulayman and Yusuf. Now, if that was not strange, then, why another descendant's temporal powers trouble the Jews? (Thanwi).

Ibn Kathir writes: Despite the fact that the Jews claim to be descendants of Ibrahim and his progeny, they differed among themselves. So that, while some believed, others denied and refused to believe in prophets raised out of Ibrahim's progeny. How then can you, O Muhammad, expect to be believed in by these people, when you are not even an Israelite?

[55] Yet, there were some among them who believed in him (i.e., in Ibrahim) but some who averted their faces from him. Jahannum suffices for a Blaze.

فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ صَدَّ عَنْهُ
وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا ﴿٥٥﴾

[56] Surely, those who denied Our signs, We shall soon roast them in a Fire. As often as their skins are burned, We shall replace them with other skins so that they may (wholly) taste the torment.¹⁷⁸ Verily Allah is Powerful, Wise.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصَلِّيهِمْ نَارًا
كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا
غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا
حَكِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

[57] As for those who believed and did good works, We shall surely admit them into gardens underneath which rivers flow, dwelling therein forever and ever. For them shall be therein spouses cleansed, and We shall admit them into shades ever deepening.¹⁷⁹

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سُدَّخِلْنَاهُمْ
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ
فِيهَا أَبَدًا هُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَنُدَّخِلْنَاهُمْ
ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا ﴿٥٧﴾

Thanwi points out: The verse implies that there is no conflict between spiritual and temporal powers.

for a hundred years will not be able to cross it” (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

178. The choice of words, “that they may (truly) taste the torment,” indicates that burning of the skin and its replacement will be real (and not symbolic: Au.) - Razi.

Thanwi adds: It cannot be said with reference to the statement in the Qur’an (76: 13): “*They shall not experience therein the sun nor extreme cold,*” that if there will be no sun, then what need for a shade? One of the answers is, why should it be supposed that the sun can be the only source of light?

179. Anas has reported that the Prophet (*saws*) said:

حَدَّثَنَا أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ لَشَجَرَةً لَيْسَ فِيهَا رَاكِبٌ
فِي ظِلِّهَا مِائَةَ عَامٍ لَا يَفْطَعُهَا

Further, what the verse quoted by Thanwi perhaps implies is that they shall not experience excessive heat (Au.).

“There is a tree in Paradise, the Khuld tree, that is so huge that a rider riding through its shade

[58] Surely, Allah commands you to deliver the Trusts back to those they are due,¹⁸⁰ and that, when you judge between the people, you judge fairly.¹⁸¹ Noble is that to which Allah exhorts you. Surely, Allah is All-hearing, All-observing.

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

180. The prevalent opinion is that it is the people in authority who have been addressed and the exhortation is that they return the trusts, bestowed on them by their subjects, by judging between them by what Allah has revealed. If they do that, then it is their right that the people listen to them and obey them. This is the opinion of `Ali. Hence we find the Prophet reciting this verse while handing back the keys of the Ka`bah to `Uthman b. Talha on the day Makkah was subdued. (That he did after he had entered the House of Allah and smashed the idols therein. Further, it is said that `Abbas, though according to some other reports `Ali, had aspired that the keys of the House be handed over to him. But the Prophet recited this verse and gave it back to `Uthman b. Talha from whom he had taken it to open the House: Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir). `Umar says he did not hear the Prophet recite this verse on any earlier occasion. (The *hadith* is in Ibn Marduwayh: Ibn Kathir; and in Ibn `Asakir and Ibn

al-Mundhir: Shawkani). It is said that, that led `Uthman b. Talha to embrace Islam (*Kashshaf*, Razi). Further, the Prophet is reported to have said:

رَدِّ الْأَمَانَةَ إِلَىٰ مَنْ ائْتَمَنَكَ ، وَلَا تَخُنْ مَنْ خَانَكَ

“Return the trust to him who trusted you, and do not deceive him who deceives you” - Ibn Jarir. (The *hadith* is in Ahmad: Ibn Kathir; also in Tirmidhi, Abu Da`ud and Albani: Shawkani, S. Ibrahim).

Also see note 399 of *Surah Al-Baqarah* of this work.

Shafi` adds: Before Islam, the door of the *Ka`bah* used to be opened every Monday and Thursday. And, it might be interesting to note that it was the same `Uthman b. Talha who had once tried - before hijrah - to rudely obstruct the Prophet's entry into the *Ka`bah*.

Later, adds Razi `Uthman b. Talha emigrated, handing over the key to

his brother Shaybah, in whose progeny it remains until this day (600 A.H.).

Again, the *amanah* that has been spoken of here would apply to all of its kinds, be they those mentioned above, or those that each human has been endowed with, which will mean to do everything the way it has been prescribed, with the right conditions of heart and mind. Therefore, one should do his ablution well, since that is an *amanah*, one should prevent the entry of the obscene into his house since that is *amanah*, et al (Razi).

In fact, the above is the understanding of some of the Companions such as Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Bara' b. `Azib and Ubayy b. Ka`b (Qurtubi).

Moreover, it should be noticed that the word *amanat* here is in the plural form which implies that the application is general (Shafi`).

A judicial point might also be made note of. Jurists differ over what happens when one has been entrusted with something as *amanah*, but loses it, despite his care, whether he is obliged to return it or not. Abu Hanifah has said no, but Imām Shafē`i has said that he is obliged to replace

it (Qurtubi).

181. "When you judge between the people, judge fairly ..." thus goes the text. The behest is to 'judge (fairly) between the people' ... all the people ... not between Muslims alone, neither when dealing with the people of the Book alone ... rather, between all the peoples. Justice is the right of all the peoples, so long as they are human beings. Human beings enjoy a special status with the Lord of the worlds, and have a special place in the system dictated by Him. Further, every human is covered by the term "people": be they believers or unbelievers, friends or foes, blacks or whites, Arabs or non-Arabs. This *Ummah* has been raised in order to administer justice - whenever it has the power to do so - and it is a special kind of justice: a kind of justice the humankind has never experienced, at least not in the form and fashion that it once experienced ... in the heyday of Islam ... in the heyday of Muslims, at those times when they were at the helm of affairs. It was a kind of justice that the humankind has since been missing, since the times the Muslims lost a say in the running of the state" (Sayyid Qutb).

[59] Believers!¹⁸² Obey Allah, obey the Messenger,¹⁸³ and those in authority among you.¹⁸⁴ Should you have a dispute concerning anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger¹⁸⁵ if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day.¹⁸⁶ Such a course is better and fairest in conclusion.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٥٩﴾

182. The previous verse addressed the leaders. This verse addresses the followers.

فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ اتَّبَعَاهُ. قَالَ أَبُو عِيسَى هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ

183. It is generally understood by the scholars that the Prophet was to be obeyed during his life-time, and now, after his death, it is his *Sunnah* that takes his place (Ibn Jarir).

“May I not find one of you reclining on his couch receiving one of my commandments, ordering a thing or prohibiting another, but he saying in response, ‘Well, I do not know! We shall follow what we find in the Book of Allah.’”

Muslim has a tradition which says:

أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ يُحَدِّثُ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ مَا تَهَيَّئْتُمْ عَنْهُ فَأَجْتَنِبُوهُ وَمَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِهِ فَافْعَلُوا مِنْهُ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ فَإِنَّمَا أَهْلَكَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ كَثْرَةُ مَسَائِلِهِمْ وَاجْتِنَالِفُهُمْ عَلَى أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ. صحيح مسلم

There are, in fact, several *ahadith* on this subject, but the strongest is a verse of the Qur’an itself which says, (24: 63):

فَلْيَخْذِرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ [النور : ٦٣]

“Avoid what I forbid you, do what I order you, to the best of your strength, for nations before you were destroyed by their excessive questioning and argumentation with their prophets.”

“Then let those who disobey his (the Prophet’s) commands beware that a tribulation befalls them or a painful torment is inflicted on them” (Qur-tubi).

In another *hadith* he said:

لَا الْفَيْئَ أَحَدَكُمْ مُتَّكِمًا عَلَى أَرْبِكَيْتِهِ يَأْتِيهِ أَمْرٌ بِمَا أَمَرْتُ بِهِ أَوْ تَهَيَّئْتُ عَنْهُ فَيَقُولُ لَا أُدْرِي مَا وَجَدْنَا

184. Obeying those in authority is no different from obeying Allah and His Messenger. Says a *hadith*:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَنْ
أَطَاعَنِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ يَعْصِنِي فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ
وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ الْأَمِيرَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَنِي وَمَنْ يَعْصِ الْأَمِيرَ فَقَدْ
عَصَانِي. صحيح مسلم

“Whoever obeyed me, obeyed Allah, and whoever obeyed someone appointed by me, obeyed me. Further, whoever disobeyed me, disobeyed Allah, and whoever disobeyed someone appointed by me, disobeyed me.”
(The *hadith* is in Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Majah and others: H. Ibrahim).

Yet, by consensus of Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ata', Hasan and Ibn Abi Nujayh, people of knowledge are also included among those who ought to be obeyed. Abu al-`Aliyyah has substantiated this with another verse of this *Surah* (4: 83):

﴿وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ
الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ﴾ [النساء: ٨٣]

“And, had they referred the matter to the Messenger and to those in authority in them, surely those of them who have understanding, would have grasped the issue (better)” - Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir.

Jabir b. `Abdullah has been reported by Hakim, in a trustworthy report, that he held similar views (Shawkani).

In fact, the third part of the verse, “obey those in authority” is referring to the *ijma`* (consensus of the scholars) whose obedience is unconditionally obligatory on the people, as against those who hold the reins of political power, whose obedience is only conditionally obligatory, since, what they order can have elements of error and sin, while the opinion reached by consensus has no such elements in it. Hence, the obedience to the scholars is included by default (Razi).

Obedience to the Authorities

Since this is an important topic, Ibn Kathir deals with it extensively. He says that the obedience to those in authority, or others, is conditional to their ordering in accordance with the *Qur`an* and *Sunnah*. If they do not follow this principle, there is no listening and no obeying. The *Sahihayn* and Abu Da`ud have the following tradition:

السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ عَلَى الْمَرْءِ الْمُسْلِمِ فِيمَا أَحَبَّ وَكَرِهَ ،
إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمَرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ فِإِذَا أُمِرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ ، فَلَا سَمْعَ
وَلَا طَاعَةَ

“A Muslim has to listen and obey, in all matters, those which he likes as well as those he does not, so long as he is not ordered a sinful thing. But if he is ordered a

sinful thing, then there is no listening, no obeying.”

Another *Sahihayn* narration reports `Ubadah ibn Samit as saying:

بَايَعْنَا عَلَى السَّمْعِ وَالطَّاعَةِ فِي مَنْشَطِنَا وَمَكْرَهِنَا
وَعُسْرِنَا وَيُسْرِنَا وَأَثَرَةَ عَلَيْنَا وَأَنْ لَا تَنَازِعَ الْأَمْرَ أَهْلَهُ
إِلَّا أَنْ تَرَوْا كُفْرًا بَوَاحًا عِنْدَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِيهِ بُرْهَانٌ

“We pledged ourselves to the Prophet on hearing and obeying; in affairs we liked as well as those we did not; in ease and in difficulties; that we shall give him preference over ourselves; and that we shall not dispute with those in authority.” “Unless,” (the Prophet added, “You notice clear disbelief (in the authorities) - something against which you have a very clear argument from Allah.”

Bukhari has another *hadith* reported by Anas which says:

اسْمَعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا وَإِنْ اسْتَعْمِلَ حَبَشِيٌّ كَانَ رَأْسُهُ زَيْبَةً

“Listen and obey even if a tiny-headed Abyssinian is appointed *amir* over you.”

Muslim has another *hadith* reported by Abu Hurayrah. It says:

كَانَتْ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ تَسْوِسُهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ كُلَّمَا هَلَكَ نَبِيٌّ
خَلَفَهُ نَبِيٌّ وَإِنَّهُ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي وَسَنَكُونُ خُلَفَاءَ فَتَكْفُرُوا

« . قَالُوا فَمَا تَأْمُرُنَا قَالَ « فُوا بِبَيْعَةِ الْأَوَّلِ فَالْأَوَّلِ
وَأَعْطُوهُمْ حَقَّهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَائِلُهُمْ عَمَّا اسْتَرَعَاهُمْ

“The Israelites were led by prophets. Every time a prophet died, Allah replaced him with another. However, there would be no prophet after me, rather *kulafa`*: many of them.” They asked him, “Messenger of Allah. What do you advise us do then?” He said: “Remain true to the pledge given to the first one, and then to the next one. (i.e., in the same order: Au.). Give them their rights, for Allah is going to question them about their subjects.”

(The oath of allegiance to a ruler is an essential part of a Muslim’s faith and religion: Au.). The *Sahihayn* have another *hadith* which says:

(عن) ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَنْ رَأَى مِنْ أَمِيرِهِ شَيْئًا يَكْرَهُهُ
فَلْيَصْبِرْ عَلَيْهِ فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ فَارَقَ الْجَمَاعَةَ شِبْرًا فَمَاتَ إِلَّا
مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً

“Whoever sees something in an amir which he does not approve of, let him bear it with patience, for none will part with the *jama`ah*, even as much as by the span of a hand, and die in that state, but will die in the state of *jahiliyyah*.”

Muslim has another *hadith* which says:

مَنْ خَلَعَ يَدًا مِنْ طَاعَةِ لِقَى اللَّهَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا حُجَّةَ لَهُ وَمَنْ مَاتَ وَلَيْسَ فِي عُنُقِهِ بَيْعَةٌ مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً

“Whoever withdrew his pledge of obedience will meet Allah in a state in which he will have no argument in his favour. And he who died in a state in which he had not pledged his hand (to an amir) died in a state of *jahiliyyah*.”

Muslim has another long report on the issue. It reports `Abdul Rahman bin `Abd Rabb Ka`bah as saying:

عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَبْدِ رَبِّ الْكَعْبَةِ قَالَ دَخَلْتُ الْمَسْجِدَ فَإِذَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَمْرٍو بْنِ الْعَاصِ جَالِسٌ فِي ظِلِّ الْكَعْبَةِ وَالنَّاسُ مُجْتَمِعُونَ عَلَيْهِ فَأَتَيْتُهُمْ فَجَلَسْتُ إِلَيْهِ فَقَالَ كُنَّا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- فِي سَفَرٍ فَتَرَلْنَا مَنْزِلًا فَمِنَّا مَنْ يُصَلِّحُ خِبَاءَهُ وَمِنَّا مَنْ يَنْتَضِلُ وَمِنَّا مَنْ هُوَ فِي جَشْرِهِ إِذْ نَادَى مُنَادِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- الصَّلَاةَ جَامِعَةً. فَاجْتَمَعْنَا إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- فَقَالَ « إِنَّهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ نَبِيٌّ قَبْلِي إِلَّا كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَدُلَّ أُمَّتَهُ عَلَى خَيْرٍ مَا يَعْلَمُهُ هُمْ وَيُنذِرُهُمْ شَرَّ مَا يَعْلَمُهُ هُمْ وَإِنْ أُمَّتُكُمْ هَذِهِ جُعِلَ عَاقِبَتُهَا فِي أَوْلَهَا وَسَيُصِيبُ آخِرَهَا بَلَاءٌ وَأُمُورٌ تَنْكُرُونَهَا وَتَجِيءُ فِتْنَةٌ فَيُرْفَقُ بَعْضُهَا بَعْضًا وَتَجِيءُ الْفِتْنَةُ فَيَقُولُ الْمُؤْمِنُ هَذِهِ مُهْلِكَتِي. ثُمَّ تَنْكَشِفُ وَتَجِيءُ الْفِتْنَةُ فَيَقُولُ الْمُؤْمِنُ هَذِهِ هَدِيَةٌ هَذِهِ. فَمَنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يَرْخُجَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَيَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَلْتَأْتِهِ مِيتَتُهُ وَهُوَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَيَأْتِ إِلَى النَّاسِ الَّذِي يُحِبُّ أَنْ يُؤْتَى إِلَيْهِ وَمَنْ بَايَعَ إِمَامًا فَأَعْطَاهُ صَفْقَةً يَدِهِ وَتَمَرَةً فَلْيَطْعُمَهُ إِنْ اسْتَطَاعَ فَإِنْ جَاءَ آخِرُ بَيَارِعِهِ فَاصْرَبُوا عُنُقَ الْآخِرِ

». فَدَتَوْتُ مِنْهُ فَعُلْتُ لَهُ أَنْشُدَكَ اللَّهُ أَنْتَ سَمِعْتَ هَذَا مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- فَأَهْوَى إِلَى أُذُنِي وَقَلْبِي يَبْدِيهِ وَقَالَ سَمِعْتُهُ أُذُنَايَ وَوَعَاهُ قَلْبِي. فَعُلْتُ لَهُ هَذَا ابْنُ عَمِّكَ مُعَاوِيَةُ بِأَمْرِنَا أَنْ نَأْكُلَ أَمْوَالَنَا بَيْنَنَا بِالْبَاطِلِ وَنَقْتُلَ أَنْفُسَنَا وَاللَّهُ يَقُولُ (يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ بِيحَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا) قَالَ فَسَكَتَ سَاعَةً ثُمَّ قَالَ أَطْعُمَهُ فِي طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ وَاعْصِهِ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ.

“I entered the Holy mosque to find `Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn al-`As sitting in the shade of the Ka`bah with people around him. He was saying, ‘We were with the Prophet in a campaign. We camped at a place. Some of us began to pitch their tents, some overhauling their arms and others attending to their beasts when a caller sent by the Prophet called us for *salah* al-jama`ah. We gathered around him. He said, ”There was not a prophet before me but it was incumbent upon him to lead his people to what according to him was good for them and warn them of what was harmful. This *Ummah* has been allotted her well-being in the first generation. The last of it is going to face the worst - things that it will detest. Tribulations will descend hand in hand (i.e., together: Au.). A tribulation will

descend and the believer will say, 'Oh me! This one will destroy me.' When it is gone, it will be followed by another, about which he will say, 'This one!? Good Lord!' Therefore, whoever wishes to be spared the Fire and enter Paradise, let him be in a state of firm belief in Allah and the Hereafter at the time death visits him. Let him go to the people with what he would approve that he himself be brought to. And, anyone pledged his allegiance to a ruler, giving him a piece of his heart, let him obey him to the extent possible. If another claimant arises, entering into a tussle with the first one, behead the second one.” `Abdul Rahman says, “On hearing that I pushed forward and enquired, ‘By Allah, did you hear that yourself from the Prophet?’ `Abdullah ibn `Amr pointed to his ears and his heart and said, ‘My ears heard this and my heart preserved it.’ I said, ”Now, here is your cousin Mu`awiyah. He orders that we devour each other’s property wrongfully and slaughter each other. While Allah says (4: 29): “*Believers! Do not devour each other’s property wrongfully, save (legally, such as) by way of trade between you by (mutual) consent. And do*

not kill one another. Surely Allah is Compassionate to you!” `Abdul Rahman says `Abdullah ibn `Amr fell silent for a moment. Then he raised his head and said, ‘Obey him in the obedience to Allah and disobey him in the disobedience to Allah.’”

(This point, that is, that those in authority are to be obeyed only in obedience to Allah and not otherwise, is brought out by another incident: Au.). Bukhari records `Ali as saying:

عَنْ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ بَعَثَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَرِيَّةً وَأَمَرَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ وَأَمَرَهُمْ أَنْ يُطِيعُوهُ فَعَضِبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَقَالَ أَلَيْسَ قَدْ أَمَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ نُطِيعُوهُ قَالُوا بَلَى قَالَ قَدْ عَزَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَمَّا جَعَلْتُمْ حَطَبًا وَأَوْقَدْتُمْ نَارًا ثُمَّ دَخَلْتُمْ فِيهَا فَجَمَعُوا حَطَبًا فَأَوْقَدُوا نَارًا فَلَمَّا هُمَا بِالدُّخُولِ فَقَامَ يُنْظَرُ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ قَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ إِنَّمَا تَبِعْنَا النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِرَارًا مِنَ النَّارِ أَفَتَدْخُلُهَا فَيَبْتِنَا هُمْ كَذَلِكَ إِذْ حَمَدْتَ النَّارَ وَسَكَرَ غَضَبُهُ فَذَكَرَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ لَوْ دَخَلُوهَا مَا حَرَجُوا مِنْهَا أَبَدًا إِنَّمَا الطَّاعَةُ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ

“The Prophet sent a group of people in a campaign appointing an Ansari in their amir instructing them to obey him. On the way the man he became angry with them. He asked them, ‘Did not the Prophet order you to obey me?’ They replied, ‘Yes.’ He told them, ‘Alright. I have decided that when you collect

firewood and lit a fire, then enter into it. So, they collected together firewood and lit a fire. But when they decide to enter into it, they began to look into each other's faces. Some of them said, 'It is to escape the Fire that we went to the Prophet. Should we enter into it now?' While they were in this discussion, the fire cooled off and the man's anger had subsided. It was mentioned to the Prophet who said, 'Had you entered the Fire, you would have never come out of it. Obedience is only in approved matters.'

Quotations from Ibn Kathir end here.

The leader of the above incident was 'Abdullah b. Hudhafa b. Qays about whom it is well known that although a Badri Companion, he was a man given to jokes. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri has testified this. It is in fact reported that once he loosened the reins of the Prophet's mule during one of his campaigns. Ibn Wahab says he asked the narrator, "Did he do that to make the Prophet laugh?" Sa'd said, "Yes. The man loved to create fun" (Qurtubi).

What Qurtubi is trying to say is that when 'Abdullah b. Hudhafa asked his companions to jump into the

fire, he was perhaps merely subjecting them to a practical joke (Au.).

185. That is, refer to Allah's Book and the Messenger's *Sunnah*: Mujahid, Qatadah, Maymun b. Mahran and Suddi (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Insofar as the "Principles of Islamic Law" are concerned, this is a key verse since, Islamic Law is based on four: The Qur'an, the *Sunnah*, *Ijma'* (consensus) and *Qiyas* (analogy). "The Qur'an" as the first basis is derived from the words, 'Obey Allah', "the *Sunnah*" as the second principle of Law has its basis in the words, 'Obey the Messenger', "*Ijma'*" is derived from the words, 'And those in authority among you,' and, finally, the fourth principle *Qiyas* is derived from the words, 'Refer it (the matter) to Allah and the Messenger', since, analogy is nothing but deduction of a rule, not explicitly stated in the Qur'an or the *Sunnah*, on the basis of what is explicitly stated in them. Now, if, by the words, 'If you are in dispute' it was meant that the Qur'an and *Sunnah* be referred to, in matters that had already been explicitly stated in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* (what are known as the *nusus*) then, differences in opinion would not arise. Therefore, the only meaning that the last phrase lends is that

[60] Have you considered those who profess to believe in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you, but they desire to resort to judgment by the taghut,¹⁸⁷ while they have been ordered to deny it?¹⁸⁸ And, Shaytan intends to lead them astray: far away in error.¹⁸⁹

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ
أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا
أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ
ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ﴿٦٠﴾

if you do not have a clear injunction about an affair in the Qur'an or *Sunnah*, nor have your scholars arrived at a consensus of opinion, then, resort to analogy. Therefore, the four basic principles of Islamic jurisprudence have their basis in this single verse (Razi).

186. The implication is clear. Whoever does not agree with judgment by Allah and His Messenger, does not believe in Allah and the Last Day (Ibn Kathir).

187. *Taghut* here stands for any un-Islamic tribunal (Majid).

188. `Amir and Qatadah have reported that there was a dispute between a Jew and a hypocrite. The hypocrite wanted the case to be referred to the Jews because he knew that he would be able to bribe them. The Jew wanted the case to be referred to Muslims because he knew that they could not be bribed. Finally they decided to refer to a soothsayer

of the Juhaynah tribe. Allah (*swt*) revealed this verse. According to some versions, they referred to Ka'b b. al-Ashraf (Ibn Jarir, Razi, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

189. Sayyid Qutb writes: "Have you considered this wonder of wonders ... a people lay claim to faith ... and then, the next moment they nullify that claim. A people who profess to believe in 'what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you,' but they do not resort to judgment by 'what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you!' Rather, they desire to be judged by another entity, by another set of laws, by another authority ... they want to be judged by none other than the taghut himself ... one who will not draw inspiration from what 'has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you' ... who neither accepts to be regulated nor ruled by 'what has been sent down to you and what was

[61] When it is said to them, 'Come to (be judged by) what Allah has revealed, and (by) the Messenger, you see the hypocrites barring the way to you in total aversion.¹⁹⁰

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَىٰ الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ الْمُنافِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْكَ صُدُودًا ﴿٦١﴾

sent down before you!' In addition, the authority they want to refer to is a *taghut* ... by more than one definition: *taghut* because he claims something that is only the right of God-head, and *taghut* because he does not follow a well-established set of rules or a criterion. And they do not do it out of ignorance, or because of an erroneous judgment. Rather, in full knowledge. It is intentional, and a deliberate step ... They are fully aware of the fact that it is unlawful for them to resort to judgment by this *taghut*: 'while they have been ordered to deny it!' ... Surely *Shaytan* has deluded them. And '*Shaytan* intends to lead them astray: far away in error.'"

190. This attitude is in line with the attitude of the polytheists about whom Allah said in (24: 48):

{ وَإِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ } [النور: ٤٨]

"And when they are called to Allah and to His Messenger to judge between them, then lo! a party of them refuses to come and turns away," and in total contrast to that of the believ-

ers about whom Allah said (24: 51):

{ إِذَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا } [النور: ٥١]

"When the faithful they are called to Allah and His Messenger to judge between them, then their only saying is, 'We have heard and we shall obey'" (Ibn Kathir).

Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir and Shawkani also quote a report according to which `Umar Faruq beheaded a man who had received the judgment from the Prophet but had come to him hoping that he might offer him some concession - because of (his toughness with the unbelievers and) his strong faith in Islam. But Ibn Kathir and Shawkani state that the narration is not too trustworthy. One narrator Ibn Lahî`ah is considered "weak" and, additionally, the chain of narrators is discontinuous. A similar report comes from the *tafsir* work of Hafiz Abu Ishaq, which strengthens the above, but which also does not meet with the requirements of authenticity either. Allah knows best.

[62] How then, when they are seized by a misfortune because of what their own hands have forwarded, they come to you swearing by Allah (saying), 'We intended nothing but goodwill and conciliation?!'¹⁹¹

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ
أَيْدِيَهُمْ ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ يَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ
أَرْدْنَا إِلَّا إِحْسَانًا وَتَوْفِيقًا ﴿٦٢﴾

[63] Those, about them Allah knows what is in their hearts, so keep them at an arm's length, (yet) admonish them and say to them penetrating words about themselves.

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ
فَأَعْرَضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي
أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا ﴿٦٣﴾

Asad notes: "The classical commentators see in verses 60-64 a reference to the hypocrites of Medina who, at the time of the Prophet, outwardly professed to be his followers but did not really believe in his teachings. It seems to me, however, that this passage goes far beyond the possible historical occasion of its revelation, inasmuch as it touches upon an often-encountered psychological problem of faith. People who are not fully convinced that there exists a reality beyond the reach of human perception (*al-ghayb* ...), find it, as a rule, difficult to disassociate their ethical views from their personal predilections and morally questionable desires - with the result that they are only too often "willing to defer to what the powers of evil tell them". Although they may half-heartedly concede that some of the moral teachings based on revelation (in

this case, the Qur'an) contain "certain verities", they instinctively recoil from those teachings whenever they conflict with what their own idiosyncrasies represent to them as desirable: and so they become guilty of hypocrisy in the deepest, religious connotation of the term."

191. "The excuses of the hypocrites on such occasions amounted to this: the prerogative of decision certainly belongs to the Prophet; we never meant to question that. Our object in going to someone else was not to secure exactly a judicial pronouncement, but to bring about mutual agreement, conciliation somehow or the other, between the parties" (Majid).

Sayyid comments: "Its an embarrassing situation for them .. when they return ... aware of the implications of what they did ... hence unable to

[64] *Never did We¹⁹² send a Messenger but (with the incumbency) that he be obeyed by the leave of Allah.¹⁹³ Therefore, had they, after they had wronged themselves (by consulting the taghut), come to you and sought Allah's forgiveness, and the Messenger sought forgiveness for them,¹⁹⁴ surely they would have found Allah Relenting, Merciful.¹⁹⁵*

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٦٤﴾

face the Prophet and therefore have to resort to false oaths to the effect that they did not go to the taghut, (a term perhaps of wide use in the pre-Islamic times also), save in the hope of reconciliation! That is the excuse of all those, in all times, who swerve away from judgment by the Law of Allah and desire to reconcile - somehow - between different elements, between different trends, and between different faiths. That is the argument of those who claim to be faithful, while they are not, and such is the argument of the hypocrites.”

192. Asad comments: “As so often in the Qur’ān, the sudden change, within one and the same sentence, from the pronoun “We” to “I” or “He” to “God”, is meant to impress upon the listener or reader of the Qur’ān the fact that God is not a “person” but an all-embracing Power that cannot be defined or even adequately referred to within the limited range of human language.”

193. “This is to impress upon us that Prophets are not sent so that people may pay lip-service to their prophethood, and then obey whoever they wish. The purpose of sending Prophets is that people should follow the laws of God as brought and expounded by them, rather than laws devised by man, and that they should obey the commands of God as revealed to the Prophets to the exclusion of the commands of others” (Mawdudi).

194. Thanwi comments: Since they had displeased the Prophet by going to the taghut, it became necessary for them that they go back to him in repentance and he respond with a clean heart and pray for their forgiveness. (Otherwise, as we know, it was not necessary for his followers to go to him. They could directly supplicate to Allah: Au.).

195. “Note that it is not the Prophet who is empowered to forgive the sin-

ners, he can only beseech on their behalf. Forgiveness is entirely in the hands of God” (Majid).

Ibn Kathir quotes an incident which is entirely out of his line, considering his master, Ibn Taimiyyah’s influence on him:

وقد ذكر جماعة منهم الشيخ أبو نصر بن الصباغ في كتابه الشامل الحكاية المشهورة عن العتيبي، قال: كنت جالساً عند قبر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، فجاء أعرابي فقال: السلام عليك يا رسول الله، سمعت الله يقول ﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّاباً رَحِيماً﴾ وقد جئتك مستغفراً لذنبي مستشفعاً بك إلى ربي. ثم أنشأ يقول:

يا خير من دفنت بالقاع أعظمه
فطاب من طيبهن القاع والأكم
نفسى الفداء لقبر أنت ساكنه
فيه العفاف وفيه الجود والكرم

ثم انصرف الأعرابي، فغلبتني عيني فرأيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في النوم، فقال: ”يا عتيبي، الحق الأعرابي فبشره أن الله قد غفر له“ – تفسير ابن كثير

Quite a few people have quoted the following, including Sheikh Abu Mansur b. al-Sabbagh, who writes in his book Al-Shamil, the famous incident coming down from `Utabi. He said: “I was sitting near the grave of the Proph-

et when a bedouin showed up. He said, ‘Peace unto you O Messenger of Allah. I have heard Allah say, ‘Had they, after they had wronged themselves, come to you and sought Allah’s forgiveness, and the Messenger sought forgiveness for them, surely they would have found Allah Relenting, Merciful.’ Now, I have come to you (O Messenger) seeking forgiveness for my sins (from Allah) and your intercession with my Lord.’ Then, he recited a couplet praising the Prophet he left.’ He said,

*O ye who is buried at the august spot
The desert and the hills purified thereby
My life be sacrificed for the chamber of
your residence
Therein is chastity, therein generosity,
nobility.*

`Utabi says he fell asleep and saw the Prophet in his dream saying: “`Utabi, seek the bedouin and tell him Allah has forgiven him.”

196. If the above verse exhorted the hypocrites to present themselves to the Prophet, the present one adds that their physical reversion and external submission is not adequate. At

[65] No, by your Lord,¹⁹⁶ they will not (truly) believe until they accept you as the judge¹⁹⁷ in matters of dispute between themselves, and then, find no displeasure in their hearts at your judgment, and submit themselves in total submission.¹⁹⁸

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٦٥﴾

heart also they will have to submit themselves wholly to feel no aversion therein whatsoever (against judgments pronounced by him in affairs of their concern) - Thanwi.

197. After the Prophet, the position is now occupied by the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, as understood by the jurists and scholars. And the judgments they pronounce will be imposed on the people by the rulers (Shawkani).

198. It is related by `Urwah b. Zubayr that:

عَنْ عُرْوَةَ قَالَ حَاصِمَ الزُّبَيْرِ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ فِي شَرِيحٍ مِنَ الْحَرَّةِ فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اسْقِ يَا زُبَيْرُ ثُمَّ أَرْسَلَ الْمَاءَ إِلَى جَارِكَ فَقَالَ الْأَنْصَارِيُّ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَلَا تَرَى أَنَّ كَمَا ابْنُ عَمَّتِكَ فَتَلَوْنَ وَجْهَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ثُمَّ قَالَ اسْقِ يَا زُبَيْرُ ثُمَّ اخْبِسِ الْمَاءَ حَتَّى يَرْجِعَ إِلَى الْجُدْرِ ثُمَّ أَرْسَلَ الْمَاءَ إِلَى جَارِكَ

Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam and an Ansari disagreed over water rights; (when they took the matter to the Prophet) he said: "Zubayr, water your plants and then let it flow (on)." The Ansari (was not well pleased with

the decision). He said: "(Do you say that) because he is your cousin?" The Prophet's countenance changed. He said: "Water your plants, Zubayr. Then hold the water until the level reaches the embankment. After that let it overflow (into the Ansari's lands)," (and Allah revealed this verse). According to another version, "until water reaches your ankles" (Ibn Jarir).

Qurtubi adds: The name of the Ansari varies from Hatib b. Abi Balta`ah, to mere Hatib, to Tha`labah b. Hatib. Bukhari and Muslim have not named him, and therefore, the person remains unidentified.

Thus we see that the Prophet first asked Zubayr to grant concession to the Ansari by not watering his plants to their entire need, rather, to let it flow through his fields as it came in (so that both could benefit from it before the source went dry: Au.). But when the Ansari did not appreciate that decision, he allowed Zubayr

to water his plants well enough, to his satisfaction, before allowing it to overflow into the adjacent fields. The incident has been recorded by Bukhari, Nasa'i and Ahmad (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

The above is the legal position, i.e., one might stop the flow of natural water until it reaches the ankles and then let it spill over to the lower lands (Razi).

Qurtubi points out that it can be deduced from the above *hadith* that the Qadi can, if the disputants would agree, offer a compromise solution (in which one gets a little more than his due).

Thanwi, with his characteristic brevity, solves a problem that some of the modern thinkers seem to have fumbled with. What follows is an expanded form: In trying to understand various implications of the verse, one might keep in mind that, of resorting to (un-Islamic) judgment, non-aversion and submission, there are three levels or three kinds: 1) of faith in it, 2) by the tongue and, 3) by deeds.

First, so far as faith is concerned, it is enough if a man submits to the Laws of the *Shari'ah* at the level of the heart, without any aversion to

them. In the absence of this (i.e. no submission at heart) a man is a kafir in the knowledge of Allah even if a believer in the opinion of the people.

Second, it is also a requirement that he admit the rightfulness and justice of the *Shari'ah* with his tongue. Without this he is an unbeliever in the sight of the people (even if success at the first level renders him a Muslim in the sight of Allah: Au.). However, meeting this condition, and failing the first, renders him a *munafiq*.

Third, insofar as deed-level is concerned it is enough - for one to be declared a believer - if one takes his disputes for judgment to the religious authorities, even if he feels some aversion to it at level of his heart (realizing that the case might not go his way: Au.). This third level is the lowest level of *taqwa* and righteousness.

The above discussion, continues Thanwi, resolves the problem of a person who does not bring up his case before the *Shar'i* authorities, even if he admits the invalidity of the non-*Shar'i* law. Is he an unbeliever? Or a hypocrite? The answer is, he is none. He is a *fasiq*, for he does not meet with the requirements of *Kufr* by meeting with the second

[66] Had we decreed for them: 'Slay yourselves,'¹⁹⁹ or, 'Flee your homes,' surely they would not have done that, save a few of them.²⁰⁰ Yet, were they to do as they were exhorted, it would have been better for them and more strengthening (for their faith).²⁰¹

وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْ اقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ
أَوْ اخْرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ مَا فَعَلُوهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ
مِنْهُمْ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ لَكَانَ
خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ تَثْبِيثًا ﴿٦٦﴾

condition stated above, nor of *nifaq* by meeting with the requirement of the first condition. Rather, he merely fails to meet with the requirements of *taqwa* and righteousness, by resorting to judgment by non-religious tribunals. And someone who does not meet with the requirements of *taqwa* and righteousness is a *fasiq* (and not a *kafir*).

(The above should also make clear, that one is a Muslim, even if he has some reservations at the intellectual level about say a *Shari`ah* law, because of his failure to sort out some problems at that level. In other words, he might say, "Truly speaking, I do not understand the reasonableness of this (or that ruling), but all the same, I submit to it, and I know that in some way or the other it is the right thing." Such mental reservation would be, *insha Allah*, forgivable in view of the fact that he met with both the first and the second conditions. An example of this is the Companions' disagreement with the

Prophet when he appointed Usamah b. Zayd as the leader over several senior Companions for a campaign. When some people protested the Prophet said: "If you are not happy, then I know that you were not happy when his father (Zayd b. Haritha) had been appointed amir over you." Or, in a second incident, when the Prophet signed the peace treaty at Hudaibiyyah, many senior Companions were upset about it. But it was not said that they had no faith: Au.).

199. As, for example, the followers of Musa, who were ordered to kill each other in verse 53 of *Surah Al-Baqarah*: Mujahid, Suddi (Ibn Jarir).

The following is worthy of note:

عن أبي إسحاق السبيعي، قال: لما نزلت ﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْ اقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ﴾ الآية، قال رجل: لو أمرنا لفعلنا، والحمد لله الذي عافانا، فبلغ ذلك النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: "إن من أمتي لرجالاً الإيمان أثبت في قلوبهم من الجبال الرواسي"

Abu Ishaq al-Subay`i has report-

ed that when this verse (4: 66): *‘Had we decreed for them (i.e., the Jews and the hypocrites): ‘Slay yourselves,’ or, ‘Flee your country,’ surely, they would not have done it, save a few of them’* was revealed, someone said, ‘Had Allah ordered us to do that, we would have done it, but He be praised, He spared us.’ When the report reached the Prophet he said, ‘There are some among my followers whose faith is as firm as the mountains’ (Razi, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

In fact, several Companions had made this sort of statement (Ibn Kathir).

Similar reports are in Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abi Hatim and Shurayh b. `Ubayd (Shawkani).

200. According to reports, when this verse was revealed the Prophet signalled at `Abdullah ibn Rawaha and said, “Had Allah ordered that, this man would have been of those few who would have complied.” Similar reports have come about `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud (Ibn Kathir).

In fact, many of the followers of our Prophet had already accomplished

that. At Badr, for instance, they unhesitatingly fought against their kin, slaying some of them. Earlier to that, they had abandoned their homes in Makkah, to settle down penniless, first in Abyssinia, and then in Madinah (Au.).

201. “Had these people been able to free themselves of uncertainty, hesitation and ambivalence, and to resolve firmly to follow and obey His (Allah’s) Prophet (peace be upon him), their lives would have been spared the instability from which they suffer. Their way of thinking, their morals and their practical dealings would all have found permanent and stable foundations, and they would have enjoyed the blessings granted only to those who follow the only one straight path with firmness and resolution. For one who is subject to indecision and hesitation, who keeps changing from one direction to another in a state of uncertainty, life is a continuous exercise in futility” (Mawdudi).

202. “By giving up uncertainty, and deciding with complete faith and conviction to follow the Prophet (peace be on him), the straight path

[67] And, in that case, We would have granted them from Us, a grand reward.

وَإِذَا لَا تَيْنَاهُمْ مِّن لَّدُنَّا أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٦٧﴾

[68] Further, We would have guided them to a Straight Path.²⁰²

وَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ﴿٦٨﴾

[69] And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, they are with those whom Allah has favored: the Prophets, Siddiqun,²⁰³ the martyrs and the righteous.²⁰⁴ good companions are they.²⁰⁵

وَمَن يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا ﴿٦٩﴾

[70] That is the bounty from Allah. And Allah suffices as One who knows.

ذَٰلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ عَٰلِمًا ﴿٧٠﴾

of their endeavours would have opened up before them. They would have been able to perceive clearly the channels into which their energies should be directed, so that each step they took would be a step towards the true goal” (Mawdudi).

203. (Sadiq is someone who speaks the truth and proves himself true to what he claims as true: Au.). Siddiq is its intensive form. It is also said that the best of the followers of a Prophet are known as *Siddiqun* (Shawkani).

It is also said that *Siddiq* is someone who has a firm belief that everything of the religion of Islam is true, without any doubt or reservation whatsoever. Yet another opinion is that it is he who outstrips others in testifying to the truthfulness of a Messenger

(Razi).

204. Sa'id ibn Jubayr, Qatadah, Suddi and Ibn Rabi` have said that,

جاء رجل من الأنصار إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو محزون، فقال له النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: ”يا فلان ما لي أراك محزوناً؟“ فقال: يا نبي الله شيء فكرت فيه، فقال: ما هو؟ قال: نحن نغدو عليك ونروح ننظر إلى وجهك ونجالسك وغداً ترفع مع النبيين فلا نصل إليك، فلم يرد النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم شيئاً، فأتاه جبريل بهذه الآية {وَمَن يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ النَّبِيِّينَ}. فبعث النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فبشره

Once, an Ansari came to the Prophet with a gloomy face. The Prophet asked him the reason. He said: “Apostle of Allah. I was thinking about something.” He asked what it was. He said, “We come to you morning and evening and sit in your company. To-

morrow you will be taken away into the company of Prophets. We will not be able to reach you.” The Prophet did not say anything in reply. Then Jibril came down with this verse. The Prophet sent for him and gave him the good news (Ibn Jarir).

The report seems to have good narrators (Ibn Kathir). Dia' Maqdisi has said that the report is of *hasan* status (Shawkani).

Kashshaf, Razi and Qurtubi have named Thawban as the Ansari of the above report or of others of similar content.

It is reported of another Ansari that when he was told of the death of the Prophet, he prayed to Allah that He blind him because he had lost interest in everything and wished to see nothing after him. It is said that he became blind on the spot (Razi, Qurtubi).

Ibn Kathir adds few more *ahadith*. One is in Muslim in which Ka' b b. al-Aslami says:

كنت أبيت عند النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فأتيته بوضوئه وحاجته، فقال لي: ”سَلْ“. فقلت: يا رسول الله، أسألك مرافقتك في الجنة. فقال: ”أَوْ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ؟“ قلت: هو ذاك. قال: ”فَأَعِنِّي عَلَى نَفْسِكَ بِكَثْرَةِ السُّجُودِ“. صحيح مسلم

“I used to spend the night nearby

the Prophet. Once I brought him water for ablution and for cleansing himself. He said: “Ask.” I said, “Messenger of Allah, I seek your companionship in Paradise.” He said, “Ask for something else.” I said, “That’s for me.” He said: “Then help me for yourself with plenty of prostrations.”

Ahmad has a tradition related by `Amr b. al-Juhanni who says a man came to the Prophet and said:

يا رسول الله شهدت أن لا إله إلا الله وأنت رسول الله وصليت الخمس وأديت زكاة مالي وصمت شهر رمضان. فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ”من مات على هذا كان مع النبيين والصديقين والشهداء يوم القيامة هكذا - ونصب أصبعيه- ما لم يعق والديه“

“Apostle of Allah. I testify that there is no deity save Allah, and that you are His messenger. I do my five daily Prayers, offer my *zakah* and fast 30 days of *Ramadan*.” the Prophet replied: “Whoever died on this would be (and pressing his two fingers) with those whom Allah has favoured: Prophets, *Siddiqun*, martyrs and the righteous so long as he did not mistreat his parents.”

In another *hadith* of Tirmidhi, rated *hasan* by him, the Prophet said:

التاجر الصدوق الأمين مع النبيين والصديقين

والشهداء

وصدقوا المرسلين“.

“The honest and trustworthy trader will be with those whom Allah has favoured: the Prophets, *Siddiqun*, and the martyrs.”

However, the best *hadith* is that which almost reaches the *mutawatir* status

من طرق متواترة عن جماعة من الصحابة: أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم سئل عن الرجل يحب القوم ولما يلحق بهم؟ فقال: “المرء مع من أحب” قال أنس: فما فرح المسلمون فرحهم بهذا الحديث. صحيحين

The Prophet was asked about a man who loves a people but is not able to join them. The Prophet said: “A man will be with those he used to love.” It is said that the Companions were rarely seen as happy as when they heard this.

Again, we have a *hadith* of the *Sahihayn* which reports the Prophet as having said:

”إن أهل الجنة ليتراءون أهل الغرف من فوقهم، كما تتراءون الكوكب الدري الغابر من الأفق من المشرق أو المغرب لتتفاضل ما بينهم“. قالوا: يا رسول الله، تلك منازل الأنبياء لا يبلغها غيرهم؟ قال: ”بلى، والذي نفسي بيده، رجال آمنوا بالله

“The dwellers of Paradise will see the people of the ghuraf from high above as you see the stars in the horizon. That (distance) because of the rank and level difference between them.” They said: “Messenger of Allah. Those must be the dwelling places of Prophets.” He replied: “No, by Him in whose hands is my life. Those would be for people who believed in Allah and His messengers.”

Quotation from Ibn Kathir ends here.

205. According to a report of `A'isha in Bukhari and Muslim, when she heard these words from the Prophet: “In the company of those whom Allah has favoured: the Prophets, *Siddiqun*, the martyrs and the righteous,” in his final sickness, she knew that the Prophet would shortly die (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

206. What it means is, do not sit back and relax, rather prepare yourself against the enemies of Islam (*Ruh*).

[71] Believers! Take your precautions (against the unbelievers);²⁰⁶ then go forward (in small detachments or go forward all together).²⁰⁷

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا خُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ فَانفِرُوا
ثِبَاتٍ أَوْ انفِرُوا جَمِيعًا ﴿٧١﴾

Mawdudi writes: “This discourse was revealed after the battle of Uhud, when the tribes living around Madina had been greatly encouraged by the defeat of the Muslims. The dangers seemed to surround the Muslims on all sides. Day in and day out news poured in about the hostile intentions of some tribe after another ... Beyond Madina neither their life nor property was secure. Consequently, the Muslims had to prepare themselves for a fierce struggle for a tremendous all out effort to ensure that the Islamic movement would not be crushed.”

207. The meaning hidden in the words “go forward all together” is that a man must try and take part in every good activity before his appointed term ends (Ruh).

Asad writes: “The problem of war as such arises from the principles of ideological statehood postulated in verse 59 of this *Surah*. Since the Muslims are expected to organize their communal life within the framework of a state based on the ideological premises laid down in the Qur’ān, they

must be ready for hostility on the part of groups or nations opposed to the world-view and the social system of Islam and, conceivably, bent on its destruction: consequently, the concept of a defensive war in God’s cause (*jihad*) plays a very prominent role in the socio-political scheme of Islam and is frequently alluded to throughout the Qur’ān.”

Since the concept that Islam sanctions only a defensive war is commonly prevalent, the above requires a slight modification. The words “defensive war,” destroy the objective “in God’s cause” stated in the same sentence. *Jihad* can only be “in God’s cause,” if it is waged to uphold the Word of God and put down the Word of taghut. Helping the oppressed Muslims, is only subsidiary and an additional cause, and cannot be called “God’s cause” per se. Also see note 212 below. Though of course, this is all theory. In actual fact, Muslims will have to keep conducting the *Jihad* of self-defence because never will they be spared the enemy-sword (Au.).

[72] Surely, there are some among you who drag their feet,²⁰⁸ then, if an affliction befalls you, he says: 'Allah favored me that I was not present with them.'

وَإِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لَيُبَطِّئَنَّ فَإِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ
مُصِيبَةٌ قَالَ فَمَا نِعِمَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ إِذْ لَمْ أَكُنْ
مَعَهُمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٢﴾

[73] But if a good fortune from Allah visits you, he says - as if there was no affection between you and him²⁰⁹ - 'How I wish I was with them. I would have then made a great fortune.'²¹⁰

وَلَكِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ فَضْلٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَيَقُولَنَّ كَأَنْ
لَّمْ تَكُنْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ مَوَدَّةٌ يَا لَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ
مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُورَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٣﴾

[74] Let those then, who (will readily) sell the life of this world for the next, fight in the way of Allah.²¹¹ Whoso fights in the way of Allah and is slain, or overcomes (the enemy), We shall surely bestow on him a mighty reward.²¹²

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

208. Such as those who do not prepare themselves - with arms and provisions - for the battles that are anticipated (Ibn Kathir).

209. There was, in fact, no love and affection between the hypocrites and Muslims, but this is what they used to claim (and these words were added to refute their claim) - Zamakhshari.

210. Mujahid, Qatadah and Ibn Jurayj have said that the allusion is to the hypocrite in this verse (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Yusuf Ali explains: "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."

211. Depending on how yashruna is understood, whether in the sense of selling, or, alternatively, in the sense of buying, which both are grammatically possible, the verse can also be translated as: "Let (the believers) fight in the way of Allah, those (unbelievers) who sell their Hereafter for this present one..." But most of the commentators have understood it as adopted here (Au.).

212. So, for a believer fighting in the

[75] How is it with you, that you do not fight in the way of Allah, and in the way of oppressed men, women and children pleading: 'Our Lord, rescue us from the people of this tyrannous town, and appoint for us a protector from You, and appoint to us a helper from You.²¹³

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

[76] The believers fight in the way of Allah, while the unbelievers fight in the way of taghut.²¹⁴ Fight you, then, against the friends of Shaytan. Shaytan's guile is weak indeed.²¹⁵

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

way of Allah, it is either martyrdom or victory. Defeat is out of the question (based on Majid's note).

214. For explanation of the word taghut see note 172 of this *Surah* and 553 of *Al-Baqarah*.

213. Thus, there are two reasons that entail the necessity of *jihad*: one, to establish the religion of Allah, and the other to help the oppressed Muslims (Shabbir).

215 "Thus the Qur'an implies that "evil" is not an independent, esoteric factor of life, but rather a result of a man's succumbing to the temptations arising from his own moral weakness and thereby "denying the truth". In other words, the "power" of the negative principle symbolized by Satan has no intrinsic reality ("Satan's guile is weak indeed"): it becomes real only through man's wilfully choosing a wrong course of action' (Asad).

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Suddi, Hasan and Ibn Zayd say that the situation refers to the early days after hijrah when weak men, women and children were left back in Makkah and were the target of persecution (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn `Abbas has said in a report of Bukhari: "I and my mother were the "oppressed ones" that Allah spoke of in this verse (Ibn Kathir).

216. Ibn `Abbas has said that once, tired of persecution in Makkah, `Abdul Rahman ibn `Awf and others complained to the Prophet: "As

[77] *Have you considered those who were told, 'Restrain yourselves. And, (in the meantime), establish the Prayers and pay the zakah?';²¹⁶ but as soon as fighting was prescribed for them, a party of them began to fear the people as they ought to fear Allah, or even more, and began to plead, 'O Our Lord. Why did you prescribe fighting for us? Why did You not grant us respite for a short while?!'²¹⁷ Say, 'Short are the enjoyments of the world, and the Hereafter is better for him who fears (his Lord).²¹⁸ And you shall not be wronged (even) by a thread.²¹⁹*

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالُ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنَا إِلَى أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِمَنِ اتَّقَى وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٧٧﴾

polytheists, we were people of honour. But, after Islam we are being humiliated.” the Prophet told them: “I have been ordered to forgive. Therefore, do not retaliate” (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Kathir adds: A similar report is in Nasa'i. And, one of the reasons for restraining the Muslims was that they were in the holy precincts where fighting was unlawful.

The above report is also in Hakim who has declared it trustworthy (Shawkani).

On the question of why Islam did not reply force with force in Makkah, Sayyid Qutb has the following to say in summary:

“First of all, we need to realize that in these matters we are speaking on behalf of Allah. We might assume

things. But we might be right, we might be wrong. There might have been reasons that are not clear to us, known by Allah alone. Therefore, a believer's attitude should be, whether it is the question of *jihad*, or other matters such as the wisdom behind Prayers, *zakah* and so on, that whatever his own reason and logic lead him on to, he only takes them as possibilities and fair guesses, but no more. He is never certain about them, and will never assure himself that there is nothing beyond them. Thus disciplining ourselves, we can look into some of what we think could have been the reasons for not legislating *jihad* in Makkah:

a) It was a phase involving discipline, training and preparation of an assortment of people, in a particular atmosphere, overruled by certain factors:

being trained especially in patience and perseverance, and in the obedience to a leadership ... that leadership itself of a more profound order, and not the tribal order.

b) Probably because a pacifist method suited the milieu in which Islam appeared: the milieu and culture of the Quraysh, the proud men, who would not bow down to force, rather, fight on.

c) To avoid turning every home into a battle-ground, especially when an organized authority was also lacking that could restore order after the chaos. Islam would have been squarely blamed for the resulting chaos. In fact, even without any retaliation by the persecuted Muslims, Islam was being blamed for dividing homes and putting sons against fathers.

d) It was from the knowledge that many of those who were then torturing Muslims and persecuting them, would themselves later turn into ardent soldiers of Islam.

e) The sense of honour that the Arabs were endowed with worked in favour of Islam. If there were some of them who were torturing weak Muslims, there were others who sympathized with them, and felt guilty about it.

f) Fewness of Muslims could have been another reason. The non-Makkan Arabs treated the struggle between the Quraysh and the early Muslims as a family quarrel in which they would not interfere. Had the Muslims clashed with the Quraysh ... and lost ... Islam would have ended there.

g) The central figure, that of Prophet Muhammad, on whom be peace, was himself well-protected by Banu Hashim. Their protection gave him freedom to preach among the Makkans and the adjoining tribes. So long as the freedom to propagate was there, there was no pressing reason to opt for the use of force.

217. The words in the original are '*ila ajalin qaribin*' which have been interpreted as meaning, 'until our deaths' (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

These were the words of the hypocrites (Qurtubi, Alusi).

Some commentators have attributed this behaviour to the weak Muslims. Although nothing has been said by way of substantiation, the possibility exists of some weak-hearted Muslims being unhappy over the ordinance to fight. Thanwi has said that since such of those as alluded to here did not

[78] Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you,²²⁰ although you should be in fortified castles.²²¹ And, if a good thing happens to them, they say, 'This is from Allah.' But when an evil befalls them they say, 'This is from you.'²²² Tell them, 'Everything is from Allah.' What then is the matter with these people that they come nowhere near to understanding the discourse?

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي
بُرُوجٍ مُّشِيدَةٍ وَإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا
هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا
هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ فَمَا
لَهُؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا

﴿٧٨﴾

shy away from *jihad* when the actual occasions arose, their initial aversion to fight - something very natural - did not entail any sin.

Majid adds: "This verse gives lie direct to the imaginary eagerness of the early Muslims for warfare from love of booty. The truth of the matter is that they felt hesitant, and very naturally so, considering the heavy odds against them and the obvious risks involved, and went to the battlefield only when impelled by a sense of duty."

218. Hasan once recited this verse and said: 'May Allah show mercy to a man who treated this world accordingly. The whole of this world, from the beginning to the end, is no more than a man going in for a nap during which he saw things in a dream and then woke up with a start' (Ibn Kathir).

219. For an explanation of the *fatil* of the original, see note 169 above.

220. A man will die on a prescribed day, neither earlier nor later, whether he took part in *jihad* or not. Khalid ibn Walid said on his death bed: "I have been into such and such battles. There is not a part in my body but there is a mark of a wound that I received. Yet, here I am, dying on my bed" (Ibn Kathir).

In our own times we have witnessed or heard several incidents that confirm our faith in this verse. For example, once a worker slipped off the roof of a high rise building under construction in Kuwait. People rushed down but no amount of search would yield his body. He just disappeared. An hour or so later, he appeared. They thought he was a ghost. He explained that he fell right into an open truck carrying foam sheets. Then he said he would buy

them all cool drinks in celebration of a new life granted. As he was crossing the street a vehicle struck him and he died on the spot. In another case, in Bangalore a hawk was carrying a snake. Perhaps it lost the hold and dropped it to the ground. The snake fell on a man riding the back seat of a scooter. It bit him immediately and he died. In a third incident police fired into a crowd of Muslims protesting against attacks on them. A bullet passed through a man's stomach and went into another. The first man survived while the latter died. One could go on adding similar stories (Au.).

221. Mujahid has the following story to narrate: "A woman gave birth to a child. She told her servant, 'Go and look for some fire.' As the man was going out, he met another man at the door. The man asked him, 'What has that woman brought?' He replied, 'A girl.' The man said, 'This girl is not going to die until she has fornicated with a hundred, and her (present) servant marries her. And she is going to die by a spider.' The servant told himself, 'Will I marry her after she has been in bed with a hundred?' He turned back and cut open the stomach of the infant girl with a knife (and ran away). The baby survived. She grew into a woman and entered

the profession of a prostitute. Once, she was near a port and the man happened to land there (i.e., the former servant). He was laden with great amount of wealth. He enquired in the town about the most beautiful woman whom he could marry. He was told of her as the most beautiful woman of the town, but was warned that she was in the evil profession. He ordered that she be brought to him. When she appeared she said, 'I've given up prostitution and if you want to marry me I think I'm ready.' He married her.

One day, as they were talking, the man revealed the story. She told him she was that girl and showed him the mark on her stomach. She also told him, 'And I used to be a prostitute, but I am not sure if my customers numbered a hundred, less, or more.' Upon that the man said, 'The man (at the door) also told me that she will be killed by a spider.' Subsequently he built her a fortified castle in the desert. One day, as they were sitting together, she spotted a spider clinging to the roof. She cried out, 'This spider will kill me.' She chased it until it fell down. She tried to stamp it with her toe. It bit her below the nail. Her foot blackened from the poison and she died. Hence the verse: 'Wheresoever you might

[79] Whatever good happens to you, it is from Allah. And whatever evil befalls you, it is from yourself.²²³ And surely, We have sent you as a Messenger to the people. And Allah suffices as a witness.

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

be, death will overtake you, although you should be in fortified castles” (Ibn Jarir). The story is also reported by Ibn Abi Hatim (Ibn Kathir).

222. Ibn Zayd has said that what they alleged was: ‘You did not do it well,’ or ‘You did not execute it well,’ and hence this misfortune took place (Ibn Jarir). Ibn `Abbas, Abu al-`Aliyyah and Suddi have, however, said that the hypocrites blamed the Prophet for anything untoward happening to them, whether a natural calamity or a personal misfortune; exactly like the people of Fir`awn about whom the Qur`ān said (7: 131):

{فَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْحَسَنَةُ قَالُوا لَنَا هَذِهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ
سَيِّئَةٌ يَطَّيَّرُوا بِمُوسَى وَمَنْ مَعَهُ} [الأعراف: ١٣١]

“Whenever a good thing happened to them they said, ‘This is from us’, but if an evil befell them they would ascribe it as an evil omen coming from Musa and his followers” (Ibn Kathir).

223. Qatadah has said, ‘Although everything is from Allah, and it is Allah who sends you good things (without

you deserving it: Au.), but when a misfortune visits you, O man, it has your sins as a cause’ (Ibn Jarir).

As for the misfortunes that befall a virtuous man, they are meant to purify him, and hence they are no misfortunes at all (Thanwi).

Shafi` quotes a *hadith* from Tirmidhi. The Prophet said:

لا يصيب عبدا نكبة فما فوقها أو دونها إلا بذنب
وما يعفو الله عنه أكثر

“Nothing strikes a believer, be it a minor mishap or something serious, but it is because of his sins; although much of it (i.e., his sins) goes forgiven.”

Tirmidhi declared the above *hadith* weak. However, a *Sahih* report says:

لا يُصِيبُ مُؤْمِنًا نَكْبَةٌ مِنْ شَوْكَةٍ فَمَا قَوْقُ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا
خَطَّتْ بِهِ عَنْهُ خَطِيئَةٌ وَرُفِعَ بِهَا دَرَجَةٌ

“A believer is not pricked by a thorn or anything above it, but his sins fall off thereby and his rank is raised.”

Asad paraphrases the Islamic view-

[80] Whosoever obeys the Messenger, thereby obeys Allah.²²⁴ As for him who turns away: We have not sent you a watcher over them.

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

point in a neat manner: “There is no contradiction between this statement and the preceding one that “all is from God”. In the world-view of the Qur’ān, God is the ultimate source of all happenings: consequently, all good that comes to man and all evil that befalls him flows, in the last resort, from God’s will. However, not everything that man regards as “evil fortune” is really, in its final effect, evil - for, “*It may well be that you hate a thing the while it is good for you, and it may well be that you love a thing the while it is bad for you: and God knows, whereas you do not know*” (2: 216). Thus, many an apparent “evil” may sometimes be no more than a trial and a God-willed means of spiritual growth through suffering, and need not necessarily be the result of a wrong choice or a wrong deed on the part of the person thus afflicted. It is, therefore, obvious that the “evil” or “evil fortune” of which this verse speaks has restricted connotation, inasmuch as it refers to evil in the moral sense of the word: that is to say, to suffering resulting from the actions or the behavior of the person

concerned, and this in accordance with the natural law of cause and effect which God has decreed for all His creations, and which the Qur’ān describes as “the way of God” (*Sunnat Allah*). For all such suffering man has only himself to blame, since “*God does not wrong anyone by as much as an atom’s weight*” (4: 40).”

224. This is one of the strongest of verses to prove that the Prophet was sinless, and that he is to be obeyed in all matters without any exception, unless the exception is proven. The latter part is also a statement of Imām Shafe’i which he made in his *Al-Risalah*, wherein he stated that, “since the details of the *Shari’ah* have not been expounded by the Qur’ān, there is no recourse but to the sunan of the Prophet.” The verse also proves that obedience in truth is due to Allah alone. If the Prophet is obeyed, it is because he is the medium of instruction between us and Allah Most High (Razi).

225. Being busy during the day with various activities, it is at night that a man can collect himself and ponder

[81] They say, 'Obedience (is the word).' But when they leave you, a party of them spends the night pondering over options other than that you stated.²²⁵ Allah writes down their nightly resolutions. Therefore, ignore them²²⁶ and place your trust in Allah. Surely, Allah suffices as a Guardian.

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

[82] Do they not ponder the Qur'ān?²²⁷ Had it been from other than Allah, surely they would have found many inconsistencies in it.²²⁸

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

over the affairs of the day (Razi).

226. "Ignore them", i.e., neither reproach them, nor humiliate them in any way, nor yet, identify them to others (Razi).

227. We are thus invited not merely to read and recite the Qur'ān but also to ponder it. It is by way of pondering and study that many of its hidden meanings are discovered. However, this is not a license for a free interpretation, or for anyone to work out the *Shari'ah* from it for himself or for others. That is something for the experts to do. Now, in response to what we have stated, nobody can say: 'No one has the property rights over the Qur'ān. I, being equally intelligent and knowledgeable in many ways, must have the right to interpret.' He would be answered that it is not being said that

some scholars have the property or intellectual rights over the Qur'ān, that is, the rights of interpretation or legal deduction, to the exclusion of others. Rather, what is being said is that such a task has a prerequisite of a long study, in institutions run for that purpose, wherein one might also be examined and certified by a group of senior scholars to ensure that what he has learnt is right and adequate for certain purposes. It is just the same, for example, as in the field of medicine. No one can say that the doctors, medical men and the specialists alone have the intellectual rights over medicine. No one can say, 'I should also have the rights to study on my own, make judgments and then prescribe medicines as I think fit. After all, I am no less intelligent than the doctors.' He would be told that nobody has the rights of

medical prescription reserved in his favor. He also has as much rights to prescribe medicine as any other. But he will have to undergo a systematic course of study and training under the supervision of a group of medical experts, before he can be given the licence to practice (Shafi': paraphrased).

228. A contemporary Western new Muslim has pointed out that far from finding many inconsistencies in the Qur'ān, even the word 'inconsistencies' has no second instance in the Qur'ān. It occurs only once, at this point.

Lack of any inconsistency is an amazing quality of the Qur'ān and a proof of the Prophet's authenticity. During the 23 years of Qur'ānic dictation, the Prophet passed through a tempestuous period that covered every day and night of his life creating a new crisis every new morning. He was persecuted, had his honor attacked, denied food, shelter; abused in the streets of Makkah, and chased by urchins and bootleggers out of the town of Ta'if. He conducted his gatherings in hideouts, was molested in the Grand Mosque, and instructed his followers to migrate in secret while he remained in the abusive town to watch his dearest moral and

material supporters go cold before his sad eyes. Left with not a penny in the pocket, and three daughters to feed and protect, with no clue about what would happen next, he was ordered to stand long hours before his Lord during the best part of the night while conspiracies were being hatched by his adversaries discussing the best way of spilling the blood of a man who, under a new leadership of the clan, had been denied tribal support and asked to fend for himself the best way he could in a violent world dangerously hostile to him.

He migrates on order, hides himself in a cave, is chased right up to his destination, to be greeted by the wealthy Jews at Madinah with acidic smiles and threatening looks, to receive messages from his enemies back home to either give up or watch them tear the town of his refuge in less time than a goat could be milked. Arrest warrant arrives from the Persian Emperor, and the Romans gather forces at the borders of the desert. Raids after raids, battles after battles, his tired and aging feet tread 50,000 km chasing the enemy out or subduing the wild tribes – during the intervals he fights, winning and losing, defending his town from enemy onslaught of such ferocity that believers in him sweat from their teeth. Attempts at

his life, guards at the tent, poison in the food, and risk of his mount while he prays on its back in the darkness of night, being sent tumbling into a ravine from hilltop by the goad of hypocrites, unsettle his peace as much as slander against his wife, death of his daughters, a bite by a scorpion, a fall from a horse, loss of a tooth, a chilling stare in disbelief at the corpse of his dear uncle, and, in ordinary times, 'no money, no food, no nothing,' chorus announcement of his wives and treacherous murder of 70 of his Companions – disturbing events a mere fraction stated here, leads one to wonder how at all he could have maintained his balance, far from dictating an everlasting masterpiece, never to be imitated, without a single inconsistency? The adversaries of Islam, the blind of truth may ask themselves, "could he have been a Prophet?" instead of the firm dissolve to destroy his followers, even if at the risk of destruction of the world (Au.)

Ibn Kathir presents a tradition from Ahmad as reported by Shu'ayb's grandfather. It says:

عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ شُعَيْبٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ جَدِّهِ قَالَ لَقَدْ جَلَسْتُ أَنَا وَأَخِي مَجْلِسًا مَا أَحْبَبُّ أَنَّ لِي بِهِ حُمْرَ النَّعَمِ أَقْبَلْتُ أَنَا وَأَخِي وَإِذَا مَشَيْخَةٌ مِنْ صَحَابَةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ جُلُوسٌ عِنْدَ بَابٍ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهِ

فَكَرِهْنَا أَنْ تَفْرُقَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَجَلَسْنَا حَجْرَةً إِذْ ذَكَرُوا آيَةَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فَتَمَارَزُوا فِيهَا حَتَّى ارْتَفَعَتْ أَصْوَاتُهُمْ فَخَرَجَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُغَضَّبًا قَدْ احْمَرَّ وَجْهُهُ بِرِيهِمْ بِالتُّرَابِ وَيَقُولُ مَهَلًا يَا قَوْمَ بَيْدَا أَهْلِكَتُمُ الْأُمَّةَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ بِاخْتِلَافِهِمْ عَلَى أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ وَضَرَبِهِمُ الْكُتُبَ بَعْضَهَا بِبَعْضٍ إِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ لَمْ يَنْزَلْ يُكْذِبُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا بَلْ يُصَدِّقُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا فَمَا عَرَفْتُمْ مِنْهُ فَاعْمَلُوا بِهِ وَمَا جَهِلْتُمْ مِنْهُ فَادْعُوهُ إِلَى عَالِمِهِ

“I and my brother took part in an assembly which I would not exchange with red camels. Once I visited the Prophet where we found some senior Companions sitting by his door. We did not wish to divide their assembly, so we sat at the edge. They quoted a verse. But they disagreed over its meaning and began to argue. Voices rose high. At that, the Prophet emerged. His face was red with anger. He threw dust at them and said, “Take it easy, my people, for this is what destroyed the nations before you: it was by disagreeing with their prophets and misquoting parts of their books to counter other parts of it. The Qur’ān has not been revealed for some parts of it to be refuted with the others, rather, its parts testify (support and explain) each other. Therefore, live by what you understand. As for what you cannot understand,

[83] When a matter of security or fear comes to them, they broadcast it.²²⁹ If they had referred it to the Messenger and to those who hold command among them,²³⁰ surely those of them who can determine²³¹ the matter would have known (the truth) it.²³² And, but for Allah's grace and mercy with you, surely, all but a few would have followed Shaytan.

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ
أَدَّعَوْا بِهِ وَلَوْ رُدُّهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولِي
الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ
وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ
الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

leave it to the experts.” In a shorter form the essence of the *hadith* is in a report of Muslim also (Ibn Kathir).

229. Suddi and Ibn Jurayj have said: What happened was that when a Muslim battalion encountered an enemy force the news spread about so and so of the unbelievers having been killed or so and so of the Muslims having been killed (without any verification of the reports) - Ibn Jarir.

In a report of Muslim and Abu Da'ud the Prophet said:

كفى بالمرء كذبا أن يُحدِّث بكل ما سمع

“It is enough of a lie for a Muslim to reproduce all that he hears.”

In another *sahih hadith* (of Muslim and *Tuhfah*: Hussein) he said:

من حدَّث بحديث وهو يرى أنه كذب فهو أحد
الكاذبين

“Whoever reports something about which he knows that it is

false, is one of the fabricators” (Ibn Kathir).

230. The words in parenthesis are based on the interpretation of Suddi, although according to Hasan, Qatadah and Ibn abi Layla, it is scholars alone who are alluded to. The verse also implies that the common people have no recourse but to follow the scholars in matters where textual instruction (nass) is lacking (Shafi' from Jassas).

Imām Razi adds that since the application of the verse cannot be restricted to *jihad* affairs (for the reasons that it speaks of matters concerning both security as well as fear), it can be used for substantiating the validity of *qiyas* (analogy).

231. The word in the original is “yestambi-tunahu” with its root in nabt which is used for the “first pail of water that is extracted from

[84] Therefore,²³³ fight in the way of Allah. You are not responsible, but for yourself.²³⁴ And urge on the believers (to fight).²³⁵ It might be that Allah will restrict the might of the unbelievers. Allah is stronger in might and more terrible in punishment.²³⁶

فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا تُكَلِّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ
وَحَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكْفِ
بِأَسْ لِدَيْنِ كَفَرُوا وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بَأْسًا وَأَشَدُّ
تَنْكِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾

a well being dug” (Razi, Qurtubi, Shawkani).

232. It is reported in *sahih ahadith* that when the news spread that the Prophet had divorced his wives, `Umar went to the mosque. Some people had already gathered there. They attested to the news. But `Umar would not believe them. He sought permission to see the Prophet. When he was allowed in, the first question he asked was, ‘Have you divorced your wives?’ When the Prophet said, ‘No,’ `Umar cried out Allahu Akbar, went down to the entrance of the mosque and shouted in a loud voice: ‘The Prophet has not divorced his wives.’ “At this”, says `Umar, “this verse was revealed, and I am one of those who determined (the truth of the matter)” - Ibn Kathir.

233. The “therefore” (*fa* of the original) returns to verse 75 above: “*And how is it with you that you do not fight in the way of Allah, while the (weak and the) oppressed men, women and children are pleading: ‘Our Lord. Res-*

cue us from this town whose people are tyrannical, and appoint for us a protector from You, and appoint to us a helper from You.” That is, ‘Fight you, therefore, O Muhammad, in the way of Allah, since such is the cry of the helpless ones’ (Razi, Qurtubi).

234. Accordingly, after the battle of Uhud when the Prophet decided to chase Abu Sufyan and announced his intentions, only a few were inclined to follow him. That was perhaps because of want of time for preparation and the injuries that they had earlier received. However, the Prophet was not discouraged at all. He declared: “I am going, even if alone” (Thanwi).

235. Bukhari has preserved a *hadith* of Abu Hurayrah’s narration in which the Prophet said:

”من آمن بالله ورسوله وأقام الصلاة، وآتى الزكاة، وصام رمضان، كان حقا على الله أن يدخله الجنة، هاجر في سبيل الله أو جلس في أرضه التي ولد فيها“
قالوا: يا رسول الله، أفلا نبشر الناس بذلك؟ فقال:
”إن في الجنة مائة درجة، أعدّها الله للمجاهدين في سبيل الله، بين كل درجتين كما بين السماء والأرض، فإذا سألتم الله فاسألوه الفردوس فإنه أوسط

الجنة. وأعلى الجنة، وفوقه عرش الرحمن، ومنه تَفَجَّر
أنهار الجنة“

“Whoever believed in Allah, did the Prayers well, paid the *zakah* and fasted ... it is due from Allah that He admit him into Paradise whether he migrated in the way of Allah, or remained in the place of his birth.” The people asked him, “Shall we not give this good news to the people, O Apostle of Allah?” He said, “Paradise has a hundred levels that Allah has prepared for the mujahidin in His path. Between each level is a distance equal to the distance between the earth and the heaven. Therefore, when you ask, ask for Jannatu al-Firdaws, for it is in the best part of Paradise and in the loftiest area, directly under the *‘Arsh* of *al-Rahman* ... from there it is that the rivers of Paradise spring out.”

Muslim has another *hadith* according to which the Prophet addressed Abu Sa`id al-Khudri and said:

”يا أبا سعيد، من رضي بالله ربا، وبالإسلام ديناً،
وبمحمد نبياً، وجبت له الجنة“ قال: فعجب لها أبو
سعيد فقال: أعدها عليّ يا رسول الله. ففعل. ثم
قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ”وأخرى يرفع
الله بها العبد مائة درجة في الجنة، ما بين كل درجتين

كما بين السماء والأرض“ قال: وما هي يا رسول
الله؟ قال: ”الجهاد في سبيل الله“

“Abu Sa`id. Whoever is satisfied with Allah as his Lord, with Islam as his religion, and Muhammad as a Prophet, has Paradise written for him.” Those words pleased Abu Sa`id. “Can you repeat them for me?” he asked. The Prophet did that and added: “Then there is something else by which Allah raises a man by a hundred levels in Paradise with each level being at a distance from the other equal to the distance between the earth and the heaven.” Abu Sa`id asked: “What is it, O Apostle of Allah?” He replied: “*Jihad* in the way of Allah” (Ibn Kathir).

236. Surely, Allah had power over them but, as He said (in 47: 4):

{وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَآتَيْنَهُمْ مِنْهُمْ وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَ بَعْضُكُمْ
بِبَعْضٍ} [محمد: ٤]

“Had Allah desired, He would have punished them, but (if He did not, it was because) He wants to try some of you with others” (Ibn Kathir).

237. The connection between this and the previous verse should be obvious. The Prophet was ordered in the previous verse to urge on the believers to fight. This verse spells

[85] Whoso intercedes in a good cause²³⁷ shall have a portion of it (in rewards); and whoso intercedes in a bad cause shall have a share²³⁸ of it in the burden.²³⁹ Allah has power over everything.²⁴⁰

مَنْ يَشْفَعُ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يَشْفَعُ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِنْهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقْبِلًا

﴿٨٥﴾

out the reward and the punishment for those who discouraged believers from joining the *jihad* (Razi). Conversely, adds Sayyid, those who encourage others to join in *jihad*, will have their rewards for such encouragement.

238. The word in the original is *kifl*, which stands for a share, portion, allotment etc. But it also has the connotation of evil in it, while *nasib* is free of such connotation (Ibn Jarir, Shawkani).

Imām Razi, however, points out that as against *nasib*, which is for any share, earned or not, *kifl* is used for that share for which one has put in some efforts. Hence the beauty in the choice of the two words at those particular points.

239. Ibn Jarir thinks that although the application is general, this specifically refers to the recommendations of the Companions to wage a battle against the unbelievers, while the hypocrites recommended a non-confrontational attitude.

Zamakhshari explains: A good intercession is one in which a person recommends the case of another, deserving person, in order that the man might obtain his rights, or acts to spurn away an evil from him, for the sake of Allah, without a wage taken for it, with the additional condition that the affairs themselves be of the lawful nature. What does not meet with these conditions is an evil intercession. It is said that once Masruq interceded for another man. After the affair the man sent Masruq a slave-girl as a gift. Masruq was upset. He said, 'Had I known your intention, I would not have interfered in your affairs, nor shall I ever do after this.'

Mufti Shafi` remarks: Recommendations have been taken to their extremes (in the sub-continent) and turned into leverage for the application of personal power and influence. So that, if someone's recommendation is not accepted, he is angered. Whereas, someone to whom a case or person has been recommended,

[86] And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet with a better one, or return it (in similar words).²⁴¹ Surely Allah keeps a watchful account of everything.

وَإِذَا حُيِّئْتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا ﴿٨٦﴾

is free to either accept or reject the recommendation. When Barirah ('A'isha's freed slave girl) obtained divorce, her husband, being in love with her, used to go about lamenting over her. The Prophet recommended that she re-marry him. Barirah asked the Prophet if that was an order from him or a recommendation. When he said that it was merely a recommendation, she said that she had no liking for the person whatsoever, and therefore, was not ready to accept the Prophet's recommendation. The Prophet let her do as she wished without feeling being snubbed by the refusal.

240. The muqita of the original has been variously interpreted as meaning: 'one who has power (over everything)'; 'one who is a witness'; as well as, 'one who guards; or, 'has an account (of a thing)' - Ibn Jarir, Razi, Qurtubi and others.

It also means "the Provider" (*Lughat*).

241. That is, if someone says, '*Al-salamu 'alaykum*,' either you respond with the same words saying,

'*Wa 'alaykum al-salam*', or add some words of your own to say, for example, '*Wa 'alaykum al-salam wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu*.' Many kinds of responses have been reported of the Prophet - Ibn Jarir.

The connection between the verses is as follows. Sometimes when the Muslims marched out against the unbelievers, they came across someone who greeted them with the Islamic greeting. The Muslims attached no weight to his greeting and considered him an unbeliever outright, because he lived in the enemy territory. (*Hijrah* to Madinah was then an obligation: Au.). Sometimes they even killed him. They were ordered to return the greeting and respect the person, rather than attempt at his life (Razi).

Ibn Kathir adds: The rule in the verse applies to Muslims. Abu Da'ud has a tradition – evaluated *Sahih* - which says:

والذي نفسي بيده، لا تدخلوا الجنة حتى تؤمنوا ولا تؤمنوا حتى تحابوا أفلا أدلكم على أمر إذا فعلتموه تحاببتم؟ أفشوا السلام بينكم

"By Him in whose Hands is my

life, you shall not enter Paradise until you believe. And you will not believe until you love each other. And, shall I not lead you to something, that, if you did, you would begin to love each other?: spread Salam between yourselves.”

As for the non-Muslims, the Prophet is reported to have said in a *hadith* preserved by Muslim:

لا تبدؤوا اليهود والنصارى بالسلام، وإذا لقيتموهم
في طريق فاضطروهم إلى أضيقة

“Do not take the initiative in saying Salam to the Jews or Christians. Rather, if you encounter them on the way, force them into its narrower area.”

Hasan has said that initiating the Salam to Muslims is recommendatory. But its reply is *wajib* (Ibn Jarir). That is also the opinion of Imām Nakha`i. But it is not obligatory to reply during the Friday sermon, or if one is reciting the Qur`ān in a loud voice, or is narrating a *hadith*, or when people are in a study circle, or during Prayer-calls or when *Iqamah* is being said.

Further, Abu Yusuf has ruled that if someone tells another, ‘Give so and so my greetings,’ then conveying it is *wajib*. He has also said that Salam

may not be said to those playing chess, or to a singer, one attending to a nature’s call, one flying pigeons, or one naked. It is also said that a man should say Salam to his wife, but not to a strange Muslim woman (unless she be quite old: Qurtubi). Also, a rider should greet the pedestrian, the pedestrian, the one sitting, the one riding a horse should greet the man on a donkey, the younger should greet the older, (although the Prophet used to greet even children: Qurtubi) and a smaller group should greet a larger group.

It is also reported of the Prophet that he said that if the Jews and Christians say “Peace be upon you,” say in return, “*Alayka*” i.e., ‘And upon you’ (Zamakhshari). A single person returning the greeting on behalf of a group is adequate (Alusi). The Companions used to greet each other even if, during a walk together, they were separated for a few seconds by a tree (Qurtubi).

Adds Shafi` from *Muwatta`*: It is reported that `Abdullah ibn `Umar sometimes visited the market place with no other intention but to say Salam to the people there.

Majid quotes an English lady: “*As-salam-alaikum*’, these gentle words of greeting each other as they pass, is a music to the ear. It is amusing

[87] Allah, there is no god but He. He shall surely bring you all together on the Day of Judgment. (There is) no doubt about it. And who is truer than Allah in a statement?!

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لِيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا ﴿٨٧﴾

[88] What is the matter with you that you are two groups with regard to the hypocrites,²⁴² while Allah has thrust them back because of what they have earned?²⁴³ Would you guide him whom Allah has led astray? You shall not find a way for him whom Allah has led astray.

فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِتْنَيْنِ وَاللَّهُ أَرْكَسَهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَهْتَدُوا مِنْ أَضَلِّ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٨﴾

to watch the dexterity with which two friends will sustain a competition in greeting: each endeavouring to outdo the other in compliments... Master and the servant, the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlettered, greet each other with the same dignity on both sides, leading to no loss of self-respect to either.”

242. Although there are several interpretations offered to the verse, the one in Bukhari and Muslim (as also in Ahmad: Ibn Kathir) seems to be the nearest to being correct. It is reported by Zayd b. Thabit that when the Prophet (*saws*) was marching out to Uhud, some people fell back and returned to their dwellings. The Companions of the Prophet were divided over them: some said they should be fought and killed. Others said no. Allah revealed this verse and the Prophet said:

إنها طيبة وقال إنها تنفي الخبيث كما تنفي النار
خبث الفضة

“This (i.e., Madinah) is *Taybah*.” He also said, “It rejects the impure as fire separates out the impurities from silver” (Qurtubi, Shawkani).

Another opinion, that of Mujahid, is that the verse referred to some of those who had come to Madinah as Muslims, but after some time returned to Makkah on the pretext of trade and then stayed back.

However, in view of the following verse which instructs Muslims not to take them friends, Ibn Jarir favours the opinion of Ibn `Abbas who said that the verse was speaking of a couple of men in Makkah (two, according to Qatadah) who had started to speak favourably of Islam but stayed back while others migrated.

[89] They wish that you also disbelieve as they have disbelieved so that you two might be on the same level. Therefore, do not take for yourselves friends from them, until they emigrate in the way of Allah.²⁴⁴ And if they refuse, then seize them and slay them wherever you find them, and take not for yourselves friends or helpers from their ranks.²⁴⁵

وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً
فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّىٰ يَهَاجِرُوا فِي
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ
حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وِلِيًّا
وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٨٩﴾

243. That is, Allah has placed them on the same footing as the ordinary unbelievers (*Kashshaf*).

Rakasa is to give back something its original shape or position. Here it has been used in the sense of sending back the hypocrites to their original position of disbelief where the same rulings and laws would apply to them as those applied to the rest of the unbelievers (Razi).

244. In early Islam, *hijrah* became mandatory for every Muslim after the Prophet's own *hijrah*. A man's Islam was not considered genuine if he did not migrate. In the event of his death he could not even be inherited by his relatives in Madinah, if there were any. These rules remained in force until the fall of Makkah when the Prophet declared: "There is no *hijrah* after the fall." However, the rule still remains in force for Muslims living in a land where they are not free to practice their religion. It

is about such a *hijrah* that the Prophet has said:

لَا تَقْطَعُ الْهَجْرَةَ حَتَّىٰ تَقْطَعَ التَّوْبَةَ وَلَا تَقْطَعُ التَّوْبَةَ
حَتَّىٰ تَطْلُعَ الشَّمْسُ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا

"*Hijrah* will never cease until the time of invalidation of repentance; and the time for repentance will not cease until the sun appears from its West" (based on *Ma`arif*).

245. In other words, these hypocrites were to be treated as any other Makkans. And the situation between the Makkans and the Muslims at that time was that, initiated by the Makkans, they were at war with each other, raiding each other's territory, and killing anyone they could lay their hands on. For instance, Khubayb b. `Adiyy was captured those days by the Makkans and killed him in Makkah in a cold-blooded manner (Au.).

246. Abu Da'ud has a narration re-

[90] Except for such of them as those who join up with those between whom and you is a treaty,²⁴⁶ or they come to you in a state of heart that they feel constricted to fight you or their own people. (Yet) had Allah given them power over you, surely they would have attacked you.²⁴⁷ However, if they avoid (fighting) you, and do not attack, rather, send you peace overtures, then Allah has not allowed you a way against them.²⁴⁸

[91] You will find others who wish to be safe from you and safe from their own people, (but) every time they are exposed to a temptation (of war), they plunge headlong into it.²⁴⁹ If they do not avoid (fighting) you, do not send peace overtures to you, and, do not restrain themselves, then seize them and slay them wherever you find them. Such are the people against whom Allah has provided you a clear argument.²⁵⁰

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصُلُونَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَنْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتَلُوكُمْ فَإِنْ اعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَالْفَوَاقِمْ إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾

سَتَجِدُونَ آخَرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا قَوْمَهُمْ كُلًّا مَا رُذُوا إِلَىٰ الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا فِيهَا فَإِنْ لَمْ يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ وَيُلْقُوا إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ وَيَكْفُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَاخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأُولَئِكَ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٩١﴾

porting Ibn `Abbas that this verse has been abrogated by the fifth verse of *al-Tawbah* which allowed the pagans respite until the Hajj of the ninth year after *hijrah*, a deadline after which their presence would not be tolerated (Shawkani).

247. “(The implication is) that the lack of requisite power, and not true good will, causes them to refrain from making war on the believers” (Asad).

248. `Ikrimah, Hasan, Qatadah and Ibn Zayd have said that these verses

were abrogated by the first five verses of *al-Tawbah* - Ibn Jarir. Abu Da`ud (in his *Nasikh*), Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Nuhhas and Bayhaqi have maintained a similar opinion (Shawkani).

249. It seems there were several people whom the verse was referring to: a tribe in Tihama that sued for peace, Nu`aym b. Mas`ud Thaqafi, and some others from Makkah who used to come to Madinah expressing their desire to remain neutral. However, whenever there were armed clashes

[92] It is not for a believer to kill a believer, unless it be by accident.²⁵¹ If someone kills a believer accidentally, (then the expiation is) freeing of a believing slave²⁵² and blood-wit paid to his family,²⁵³ unless they forgive by way of charity. However, if (the dead) belonged to a people at war with you, but he was a believer, then (upon you is only) the freeing of a believing slave. But if he belonged to a people with whom you have a compact, then, (incumbent is) the blood-wit paid to his family as well as freeing of a believing slave. Nonetheless, for such as him who does not find the means, it is two month's consecutive fasts²⁵⁴ by way of repentance to Allah. Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَاً
وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَاً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ
وَدِيَّةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَدَّقُوا
فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ
فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ
بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدِيَّةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَى
أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ
شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٩٢﴾

they threw their weight on one or the other side (Ibn Jarir, Shawkani).

250. In short there were, at that time in the history of Islam, three classifications of people outside the fold of Islam:

1) Those who had the ability to migrate but did not, or migrated but ultimately returned to their disbelieving people. They held the same status as the common unbelievers.

2) Those who had entered into a no-war treaty with the Muslims, or had made a pact with those who had made a similar treaty with the Muslims. They could not be attacked.

3) Those who had made a treaty of expediency with the Muslims. They remained true to the treaty as long as it suited them. But whenever a battle erupted between Muslims and others, they threw in their lot with the enemies of the Muslims. Pre-emptive attacks on these were also allowed (*Ma`arif*).

251. That is, it is not conceivable that a believer should intentionally kill another believer.

Several incidents became the cause of revelation of this verse. It is said that when `Umar (*ra*) migrated to Madinah he was accompanied by `Ayyash ibn Abi Rabi`ah al-Makhzumi, who

was the most beloved of his mother's sons. Abu Jahl followed him in his tracks to Madinah (while the Prophet was still at Makkah), in the company of Harith b. Yezid and informed `Ayyash that his mother had vowed that she would lie in the sun until `Ayyash came to see her. They assured him that once his mother had broken her vow he could return. `Umar suspected foul play and tried to dissuade him from returning. But when he found that `Ayyash had made up his mind he told him to take one of his own camels, a very fast one, and never to dismount come what may. If he suspected foul play at any point, all that he had to do was to turn her around and let her loose. So `Ayyash started back in their company. On the way Abu Jahl and Harith managed to bring him down from the camel, tied him up and rode back to Makkah. Harith even whipped `Ayyash. `Ayyash vowed to himself that he would kill him at the first opportunity. However, for the moment under guard, he stayed in Makkah until it fell to the Muslims eight years later. Then, as `Ayyash was returning to Madinah, he met Harith b. Yezid on the way and killed him without knowing that in the meanwhile Harith had

become a Muslim. These verses were revealed (Ibn Jarir).

Some details of the above narration are from Ibn Is-haq (Au.).

Another of such accidental murders that took place during the Prophet's time is recorded in Muslim and narrated by Usama b. Zayd. He says that once, out in a campaign, he came across a man who said *la ilaha illa Allah*, but he killed him all the same. When he reported to the Prophet he asked him: "Did you kill him after he had said *la ilaha illa Allah*?" Usama replied: "O Messenger of Allah, he had said that out of fear of the sword." The Prophet said: "Why did you not open his chest to find out if he had said that out of fear?" (Qurtubi).

The narration is as follows:

عَنْ أُسَامَةَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ وَهَذَا حَدِيثُ ابْنِ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ قَالَ
بَعَثَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي سَرِيَّةٍ فَصَبَّحْنَا
الْحُرَقَاتِ مِنْ جُهَيْنَةَ فَأَدْرَكْتُ رَجُلًا فَقَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا
اللَّهُ فَطَعَنَتْهُ فَوَقَعَ فِي نَفْسِي مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَذَكَرْتُهُ لِلنَّبِيِّ
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ أَفَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَقَتَلْتَهُ قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ
اللَّهِ إِنَّمَا قَالَهَا خَوْفًا مِنَ السِّلَاحِ قَالَ أَفَلَا شَقَقْتُ عَنْ
قَلْبِهِ حَتَّى تَعْلَمَ أَقَالَهَا أَمْ لَا فَمَا زَالَ يُكَرِّرُهَا عَلَيَّ حَتَّى
تَمَنَيْتُ أَنِّي أَسْلَمْتُ يَوْمَئِذٍ

According to other reports Abu al-Darda' also happened to kill a

man during a campaign. When he raised his sword the man cried out *la ilaha illa Allah*. But, despite that, Abu Darda' killed him. When he returned and was asked about the affair, he said that it was nothing but fear that had led that man to utter those words. He enquired the Prophet: granted he had committed an error, what was his own position now? The Prophet answered: "And what about the words *la ilaha illa Allah*?" Abu al-Darda' sought clearance for himself several times but the Prophet repeated the same words. Then these verses were revealed (Ibn Jarir).

But other reports, such as one in Bukhari, have named the person as Khalid ibn al-Walid and not Abu Darda'. The story of Khalid ibn al-Walid himself is that he was leading in a campaign when they come across a people, who, when confronted, began to say: "*Saba'na, saba'na*" (i.e., we have abandoned our old religion and adopted the new one). But since that did not mean they had become Muslims, Khalid attacked them. Some were killed. When the incident was reported to the Prophet, he raised his hands in supplication and said: "O Allah, I disown what Khalid

has done." Subsequently he sent `Ali to pay them the blood-wit and compensate for any other loss they had suffered (Ibn Kathir).

252. Most of the early scholars have said that since the Qur'an often states the freeing of a slave as expiation, but in some instances makes it conditional that they be believing slaves, it is necessary, in such cases, to free only an adult, believing slave, who has begun to Pray and fast (Ibn Jarir). However, the majority opinion is that even a believing child-slave can be enfranchised as expiation (Ibn Kathir).

253. Those days blood-wit used to be a hundred adult camels of various ages, or a 1000 Dinars, due from the *`Aqilah* (male blood relatives, friends and supporters) of the murderer. (This is also the blood-wit for an embryo: Ibn Kathir).

Further, Abu Bakr, `Uthman, Ibn Mas`ud, Ibrahim Nakha'i, Sha`bi, Zuhri, and many others maintained that the blood-wit amount for a Jew or a Christian is the same as that for a Muslim. But `Umar granted the *Dhimmi* only one-half the blood-wit (Ibn Jarir).

254. So that, if one fasts for 40 consecutive days but does not on the

[93] As for him who kills a believer willfully,²⁵⁵ his reward is Jahannum, abiding therein forever.²⁵⁶ Allah is angry with him, His curse is upon him And He has prepared for him a great chastisement.

وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعْنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٣﴾

41st day, he will have to begin anew and fast 60 consecutive days.

255. An intentional murder in Islam (is not simply one that has been premeditated, rather: Au.), one in which a person uses a weapon, a rope, a large stone, a heavy stick, or anything that can kill. If these, and other circumstantial evidences are absent, then the slaying will be considered *shibh `amd* (quasi-deliberate intent), in which case the blood-wit is suitably adjusted [by the judge], (in addition, of course, to two month's fasts: Au.). This is the opinion of the great majority. This has been derived from the judgment of the Prophet in a case involving a Jew who killed a woman by placing her head on a rock and dropping another on it (Ibn Jarir).

256. Abu Mijlaz and Abu Salih's opinion is that the punishment deserved by the intentional killer of a believer is as stated in this verse, i.e., "His reward is Jahannum, abiding therein for ever. Allah is angry with him, His curse is upon him; and He

has prepared a great chastisement for him." But the final decision will be Allah's.

However, Ibn `Abbas' opinion is well known that there is no repentance for such a man. He used to say: "This was the last thing Allah revealed on the subject. He did not reveal anything subsequently to abrogate it." Kharijah b. Zayd and Dahhak were of the same opinion. Yet, Mujahid used to add: "unless he repented" (Ibn Jarir).

As for the verses 68-70 of *Surah al-Furqan*, Zayd bin Thabit's opinion was that they were revealed six months before *Surah al-Nisa'*. (According to another opinion, 8 years earlier. See *al-Furqan*, v. 68 in Ibn Jarir). And, the verses (68-70) of *Surah al-Furqan* are:

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا (٦٨) يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا (٦٩) إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا [الفرقان : ٦٨ - ٧٠]

“And those who invoke not any other deity besides Allah, nor slay such souls as Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause, nor commit an illegal sexual intercourse - and whoever does that shall meet the price of sin; his punishment will be doubled on the Day of Judgment, and he shall abide there in disgrace; except for him who repented, and believed, and worked righteous deeds, Allah will change their evil deeds with good ones. Allah is Ever-forgiving, Ever-merciful.”

(In other words, the statement of *Surah al-Nisa'* has not been abrogated by the verses of *Surah al-Furqan* quoted herewith) - Ibn Jarir.

Thus, Ibn Zayd's information supports Ibn 'Abbas' opinion that the verses of *Surah al-Nisa'* were the last thing revealed on the subject (Au.).

Ibn Kathir adds: Slaying of a believer, is a heinous crime. The Prophet has said, in a report of the *Sahihayn*:

أَوَّلُ مَا يُقْضَى بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي الدِّمَاءِ

“The first (of the disputes) to be settled on the day of Judgment would be that of the (crimes) of bloodshed.”

Another *hadith* (of Ibn Majah: H. Ibrahim) says that,

لَزَوَالِ الدُّنْيَا أَهْوَنُ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ قَتْلِ مُسْلِمٍ

“The destruction of the world is of less concern to Allah than the killing of a believer.”

Another *hadith* says that:

لَوْ اجْتَمَعَ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ وَأَهْلُ الْأَرْضِ عَلَى قَتْلِ امْرِئٍ
مُؤْمِنٍ لَعَذَّبَهُمُ اللَّهُ

“Were the people of the heaven and earth to unite over the killing of a single Muslim, Allah would surely hurl them all into Fire.” (But the report is weak: Au.).

Yet another report (of Ibn Majah: H. Ibrahim) says:

مَنْ أَعَانَ عَلَى قَتْلِ مُسْلِمٍ بِشَطْرِ كَلِمَةٍ لَقِيَ اللَّهَ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ مَكْتُوبٌ عَلَى جَبْهَتِهِ آيِسٌ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ

“Whoever helped in the slaying of a Muslim, even if it be by a word, will appear on the Day of Judgment with the words: ‘Despaired of Allah's mercy’ written on his forehead.”

The report is very weak (Albani).

Ibn 'Abbas' well-known opinion is in Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i and Ahmad. It is reported about him in Nasa'i and Ibn Majah that a man came to him and asked him: “What do you have to say about a man who murdered a Muslim?” In reply Ibn 'Abbas quoted this verse and said: “These were the last words

on this subject that were revealed to the Prophet.” The man asked: “What have you to say if he repented, and led a good life there onward?” Ibn `Abbas said: “Where is repentance for him? I have heard the Prophet say:

يَجِيءُ الْقَاتِلُ وَالْمَقْتُولُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مُتَعَلِّقَ بِرَأْسِ
صَاحِبِهِ يَقُولُ رَبِّ سَلْ هَذَا لِمَ قَتَلَنِي

“The murderer and the murdered will come on the day of Judgment, holding the (murderer) by his head, saying: “O Lord. Ask this man why did he kill me?””

Ibn `Abbas is not alone in this opinion. Ibn Mas`ud, Abu Hurayrah, `Abdullah ibn `Amr, Mu`awiyah, and many others were with him.

However, all said, the opinion of the great majority of scholars, both classical as well as modern, is that the final say with regard to the murderer of a believer will be Allah's. He might forgive if He will. As for the fact that nothing was revealed on the subject after the verses of *Surah al-Nisa'* in question, that should not be of a great concern, for the verses which promise forgiveness, even if revealed earlier, are general in their application. Further, we also have in a well-known tradition the story of an Israelite who had murdered a hundred

souls, yet he was forgiven. In fact, Abu Hurayrah's opinion itself is that the punishment of a believer's murderer is as stated in these verses. But, it is not necessary that such a punishment be delivered to him. Again, so far as the demand of the murdered person that the murderer be asked why he murdered him, well, that is his right which he would be raising and which he will be compensated for. That in fact also applies to all such cases where other's rights have been usurped, such as theft, deceit, etc.

Quotation from Ibn Kathir ends here.

Interestingly, some reports suggest that Ibn `Abbas admitted the possibility of repentance for an intentional murder. It is said that once a man came to him and asked him about an intentional murderer. Ibn `Abbas told him that there was no chance of him being forgiven. When the man was gone his companions and students asked him if he had not said earlier that an intentional murderer of a believer had a chance of forgiveness. He replied that although he had said that earlier, but in this present case he suspected that the man appeared to him as one meditating a murder and wanted to be sure that

[94] Believers!²⁵⁷ When you are journeying in the way of Allah, be discriminating (before you attack), and - out of a desire for the fleeting gains of this worldly life - do not say to him who offers you an Islamic greeting, 'You are not a believer.'²⁵⁸ For with Allah are gains abundant. So were you aforetime, then Allah favored you.²⁵⁹ Therefore, be discriminating.²⁶⁰ Surely, Allah is Aware of what you do.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ أَلْفَىٰ إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَغَانِمٌ كَثِيرَةٌ كَذَلِكَ كُنْتُمْ مِّن قَبْلُ فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿٩٤﴾

if he committed it, he would be forgiven. Accordingly, the people sent someone on the heels of the man to find out whether that was true, and found that the case was as Ibn `Abbas had suspected (Qurtubi).

Alusi adds: It is reported of many scholars that they ordinarily ruled that there was no repentance for a killer, but when somebody actually came to them admitting the crime, they asked him to repent.

257. The previous verses spoke of the heinousness of the crime of a Muslim's murder. The following verses tell us that for the rules of Islam to be applicable to a man, all that he has to meet by way of a condition is his verbal assertion that he is a Muslim. A detailed enquiry is not to be conducted to check the bona fides of a man's claim (Thanwi).

258. Several stories have come down

to us as those occasioning the revelation of these verses, but the most reliable one is in Tirmidhi, who declared it *hasan sahih* of status, as well as in Hakim, who has called it a trustworthy narration although Bukhari and Muslim have not recorded it. According to these reports a group of Companions went out in a campaign. They met a shepherd who greeted them in the Islamic way. But they thought he was doing that only to save his life. They killed him and seized his cattle. Allah revealed this verse (Ibn Kathir).

259. It is said that the man who was slain used to conceal his Islamic identity from his people out of fear of persecution. Allah, therefore, reminded those who had slain him that once you were in the same state, concealing your faith from your own people out of fear of persecution at their hands (Ibn Jarir).

Bukhari has a short report about Miqdad ibn al-Aswad that he killed someone who cried out la ilaha illa Allah when he advanced toward him, but, despite that, Miqdad killed him. The Prophet told him:

إذا كان رجل مؤمن يخفي إيمانه مع قوم كفار، فأظهر إيمانه فقتلته، فكذلك كنت أنت تخفي إيمانك بمكة من قبل

“If the believing man was concealing his faith from his unbelieving people; he disclosed his faith but you killed him, so were you aforetime, concealing your faith in Makkah” (Ibn Kathir).

Sayyid Qutb writes: “Allah reminds the believers of the recent days of ignorance: of the rashness and frivolity that prevailed then. He reminds them of His grace by which He cleansed their hearts and guided them to loftier objectives, so that now they can not think of returning to battles and wars with the intention of loot and plunder as was their wont in the days of ignorance. He impresses upon them His favor in that He has set for them the limits and bounds, and has given them a new system (that organizes their affairs). So let not the final verdict be influenced by the first impulses (of anger), as it used to be during the days of *jahiliyyah*. The text also

throws hints at the fact that they themselves were in the same state some time back: concealing their faith from their enemies, on account of fear and vulnerability, not making it known except when in peace with the Muslims. This man too, who was killed, used to conceal his faith from his people, and disclosed it to the Muslims by greeting them in the manner of Islamic greeting. Said Allah, ‘*So were you aforetime, but Allah has been gracious to you.*’”

Legal Points

- 1. While blood-wit is due from himself and the family (*aqilah*) of the murderer, fasts are to be observed by him alone (*Ma`arif*).
- 2. Where there is no inheritor of the slain, the blood-wit will be returned to the public treasury (*Ma`arif*).
- 3. According to the Hanafiyyah, blood-wit amount of a *dhimmi* is the same as that of a Muslim (*Ma`arif*).
- 4. The blood-wit amount, in the case of a murder of a man belonging to a people with whom the Islamic state has a treaty, will depend on the clauses of the treaty (Mawdu-di from Jassas).

[95] Not equal are the believers who sit back - other than the disabled²⁶¹ - and those who fight in the way of Allah with their possessions and their selves. Allah has preferred by a rank those who fight in the way of Allah with their possessions and their selves, over those who sit back; although, to each Allah has promised the (ultimate) good. But Allah has preferred - with a great reward - those who fight, over those who sit back.

لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرِ
أُولِي الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ
بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً
وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحَسَنَى وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ
الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

﴿٩٥﴾

260. The words “Be discriminating” imply that although a man becomes a Muslim by his very assertion to that effect, it is also necessary that he should “not” at least do what the unbelievers do. For instance, if he says he is a Muslim, but worships idols, then he has invalidated his own claim. In fact, Musaylimah the Liar, used to pray and order the adhan said in the Islamic manner, without any alteration. But he also claimed that he was a Prophet. That nullified his claim to Islam of the standard definition (*Ma`arif*).

261. It is said that when this verse was revealed `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum, the blind, came to the Prophet and asked: “What about people like me, O Messenger of Allah?” The revelation then added: “unless they suffer a disability” (Ibn Jarir).

Hence the Prophet once said to his

Companions, according to reports in Bukhari and Abu Da`ud:

لَقَدْ تَرَكْتُمْ بِالْمَدِينَةِ أَهْوَامًا مَا سِرْتُمْ مَسِيرًا ، وَلَا أَتَقَفْتُمْ
مَنْ تَقَفْتِ ، وَلَا قَطَعْتُمْ مَنْ وَاذِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ مَعَكُمْ فِيهِ
، قَالُوا : يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، كَيْفَ يَكُونُونَ مَعَنَا وَهُمْ
بِالْمَدِينَةِ ؟ قَالَ : حَبَسَهُمُ الْعُدْرُ

“You have left behind you some people in Madinah who are with you wherever you go, in whatever you spend, and whenever you cross through a valley.” They asked: “How could that be, Messenger of Allah?” He said: “Nothing held them back but a reason beyond their control” (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

Alusi adds: It is reported of `Abdullah ibn Maktum by Ibn al-Mundhir through Ibn abi Layla, that he used to participate in *jihad* saying: “Give me the flag and place me in the middle, for, (being blind) I cannot run away.”

[96] (To each are separate) ranks from Him,²⁶² forgiveness and mercy. And Allah is Ever-forgiving, Ever-merciful.²⁶³

دَرَجَاتٍ مِّنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفُورًا
رَّحِيمًا ﴿٩٦﴾

262. Qatadah has said: “It used to be said: ‘Islam is one rank; *hijrah* in Islam another rank; *jihad* in *hijrah* yet another rank. And, being killed in a *jihad* in *hijrah*, another rank” (Ibn al-Qayyim and others).

263. The *Sahihayn* have preserved the Prophet’s words:

إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ أَعَدَّهَا لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ
مَا بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ

“There are a hundred levels in Paradise that Allah has prepared for the *mujahidin*. Between each level is the distance as there is between the heaven and the earth” (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

Bukhari has the following words in addition:

فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمْ اللَّهَ فَسَلُّوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ فَإِنَّهُ أَوْسَطُ الْجَنَّةِ
وَأَعْلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَفَوْقَهُ عَرْشُ اللَّهِ وَمِنْهُ تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْجَنَّةِ

“Therefore, when you ask Allah, ask for Firdaws for it is in the center of Paradise and the best part of it. Above it is the *Arsh* of the *Rahman* and from there spring out the rivers of Paradise (Shawkani).

Jihad

At this point, Sayyid Qutb has the following to write on the subject of *jihad*: “*Jihad* is not one of the several passing phenomenon of the early Islam. It is a necessary outfit that accompanies the caravan and the mission. The point is not - as some well-wishing Muslims feel - that Islam grew in an age that was dominated by Imperial Powers. Therefore, the concept, as if to say, was thrust upon the value system of its followers, by the surrounding milieu. That is, there was no alternative to a dominating force for the maintenance of a just balance.

The least that these sacerdotal ideas and wild guesses do is to speak of the poor understanding of the true nature of Islam.

Had *jihad* been a passing phenomenon in the lives of the believers, the Qur’an would not have devoted so much space, in its best parts, and in the style that it reserves, for it. Nor would the *Sunnah* of the Prophet have granted it so much space, and reserved for it such a style.

Had *jihad* been a passing phenomenon the Prophet would not have addressed every believer who will follow him until the Last day in words:

مَنْ مَاتَ وَلَمْ يَغْزُ وَلَمْ يُحَدِّثْ نَفْسَهُ بِغَزْوٍ مَاتَ عَلَى
شُعْبَةٍ يَنْفَاقِ

“Whoever died without fighting and without intending to fight, died on a branch of hypocrisy.”

Yes, the Prophet turned away a few individual *mujahidin*, because of their special circumstances - as it is reported in the *Sahih* books that a man sought the Prophet's permission to fight. The Prophet asked him: “Do you have parents?” He replied, “Yes.” The Prophet ordered him: “Serve them.” But if incidents of this sort have been reported, they were concerning specific persons who were spared *jihad* for specific reasons. They do not lay down the general rule for all. Obviously, the absence of an individual does not affect a whole body of *mujahidin*. It is quite possible that the Prophet - as was his wont - knew the conditions of every one of his follower. Perhaps he knew the conditions of this particular person's parents, and therefore, advised him to stay back.

But nobody can say, basing his argument on it, that *jihad* was a passing

phenomenon because of the peculiar situations; and that the situation has now changed.

That is not so. And if it is not so, it is not because Islam desires its adherents to saunter in the streets and highways with a naked sword chopping off heads. Rather, it is because the realities of life and the nature of this mission require that it hold the sword and be on its guard every moment.

Allah was aware that this mission will be disapproved of by the kings and rulers of the lands, and that it is natural that those in power should oppose it, for its ways are not the ways of the rulers. Its framework is not the framework of the kings: not only yesterday, but even today and tomorrow - in every place and in every epoch.

Allah knew that evil is a braggart; that it will never be fair; that it will never allow virtue to flourish, however safe and non-conflicting a path it might choose for itself, for the very growth of virtue is a thing of danger to evil; and the very existence of truth is a threat to falsehood. Therefore, there is no option for evil but a resort to oppression, and there is no option for falsehood but to attempt to exterminate truth and destroy it

[97] Behold, the angels who withdraw the souls of those who continued to wrong themselves ask: 'In what circumstances were you?' They reply: 'We were oppressed in the land.'²⁶⁴ They ask: 'But was not Allah's earth vast enough in which you could have emigrated?'²⁶⁵ Such people then, their resort is Jahannum, an evil retreat.²⁶⁶

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي
 أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا
 مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ
 أَرْضَ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا فَأُولَئِكَ
 مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾

with brute force.

This is the nature of things, and not a passing phenomenon.

This is the instinctive tendency and not a temporary phase.

Therefore, there is no option to *jihad* - no choice for Islam but to sanction it - in all its forms. It is incumbent, however, that it should begin in the world of conscience (within the self); then it should grow strong and appear in full light of life and action. There is no alternative but for the evil in arms to be faced up by virtue, also in arms. There is no choice but for armed truth to confront the evil goaded on by its swollen numbers. If that does not happen, then the affair is no more than suicide; or a horse-play that does not deserve the attention of the believers."

264. The verse refers to those who embraced Islam secretly in Makkah and did not emigrate to Madinah

even after the Prophet's emigration.

Muhammad ibn `Abdul Rahman reports: "A contingent was being raised against the Syrians (during the *Khilafah* of `Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr) and my name was included. I met `Ikrimah and told him about myself. He discouraged me in very strong terms from joining the contingent and related Ibn `Abbas as saying, 'Some people who had borne testimony to the faith were in the pagan ranks and (were forced to: Au.) participate in battles against the Muslims. Arrows flew and kill them, or they fell to a sword. It is in reference to such that Allah revealed, "The angels who withdraw the souls of those who continued to wrong themselves ask: 'In what circumstances were you?'" (Ibn Jarir).

The above report is in Bukhari (Qur-tubi). Another report in Ibn Abi Hatim identifies the battle in the above *hadith* as that of Badr (Ibn Kathir).

[98] Except the truly helpless: men, women and children²⁶⁷ who do not find the means (to escape) and are not guided to a way.²⁶⁸

إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ
وَالْوِلْدَانَ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ
سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٨﴾

[99] It is hoped of such that Allah will forgive them.²⁶⁹ Allah is ever Pardoning, Forgiving.

فَأُولَئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُو عَنْهُمْ وَكَانَ
اللَّهُ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا ﴿٩٩﴾

265. Mawdudi writes: “Those people who had willingly acquiesced to living under an un-Islamic order would be called to account by God and would be asked: If a certain territory was under the dominance of rebels against God, so that it had become impossible to follow His Law, why did you continue to live there? Why did you not migrate to a land where it was possible to follow the law of God?”

266. Abu Da’ud has a *hadith* which records the Prophet as having said:

من جامع المشرك وسكن معه فإنه مثله

“Whoever intermingled with a pagan and lived with him is like him” (Ibn Kathir).

267. Although the inclusion of children sounds superfluous, it is perhaps to say that the inability to migrate should be of the order of that suffered by the children, in order to

be counted as a good excuse (Thanwi).

268. Ibn `Abbas is widely reported as saying: “I and my mother were of the helpless ones who did not have the means nor were guided to a way” (Ibn Jarir).

269. According to reports, the Prophet used to supplicate for the deliverance of these people in his Prayers, even naming some, such as `Ayyash ibn Rabi`ah, Salamah ibn Hisham and others (Ibn Jarir). Such reports are in Bukhari also (Ibn Kathir).

270. The word in the original is *muragham* which can also be explained as one who leaves his people against their will (Zamakhshari).

271. Mawdudi writes: “Some people have misunderstood the tradition which says: ‘There is no hijrah after the conquest of Makka’. This tradition is specifically related to the peo-

[100] Whoso emigrates in the way of Allah will find many refuges²⁷⁰ and vast expanses in the earth.²⁷¹ Further, whoso abandons his home, as an immigrant to Allah and His Messenger, but death overtakes him, surely, his reward is due with Allah.²⁷² Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful.

وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
مُرَافِقًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً وَمَنْ يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ
مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكُهُ الْمَوْتُ
فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا
رَحِيمًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

ple of Arabia of that time and does not embody a permanent injunction. At the time when the greater part of Arabia constituted the Domain of Unbelief (*Dar al-Kufr*) or the Domain of War (*Dar al-Harb*), and Islamic laws were being enforced only in Madina and its outskirts, the Muslims were emphatically enjoined to join and keep together. But when unbelief lost its strength and elan after the conquest of Makka, and almost the entire peninsula came under the dominance of Islam, the Prophet (peace be upon him) declared that migration was no longer needed. This does not mean, however, that the duty to migrate was abolished for Muslims all over the world for all time to come, regardless of the circumstances in which they live.”

Also see note 243 above.

Asad adds: “While the physical exodus from Mecca to Medina ceased to be obligatory for the believers after the conquest of Mecca in the year 8

A.H., the spiritual exodus from the domain of evil to that of righteousness continues to be a fundamental demand of Islam.”

272. Sa'id ibn Jubayr, Qatadah, 'Ikrimah, Dahhak and Suddi have reported that when the previous verse was revealed (no. 97) a man of Banu Khuza'ah called Damurah, who was sick, and was living among the Makkans, ordered that he be put on a stretcher and carried to the Prophet. He was in Tan'im when death overtook him. Some Muslims felt sorry that he did not die in Madinah. The Makkans made fun of him saying: 'The fellow neither died among his people, nor among those he wished to be with.' In response this verse was revealed (Ibn Jarir).

The report is also in Ibn abi Hatim (Ibn Kathir); and also in Haythami's *Majma' al-Zawa'id* (who judged it trustworthy) and in Ibn Hajr's *Al-Matalib* (S. Ibrahim).

[101] There is no sin upon you that when you journey in the land you shorten the Prayer, if you are apprehensive that the unbelievers will attack you.²⁷³ Admittedly, the unbelievers are your manifest foes.

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

273. Mujahid says that once the Prophet was in `Usfan. A group of pagans chanced to be around. When the Muslims did their noon Prayers, it occurred to them that they could have attacked and plundered them while they were thus engaged. Allah revealed this verse between the noon and the afternoon Prayers. Accordingly, when the Prophet did his afternoon Prayers he made two rows of them, all joining the congregation. However, when he did his prostration, only one row prostrated itself with him. The other stood guard (although still in Prayers). At the time of the second *rak`ah* prostration, those of the rear row advanced and prostrated themselves with him while those of the first row retreated standing guard (while still in Prayers). "Thus," Ibn `Abbas said, "the Prayers are: four *rak`ah* within towns, two in journey and one when in danger of attack." And `Umar has been reported as saying that he wondered aloud before the Prophet as to why they were shortening their Prayers in every journey, fear of at-

tack or not, despite Allah having made it conditional to the fear of attack? The Prophet replied: "This is a charitable gift from your Lord, so accept it as that" (Ibn Jarir).

This report about `Umar is in Muslim, Tirmidhi and Musnad Ahmad. In fact, the Prophet is reported in *sahih ahadith* as having Prayed two *rak`at* in his journey to Madinah after the fall of Makkah, although that was not a situation of fear. As for the story about shortening of Prayers in `Usfan, it is well reported, with a version close to it in Bukhari also (Ibn Kathir).

Qurtubi adds: The Prophet is reported to have offered Prayers with the impeding fear of attack scores of times, praying differently on different occasions, which indicates that there is much latitude in the exact manner of this Prayer.

Fiqh Points

The following points are from Mufti Shafi`:

[102] If you (O Prophet) happen to be among them and conduct the Prayer, then, let a group of them join up with you, wearing their weapons on them. When they have completed a cycle, let them withdraw to your rear while the other group that has not Prayed join up and Pray with you, observing every precaution and wearing their weapons on them. The unbelievers wish that if you neglect your weapons and equipment, they launch upon you a single massive attack. However, there is no sin upon you if you are inconvenienced by the rain,²⁷⁴ or because you are sick, that you lay aside your weapons (while Praying). Nevertheless, take your precaution. Allah has prepared for the unbelievers a humiliating chastisement.

وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلْتَأْتِيهِمْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ مَّعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِن وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَىٰ لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ وَدَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَّيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَدَىٰ مِّن مَّطَرٍ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضَىٰ أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا

- 1. The minimum travelling distance for shortening the Prayers is, according to the Hanafiyyah, three *manazil* (about 48 miles, or about 80 km.: Au.)
- 2. There is no option in shortening. That is, one has to necessarily shorten the Prayers when in a journey.
- 3. If one reaches his destination and intends to stay there for 15 or less number of days then he shortens the Prayers, otherwise completes them.
- 4. If someone extends the stay by less than 15 days, over the first 15 days, then too he shortens the

Prayers, even if he has to re-extend several times over (Au.).

- 5. It is only the *Zuhr*, *Asr* and *Isha* Prayers that are shortened. (In actual fact, adds Alusi, all Prayers are four *rak'ah*. The *Fajr* Prayer has been shortened because of the long recitation in it and the *Maghrib* because it is the *witr* of the day-Prayers).
- 6. Prayers should be shortened in every journey even if there is no fear of any sort.
- 7. There is no shortening of the *sunan*, if one wishes to perform them.
- 8. In the situations of actual combat, the Prayers might either be

[103] When you have terminated the Prayer (then, thereafter) remember Allah standing, sitting and on your sides. Then, when you feel secure, offer the Prayer (un-shortened).²⁷⁵ Verily, Prayer is a timed prescription for the believers.²⁷⁶

وَقَعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْفُوتًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

deferred, or, as Qurtubi and others have said, might be done individually by signs (Au.).

- 9. *Salah al-Khawf* is still statutory, even though the Prophet is not amongst us. (The Companions used to Pray *Salah al-Khawf* in the battlefields: Au.).

274. That is, if you think weapons will be damaged by exposure to rains, then you can lay them aside in a protected place.

275. The verse covers both the situations of security (within the towns) as well as that of travel. In both situations one completes his Prayers: four *rak`ah* in the towns and two *rak`ah* in the journeys. As for the shortened two *rak`ah* of the journey, the scholars are unanimous that since they are shortened by Allah's commandment, they are complete. In fact, `A'isha has been reported as saying that the Prayers were originally two *rak`ah* only, that were increased to four in

towns. Therefore, the two *rak`ah* of the journey are complete and hence the words of the Qur'an:

فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ [النساء : ١٠٣]

"When you feel secure, offer the Prayers (i.e., un-shortened)."

276. Majid quotes Dr. Iqbal: "The timings of the daily prayer which according to the Qur'an restores self-possession to the ego by bringing it into closer touch with the ultimate source of life and freedom, is intended to save the ego from the mechanizing effects of sleep and business. Prayer in Islam is the ego's escape from mechanism to freedom."

277. As it happened at Uhud that when the Muslims were defeated, the Prophet climbed a hill. Abu Sufyan came to the foot of the hill and shouted out:

يوم بيوم بدر الأيام دول و الحرب سجال فقال عمر : لا سواء قتلاتنا في الجنة و قتلاكم في النار

"Today it was retaliation for the

[104] And weaken not in pursuing the (enemy) people. If you have experienced pain, then, surely, they also experience pain just as you experience pain. But you are hoping of your Lord what they do not hope for.²⁷⁷ Allah is ever Knowing, Wise.

وَلَا يَهِنُوا فِي اتِّبَاعِ الْقَوْمِ إِن تَكُونُوا تَأْلَمُونَ
فَأَتَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ
اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

[105] Verily, We have sent down the Book to you with the truth so that you might judge between the people by what Allah has shown you.²⁷⁸ Therefore, plead not in favor of those who betray.²⁷⁹

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ
النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَكُن لِّلْخَائِبِينَ
حَصِيمًا ﴿١٠٥﴾

day of Badr! Days are exchangeable. War is a (water) pail (that goes up and down a well).” `Umar replied: “(Not equal are we). Our dead are in Paradise while yours are in Hell.”

278. With reference to the words: “By what Allah has shown you,” (i.e., “of the truth,”) `Umar has said: “Let none of you say, I did this or that by what Allah showed me (as the right thing). Because such a ”showing” by Allah was only to his Prophet. As for us, our opinions can both be right as well as wrong” (Razi). In fact, when someone told `Umar in a case that he judge by what “Allah shows him,” `Umar reprimanded him and said that that was the prerogative of the Prophet (Shafi`).

Mufti Shafi` adds: The verse proves

that the Prophet had Allah’s permission for *ijtihad* and that his *ijtihadat* (legal rulings) had the status of *Shar`i* law, since, if he erred Allah corrected him, even if it was a minor issue, as in the case discussed in the following verses. Again, the verse also implies that the Prophet did not have knowledge of all things: he knew only what “Allah showed him.”

279. Although the application is common, a widely quoted incident was the initial cause of revelation of this verse. Qatadah bin Nu`man is the narrator. He says: “Dates and barley were staple food of the Madinans in pre-Islamic times. The richer ones among them bought refined flour, breads made of which would only be eaten by the head of the family to the exclusion of others. It so happened that my uncle bought a sack of it

from the Syrian markets and stored it along with some weapons. Now, there was a hypocrite named Bashir among the Banu Ubayraq. One night he tunnelled into the house and stole the sack along with the weapons. My uncle Rifa`ah reported to me and we began to spy around. We were led to this family which was reported to be eating out of refined flour. I reported to the Prophet, informing him about the person we suspected. We also told him that we did not care for the flour but wanted the weapons back. When Banu Ubayraq came to know that they were being suspected, they came to the Prophet and complained that I was slandering a people whose Islam and uprightness nobody could doubt. They laid the blame for the theft upon others. The Prophet repeated to me what they had said, ending, 'Do you slander a people whose Islam and uprightness is beyond suspicion?' I regretted that I had brought the affair to his notice. When I told my uncle of the outcome he said: 'Allah is the Helper.' Then came down these verses which told the Prophet not to side with those who betray the trust. They said: '*Therefore, be not an advocate for those that betray (the trust).*' The allusion was to his defense of Banu Ubayraq. The weapons were also re-

turned in response to these verses. The Prophet got them delivered to my uncle Rifa`ah."

Qatadah b. Nu`man added: "My uncle was blind and somehow I had all along suspected that he was also not sincere in his faith. However, when the weapons were returned to him he said: 'O my nephew. Give away (these weapons) as charity in the way of Allah.' Then I knew that he was a true Muslim." It is also reported that after that incident Bashir went and joined the Makkan pagans. Several other versions of the story have been reported, according to some of which Bashir had placed the blame on a Jew as the one who had stolen the weapons (Ibn Jarir).

The incident is widely reported, including one by Hakim who has said that it meets with the critical requirements of Muslim (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

There are reports that suggest that another incident involving a man called To`mah b. Ubayraq also took place around that time. He had stolen a coat of mail and tried to lay the blame on others (Au.).

280. The forgiveness that the Prophet was asked to implore was the *istighfar* by way of *dhikr* which does

[106] Implore Allah's forgiveness, surely Allah is All-forgiving, All-kind.²⁸⁰

وَاسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

[107] And dispute not on behalf of those who are dishonest to their own souls.²⁸¹ Surely, Allah does not approve of one given to dishonesty and sins.²⁸²

وَلَا تُجَادِلْ عَنِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ خَوَّانًا أَتِيمًا ﴿١٠٧﴾

[108] They hide (their crime) from the people, but cannot hide (them) from Allah. He is with them when they plot at nights in words He does not approve of.²⁸³ Allah is ever encompassing the things they do.

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

not necessarily presume the occurrence of a sin (Qurtubi).

Thanwi states: Because of the high status of the Prophet, his saying to Qatadah b. Nu`man that he ought not to suspect practicing good Muslims, amounted to an error for which he was asked to implore Allah's forgiveness.

It has also been suggested that the Prophet was being asked to implore forgiveness on behalf of others (Au.).

281. The verse refers to those who sided with or spoke on behalf of Banu Ubayraq (Ibn Jarir).

282. The word in the original, "*khawwan*," is in its intensive form. It refers to Bashir's unremitting dishonesty. It is reported of the man that he had a long history of dishonest acts

behind him. In Madinah he used to utter scandalous poetry against Muslims and when questioned, attribute them to other poets. In keeping with his character, when he joined up with the Makkans after his exposure by the Qur`an, he committed several thefts there also. In fact, he died when a wall under which he was digging a tunnel to creep into a house caved in on him.

283. It is said that when Bashir (or To`mah) felt sure of being exposed, he plotted with some people that he would conceal it in the yard of a Jew and then lead the people to it to shift the blame to him. This verse refers to his plotting in the night (Zamakhshari). According to some versions in Ibn Jarir and others, Bashir (or To`mah) actually accomplished what he had plotted.

[109] Here you are, disputing on behalf of them in the life of this world, but who will dispute with Allah on their behalf on the Day of Judgment? Or, who will be their defender (that Day)?²⁸⁴

هَأَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ جَادَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا فَمَنْ يُجَادِلُ اللَّهَ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
أَمْ مَنْ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿١٠٩﴾

284. The reference is to Banu Ubayraq who had sided with their man although they knew that he was guilty.

Sayyid comments: The verses in question speak of an incident which has no parallel in human history and is a proof by itself that this Qur'an is a revelation of Allah. Humans, however lofty their thoughts might be, and however purified their souls, could not have risen to these heights. These verses rise to a level that is like a line drawn in the horizon that humans have never and will never aspire to reach. It happened at a time when the Jews were up against Islam leaving no poisoned arrow in their quill un-shot toward Islam and Muslims. This chapter, as well as the previous two chapters of the Qur'an, speak in detail of their machinations and conspiracies.

Nonetheless, during those very days when they were spreading lies, joining hands with the pagans, encouraging the hypocrites, charting

out attack plans for them, spreading rumours, puzzling the minds, ridiculing the Prophet's leadership, planting doubts about the revelation and messengership and attempting to disintegrate the Muslim society from within - during those very days of constriction and danger, these verses came down, absolving a Jew of a false allegation of theft, while the conspirers were no less than a family of the Ansar: those Ansar who were the very backbone of the Prophet's strength in Madinah.

What human discourse could have reached this height? It could only be Allah's revelation.

285. It is said that a woman came to 'Abdullah b. Mughaffal and asked: "What do you have to say of a woman who committed obscenity, became pregnant and killed the child when she gave birth?" Ibn Mughaffal told her: "She shall be in the Fire." The woman retreated weeping. At that Ibn Mughaffal called her back and said: "I think your case cannot

[110] Yet, whoever does an evil, or wrongs himself, but seeks Allah's forgiveness, he shall find Allah ever Forgiving, Merciful.²⁸⁵

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

[111] Whoever earns an evil, earns it only against himself. Allah is ever Knowing, Wise.

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

[112] And, whoever earns an error, or a sin,²⁸⁶ and then casts it upon an innocent one, thereby burdens (himself) with a slander and a manifest sin.

وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ حَظِيئَةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِ بَرِيئًا
فَقَدْ احْتَمَلَ بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١١٢﴾

[113] But for the grace of Allah on you and His mercy, a party of them had proposed to lead you (O Muhammad) astray;²⁸⁷ but they lead not astray save themselves; and they will not harm you in the least. Allah has sent upon you the Book and the Wisdom²⁸⁸ and has taught you what you knew not.²⁸⁹ Surely, great has been Allah's grace upon you.

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

be any different from the two kinds (mentioned in this verse): 'Whoever does an evil, or wrongs himself, but seeks Allah's forgiveness, he shall find Allah Forgiving, Kind.'" At that the woman wiped her tears and went her way (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Ubayriq (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

286. The words in the original for "error" and "sin" are "*khati'atan*" and "*ithman*." The former alludes to an inadvertent sin while the latter to a deliberate one (Ibn Jarir).

Imām Razi's searching mind adds: The *fadl* (Grace) of the original manifested itself in the grant of prophethood, while *rahmah* (mercy) in Allah's protection of him from sins.

287. The allusion is to those who tried to conceal the truth from the Prophet in the affair concerning the theft of the armor by one of the Banu

288. The meaning of the word hikmah as used in the Qur'an will depend on the context. It might appear along with the word Qur'an or without it. If it appears un-juxtaposed with the word Qur'an, then it has been interpreted as meaning "prophethood." Sometimes it is interpreted as the knowledge of the Qur'an. Some others have said that

[114] Not much good there is in most of their conspiring,²⁹⁰ except for him who exhorts to charity, the good, or, conciliation between the people.²⁹¹ Whoever does that seeking Allah's good Pleasure, surely, We shall in time grant him a mighty reward.

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

hikmah in such contexts means the Qur'an itself, its knowledge, understanding, etc. Alternatively, the word *hikmah* can appear juxtaposed to the word Qur'an (as in the present case). In such a context it is normally interpreted either as the *Sunnah*, or, generally speaking, knowledge of the truth, deeds that compare well with that knowledge, and, in addition, the ability to say and do the right things in right measure, at the right time (wisdom, in one word: Au.) - Ibn al-Qayyim.

289. That is, He taught you, O Prophet, the *Shari'ah*, the lawful and the unlawful, vice and virtue, the good and the evil (Ibn Jarir, Shawkani).

290. Since all meetings that have an evil agenda on the cards, are normally held in secret, Allah used the word *najwa* which is for a secret meeting (Au.).

This verse proves that all that the ig-

norant *Sufis* teach in secret is false, if it goes against the Qur'an and *Sunnah* (Thanwi).

291. Except for Ibn Majah the six *Sihab* have the following narration recorded in them. Umm Kulthum bint 'Uqbah reports the Prophet as having said:

لَيْسَ الْكَذَّابُ الَّذِي يُصْلِحُ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فَيَقُولُ خَيْرًا
أَوْ يُبْمِي خَيْرًا

“He is not a liar who attempts at exaggerating or fabricating stories in order to make peace between the people.”

She added:

لَمْ أَسْمَعْهُ يُرَخِّصُ فِي شَيْءٍ مِّمَّا يَقُولُ النَّاسُ إِلَّا فِي
ثَلَاثٍ فِي الْحَرْبِ وَالْإِصْلَاحِ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَحَدِيثِ
الرَّجُلِ افْرَأْتَهُ وَحَدِيثِ الْمَرْأَةِ رَوَّجَهَا

“I have not heard him (the Prophet) allow people go about saying (lies to each other) except in three affairs: a) in war, b) making peace between the people,

[115] (In contrast) Whosoever makes a breach with the Messenger,²⁹² after the guidance has become clear to him, and follows other than the way of the believers,²⁹³ We shall let him do what he chooses, then roast him in Jahannum,²⁹⁴ an evil destination.

وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ
الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ
مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصَلِّهِ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿١١٥﴾

and c) reporting to the man what (good things about him) the wife has said, and to the wife what (good things about her) the husband has said.”

In a *hadith* of Abu Da'ud, the Prophet said:

ألا أخبركم بأفضل من درجة الصيام، والصلاة،
والصدقة؟ قالوا: بلى يا رسول الله. قال: "إصلاح
ذات البين"

“May I not tell you about something that is better than fasts, Prayers and charity?” They said: “Sure, do it, O Messenger of Allah.” He said: “Make peace between people.”

And he said,

وفساد ذات البين هي الحالقة

“To create discord between the people is the all-erasing one” (Ibn Kathir).

Qurtubi adds: `Umar used to write to his governors not to be in a haste while judging between the people. Rather, they should delay the judg-

ment, in the hope that the two parties might settle the matter between themselves. A judgment imposed from outside gives birth to acrimony.

292. The words in the original for “make a breach” is “*yushaaqiq*.” It draws the following comment from Sayyid: “Linguistically the word stands for taking sides other than the side taken by another person. With reference to the Prophet, it would mean to take a side opposed to his, or to fall in a line not taken by him. On a broader plane, it would mean to oppose him in his ways and choose for oneself a path not shown by him. The message that the Prophet has brought consists of a complete system of life. It includes doctrines and creeds for the individual, as well as the Law both for the individual as well as the community. It also embodies general directions for social, economic and political activities of the state. It is one whole body. Whoever took a part of it and rejected a part, tore the body into two. It will

[116] Surely, Allah will not forgive that He is associated with, but shall forgive less than that for whom He will,²⁹⁵ And whosoever associated (ought) with Allah, surely, strayed far away (from Truth).

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ﴿١١٦﴾

never work. One who took a 'side other than the side taken by the Prophet,' or believed in a part and disbelieved in a part, in fact shredded the whole."

293. Imām Shafe`i has used this verse to prove the validity of *ijma`* (consensus) - Razi, Ibn Kathir.

Thanwi states: The implication is as follows. For the mind to keep the entire body of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet present before itself, is not easy. Therefore, alternatively, another way to find out whether one is going against the "ways of the Prophet" or not, would be to check up with the ways of the "true" believers.

294. In this context Majid quotes Asad from his *Road to Makkah*: "The imitation of outward appearance leads, by degrees, to a corresponding assimilation of the mental disposition... Only very superficial people can believe that it is possible to imitate a civilization in its external appearance, without being at the same

time affected by its spirit. A civilization is not an empty form only, but a living energy. The moment we begin to accept its form, its internal currents and its dynamic influences set to work in ourselves and mould slowly, imperceptibly our whole mental attitude."

295. The immediate reference was to To`mah, who, had he not gone and joined the pagans, still had the chance of being forgiven (Razi). But, instead of seeking Allah's forgiveness, he preferred to worship female deities (Au.).

296. According to Suddi, Ibn Zayd and others the allusion is to Lat, `Uzza, Manat, Isaf and Na'ilah: all female deities. (They used to even adorn them with jewellery: Thanwi). However, the opinion of Ibn `Abbas and Qatadah is that the word *inath* is also used for inanimate objects that have no souls, and thus the allusion is to idols. A third opinion is that the allusion is to the belief of the pagans who claimed that their deities were

[117] Indeed, they invoke not besides Him, but female (deities).²⁹⁶ (But) in truth, they invoke none other than a rebellious Shaytan.

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

[118] (Whom) Allah has cursed, and who vowed that, 'Assuredly I will take of Your slaves an appointed portion.'²⁹⁷

لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَقَالَ لَأَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ﴿١١٨﴾

originally angels which, in their belief, were females (Ibn Jarir, Razi).

Thanwi adds: Not that they did not worship male deities. It was to set a point about their abundant idiocy that their worship of female deities was made note of.

Majid writes: "It was not only the Arabs who worshipped as 'daughters of God' angels and certain of their images, but many divinities throughout the world, including the sun, the moon, and the 'Great Mother,; have been construed as feminine, and the cult of goddesses has been almost universal". He quotes *The Encyclopaedia of Religion*: "Among many primitive peoples, and at the present time in a large number of less developed cults, goddesses occupy important places in the pantheon."

Lakshmi Devi, Durga Bai and Maryam are some of the other names that easily come to mind (Au.).

297. That portion is 999 from every

1000 souls. Says a tradition of Muslim:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَا آدَمُ فَيَقُولُ لَبَّيْكَ وَسَعْدَيْكَ وَالْخَيْرُ فِي يَدَيْكَ قَالَ يَقُولُ أُخْرِجْ بَعْثَ النَّارِ قَالَ وَمَا بَعْثَ النَّارِ قَالَ مِنْ كُلِّ أَلْفٍ تِسْعَ مِائَةٍ وَتِسْعَةً وَتِسْعِينَ قَالَ فَذَاكَ حِينَ يَثِيبُ الصَّغِيرُ .
صحيح مسلم

"Allah will say to Adam on the Day of Judgment, 'O Adam.' He will answer, 'Here I am O our Lord. Good is in Your Hand.' He will say, 'Send across the assortment of the Fire.' He will ask, 'And what is the assortment of the Fire?' It will be said, 'From every thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine.' The Prophet added, 'That will be the time when a little one will become old.'" (Qurtubi).

298. The pagans used to slit, pierce, or cut the ear lobes of the cattle for various superstitious reasons, as well as, sometimes, in dedication to a de-

[120] He will promise them and lend them hopes. But Shaytan does not promise them save delusions.³⁰¹

يَعِدُّهُمْ وَمِنِّيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا
عُرْوًا ﴿١٢٠﴾

[121] Their end shall be Jahannum from which they shall find no escape.

أُولَئِكَ مَاوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا
مَخِصًا ﴿١٢١﴾

[122] Whereas, those who believe and do righteous deeds, We shall surely admit them into gardens underneath which rivers flow, abiding therein forever. Allah's promise is true. And who is truer to his word than Allah?

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

might not get it removed, unless it hurts him to have that extra finger. Application of henna, or use of rib-bon in the hair, and other such practices for beautification purposes, are not prohibited, as they do not disfigure the creation of Allah. In fact, the Prophet once suggested to a woman that she apply henna to her hand. The lady took it so serious that she continued to use henna until the age of ninety.

Some scholars have said that shaving off the beard also falls in the category of "defacing the creation of Allah" (Thanwi).

300. Whoever followed *Shaytan* and obeyed him, took him for a patron and abandoned Allah's protection (Razi).

301. As it happened at Badr when

Shaytan deluded them by saying (8:48):

{وَأُذِ زَيْنَ هُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَاهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ
الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌّ لَكُمْ فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَتِ الْفِئَتَانِ
نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِنْكُمْ إِنِّي أَرَى
مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ
[الأنفال: ٤٨]}

"When *Shaytan* beautified their deeds and said, 'Today no one can overcome you. Moreover, I am by your side.' But when he saw the two forces, (i.e., the believers and the angels) he turned on his back and said, 'I have nothing to do with you. I see what you cannot see. I fear Allah. Surely, Allah is severe in punishment.'"

However, his delusion will truly be apparent on the Day of Judgment when *Shaytan* will say:

وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعَدَّ
الْحَقُّ وَوَعَدْتُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ
سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا تَلُمُونِي

[123] Not by your desires (O Muslims), nor by the desires of the People of the Book (are the affairs judged).³⁰² Rather, whosoever does evil, will be recompensed for it.³⁰³ and will not find for himself, besides Allah, anyone as a supporter or a helper.

لَيْسَ بِأَمَانَتِكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِيَّ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ
يَعْمَلُ سُوءًا يُجْزَى بِهِ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ
اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٣﴾

[124] And whosoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, and he be a believer, such shall enter Paradise. They shall not be wronged by a speck.

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ
أُنْتَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ
وَلَا يُظَلَّمُونَ نَفِيرًا ﴿١٢٤﴾

وَلَوْ مَوَا أَنْتُمْ مَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِحِكُمْ وَمَا أَشْتُمْ بِمُصْرِحِيَّ
إِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَا أَشْرَكْتُمُونَ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ [إبراهيم : ٢٢]

“And Shaytan will say when the affairs are decided, ‘Verily, Allah made you a true promise. I also promised you but I did not keep it. (Further), I did not have any power over you, except that I invited you and you answered. Therefore, do not blame me, rather, blame yourselves. I cannot help you (now) nor can you me. I disown your earlier acts of worship to me” (Ibn Jarir).

302. Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah, Suddi, Abu Salih and Dahhak have said that some Muslims, Christians and Jews, argued among themselves. The Jews said: “Our Book is better than yours. It came down before yours and our Prophet was the best of Prophets.” The Christians said similar things. The Muslims said their Book had abrogated the previous ones and that

their Prophet was the seal of Prophets. In response Allah revealed this verse.

However, Mujahid holds a different and weightier opinion. He said that the first part of the verse (i.e., “Not by your desires”) addressed the pagans. In other words, the verse is saying: “Not by your desires (O pagans), nor by the desires of the People of the Book..” (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathi).

Hasan al-Busri has said:

ليس الإيمان بالتمني ولكن ما قر في القلب وصدقه
العمل إن قوما ألهتهم امانى المغفرة حتى خرجوا في
الدنيا ولا حسنة لهم وقالوا نحسن الظن بالله وكذبوا
لو احسنوا الظن بالله لأحسنوا العمل له

Faith is not the name of dreams or vain desires, rather, what takes root in the heart and good deeds confirm it. Vain hopes of forgiveness led a people to neglect, so that they left the world with-

out a good deed in their account. They said, 'We fasten good hopes in Allah.' They lied. Had they truly fastened good hopes in Allah, they would have attempt good deeds (*Kashshaf*).

303. `A'isha, Ubayy b. Ka`b and Mujahid have said that the principle enunciated in this verse holds good for the believers also save that the believers are recompensed for their minor sins by whatever unpleasant things that happen to them, although Allah forgives much. As for the unbelievers, Hasan and Dahhak have said that they will be recompensed for all that they do, major or minor (in the Hereafter). In fact, this meaning goes back right to the Prophet. It is reported that when this verse was revealed, Muslims felt it hard upon themselves. They spoke to the Prophet. He told them:

سَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا، فَإِنْ فِي كُلِّ مَا يَصَابُ بِهِ الْمُسْلِمُ كَفَّارَةٌ
حَتَّى الشُّوْكَةِ يُشَاكُهَا، وَالتَّنَكُّبِ يَنْكُبُهَا

“Set your objectives right and try to be as near as (the ideal) as possible, for all that a Muslim suffers is by way of expiation, including a minor misfortune that befalls him, or a thorn that pricks him.” (This *hadith* is in Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i and others: Ibn Kathir. Some *ahadith* add the

words: “including the little scare that one suffers, when, having placed a thing in one pocket, searches for it in another but does not find it”: Qurtubi).

There are several other reports to this effect with Abu Bakr as the enquirer (Ibn Jarir). According to some sources, Abu Bakr felt his back broken when this verse said: “Whosoever does evil, will be recompensed for it” (Shafi'). The report about Abu Bakr is in Muslim also, as in other compilations. Bukhari and Muslim have Abu Sa'id and Abu Hurayrah also relating that the Prophet said:

مَا يُصِيبُ الْمُسْلِمَ مِنْ نَصَبٍ وَلَا وَصَبٍ وَلَا هَمٍّ وَلَا
حُزْنٍ وَلَا أَدَى وَلَا غَمٍّ حَتَّى الشُّوْكَةِ يُشَاكُهَا إِلَّا كَفَّرَ
اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ خَطَايَاهُ

“Nothing befalls a Muslim, whether it is a hardship, discomfort, illness or grief, including a distress that might strike him, but it expiates his sins” (Ibn Kathir).

304. The word in the original for upright is *hanif*. See ch.2 n. and ch.3 n. 113 for explanation.

305. Allah took Ibrahim for a friend because of Ibrahim's extreme love for Allah and complete submission to Him. In a report of Muslim the Prophet said:

[125] *And who can be on a better religion than him who submitted his will to Allah, did righteous deeds, and followed the ways of Ibrahim, the upright?*³⁰⁴ *And Allah took Ibrahim for a friend.*³⁰⁵

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا ﴿١٢٥﴾

عَنْ أَبِي الْأَخْوَصِ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- قَالَ « لَوْ كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ خَلِيلًا لَاتَّخَذْتُ ابْنَ أَبِي قُحَافَةَ خَلِيلًا وَلَكِنْ صَاحِبُكُمْ خَلِيلُ اللَّهِ

“Were I to take a Friend from the peoples of the earth, I would have taken Abu Quhafah’s son (Abu Bakr) as a friend. But your companion (himself) is Allah’s friend.”

According to another report:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اتَّخَذَنِي خَلِيلًا، كَمَا اتَّخَذَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا

“Verily Allah took me for a friend, as He took Ibrahim for a friend” (Ibn Kathir).

Qurtubi adds: A tradition of the Prophet says:

الرَّجُلُ عَلَى دِينِ خَلِيلِهِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَحَدُكُمْ مَنْ يُخَالِلُهُ. قَالَ أَبُو عِيْسَى هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ غَرِيبٌ. (ترمذي)

“A man is on the religion of his friend. So check on yourself as to whom do you befriend.”

Tirmidhi evaluated it as *Hasan*.

And Hassan b. Thabit has said:

Plenty are a man's friends,

But in distress few

Be not misled by the friendship of those you befriend

Every brother says I am trustworthy

But not everyone does what he says, exactly

'cept for the well-bred, religious friend

'Tis he who is true to his declaration.

(Translator unknown)

306. When Allah said that He took Ibrahim as a friend, someone might imagine that perhaps He needed him. Allah emphatically asserted His Self-sufficiency by stating: “*To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth.*” (Razi).

307. Sayyid writes: It is apparent from the many enquiries that the Companions of the Prophet were making about women during the early phase of life at Madinah, that it was nothing but their newly acquired sensitivity about what is right and what is wrong that invoked them to ask those questions. They suspected everything that they had inherited from the days of *jahiliyyah*,

[126] To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth.³⁰⁶ And Allah encompasses everything.

[127] They ask you for a pronouncement concerning women.³⁰⁷ Tell them, Allah instructs you about them, and about what is being recited to you in the Book³⁰⁸ concerning the orphaned girls, to whom you give not what is prescribed for them yet you desire to marry them³⁰⁹ .. (Allah admonishes you about them)... and about the oppressed children,³¹⁰ and that you stand firm for justice to the orphan.³¹¹ Surely, whatever you do of the good, Allah is well-acquainted therewith.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ
اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطًا ﴿١٢٦﴾

وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ
فِيهِنَّ وَمَا يُنَالِي عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ فِي
يَتَامَى النِّسَاءِ الْأَلْيَاتِ لِأَن تَتَّخِذْنَ مَا كُتِبَ
لَهُنَّ وَتَرْتَبِئْنَ أَن تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ
مِنَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَأَن تَقْتُمُوا لِلْيَتَامَى بِالْقِسْطِ
وَمَا تَعْلَمُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِ عَلِيمًا
﴿١٢٧﴾

and expected that the newest guidance would either modify the old practices, or annul them altogether.

This reflects among the new Muslims who enquire about some very simple cultural practices of non-Muslim societies, whether they are allowed in Islam or not (Au.).

308. "In accordance with the system prevailing throughout the Qur'an, a lengthy passage dealing with purely moral or ethical questions is usually - as in the present case - followed by verses relating to social legislation, and this with a view to bringing out the intimate connection between man's spiritual life and his social behavior" (Asad).

Ibn 'Abbas has said that the pre-Islamic

Arabs did not allot a share to women in inheritance. When Islam came, some men enquired about what was due to them and Allah answered them to the effect that what is due has already been stated at the beginning of this chapter, which, as a matter of fact, you have not been giving them (Ibn Jarir).

Some have said that even after the revelation of earlier verses, some people remained in doubts, thought that the instructions were not adequate, and made more enquiries, responding to which Allah revealed this and the last few verses of this chapter (Razi, Qurtubi and others).

309. The phrase is so constructed in the original, that it can be understood either way: as adopted by us,

viz., “you desire to marry them” or, alternatively, “you are, in fact, averse to marrying them” (Zamakhshari, Razi and others).

According to `A'isha, this later part of the verse refers to those girls who were orphaned, who inherited wealth, and their guardians themselves wanted to marry them, in order to lay hands on their wealth. (This report is in Bukhari: Ibn Kathir).

Sa`id b. Jubayr has a more complete explanation. He says that in pre-Islamic days the Arabs did not allot a share to women and children in the inheritance. When Allah revealed the earlier parts of this chapter, which included women and children as the inheritors, they felt it a bit hard upon them, wondering how could those who did not contribute to the creation of wealth, be given a share. They hoped the rules would be abrogated by fresh revelations. But when that did not happen, they spoke to the Prophet and Allah responded with these verses (Ibn Jarir).

310. “Taking the Holy Qur`ān as the work, not of God but of the Prophet, says a Christian writer: ‘One of the most commendable things which one finds in reading the Qoran is the solicitude which Muhammed shows

for the young, and specially for such as have been deprived of their natural guardians. Again and again he insists upon a kind and just treatment being accorded to children. And working upon his words, the Muhammedan doctors have framed a system of rules concerning the appointment and duties of guardians which is more complete, and extending to the most details’ (Roberts)” - Majid.

311. It has been generally understood that the reference by the “orphans” is to those girls who inherited wealth. If they happened to be beautiful their guardians themselves took them in wedlock, but if they were not, they prevented their marriage to others until they died, after which they inherited their wealth. The guardians were admonished by this verse to be fair with them, as well as with the oppressed children, not only in matters of inheritance, but in every other affair. Accordingly, whenever a case was brought up before the second caliph `Umar, he advised the guardian to look for a better suitor than himself to marry off the orphaned girl, if she happened to be beautiful and wealthy. However, if she happened to be not so good looking and poor, then `Umar told the guardian

[128] And, if a woman fears unkind treatment or aversion from her husband, then there is no sin for them to seek an amicable settlement between themselves.³¹² And an amicable settlement is better.³¹³ (Although) souls are prone to avarice,³¹⁴ if you do good and observe self-restraint then, surely, Allah is Aware of all that you do.³¹⁵

وَإِنْ امْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنْفُسُ الشُّحَّ وَإِنْ تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٢٨﴾

that he had greater rights to her and therefore ought to take her into wedlock (Ibn Jarir, Zamakhshari).

312. According to the great majority the verse purports to say that if a man does not approve of his wife, because of lack of charm, ill manners, old age, infertility, or whatever, and intends to divorce her, but she on her part does not want a separation, then they can work out a compromise by which she forgoes some of her rights, such as the right of equal visits, or of maintenance, and, in return he retains her. Such amicable settlement is, according to the revelation, better than separation. Suddi has pointed out that this happened in the case of Sawdah bint Zam`ah whom the Prophet wished to divorce, but she requested that she be retained and in return she would relinquish the right of her day to `A'isha (Ibn Jarir, Razi). The report about Sawdah is in Bukhari, Tirmidhi, Abu Da`ud and

others (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

Shafi` expands upon a point from Thanwi: In case of a husband and wife working out a compromise deal, the wife will lose for good only that right which is of the past, such as, for example, mahr (dower). If she pardons a part or whole of it in a deal with her husband, she loses it for good. In contrast, those of the rights that are of the future, such as, for instance, her maintenance, she does not lose them permanently, if she forgoes a part or whole of them in a deal with her husband. Whenever she wants she can rescind, and the husband will have the choice either to give her the full share, or divorce her.

Further, adds Shafi`, the emphasis on a settlement between themselves, without outside interference, may be made not of, because, it is such a settlement that is expected to last.

Thanwi has another point: It might occur to some that relinquishing a part of her rights by a wife in return of her husband not divorcing her, is tantamount to bribing. To others it might look as if the husband exploited the situation. To remove the doubts, which might be cast upon either of the parties, Allah said: "There is no sin..."

313. That is, an amicable settlement is better than divorce which, according to a *hadīth* (in Abu Da'ud and Ibn Majah: Hussein):

أَبْغَضُ الْحَالَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ الطَّلَاقُ

"The most hateful of the lawful things in the sight of Allah is divorce" (Ibn Kathir).

But the *hadīth* has been declared as of *Hasan* status (Au.).

Also, adds Shafi', the verse gives a wide latitude to the Muslims to work out the kind of settlements and agreements between themselves that will suit the most number of people, regardless of what the ideal demands. The Prophet has said in a report of Hakim:

الصلح جائز بين المسلمين إلا صلحا حرم حلالا
أو أحل حراما

"Every agreement between the Muslims is lawful except when

an unlawful has been made lawful or a lawful has been made unlawful."

Mawdudi writes: "In order to appreciate the response fully one would do well to consider the query itself. In the days of Ignorance a man was free to marry an unlimited number of women, who had virtually no rights. When the preliminary verses of the present *Surah* were revealed (see especially verse 3) this freedom was circumscribed in two ways. First, the maximum number of wives was fixed at four. Second, justice (that is, equal treatment of wives) was laid down as a necessary condition for marrying more than one. This gives rise to the question whether a person is obliged by Islam to feel equally towards each of his wives, to love each to an equal degree, and treat them equally even in respect of sexual relationship. Such questions are especially relevant with regard to a husband one of whose wives might be, say, afflicted with either sterility, permanent sickness or who is incapable of sexual intercourse. Does justice demand that if he fails to live up to the standards of equality mentioned above that he should renounce his first wife in order to marry the second? Moreover, where the first wife is disinclined to agree to annulment

[129] Indeed, you will never manage (perfect) equality between the wives, however eager you might be.³¹⁶ But do not turn completely away from one and leave her, as it were, suspended.³¹⁷ If you set things right and observe self-restraint, then, surely, Allah is Ever-forgiving, Ever-kind.

وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ فَتَذَرُوهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٢٩﴾

of her marriage, is it appropriate for the spouses to agree to make a voluntary accord between themselves, according to which the wife, towards whom the husband feels relatively less attracted, voluntarily surrenders some of her rights, prevailing upon her husband not to repudiate the marriage? Would such an act be against the dictates of justice?"

314. The generality of the statement implies that we should not be surprised or disappointed to observe a minor failing in those whom we consider perfect, since, after all, certain traits and tendencies have been placed in the human soul (Thanwi, reworded).

315. It is said that `Imran b. Hitan was an ugly dark man, but his wife a beautiful one. One day she looked hard in his face and said, "Allah be praised." He asked, "What's the matter." She said, "Well, I thanked Allah, for both of us shall be in Para-

dise." He asked: "And how is that?" She replied, "You got a person like me and thank Allah. I got a person like you and observe sabr. And Allah has promised Paradise to the *shakirin* and *sabirin*" (Zamakhshari).

316. This has generally been understood to be referring to the inclination of the heart. A man will never be able to love his two or more wives equally or show passion in equal measure. The Prophet himself did his best to treat his several wives equitably, but Prayed:

اللهم هذا قسمي فيما أملك، فلا تلمني فيما تملك ولا أملك

"O Allah. This is the best I could do within what is in my power. Do not blame me for what is in Your power, but not in my power." (This *hadith* is in Abu Da'ud with good *isnad*: Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

In another *hadith*, (in Tirmidhi: Ibn

Kathir) narrated by Abu Hurayrah, the Prophet said:

من كانت له امرأتان فمال إلى إحداهما، جاء يوم
القيامة وأحد شقيه ساقط

“Whoever had two wives and inclined wholly toward one of them, will appear on the Day of Judgment with one half of the body drooping down” (Ibn Jarir, *Kashshaf*, Razi, Qurtubi).

The *hadīth* is in Tirmidhi (Shawkani), and in Nasa’i, Ibn Majah, and Albani (Syed Ibrahim).

Zamakhshari adds: It is reported that ‘Umar sent something expensive to ‘A’isha. She asked the bearer: “Did ‘Umar send the same thing to all of the Prophet’s wives?” The man said: “No. Rather, he sent similar things to his Qurayshi wives, but some other things to non-Qurayshi wives.” She told him: “Take it back, for the Prophet used to treat his wives equally.” At that ‘Umar sent all of them similar gifts.

And, it is reported of Mu’adh ibn Jabal, who had two wives, that when he was in the house of one, he would not make ablution in the house of the other. When the two died in

the famous Syrian plague, he buried them in the same grave.

317. Thus, extending the logic, one should not give up attempting what is within one’s power, despite the fear of inadequacy, in the hope that later, he might be able to summon enough power to do it adequately, for, it might so prove, that never would he have power to do it in a manner that fully justifies the attempt. Procrastination might deprive him of whatever little that he could immediately accomplish (Thanwi).

318. That is, it is an old admonition that has been repeated over the ages, and not exclusively addressed to you (Zamakhshari).

319. Some scholars have said that this verse is the axis of the Qur’ān. Everything else of the revelation revolves around this verse (Qurtubi).

320. Sayyid writes: “To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth”: this is a commonly occurring refrain. At this point it means to say that the family laws that are being dictated are part of one whole system that governs this universe, and therefore, there has to be harmo-

[130] But if they separate, Allah will enrich each of them with His bounty. Allah is All-embracing, All-wise.

وَإِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّن سَعَتِهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٣٠﴾

[131] To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth. We charged those who were given the Book before you, as (We have charged) you,³¹⁸ that you fear Allah.³¹⁹ But if you disbelieve, then to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth. Allah is All-sufficient, All-laudable.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَإِن تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيدًا ﴿١٣١﴾

[132] To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth.³²⁰ And Allah suffices for a Guardian.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿١٣٢﴾

[133] If He will, O people, He can put you away, and bring others (in your place).³²¹ Surely, Allah has power over that.

إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَيَأْتِ بِآخَرِينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ قَدِيرًا ﴿١٣٣﴾

ny between the two - the system that governs the world and the system that governs family life. (Otherwise there would be conflict, and conflict would result in tension and unhappiness: Au.).

321. This applies to anyone who has been given wealth, power, influence, knowledge, or any other blessing, that if he does not expend it in the way of Allah, does not do what is expected of him, or does not live by it, then Allah might take away the blessing from him and give it to others (Qurtubi).

322. The same thing has been stated elsewhere more explicitly. For instance, (in 11: 15) Allah said:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا ثَوَّفَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَاهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْحَسُونَ (١٥) أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ وَحِطَّ مَا صَنَعُوا فِيهَا وَبَاطِلٌ مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ [هود : ١٥ ، ١٦]

“Whoso desires this life and its adornment, We will recompense them fully for their deeds in this world, and they shall not suffer any loss. But, they will have nothing for them in the Hereafter except the Fire. There, their efforts will be lost, and vain all that they were doing” (Ibn Jarir).

Thanwi points out: This applies equally to the signs of spiritual gains

[134] Whosoever desires the reward of this world, (should know that) with Allah are the rewards of this world as well as the next.³²² And Allah is All-hearing, All-seeing.³²³

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

[135] Believers! Be you upholders of justice,³²⁴ bearers of testimony for Allah,³²⁵ even if it is against yourselves, or your parents and kinsmen, whether the person concerned be rich or poor; Allah is closer to both.³²⁶ Follow not caprice, lest you swerve; for if you twist (the facts) or refuse (to bear the testimony),³²⁷ then, surely, Allah is Aware of what you do.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا وَإِنْ تَلَوُّوا أَوْ نَعَرْتُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٣٥﴾

in this present life, which some people eagerly await.

323. “The section ends with the assertion that God is All-Seeing and All-Hearing. This means that God is fully aware of the action of His creations and is unlike those negligent sovereigns who are blind in lavishing their favours. God governs the universe with full knowledge and awareness. He has an eye on the capacities and ambitions of all human beings and knows their qualities exactly. He is fully aware for the purposes to which people devote their efforts and energies. Anyone who wilfully decides to be dishonest to God should therefore not cherish hopes of receiving the favours reserved for those who obey Him” (Mawdudi).

324. The word in the original is *qaw-*

wamin, an intensive form, implying that the quality of justice should be of a high order, a permanent phenomenon, and not a passing one (*Kashshaf*, Razi, Qurtubi and others).

325. Ibn Jarir states: “To stand out firmly for justice should be a part of your character and a necessary quality. And the meaning of the whole verse is: ‘Stand out firmly for justice, and bear testimony for the sake of Allah.’”

Ibn Jarir also quotes Ibn Shihab (al-Zuhri) as saying that the righteous men of the first few generations (the *Salaf al-Salih*) were people of such quality that they could be trusted for testimony in cases involving their parents, brothers, wives or other kinsmen. But, after them came

a people who could not be trusted to that degree. Therefore, their testimony, where their kinsmen were involved, became unacceptable.

It happened in India once, during the time of the British, that there arose a dispute among Muslims and Hindus over a piece of land. Neither of them possessed valid documents in support of their claims. Finally, the Hindus suggested that the testimony of an aged trusted Muslim scholar of the town may be sought because he knew the truth of the matter. But the problem was that after the failed 1857 insurrection against the British rule, spearheaded by Muslims, the said scholar had sworn that he would not look at the face of a British again. The magistrate laughed and said that he could testify without looking at his face. His condition accepted, the aged man came in, stood with his back to the magistrate and testified that the land belonged to the Hindus. Another version says that the magistrate actually went to the Sheikh's house who testified from behind a half-open door that the land belonged to the Hindus (Au.).

Fiqh Point

Qurtubi states that Hasan, Nakha'i, Sha'bi, Shurayh, Malik, Thawri, Shafe'i and Ibn Hanbal were of those

who did not accept the testimony of a person when his close relatives were involved, although there are others who allowed it on condition that the man meet with the condition of an "*adool*" (i.e., one who is trustworthy, religious and without any of those minor blemishes that are unbecoming of a gentleman). Imām Malik and Abu Hanifah do not allow a husband's or wife's testimony in favor or against each other. Further, according to a tradition of Abu Da'ud, the Prophet had refused to accept the testimony of a dishonest person, of a person against another with whom he bore a grudge, and of the head of a family, in favor of the family members, which leads us to the rule that wherever a person stands to gain something, in some way or the other, his testimony is not acceptable.

326. That is, poverty of one, or richness of another, should have no bearing upon your testimony, for Allah is a better Protector of either, than you can be ('Ali, Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah and others: Ibn Jarir).

When 'Abdullah ibn Rawaha had gone to Khyber to collect jizyah and the Jews tried to bribe him, he said: "By God. I have come to you from a man who is the dearest to me on

[136] O those who have believed!³²⁸ Believe in Allah and His Messenger, in the Book He has revealed unto His Messenger and in the Book He revealed earlier.³²⁹ Whoso disbelieved in Allah, His angels,³³⁰ His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, surely, fell into a distant error.³³¹

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

earth. And you are the most hateful to me as the descendants of pigs and monkeys. But, neither his love nor your hatred, can prevent me from being just to you". They said, "The heavens and the earth are in their place because of this" (Ibn Kathir).

327. The translation is based on the opinions of Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Qatadah, Ibn Zayd and others as found in Ibn Jarir.

328. Ibn Jarir's opinion is that by the words, "O those who have believed" it is the Jews and Christians who have been addressed who are being told: 'O those who have believed in the earlier Prophets, believe in this latest Prophet Muhammad and his mission also.'

But the opinion of most of the other commentators is that the address is to the Muslims, who are being asked to seek reaffirmation, purification and a full realization of their faith.

329. Although the rendering here

is "revealed" for both the occasions, the original text has *nazzala* for the Qur'an and *anzala* for the previous Scriptures. *Nazzala* implies a gradual revelation, little by little, in pieces, whereas *anzala* implies a one time revelation, in one whole (*Kashshaf*, Razi and others).

Asad adds: "What is meant here is belief in the fact of earlier revelations, and not in the earlier-revealed scriptures in their present form, which - as repeatedly stated in the Qur'an - is the outcome of far-reaching corruption of the original text".

330. Since Allah conveys His messages to the Prophets and Messengers through the medium of angels, belief in angels is co-related with belief in Allah and His Messengers. This explains the placement of the statement concerning belief in the angels, between belief in Allah on the one hand, and His Messengers on the other (based on Razi's and Asad's notes).

[137] Surely, those who believed, then they disbelieved, then they believed, and then again disbelieved, and then went on increasing in disbelief, Allah will not forgive them, nor will guide them to (the right) path.³³²

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

[138] Give good tidings to the hypocrites that for them awaits a painful chastisement.

بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣٨﴾

[139] Those who take the unbelievers for friends instead of the believers.³³³ Do they seek power in them?³³⁴ (If so) Then, all power belongs to Allah.

الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْليَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلْيَبْتَغُونَ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٣٩﴾

331. That is, whoso disbelieved in any of articles mentioned in the verse, is an unbeliever (Alusi).

332. Although the apparent reference is to the hypocrites, Qatadah's opinion is that the allusion is to the Jews who believed in Musa and then disbelieved in him, to Christians who believed in `Isa and then disbelieved in him - their disbelief was expressed in their abandoning of the *Tawrah* and *Injil* - and then they increased their disbelief by not believing in Muhammad (Ibn Jarir).

333. It is reported by `A'isha that when a pagan wished to fight along with the believers, the Prophet refused to accept him, telling him:

ارْجِعْ. إِنَّا لَا نَسْتَعِينُ بِمُشْرِكٍ.

“(You may) Return. We do not

seek help of a pagan” (Qurtubi).

334. A *hadith* of Abu Rayhana reported in Ahmad says:

من انتسب إلى تسعة آباء كفار، يريد بهم عزًا وفخرًا، فهو عاشرهم في النار

“Whosoever sought to connect himself with nine of his unbelieving fathers and forefathers, out of pride and in search of honor, shall be tenth of them in the Fire” (Ibn Kathir).

335. Some Muslims used to sit in the company of Jews who poked fun at Islam. This verse was revealed to forbid them.

Abu Wa'il is reported to have said: “Sometimes a man utters a single word just to make his companions laugh. But it evokes Allah's anger.”

[140] He has already revealed to you in the Book that when you hear Allah's verses being denied and made mockery of, then, do not sit with them until they engage themselves in another topic.³³⁵ (If you do not) Then surely, you shall be like them.³³⁶ Surely, Allah will gather together the hypocrites and the unbelievers - all of them - in Hell.

وَقَدْ تَرَلَّ عَلَيْنَكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَتَعَدُّوا مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا مِتُّمَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٤٠﴾

When Ibrahim Nakha`i was told about Abu Wa'il's statement he said: "He spoke the truth."

(Ibn Kathir).

Khawhirzadah has said: "To have no objections to the *Kufr* of a *Kafir* is itself a kind of *Kufr*" (Alusi).

Dahhak has said that the rule applies to all innovators and habitual sinners of all times (Qurtubi).

336. It is said that a group of people were caught drinking during the time of `Umar ibn `Abdul `Aziz. He had them all whipped including one who was actually fasting. `Umar recited this verse when they protested that the man was fasting. His point was that he had brought the punishment on himself by being in their company (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

337. The meaning is: "Did we not manage to get the upper hand over you, yet, despite that, we identified ourselves with you and helped you in your efforts to overcome the believers, until you achieved your objectives" (Shawkani).

In fact, a *hadith* of the Prophet says:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلَا يَجْلِسُ عَلَى مَائِدَةٍ يُدَارُ عَلَيْهَا بِالْخَمْرِ

"Let not him who believes in Allah and His Messenger, sit on a table on which wine is served"

338. When `Ali had suffered the setbacks he suffered, a man came to him and reciting the second half of the verse "And He will not grant the unbelievers any way (of triumph) over the believers," asked him how he would explain it. `Ali told him to get closer. Then he recited the whole verse to him: "Allah will judge between you on the Day of Judgment. And (that day) He will not grant the unbelievers any way (of triumph)

[141] Those who wait upon you so that if a victory comes to you from Allah, they ask: 'Were we not with you?' But if the unbelievers get a share of it they say (to them): 'Did we not gain the mastery over you,³³⁷ and protect you from the believers?' Allah will judge between you on the Day of Judgment. And He will not grant the unbelievers any way over the believers.³³⁸

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَكُمْ بِكُمْ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ
مِّنَ اللَّهِ قَالُوا أَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ وَإِنْ كَانَ
لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ قَالُوا أَمْ نَسْتَحْوِذُ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَمَنْعَكُمْ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤١﴾

over the believers.” That is, the verse is applicable to the situation in the Hereafter (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir, and Shawkani).

Qurtubi and Ibn Kathir, however, add that the verse could equally hold good for this life, as Allah will never allow the unbelievers a total dominance over the believers, even though temporary setbacks are not ruled out, as said Allah in (40: 51):

إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ
يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ [غافر : ٥١]

“Verily, We shall grant victory to our Messengers and those who believed in them in the life of this world and on the Day when witnesses will stand forth (for testimony).”

In fact, according to a report in Muslim, the Prophet supplicated to Allah that He may not give the unbelievers total dominance over this *Ummah* and the supplication was accepted.

The whole *hadith* runs something like this. The Prophet made three supplications for the *Ummah*. Two were accepted, third was rejected. He asked that the *Ummah* never be completely overpowered by its enemies. It was granted. He asked that starvation does not destroy this *Ummah*. It was granted. Finally, he prayed that they do not fight among themselves. This supplication was rejected (Au.).

However, Qurtubi adds the opinion of Ibn al-`Arabi, that excluded is the situation in which the Muslims do not counsel good deeds, do not prohibit evil deeds, and do not repent their own misdeeds, in which case the unbelievers might be granted dominance over them.

339. Allah does not deceive anyone. It is nothing but parity of words, the meanings are different. See ch. 2, note 25 and ch. 86, note 14 (both

[142] Verily, the hypocrites (seek to) deceive Allah while it is He who is deceiving them.³³⁹ When they stand up to Pray, they stand up lazily,³⁴⁰ putting up a show for the people, and do not remember Allah but a little.³⁴¹

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى يُرَآؤُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾

works of this series) for fuller explanation (Au.).

Here, in this world, they are allowed to do what they want to, as a result of which they make some worldly gains which leads them to believe that what they are doing is right. They will be treated in the Hereafter in the like manner. See ch. 57, verse 12-15. A *hadith* of Bukhari says:

مَنْ سَمِعَ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ بِهِ وَمَنْ يُرَائِي يُرَائِي اللَّهُ بِهِ

“He who tried to make people hear (of his knowledge), Allah will expose him (to the people on the Day of Judgment) and he who tried to show off, Allah will show the truth about him thereof.” (Ibn Kathir).

Suddi, Hasan and Ibn Jurayj have said however, that the true deception would be in the Hereafter when they would be given light along with the believers, but, a little later, their light will be withdrawn, they will be left in darkness, and a wall would be placed, separating them from the believers (Ibn Jarir).

340. A *hadith* preserved by the *Sahihayn* records the Prophet as having said:

إِنَّ أَثْقَلَ صَلَاةٍ عَلَى الْمُنَافِقِينَ صَلَاةُ الْعِشَاءِ وَصَلَاةُ الْفَجْرِ وَلَوْ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا فِيهِمَا لَأَتَوْهُمَا وَلَوْ حَبَوًّا وَلَقَدْ هَمَمْتُ أَنْ أَمُرَ بِالصَّلَاةِ فَتُقَامَ ثُمَّ أَمُرَ رَجُلًا فَيُصَلِّيَ بِالنَّاسِ ثُمَّ أَنْطَلِقَ مَعِيَ بِرِجَالٍ مَعَهُمْ حُزْمٌ مِنْ حَطَبٍ إِلَى قَوْمٍ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الصَّلَاةَ فَأُحْرِقَ عَلَيْهِمْ بُيُوتُهُمْ بِالنَّارِ.

“The most difficult of the Prayers for the hypocrites is that of *Fajr* and *Isha*’. But, if they knew what is there in them, they would respond, even if they had to drag themselves. Indeed, I intend to order the Prayer begun, ask another person to lead in the Prayer, and myself go around with a group of people with some wood in search of those who do not come to the Prayer and burn down their homes.”

In another report of Muslim he said:

تِلْكَ صَلَاةُ الْمُنَافِقِ، يَجْلِسُ يَرْقُبُ الشَّمْسَ حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَتْ بَيْنَ قَرْيَتَيْ شَيْطَانٍ قَامَ فَتَقَرَّبَهَا أَرْبَعًا، لَا يَذْكُرُ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِيهَا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

[143] Wavering between the two: neither with these, nor with those.³⁴² And whomsoever Allah leads astray, you shall not find a way for him.³⁴³

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

“That is the Prayer of a hypocrite. He sits down watching the sun, until, when it is about to set, he gets up and offers four *rak`ah* of Prayers, striking the ground, bird-like (with his forehead), not remembering Allah therein, but a little” (Qurtubi with Ibn Kathir in greater detail).

341. Zamakhshari observes: It is the same attitude that you will observe in many of those who claim to be Muslims (but whose hearts are enamoured with worldly things). If you happen to be in their company, you will find them endlessly talking of this world and its affairs, seldom glorifying Allah or praising Him: They do not remember Allah, but little.

342. The hypocrite - with his physical body with the believers, but the heart with the unbelievers - wavers between the two. The Prophet has said about him (in a *hadith* of Muslim: Ibn Kathir):

مَثَلُ الْمُنَافِقِ كَمَثَلِ الشَّاةِ الْعَائِرَةِ بَيْنَ الْغَنَمَيْنِ تَعِيرُ إِلَى هَذِهِ مَرَّةً وَإِلَى هَذِهِ مَرَّةً

“The example of a hypocrite is

similar to a goat wandering between two herds. It wanders sometimes to one, at other times to another” (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

343. Mawdudi comments: “No human being can proceed along any path, whether it be good or evil, unless God lets him proceed along it, and bestows upon him the means to do so. However, it is up to the man himself to choose his own path, and after he has made the choice, God will let him proceed along it, and will even pave the way for him. If a person really cares about God, genuinely seeks the truth and earnestly tries to pursue the path charted by God, God permits him to follow his choice, and even provides the means necessary to proceed along his chosen path. On the other hand, God shuts the door of true guidance on the person who chooses error and strives to proceed only along wrong paths, and further enables him to follow the path of his choice. It is beyond the power of any human being to prevent such a person from thinking wrongly, acting wrongly and us-

[144] Believers! Do not take the unbelievers as friends³⁴⁴ instead of the believers. Do you want to offer Allah a clear argument against yourselves?

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ
أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أُرِيدُونَ أَنْ
يَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا ﴿١٤٤﴾

[145] Surely, the hypocrites will be in the lowest region of the Fire.³⁴⁵ And you will not find for them a helper.

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ
وَلَنْ يَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا ﴿١٤٥﴾

ing his energies in wrong directions. If a man loses the road to his success and is subsequently deprived of true guidance by God, in whose power it lies, then, to restore to him his lost treasure”?

344. “Friends” is not the right word for “*waliyy*” (pl. *awliya'*), rather, only convenient to use. *Waliyy* is one in whom one places his full trust, from whom he conceals nothing, and who will protect him as he will himself (Au.).

345. It is widely reported of the Companions and their followers that the hypocrites will be in the lowest region of Hell, in special chambers, constructed of steel, with lids from the top firmly locked and sealed from all around with no chance of escape (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

When one wishes to express the meaning of ‘one level above the other,’ the word in Arabic would be

darj. But if one wants to express the meaning of ‘one level below the other,’ then the word is *durk*. It is said that of Hell there are various levels (*adrak*). The first is known as Jahannum, the one below it is Laza, the next al-Hutamah, the next Al-Sa'ir, the next Saqar, the next al-Jahim and finally al-Hawiyah, which is the lowest region. However, sometimes all the seven are referred to by the name of the top most, i.e., Jahannum (Qurtubi).

346. The Prophet has said:

أخلص دينك يكفك القليل من العمل

“Make your religion purely for Allah, then a little deed will suffice you” (Ibn Kathir).

But the *hadith* has been questioned for its chain of narration (Au.).

347. Allah’s displeasure that they earned in the past because of their evil deeds is apparent in that He did

[146] Except for those who repented, made amends, held fast to Allah and made their religion sincerely Allah's,³⁴⁶ such indeed shall be with the believers.³⁴⁷ And Allah will soon grant the believers an immense reward.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِي اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٤٦﴾

[147] What would Allah do with chastising you, if you are thankful³⁴⁸ and believe? And Allah is ever Appreciative,³⁴⁹ Knowing.

مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَدَابِكُمْ إِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَآمَنْتُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا ﴿١٤٧﴾

not say: "They are the believers," rather: "They shall be with the believers" (Qutaybi: Qurtubi, Shawkani).

348. "The attitude of gratefulness to God consists in acknowledging His benefaction in one's heart, in confessing it in one's speech and by manifesting it in one's deeds" (Mawdudi).

349. "The word used here is *shakir* ... In the context of the God-man relationship, when the word *shukr* is used in respect of God, it denotes 'appreciation of services'. When it is used in respect of man, it denotes his acknowledgement of God's benefaction and his sense of gratitude to Him" (Mawdudi).

The Relationship

When Allah spoke of the evil ways of the hypocrites, He followed it up to say that He does not approve of the evil word spoken aloud: including some of such things as were spoken

about the hypocrites. But sometimes, when the person is a transgressor, it becomes necessary. Hence He said: "Allah does not approve of an evil word (spoken) aloud, unless a man has been wronged" (Razi).

350. It is another way of saying that Allah is angry with them (Razi, Alusi).

351. Although the words are, "spoken aloud," perhaps the meaning is, "(Allah does not approve of the evil word) 'spoken out' (even if it is not spoken aloud)" - Alusi.

352. Ibn 'Abbas has said that the prohibition concerns a man supplicating against another, unless he were to be wronged by him. But if he forgives, then that's better for him. Mujahid and others have illustrated it this way. Supposing a man is mistreated as a guest. When he leaves he can complain that he was not treated

[148] Allah does not approve³⁵⁰ of an evil word (spoken) aloud,³⁵¹ unless a man has been wronged.³⁵² Allah is ever Hearing, ever Knowing.

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

well (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Ibn Kathir quotes a *hadith* from the *Sahihayn* to show that Mujahid's statement has a basis. Once, the Companions complained to the Prophet that sometimes when they stopped at a village, they were not treated well. He told them that they could go to the extent of forcing the host to treat them well. According to another *hadith* in Ahmad, a night's shelter and food are the rights of every guest. If he is mistreated he might seek the help of those in the neighborhood against the host.

The above shows how important, the rights of a guest upon a host are in an Islamic system of life. (Au.)

Hasan al-Busri has advised that if a man is wronged, he should, instead of supplicating against the oppressor, say, "O Allah, help me against him to get back my right" (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

A more general meaning is, Allah does not approve that someone speak ill of another, unless he be wronged

by the other (Ibn Jarir).

At one time when someone stole something from 'A'isha's house, she began to supplicate against him. The Prophet told her: "Do not lighten his burden" (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

A variant reading however, has been *zalama* (he wronged) instead of *zulima* (he was wronged) which was the opinion of Zayd b. Aslam, Ibn Abi Is-haq, Dahhak, Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn Jubayr, 'Ata' ibn Sa'ib. The interpretation in that case would be as follows. Firstly, the answer to the 'except' should be assumed, and then the whole to be understood as, '(Except for him who commits a wrong) ... against such a person one can speak evil aloud.' Yet another possible meaning in view of this second reading is that it is only the oppressor who will speak evil aloud (Qurtubi).

353. Mawdudi writes: "... If a wronged person speaks out against a wrong-doer, he is quite justified in doing so. Even though this is a person's right, it is more meritorious to continue to do good both in pub-

[149] Whether you do good openly or conceal it, or forgive an evil, surely Allah is ever-Pardoning, ever-Powerful.³⁵³

إِنْ تَبْدُوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيرًا ﴿١٤٩﴾

[150] Verily, those who deny Allah and His messengers and wish to make division between Allah and His messengers and say, 'We shall believe in some and deny others,' wishing to take between this and that a way,³⁵⁴

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٥٠﴾

lic and in private, and to ignore the misdeeds of others. For one's ideal should be to try to approximate to God's ways as far as possible. God with whom one wants to be close is lenient and forbearing; He provides sustenance even to the worst criminals and seeks mitigating circumstances in even the most serious offenses. In order to become close to God, one ought to be generous in spirit and full of tolerance."

Mufti Shafi` comments: Thus, we see that Islam establishes justice by giving the oppressed the right to seek revenge. However, court rulings normally create a bitter feeling among the contentious parties. Therefore, it recommends the oppressed that he forgive his right. This creates peace and harmony in the society.

354. Several allusions are possible. It could mean a way in between belief and unbelief. (But they erred because there is no relationship whatsoever

between the two: Zamakhshari).

In explanation, Alusi quotes the verse (10: 32):

فَمَاذَا بَعَدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ [يونس : ٣٢]

"And what (is left) after the truth, but falsehood?"

Alternatively, it could mean: a way by which they believe in some prophets and deny others.

It could also mean that they wish to find a way by which they believe in God but not in His messengers.

Although the immediate reference was (as pointed out by Qatadah and Suddi: Ibn Jarir) to the Jews and Christians, of whom the former believed in Musa but denied `Isa and Muhammad, while the latter believed in Musa and `Isa, but denied Muhammad – peace on them all (Au.).

Majid's comment on "they wish to

[151] Such are the true unbelievers.³⁵⁵ We have prepared a humiliating chastisement for the unbelievers.

أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا وَأَعْتَدْنَا
لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿١٥١﴾

[152] As for those who believed in Allah and His messengers and made no division between any of them - those, He shall give them their reward. And Allah is ever-Forgiving, ever-Merciful.³⁵⁶

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يَفْرُقُوا بَيْنَ
أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ أُولَئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرَهُمْ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٥٢﴾

[153] The people of the Book ask you to bring down upon them a Book from the heaven.³⁵⁷ Indeed they asked Musa for (something) greater than that. They said, 'Show us God openly.' A thunderbolt struck them for their evildoing. Then they took for themselves the calf (for worship) - after the clear signs had come to them. Yet We pardoned them that (crime), and bestowed upon Musa a manifest authority.³⁵⁸

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تَنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ
كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ أَكْبَرَ
مِنَ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ
الصَّاعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِن
بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَن ذَلِكَ
وَآتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١٥٣﴾

make division between Allah and His messengers” is: “By professing to believe in Him in the abstract, but rejecting His law as propounded by His prophets and apostles.”

355. That is, those whose disbelief is beyond any doubt (Zamakhshari, Razi).

356. So He will forgive their minor sins.

357. Muhammad b. Ka`b al-Qurazi has said that some Jews went to the Prophet and said: “Musa was given inscribed tablets. If you are a true Prophet, bring something similar.”

Others demanded separate writs to several of them. Allah revealed these verses in response (Ibn Jarir, Zamakhshari, Razi).

Thanwi adds: “The verse refutes the belief of those who assume that it is in the power of their *Shuyukh* to bestow spiritual benefits on their followers.”

358. It was because of the authority and power which Musa was granted that he was able to enforce his obedience and execute the punishment ordered subsequent to the crime of heifer-worship committed by the

[154] We raised above them (Mount) Tur because of the covenant³⁵⁹ and ordered them, 'Enter at the gate, prostrating (yourselves).'³⁶⁰ We also told them, 'Do not transgress in the matter of the Sabbath.' And We took from them a solemn compact.

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

Israelites: viz., slaughtering of those who had worshipped the heifer at the hands of those who had not (Zamakhshari).

A hint is also hidden in the verse that such will be the power that Muhammad (*saws*) will be given in the face of the opposition (Razi).

359. The Israelites had made a demand on Musa that they also be given a Law as had been given to other nations. They were discouraged from persisting in their demand on grounds that if given, they might not live by it. However, when they insisted, a firm compact was taken from them to the effect that if given they would receive it well. Yet, when the *Tawrah* was revealed, containing the Law, they refused to accept it on grounds that it contained harsh

injunctions. The reference here is to that historical event (Au.).

360. See *Al-Baqarah*, note 141 of this work for explanation.

361. See *Al-Baqarah*, note 186 of this work for explanation.

Mawdudi comments: "In fact, like all ignorant worshippers of falsehood, these people also boasted that their faith in the ideas and prejudices, customs and usages of their forefathers was so firm that they could never be made to forsake them. Whenever the Messengers of God tried to admonish them, they have been told point-blank that no matter what argument or evidence the latter might adduce in support of their message, they would never be prepared to alter their viewpoint."

[155] Therefore, because of their breaking the compact, their denial of Allah's signs, their slaughtering of the prophets without right, and their utterance, 'Our hearts are insulated - ³⁶¹ rather, Allah has set a seal upon them because of their unbelief; therefore, they will not believe but a few.

فِيمَا تَفْضِيهِمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَكُفْرِهِمْ بآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بَغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٥٥﴾

[156] And because of their unbelief³⁶² and their uttering against Maryam a mighty calumny.³⁶³

وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَى مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٥٦﴾

362. Why did Allah repeat the words "because of their disbelief," when the same thing was stated in the previous verse? It was because of their recurring disbelief (Zamakhshari).

363. That is, by denying the miraculous birth of Jesus, they imputed moral impropriety on the part of Maryam.

Majid writes: "In the ancient 'Life of Jesus' (the Toldoth Jeshu) occurs the following:- 'Now over against the door of her house there dwelt a man of fair appearance (a warrior), Joseph the son of Pandra: he cast his eyes upon her. [Seven verses are here omitted which relate the seduction of Mary by Joseph, she being under the impression that he was her betrothed, until he came in later, and the mistake was discovered].' (Ac-

cording to the Hebrews,' p. 35). The courageous slander is supported by the Talmud."

See the allegation in the following note also (Au.).

364. Majid comments: "It was not only the Christians who made the Jews accountable for the 'death' of Jesus, but the Jews themselves spoke with pride and delight of their achievement. '... Then all the men of Jerusalem being well-armed and mailed, captured Jesus. And when his disciples saw that he was captive in their hands, and that it was in vain to fight, they took to their legs, and lifted up their voice, and wept bitterly. And the men of Jerusalem waxed stronger and conquered the bastard, the son of a woman in her separation, with his multitude, slay-

[157] And because of their saying, 'Surely we slew the Messiah,³⁶⁴ `Isa son of Maryam, Allah's Messenger!'³⁶⁵ But they did not slay him, neither crucify him.³⁶⁶ Rather, it appeared so unto them.³⁶⁷ Surely those who are at variance concerning him are in a doubt regarding him.³⁶⁸ They have no knowledge of the affair except the following of surmise. They slew him not on a certainty.³⁶⁹

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

ing many of them, while the rest fled to the mountains' (According to the Hebrews, p. 46 f.n.)."

365. There are two explanations for the addition of the words: "*Allah's Messenger*." First, the Jews added those words despite their disbelief out of derision, as Fir`awn had said (26: 27):

إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمْ الَّذِي أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ [الشعراء
: ٢٧]

"The Messenger that has been sent to you is surely mad."

Second, it might be by way of reverence to `Isa (*asws*) in contrast to his belittling by his adversaries (Zamakhshari, Razi). In Majid's words: "The epithet is appended to emphasize the true rank and status of Jesus..."

366. "Crucifixion is the act of putting to death by nailing to a cross. It was in use, generally restricted to

slaves and rebels, amongst the Romans, under whose government Jesus and his prosecutors, the Jews lived" (Majid).

367. Qatadah, Suddi, Ibn abi Buzzah and many others have said that when the Jews came to seize `Isa ibn Maryam, he asked his disciples: "Which of you will accept to be transformed into my physical features on the promise of Paradise?" One of them volunteered. He was taken away and crucified while Allah raised `Isa to the heavens (Mujahid added: "alive").

Wahab b. Munabbih has said however that when the Jews came, all of the disciples of `Isa (*asws*) were transformed in their physical features into that of `Isa (Ibn Jarir).

Zamakhshari says some reports say that the very disciple who had betrayed `Isa was transformed into his physical features.

Majid adds: "... Jesus was substituted by another ... for him. This true doctrine regarding Jesus is shared by an early Christian sect. The Basilidian maintained that Jesus 'changed form with Simon of Cyrene who actually suffered in place.' (EBr. III, p. 176). 'Irenaeus says that Basilidians' account of the crucifixion was that Simon of Cyrene was crucified by mistake, and Jesus himself took the form of Simon, and stood by and laughed at them' (ERE. IV, p. 833)."

368. The Jews knew that `Isa ibn Maryam was in the company of 12 of his disciples that night in the house in which they had assembled. But by the time they forced their entry into the house `Isa had already been raised up and so they found only twelve people there (instead of thirteen). Although they arrested the one who resembled `Isa, the fact that one person was missing cast a doubt over the person they had captured, whether he was truly the man they were looking for or not (Ibn Jarir).

Majid writes: "(The verse refers to) ... the Jews and the various Christian sects disputing among themselves respecting Jesus and his fate."

Imām Razi comments: Major Christian divisions are three: The Nestorians, the Evangelists and the Jaco-

bites, all the three of whom hold different opinions about the death and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Mawdudi writes: "The Christians have dozens of different versions, rather than one universally agreed view regarding the crucifixion of the Messiah. ... (Some) were of the opinion that the one who was crucified was certainly Jesus himself, but that he did not die on the cross and was still alive when brought down from it. Others asserted that though Jesus died on the cross, he later returned to life, met his disciples and conversed with them about ten times. Again, some believe that the human body of Jesus suffered death and was buried, while the spirit of godhead in him was taken up on high. Yet others believe that after his death the Messiah was resurrected physically and was subsequently taken up to heaven in physical form."

It is singularly interesting to note that the best of Christians, including the priestly class, is never very comfortable about the fate of Jesus and therefore, the beliefs arising out of the event. A few minutes of argument shakes even a knowledgeable Christian to the core. The words of Allah therefore, "*Surely those who are at variance concerning him are in a*

[158] Rather, Allah raised him to Himself.³⁷⁰
Allah is Almighty,³⁷¹ Wise.

بَل رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيمًا حَكِيمًا

﴿١٥٨﴾

[159] There is none of the people of the Book but will assuredly believe in him before his death,³⁷² and on the Day of Judgment he (Jesus) shall be a witness against them.³⁷³

وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ
مَوْتِهِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا

﴿١٥٩﴾

doubt regarding him,” have another dimension (Au.).

369. The emphasis in, “They slew him not on a certainty,” is not on “him” (i.e., `Isa) as it is widely presumed (Au.). Ibn `Abbas, Juwaybar and Suddi have said that the emphasis is on “on a certainty.” That is to say, they were not at all certain that they had crucified the right man. A doubt lingered because of the fact that they had found only twelve men in that house although they were pretty sure there should have been thirteen (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

370. It was His Might that He sent Butros the Roman over them. He massacred a large number of them (Qurtubi).

Qurtubi is referring perhaps to Titus, the Roman Governor who, infuriated by the Jewish revolt of the 70 C.E, slaughtered them in tens of thousands and razed Jerusalem to the ground (Au.).

371. See *Aal-`Imran*, notes 100-102 of this work for an explanation.

372. Ibn `Abbas, Hasan, Qatadah, Abu Malik and others have said that (since `Isa did not die, rather was taken up to the heavens and will descend again) none would be left of the people of the Book at the time of his second coming, but would have believed in him before his death, that is, before `Isa's death. Hasan has said: “By God. He is alive with Allah even now. When he descends, everyone will believe in him.” (He is alive and is in the second firmament, as declared in the tradition of *Mi`raj: Alusi*).

However, a second opinion from the same authorities is that none of the people of the book dies, before he has believed in the messengership of `Isa (*asws*) - Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir.

Zamakhshari, Razi and Qurtubi have stated that Shahr ibn Hawshab voiced this opinion before Hajjaj bin

Yusuf, who had expressed his puzzle over the verse. Apparently, Hajjaj was impressed by the interpretation and asked Shahr whom he had taken it from. Shahr replied: "From Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn Hanafiyyah." Hajjaj began to draw lines on the ground with a twig in his hand and then said after a while: "You took it from a crystalline eye."

Zamakhshari adds: Kalbi asked Shahr why he had spelt that name when he had not taken it from him. Shahr replied: "I wanted to provoke his anger. He did not like to hear that name."

Referring to the second interpretation, to the effect that every individual of the people of the Book will believe in `Isa before his own death, Shafi` states that with the arrival of the angels of death, everyone begins to see a part of the ghayb (and therefore, in case of the Christians, the dying man realizes that God is one, and Jesus could not have been God).

Although Ibn Jarir prefers the former opinion, the two are, obviously, reconcilable (Au.).

The Second Coming of Jesus

Ibn Kathir says that the second coming of `Isa is proven by *ahadith* that

reach the tawatur status. (Rejection of a mutawatir *hadith* entails *Kufr*: Au.). At this point he quotes some of them. We shall present a few.

The *Sahihayn* report Abu Hurayrah. The Prophet said:

والذي نفسي بيده لَيُوشِكَنَّ أَنْ يَنْزَلَ فِيكُمْ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ حَكَمًا عَدْلًا فَيَكْسِرُ الصَّلِيبَ، وَيَقْتُلُ الْخَنزِيرَ، وَيُضِعُ الْجِزْيَةَ، وَيُفِيضُ الْمَالَ حَتَّى لَا يَقْبَلَهُ أَحَدٌ، حَتَّى تَكُونَ السَّجْدَةَ خَيْرًا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا. ثُمَّ يَقُولُ أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ: اقْرَأُوا إِنْ شِئْتُمْ: { وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا }

"By Him in whose hands is my life, surely `Isa son of Mary will come down among you. He will fill the land with justice. He will break the Cross, destroy the hog, annul the jizyah and distribute so much wealth that there would be no one to accept, until a time will come when a man will prefer a single prostration over all that the heaven and earth contain." Abu Hurayrah then recited this verse: "There is none of the people of the Book but will assuredly believe in him before his death." According to another report in Ahmad and Muslim, `Isa will come down to Rawha' to perform Hajj, `Umrah, or both.

Another report in Muslim records

Abu Hurayrah reporting the Prophet as having said:

لَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ حَتَّى يَنْزِلَ الرُّومُ بِالْأَعْمَاقِ أَوْ بِدَابِقِ
فَيَخْرُجُ إِلَيْهِمْ جَيْشٌ مِنَ الْمَدِينَةِ مِنْ خِيَارِ أَهْلِ
الْأَرْضِ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَإِذَا تَصَافَوْا قَالَتْ الرُّومُ حَلُّوا بَيْنَنَا
وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ سَبَّوْنَا مِنَّا نَقَاتِلُهُمْ فَيَقُولُ الْمُسْلِمُونَ لَا
وَاللَّهِ لَا نُحَلِّي بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ إِخْوَانِنَا فَيُقَاتِلُونَهُمْ فَيَهْرَبُونَ
ثُمَّ لَا يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَبَدًا وَيُقْتَلُ ثَلَاثُهُمْ أَفْضَلُ
الشُّهَدَاءِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَيَفْتَبِحُ الثَّلَاثُ لَا يَفْتَنُونَ أَبَدًا
فَيَفْتَنِيحُونَ فَسُطَنَطِينِيَّةً فَيَبْنِمَا هُمْ يَفْتَسِمُونَ الْعَنَائِمَ
فَدَّ عَلَّفُوا سُيُوفَهُمْ بِالرَّيْثُونَ إِذْ صَاحَ فِيهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ
إِنَّ الْمَسِيحَ قَدْ خَلَفَكُمْ فِي أَهْلِيكُمْ فَيَخْرُجُونَ وَذَلِكَ
بَاطِلٌ فَإِذَا جَاءُوا الشَّامَ حَرَجَ فَبَيْنَمَا هُمْ يُعْدُونَ
لِلْقِتَالِ يُسُورُونَ الصُّفُوفَ إِذْ أُقِيمَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَيَنْزِلُ
عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَمَّهُمْ فَإِذَا رَأَهُ
عَدُوُّ اللَّهِ ذَابَ كَمَا يَذُوبُ الْمِلْحُ فِي الْمَاءِ فَلَوْ تَرَكَهُ
لَأَنْذَابَ حَتَّى يَهْلِكَ وَلَكِنْ يَثْنُلُهُ اللَّهُ بِإِيْدِهِ فَيُرِيهِمْ
دَمَهُ فِي حَزْبِهِ.

“The Hour will not be called before the Romans come down to A`maaq or Dabiq. Muslim forces will come out to meet them. The best of the people of the earth of that day will come out of Madinah. When they face each other, the Romans will say, ‘Hand over back to us those of our men who were taken prisoners.’ The Muslims will say, ‘No. By Allah, We shall not hand over our brethren to you.’ A battle will ensue. A third of the Muslim forces will flee. Allah will never forgive

them. Another third will be martyred. They would be the best of the martyrs. The last third will overcome them, and Allah will never test them again. They will move on and capture Constantinople. But, while they would be busy dividing the spoils of war, with their swords hung by the olive trees, Satan will cry out from the rear, ”The Antichrist is behind you among your kin.” They will turn back. But the news would be false. However, by the time they reach Syria, he would be out. And while they would be readying themselves in rows for a battle with him, Prayer will be commenced. At that moment `Isa son of Mary will descend. He will lead them in the Prayers. As soon as Allah’s enemy (the Antichrist) sees him he would begin to dissolve as salt dissolves in water. So that, were he to leave him alone, he would still dissolve himself and be destroyed. But he will kill him with his hands and show them his blood on his weapon.”

A tradition in Ahmad says:

الْأَنْبِيَاءُ إِخْوَةٌ لِعَالَمَاتٍ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ شَتَّى وَدِينُهُمْ وَاحِدٌ
وَأَنَا أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ لِأَنَّهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ بَنِي

وَبَيْنَهُ نَبِيٌّ وَإِنَّهُ نَازِلٌ فَإِذَا رَأَيْشْمُوهُ فَأَعْرِفُوهُ رَجُلًا مَرْبُوعًا إِلَى الْحُمْرَةِ وَالْبَيَاضِ عَلَيْهِ ثَوْبَانِ مُمَصَّرَانِ كَأَنَّ رَأْسَهُ يَقْطُرُ وَإِنْ لَمْ يُصِبْهُ بَلَاءٌ فَيَدُقُّ الصَّلِيبَ وَيَقْتُلُ الْحَنْزِيرَ وَيَضَعُ الْحَرْبَةَ وَيَدْعُو النَّاسَ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ فَيُهْلِكُ اللَّهُ فِي زَمَانِهِ الْمَلِكَ كُلَّهُمَا إِلَّا الْإِسْلَامَ وَيُهْلِكُ اللَّهُ فِي زَمَانِهِ الْمَسِيحَ الدَّجَالَ وَتَقَعُ الْأَمْنَةُ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ حَتَّى تَرْتَعَ الْأَسُودُ مَعَ الْإِبِلِ وَالْتِمَارُ مَعَ الْبَقَرِ وَالذَّنَابُ مَعَ الْعَنَمِ وَيَلْعَبُ الصَّبِيَّانِ بِالْحَيَاتِ لَا تَضُرَّهُمْ فَيَمَكْتُ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً ثُمَّ يَمُوتُ وَيُصَلِّي عَلَيْهِ الْمُسْلِمُونَ

“Prophets are brothers, sons of one father, of divergent mothers. Their religion is one. I am closer to `Isa than anyone else, for there was no Prophet between him and me. He is going to descend again. You will recognize him on sight. A man of medium height, he will be between fair and red-complexioned, with two pieces of reddish color cloaks on. His hair would look like it was letting down droplets of water, although not wet. He will break the Cross, destroy the hog, annul the *jizyah* and invite the people to Islam. In his time Allah will destroy all religions except Islam. In his time too Dajjal the Antichrist will be destroyed. Subsequent to that total peace would reign over the earth so that camels will graze alongside tigers, cheetahs alongside cows, wolves alongside sheep, and children will play with

snakes unharmed. He will remain for forty years and die. Muslims will pray over him.”

An-Nawwas b. Sam`an relates the Prophet in Muslim:

عَنْ النَّوَّاسِ بْنِ سَمْعَانَ قَالَ ذَكَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الدَّجَالَ ذَاتَ عَدَاةٍ فَخَفَّضَ فِيهِ وَرَفَعَ حَتَّى ظَنَّاهُ فِي طَائِفَةِ النَّحْلِ فَلَمَّا رُحْنَا إِلَيْهِ عَرَفَ ذَلِكَ فِينَا فَقَالَ مَا شَأْنُكُمْ قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ذَكَرْتَ الدَّجَالَ عَدَاةً فَخَفَّضْتَ فِيهِ وَرَفَعْتَ حَتَّى ظَنَّاهُ فِي طَائِفَةِ النَّحْلِ فَقَالَ غَيْرِ الدَّجَالَ أَحُوفِي عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ يَخْرُجُ وَأَنَا فِيكُمْ فَأَنَا حَجِيجُهُ دُونَكُمْ وَإِنْ يَخْرُجُ وَلَسْتُ فِيكُمْ فَأَمْرُ حَجِيجِ نَفْسِهِ وَاللَّهُ خَلِيقَتِي عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ إِنَّهُ شَابٌ قَطَطٌ عَيْشُهُ طَائِفَةُ كَأَنِّي أَشْبَهُهُ بَعْدَ الْعُرَى بْنِ قَطَنِ فَمَنْ أَدْرَكَهُ مِنْكُمْ فَلْيَقْرَأْ عَلَيْهِ قَوَاتِحَ سُورَةِ الْكَهْفِ إِنَّهُ خَارِجٌ خَلَّةَ بَيْنِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْعِرَاقِ فَعَاثَ بَيْنَنَا وَعَاثَ بَيْنَنَا يَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ فَاتَّبِعُوا قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا لَيْتُهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالَ أُرْبَعُونَ يَوْمًا يَوْمَ كَسَنَةِ وَيَوْمَ كَشْهَرٍ وَيَوْمَ كَجُمُعَةٍ وَسَائِرِ أَيَّامِهِ كَأَيَّامِكُمْ قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ الَّذِي كَسَنَةِ أَتَكْفِينَا فِيهِ صَلَاةَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ لَا أَفْدُرُوا لَهُ قَدْرَهُ قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا إِسْرَاعُهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالَ كَالْعَيْثِ اسْتَدْبَرْتُهُ الرِّيحُ فَيَأْتِي عَلَى الْقَوْمِ فَيَدْعُوهُمْ فَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَيَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُ فَيَأْمُرُ السَّمَاءَ فَتَمْطِرُ وَالْأَرْضَ فَتَنْبِثُ فَمَتْرُوحٌ عَلَيْهِمْ سَارِحَتُهُمْ أَطْوَلَ مَا كَانَتْ دُرًّا وَأَسْبَعُهُ ضُرُوعًا وَأَمَدُهُ حَوَاصِرٌ ثُمَّ يَأْتِي الْقَوْمَ فَيَدْعُوهُمْ فَيَرُدُّونَ عَلَيْهِ قَوْلَهُ فَيَنْصَرِفُ عَنْهُمْ فَيُصْبِحُونَ مُمَجَلِبِينَ لَيْسَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ شَيْءٌ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ وَيَمُرُّ بِالْحَرْبَةِ فَيَقُولُ لَهَا أَخْرِجِي كُنُوزَكَ فَتَنْبِغُهُ كُنُوزُهَا كَيْعَاسِيبِ النَّحْلِ ثُمَّ يَدْعُو رَجُلًا مُتَمَلِّيًا شَبَابًا فَيَضْرِبُهُ بِالسِّيفِ فَيَقْطَعُهُ جَزَلَتَيْنِ زَمِيَةَ الْعَرَضِ ثُمَّ يَدْعُوهُ فَيَقْبِلُ وَيَتَهَلَّلُ وَجْهَهُ يَضْحَكُ فَبَيْنَمَا هُوَ كَذَلِكَ إِذْ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ الْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ فَيَنْزِلُ عِنْدَ الْمَنَارَةِ الْبَيْضَاءِ شَرَفِي دِمَشْقَ بَيْنَ مَهْرُودَتَيْنِ وَاضِعًا كَفَّيْهِ عَلَى أُجْنِحَةِ مَلَكَيْنِ إِذَا طَاطَأَ رَأْسَهُ قَطْرٌ وَإِذَا

رَفَعَهُ تَحَدَّرَ مِنْهُ جُنَانٌ كَاللُّؤْلُؤِ فَلَا يَجِلُّ لِكَافِرٍ يَجِدُ رِيحَ
 نَفْسِهِ إِلَّا مَاتَ وَنَفْسُهُ يَنْتَهِي حَيْثُ يَنْتَهِي طَرْفُهُ
 فَيَطْلُبُهُ حَتَّى يُدْرِكَهُ بِبَابٍ لِدَيْفِئْتُهُ ثُمَّ يَأْتِي عَيْسَى ابْنَ
 مَرْزَمٍ قَوْمٌ قَدْ عَصَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ فَيَمْسَحُ عَنْ وُجُوهِهِمْ
 وَيُجَدِّثُهُمْ بِدَرَجَاتِهِمْ فِي الْجَنَّةِ فَيَبْتِنَمَا هُوَ كَذَلِكَ إِذْ
 أَوْحَى اللَّهُ إِلَى عَيْسَى إِيَّيْ قَدْ أَخْرَجْتُ عِبَادًا لِي لَا
 يَدَانِ لِأَحَدٍ يِقْتَالُهُمْ فَحَزِرْ عِبَادِي إِلَى الطُّورِ وَيَبْعَثُ
 اللَّهُ يَأْجُوجَ وَمَأْجُوجَ وَهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَنْسِلُونَ
 فَيَمُرُّ أَوَائِلُهُمْ عَلَى بَحْرِيَّةٍ طَبْرِيَّةٍ فَيَسْرُبُونَ مَا فِيهَا وَيَمُرُّ
 آخِرُهُمْ فَيَقُولُونَ لَقَدْ كَانَ بَيْنَهُ مَاءٌ وَيُخَصِّرُ نَبِيَّ
 اللَّهِ عَيْسَى وَأَصْحَابَهُ حَتَّى يَكُونَ رَأْسُ الثَّوْرِ لِأَحَدِهِمْ
 خَيْرًا مِنْ مِائَةِ دِينَارٍ لِأَحَدِكُمْ الْيَوْمَ فَيَرْتَعِبُ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ
 عَيْسَى وَأَصْحَابُهُ فَيُرْسِلُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمُ النَّعْفَ فِي رِقَابِهِمْ
 فَيُضْبِحُونَ فَتَرَى كَمَوْتَ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ثُمَّ يَهْبِطُ
 نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ عَيْسَى وَأَصْحَابُهُ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ فَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي
 الْأَرْضِ مَوْضِعَ شِبْرٍ إِلَّا مَلَأَهُ زَهْمُهُمْ وَتَنَنَّهُمْ فَيَرْتَعِبُ
 نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ عَيْسَى وَأَصْحَابُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ فَيُرْسِلُ اللَّهُ طَيْرًا
 كَأَعْنَاقِ الْبُيُوتِ فَتَحْمِلُهُمْ فَتَطْرَحُهُمْ حَيْثُ شَاءَ اللَّهُ
 ثُمَّ يُرْسِلُ اللَّهُ مَطَرًا لَا يَكُفُّ مِنْهُ بَيْتٌ مَدْرٍ وَلَا وَبَرٍ
 فَيَغْسِلُ الْأَرْضَ حَتَّى يَبْرُكَهَا كَالرَّلَقَةِ ثُمَّ يَقَالُ لِلْأَرْضِ
 أُنْتِي تَمْرَتِكَ وَرُدِّي بَرَكَتِكَ فَيَوْمِئِذٍ تَأْكُلُ الْعِصَابَةُ مِنْ
 الرُّمَانَةِ وَيَسْتَطْلِقُونَ بِقِحْفِهَا وَيَبَارِكُ فِي الرِّسْلِ حَتَّى أَنْ
 اللَّفْحَةَ مِنَ الْإِبِلِ لَتَكْفِي الْقِنَامَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَاللَّفْحَةَ
 مِنَ الْبَقَرِ لَتَكْفِي الْقَبِيلَةَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَاللَّفْحَةَ مِنَ الْغَنَمِ
 لَتَكْفِي الْفَجْدَ مِنَ النَّاسِ فَيَبْتِنَمَا هُمْ كَذَلِكَ إِذْ بَعَثَ
 اللَّهُ رِيحًا طَيِّبَةً فَتَأْخُذُهُمْ تَحْتَ آبَابِهِمْ فَتَقْبِضُ رُوحَ
 كُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ وَكُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَيَبْقَى شِرَارُ النَّاسِ يَنْتَهَارِجُونَ
 فِيهَا تَهَارِجُ الْحُمْرُ فَعَلَيْهِمْ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ

“One day the Prophet spoke of Dajjal. During his talk he raised his voice and lowered it (to whis-pers) in such a manner that we began to suspect that he was right there in the date-palm groves.

When we went to him (later in the day) he sensed our concern from our faces. He asked what the matter was. We told him that the way he raised his voice and lowered it we thought Dajjal was hiding right there in the date-palm groves. He said, ‘As far as you are concerned it is not Dajjal whose appearance I am concerned with, while I am with you. (If he appears in my presence) I shall suffice him on your behalf. But if he appears and I am not with you then let each of you take care of himself, although Allah is the *Khalifah* of every Muslim in my absence.

“(Let me tell you about him). He will be a young man with short curled hair. One of his eyes would be sightless. He will be quite similar-looking to `Abdul `Uzza b. Qatan. Let anyone of you who encounters him recite the first few verses of *Surah al-Kahaf*. He will first appear on a deserted road between Syria and Iraq creating tumult on his left and on his right. (The Prophet then added), ‘People. Be steadfast.’ We asked him, ‘How long will he reign on the earth?’ He replied: ‘Forty days: a day will be like a year, another like a month,

another like a week and the rest of his days like your ordinary days.' We asked: 'Messenger of Allah. The day you say will be like a year, will our five Prayers be sufficient in it?' He replied, 'No. Rather, assess the time (as best as you can).' We asked him, 'Messenger of Allah. How fast will he move about?' He replied, 'Like the rain-clouds moved by the winds. He will come to a people, invite them to himself and they will believe in him. So he will order the heavens to rain down on them and it will rain. The earth will throw out its produce. Their cattle will feed on the longest stalk that the earth has thrown out. Those cattle will be the most filled of udders and widest of thighs. Then he will go to another people and invite them to (believe in) him. They will refuse. He will leave them to themselves and move on. But they will experience famine and will be left with no wealth of any sort in their hands. He will pass by a waste patch of land and order: "Throw out your treasures." The treasures would begin to follow him like bees follow the queen-bee. He will beckon a man in the prime of his youth. He will cut him into two and throw the

pieces apart. Then he will beckon his head and the torso and the man will rise up smiling.

"While he will be engaged in such affairs, Allah will send the Messiah, son of Maryam. He will descend down near the white minaret in the east of Jerusalem, wearing two pieces of reddish-coloured cloaks, resting his hands on the wings of two angels. When he lowers his head, it would let fall droplets (of water), and when he raises it, they would roll down as pearl-like silver pieces. An unbeliever will not be touched by his breath but will die (of its effects). And his breath will reach the distance his sight will reach.

He will start off until he meets Dajjal at the gate of Ludd (present day Lydda in the state of Israel: Au.). He will kill him there. Then `Isa, the Prophet of Allah, will meet a people whom Allah would have saved (from the evils of Dajjal). He will wipe their faces and talk to them about their place in Paradise. He will be in such affairs when Allah will reveal unto him, 'O `Isa, I have let loose a people that no one can resist. Therefore take your fol-

lowers to (Mount) Tur.' Then Allah will let free Yajuj and Majuj, who, as Allah Himself has said "will come (rushing) down from every hill." Their forerunners will pass by Lake Tabariyyah and drink off its water. When their tail-enders arrive at the spot, they will say, 'Once there used to be a lake here.'

"Isa and his followers will remain (on Tur. They will run short of food) until the head of an oxen will be dearer to them than a hundred Dinars of today. Isa and his followers will pray to Allah. Allah will cause a tumor to grow in their necks and they will fall down dead, rank and file. Isa and his followers will then come down. They will not find a space equal to the span of a hand but filled with their dead and blood with foul smell all around. They will again pray to Allah. He will send birds with necks as huge as those of camels. They will lift them up and throw them where Allah will. Then He will send down rains that will wash every home, whether of bricks or mud, and render them clean like a mirror. Then it will be said to the earth: 'Grow your fruits and bring out your blessings.'

"Those days a whole group of people will eat out of one pomegranate, and it will suffice them. They will rest under its shell. People will drink out of a single udder of a camel and it will be enough for a large crowd. The udder of a cow will suffice a whole tribe, and the udder of a goat will suffice a whole clan. Such will be the state when Allah will send through them a fragrant breeze which will affect them under their arm pits. That will take away the life of every believer. Those alone would be left who would copulate as the asses do. It is upon such that the Hour will be struck."

A *hadith* of Ibn Majah is reported by Abu Umamah al-Bahili. He says,

عَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ الْبَاهِلِيِّ قَالَ حَطَبْنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَكَانَ أَكْثَرَ حُطْبَيْهِ حَدِيثًا حَدَّثَنَا عَنْ الدَّجَالِ وَحَدَّثَنَا فَكَانَ مِنْ قَوْلِهِ أَنْ قَالَ إِنَّهُ لَمْ تَكُنْ فِتْنَةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُنْذُ ذَرَأَ اللَّهُ ذُرِّيَّةَ آدَمَ أَكْظَمَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الدَّجَالِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَبْعَثْ نَبِيًّا إِلَّا خَدَرَ أُمَّتَهُ الدَّجَالُ وَأَنَا آخِرُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَأَنْتُمْ آخِرُ الْأُمَمِ وَهُوَ خَارِجٌ فِيكُمْ لَا حِمْلَةَ وَإِنْ يَخْرُجُ وَأَنَا بَيْنَ ظَهْرَاتِكُمْ فَأَنَا حَجِيجٌ لِكُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَإِنْ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَعْدِي فَكُلُّ امْرِئٍ حَجِيجٌ نَفْسِهِ وَاللَّهُ خَلِيفَتِي عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَإِنَّهُ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خَلَّةِ بَيْنِ الشَّامِ وَالْعِرَاقِ قَبِيعٌ بَيْنًا وَيَعِيبُ شِمَالًا يَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ فَاتَّبِعُوا قَائِلِي سَأَصْفَهُ لَكُمْ صِفَةً لَمْ يَصْفَهَا إِلَّاهُ نَبِيٌّ قَبْلِي إِنَّهُ يَبْدَأُ فَيَقُولُ أَنَا نَبِيٌّ وَلَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي ثُمَّ يَنْتَبِئُ فَيَقُولُ أَنَا رَبُّكُمْ وَلَا تَرَوْنَ رَبُّكُمْ حَتَّى

هُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ قَلِيلٌ وَجَاهُهُمْ بِبَيْتِ الْمَقْدِسِ وَإِمَامُهُمْ رَجُلٌ
صَالِحٌ فَبَيْنَمَا إِمَامُهُمْ قَدْ تَقَدَّمَ يُصَلِّي بِهِنَّ الصُّبْحَ
إِذْ تَرَلَّ عَلَيْهِمْ عَيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ الصُّبْحَ فَرَجَعَ ذَلِكَ
الْإِمَامُ يَنْكُصُ بِمَنْشِي الْقَهْقَرَى لِيَتَقَدَّمَ عَيْسَى يُصَلِّي
بِالنَّاسِ فَيَضَعُ عَيْسَى يَدَهُ بَيْنَ كَتِفَيْهِ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ لَهُ تَقَدَّمَ
فَصَلِّ فَإِنِّي لَأَقِيمَنَّ لَكَ أَيَّامَ الصَّلَاةِ بِهِنَّ إِمَامُهُمْ فَإِذَا
انصَرَفَ قَالَ عَيْسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ افْتَحُوا الْبَابَ فَيُفْتَحُ
وَوَرَاءَهُ الدَّجَالُ مَعَهُ سَبْعُونَ أَلْفَ يَهُودِيٍّ كُلُّهُمْ دُو
سَبْفٌ مَحْلَى وَسَاجٍ فَإِذَا نَظَرَ إِلَيْهِ الدَّجَالُ ذَابَ كَمَا
يَذُوبُ الْمِلْحُ فِي الْمَاءِ وَيَنْطَلِقُ هَارِبًا وَيَقُولُ عَيْسَى
عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِنَّ لِي فِيكَ ضَرْبَةٌ لَنْ تَسْبِقَنِي بِهَا فَيُدْرِكُهُ
عِنْدَ بَابِ اللَّذِّ الشَّرْقِيِّ فَيَقْتُلُهُ فَيَهْرِمُ اللَّهُ الْيَهُودَ فَلَا
يَبْقَى شَيْءٌ مِمَّا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ يَتَوَارَى بِهِ يَهُودِيٌّ إِلَّا أَنْطَقَ
اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ الشَّيْءَ لَا حَجَرَ وَلَا شَجَرَ وَلَا حَائِطَ وَلَا
ذَاتَةَ إِلَّا الْعُرْقَدَةَ فَإِذَا مِنْ شَجَرِهِمْ لَا تَنْطِقُ إِلَّا قَالَ
يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ الْمُسْلِمِ هَذَا يَهُودِيٌّ فَتَعَالَ فَاغْتُلْهُ قَالَ
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَإِنَّ أَيَّامَهُ أَرْبَعُونَ
سَنَةً السَّنَةُ كَبِصْفِ السَّنَةِ وَالسَّنَةُ كَالشَّهْرِ وَالشَّهْرُ
كَالْجُمُعَةِ وَآخِرُ أَيَّامِهِ كَالشَّرَرَةِ يُضْبَحُ أَحَدُكُمْ عَلَى
بَابِ الْمَدِينَةِ فَلَا يَبْلُغُ بَابَهَا الْآخِرَ حَتَّى يُمَسِّي قَبِيلَ
لَهُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ كَيْفَ نُصَلِّي فِي تِلْكَ الْأَيَّامِ الْقِصَارِ
قَالَ تَقْدُرُونَ فِيهَا الصَّلَاةَ كَمَا تَقْدُرُونَ فِي هَذِهِ
الْأَيَّامِ الطَّوَالِ ثُمَّ صَلُّوا قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ فَيَكُونُ عَيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِي أُمَّتِي
حَكَمًا عَدْلًا وَإِمَامًا مُقْسِبًا يَدْفُقُ الصَّلِيبَ وَيَذْبَحُ
الْحَنْزِيرَ وَيَضَعُ الْجُرْبِيَّةَ وَيَتْرُكُ الصَّدَقَةَ فَلَا يُسْعَى عَلَى
شَاةٍ وَلَا بَعِيرٍ وَتُرْفَعُ الشَّخْنَاءُ وَالتَّبَاغُضُ وَتَشْرَعُ حُمَةٌ
كُلٌّ ذَاتُ حُمَةٍ حَتَّى يُدْجَلَ الْوَلِيدُ يَدَهُ فِي فِي الْحَيَّةِ
فَلَا تَضُرُّهُ وَتُفَرِّ الْوَلِيدَةُ الْأَسَدَ فَلَا يَضُرُّهَا وَيَكُونُ
الدُّبُّ فِي الْعَنَمِ كَأَنَّهَا كَلْبِيهَا وَمَثَلُ الْأَرْضِ مِنَ السَّلَامِ
كَمَا مَثَلُ الْإِنَاءِ مِنَ الْمَاءِ وَتَكُونُ الْكَلِمَةُ وَاحِدَةً فَلَا
يُعْبَدُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

“Once, the Prophet delivered a speech. (Those days) most of

تَمُوتُوا وَإِنَّهُ أَعَزُّ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَيْسَ بِأَعَزَّ وَإِنَّهُ مَكْتُوبٌ
بَيْنَ عَيْنَيْهِ كَافِرٌ يَقْرَأُ كُلُّ مُؤْمِنٍ كَاتِبٍ أَوْ غَيْرِ كَاتِبٍ
وَإِنَّ مِنْ فِتْنَتِهِ أَنْ مَعَهُ جَنَّةٌ وَنَارًا فَتَارَهُ جَنَّةٌ وَجَنَّتُهُ
نَارٌ فَمَنْ ابْتُلِيَ بِنَارِهِ فَلْيَسْتَعِثْ بِاللَّهِ وَلْيَقْرَأْ فَوَاتِحَ
الْكَهْفِ فَتَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا كَمَا كَانَتْ النَّارُ
عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِنَّ مِنْ فِتْنَتِهِ أَنْ يَقُولَ لِأَعْرَابِيٍّ أَرَأَيْتَ
إِنْ بَعَثْتُ لَكَ أَبَاكَ وَأُمَّكَ أَتَشْهَدُ أَنِّي رَبُّكَ فَيَقُولُ
نَعَمْ فَيَسْتَمْتَلُ لَهُ شَيْطَانَانِ فِي صُورَةِ أَبِيهِ وَأُمِّهِ فَيَقُولَانِ
يَا بُنَيَّ اتَّبِعْهُ فَإِنَّهُ رَبُّكَ وَإِنَّ مِنْ فِتْنَتِهِ أَنْ يُسَلِّطَ عَلَى
نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ فَيَقْتُلَهَا وَيَشْرَهَا بِالْمِنْشَارِ حَتَّى يَلْقَى
شَيْئَيْنِ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ انظُرُوا إِلَى عَبْدِي هَذَا فَإِنِّي أَبْعَثُهُ
الآنَ ثُمَّ يَرْعُمُ أَنْ لَهُ رَبًّا غَيْرِي فَيَبْعَثُهُ اللَّهُ وَيَقُولُ لَهُ
الْحَيْثُ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي اللَّهُ وَأَنْتَ عَدُوُّ اللَّهِ أَنْتَ
الدَّجَالُ وَاللَّهُ مَا كُنْتُ بَعْدَ أَشَدَّ بَصِيرَةً بِكَ مِنِّي الْيَوْمَ
قَالَ أَبُو الْحَسَنِ الطَّنَافِيسِيُّ فَحَدَّثَنَا الْمُحَارِبِيُّ حَدَّثَنَا
عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ الْوَلِيدِ الْوَصَّافِيُّ عَنْ عَطِيَّةَ عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ
قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَلِكَ الرَّجُلُ
أَرْفَعُ أُمَّتِي دَرَجَةً فِي الْجَنَّةِ قَالَ قَالَ أَبُو سَعِيدٍ وَاللَّهِ مَا
كُنَّا نَرَى ذَلِكَ الرَّجُلَ إِلَّا عُمرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابِ حَتَّى
مَضَى لِسَبِيلِهِ قَالَ الْمُحَارِبِيُّ ثُمَّ رَجَعْنَا إِلَى حَدِيثِ
أَبِي زَائِعٍ قَالَ وَإِنَّ مِنْ فِتْنَتِهِ أَنْ يَأْمُرَ السَّمَاءَ أَنْ تُمْطِرَ
فَتُمْطِرُ وَيَأْمُرَ الْأَرْضَ أَنْ تُثْبِتَ فَتُثْبِتُ وَإِنَّ مِنْ فِتْنَتِهِ
أَنْ يَمُرَّ بِالْحَيِّ فَيُكَذِّبُونَهُ فَلَا تَبْقَى لَهُمْ سَائِمَةٌ إِلَّا
هَلَكَتْ وَإِنَّ مِنْ فِتْنَتِهِ أَنْ يَمُرَّ بِالْحَيِّ فَيُصَدِّقُونَهُ فَيَأْمُرَ
السَّمَاءَ أَنْ تُمْطِرَ فَتُمْطِرُ وَيَأْمُرَ الْأَرْضَ أَنْ تُثْبِتَ
فَتُثْبِتَ حَتَّى تَتَوَخَّ مَوَاشِيَهُمْ مِنْ يَوْمِهِمْ ذَلِكَ أَسْمَنُ مَا
كَانَتْ وَأَعْظَمُهُ وَأَمَدُهُ خَوَاصِرٌ وَأَدْرَهُ ضُرُوعًا وَإِنَّهُ لَا
يَبْقَى شَيْءٌ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا وَطَفَهُ وَظَهَرَ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا مَكَّةَ
وَالْمَدِينَةَ لَا يَأْتِيهِمَا مِنْ تَغْبٍ مِنْ نَقَاهِمَا إِلَّا لَقِيَهُ
الْمَلَائِكَةُ بِالسُّبُوفِ صَلَتَهُ حَتَّى يَنْزِلَ عِنْدَ الطَّرِيبِ
الْأَحْمَرِ عِنْدَ مُنْتَهَى السَّبْحَةِ فَتَرْجِفُ الْمَدِينَةَ بِأَهْلِهَا
ثَلَاثَ رَجَفَاتٍ فَلَا يَبْقَى مُنَافِقٌ وَلَا مُنَافِقَةٌ إِلَّا حَرَجَ
إِلَيْهِ فَتَنْفِي الْحَبَّتِ مِنْهَا كَمَا يَنْفِي الْكَبِيرُ حَبَّتِ الْحَدِيدِ
وَيُدْعَى ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ يَوْمَ الْخَلَاصِ فَقَالَتْ أُمُّ شَرِيكٍ
بِنْتُ أَبِي الْعَكْرِ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَأَيْنَ الْعَرَبُ يَوْمَئِذٍ قَالَ

his speeches were about Dajjal, warning us about him. Of the things he said on this occasion was: 'No tribulation has been of great dimension for the children of Adam since he was created, than that of Dajjal. Allah did not send a prophet but he warned his followers of him. I am last of the prophets and you are the last of the nations. Therefore he has to appear amongst you. If he appears while I'm with you, then I am a protector of every Muslim. If he appears after me, then let each soul take care of itself. And Allah is the protector of every Muslim after me. He will appear on a road between Syria and Iraq and spread corruption on his left and right. People! O slaves of Allah! Stay firm.

'Let me describe him to you the way no prophet has described him before. He will begin by claiming, "I am a prophet," whereas I am the last of the prophets. Then he will say, "I am your Lord." But you cannot see your Lord until you die. He will be one-eyed. But your Lord is not one-eyed. It will be written on his forehead, "*Kafir*," that every believer will be able to read: whether lettered or unlettered. One of his temp-

tations will be that he will carry with him the Fire and Paradise. However, his Fire will be Paradise and his Paradise Fire. Therefore whoever is tried out with his Fire, let him seek Allah's help and recite the opening verses of *Surah al-Kahaf*. It will cool down for him, as it cooled down for Ibrahim. Another of his temptation will be that he will beckon a bedouin and say to him, "Will you testify that I am your Lord if I quicken your parents?" He will say, "Yes." *Shaytan* will then put on the appearance of his parents. They will say, "Son! Follow him. He is your Lord." Another of his enticement will be that he will order a saw through a man from the head downward splitting him into two. Then he will say, "Look at this slave of mine. I am going to quicken him but he is going to deny me." Allah will quicken him. Dajjal will ask him, "Who's your Lord?" He will reply, "My Lord is Allah, and you are Allah's enemy Dajjal. By God, I was never as sure about you as I am now." That person (interjected the Prophet) will be the highest of position in Paradise among my followers. [And, Abu Sa'id, interjected], our belief was that it

was `Umar ibn al-Khattab he had alluded to, until he died.

'Another of his temptations will be that he will order the heavens to rain down, and it will rain. He will order the earth to throw out its produce and it will. Another ordeal would be that he will pass by a village. They will declare their belief in him and he will order the heavens and it will rain. He will order the earth to produce and it will. Their cattle will be the fattest of body with udders filled with milk.

'No part of the earth will be left which he would not have trampled and overcome except Makkah and Madinah, for he will not try to enter into them by any cleavage but he will find angels with swords guarding them, until he will encamp near the red hill near the barren patch. Thereupon Madinah will shake three times, so that no hypocrite man or woman would be left but would have joined him. Thus Madinah will throw out its dirt as the smith's hearth throws up the dirt. That day will be called the Day of Deliverance.'

At that Umm Shurayk bint Abi al-`Akr asked, "Prophet of Al-

lah?" Where will the Arabs be that day?" He replied, "They will be few; mostly in Jerusalem." (Then he continued), their leader will be a pious person. He will be about to lead them in a morning Prayer when Jesus Christ will descend. The Imām would retreat backwards but Jesus will place his hands on his shoulders and say, "Lead them. For the Prayers had been called out for you as the leader." So their leader will lead them in the Prayers. When he would have left, Jesus will say, "Open the gate." It will be opened and lo, Dajjal will be right there with 70,000 Jews: all of them with swords, well ornamented and wearing crowns. However, when Dajjal will spot Jesus, he will start melting as salt melts in water and begin to retreat in a hurry. Jesus will tell him, "You are destined to receive a blow from me that you cannot escape." He will overtake him near the eastern gate of Ludd and kill him. Allah will hand out defeat to the Jews so that, none of Allah's creation, neither a stone, tree, wall, nor a beast - except the Gharqad tree (extensively grown nowadays in Israel: Au.), for it is a the tree of the Jews - behind

which a Jew will be taking shelter but it will cry out, "Here is a Jew. Come and kill him."

"Those days every day will be equal to 40 years. (Of which) a year will be equal to half a year. A year like a month; a month like a week. Its last days will be like sparks. A man will start off in the morning from the gate of a city and would not have reached another gate but it will be evening. He was asked, "How shall we Pray in those short days?" He replied, "By approximation."

"Then he continued, 'Jesus Christ will establish order and justice. He will break the cross, slaughter the hog, annul *ji'z'yah*, and will not accept *zakah*, neither of the camels nor of goats (because there will be no one to accept it). Hatred and envy will be removed from the people and the poison of every poisonous thing will be withdrawn. So that, a child will put his hand into the mouth of a python, but it will not hurt. Children will play with tigers and they will not hurt them. Wolves will live among sheep as if dogs. The earth will be filled with peace as a vessel is filled with water. All the people will be on one religion

and no one will be worshipped except Allah'" (shortened).

The Musnad of Ahmad and Muslim have another *hadith* on the subject. Narrated by Hudhyfah (*ra*), it says:

عَنْ حُدَيْفَةَ بْنِ أَسِيدٍ الْغِفَارِيِّ قَالَ اطَّلَعَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ نَتَذَكَّرُ فَقَالَ مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ قَالُوا نَذَكَّرُ السَّاعَةَ قَالَ إِنَّهَا لَنْ تَقُومَ حَتَّى تَرُونَ قَبْلِهَا عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ فَذَكَرَ الدُّخَانَ وَالْجَحَالَ وَالذَّابَّةَ وَطُلُوعَ الشَّمْسِ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا وَثُرُولَ عِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَيَأْجُوجَ وَمَأْجُوجَ وَثَلَاثَةَ حُسُوفٍ حَسَنَفَ بِالْمَشْرِقِ وَحَسَنَفَ بِالْمَغْرِبِ وَحَسَنَفَ بِجَزِيرَةِ الْعَرَبِ وَأَخْرَجَ ذَلِكَ نَارًا تَخْرُجُ مِنَ الْيَمَنِ تَطْرُدُ النَّاسَ إِلَى مَحْشَرِهِمْ. صحيح مسلم

"Once we were sitting together and talking amongst ourselves about the Last Hour when the Prophet appeared. He asked us what it was that we were talking about. We told him we were talking about the Hour. He said: 'It will not be called until ten signs have appeared: Smoke, Dajjal, the Animal (that will speak to the people), rising of the sun from the West, descending down of `Isa, appearance of Yajuj and Majuj, and three sinking incidents: one in the East, another in the West and a third in the Arabian Peninsula. The last (sign) will be that of the Fire that will start from the Yemen and drive the people toward the Field of

[160] Therefore, because of the transgressions of those who Judaized themselves, We made some of those good things unlawful to them that were (originally) declared lawful, and because of their hindering many from the path of Allah.³⁷⁴

فَيُظْلَمُ مَنِ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ طَيِّبَاتٍ أُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ﴿١٦٠﴾

Reckoning.”

The *hadith* literature also says that the dwellers in Paradise will look similar to Adam and will be of the same age as `Isa (*asws*), that is, thirty-three years. Ibn `Asakir has stated that after his death, `Isa will be buried in the house (*hujrah*) of our Prophet.

Quote from Ibn Kathir ends here.

Alusi states that about his burial site there are two opinions: i) he will be buried in the *hujrah* of the Prophet and ii) he will be buried in Jerusalem.

373. `Isa ibn Maryam will testify against his people to the effect that he had delivered to them Allah's message (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

374. The phrase can both be rendered as “*their hindering many from the path of Allah,*” as well as, “their frequent hindering from the path of Allah” (Zamakhshari).

Thanwi says, in effect: The verse implies that sins of a believer can cause cessation or diminution of spiritual gains.

The words, “*Judaized themselves*” alludes to the fact that Allah had not revealed Judaism, but the religion of surrender (*Islam*) through Musa and the Prophets who followed him; but, over time, the Jewish scholars created a new religion called Judaism several centuries after Musa.

375. Majid quotes the Bible: “‘But fear thy God: that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase’ (Le. 25: 36, 37).”

376. The word in the original for “without right” is *batil*. Zamakhshari has explained it as “graft” or “bribe money,” that their rabbis would accept for interpolations in the *Tawrah*.

[161] And, because of their acceptance of usury, although they were prohibited,³⁷⁵ and consuming the wealth of the people without right³⁷⁶ And We have prepared for the unbelievers among them a painful chastisement.³⁷⁷

وَأَخَذِهِمُ الرِّبَا وَقَدْ نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَأَكْلِهِمْ أَمْوَالَ
النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦١﴾

377. Mawdudi writes: “The severe punishment that has befallen the Jews in this world is unique and should serve as a lesson for all. Two thousand years have gone by and they have remained scattered all over the world and have been treated everywhere as outcasts. There has been no period during the last two millennia when they have not been looked down on ignominiously and there is no part of the world where they are respected despite their enormous riches. What is more, this nation has been left dangling between life and death, ... Their condemnation to this state of suspension makes them a lesson for all nations till the end of time. It marks the tragic fate

that meets a people who, despite enjoying the guidance of the Book of God, dare to defy Him.”

378. For explanation of the term “well-grounded in knowledge” see *Aal-`Imran*, note 15 of this work.

According to a report in Ibn Ishaq, the opinion of Ibn `Abbas is that here the reference is to `Abdullah ibn Sallam, Usayd b. Sho`bah and Tha`labah b. Sho`bah who had abandoned Judaism and joined Islam (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

379. Reports say that some Jews, notably Sukayn and `Adiy b. Thabit (`Adiy b. Zayd: Qurtubi, Alusi), claimed before the Prophet that God

[162] But those of them who are well-grounded in knowledge,³⁷⁸ and the believers believe in what has been revealed to you and what was revealed before you, attend to the Prayers, pay the zakah, and those who believe in Allah and the Last Day - on such (of them) We shall surely bestow a mighty reward.

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

[163] Assuredly, We have revealed unto you (O Muhammad) as we (earlier) revealed unto Nuh and the prophets after him; as (We also) revealed unto Ibrahim, Isma'il, Is-haq, Ya`qub, the tribes, `Isa, Ayyub, Yunus, Harun and Sulayman.³⁷⁹ And We gave Da'ud the Zabur.³⁸⁰

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَى وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٦٣﴾

did not reveal anything to anybody after Musa. Allah revealed this verse in refutation. Another report, that of Ka`b al-Qurazi, says that when the Jews heard the previous verses, describing their corruption, some of them denied that anything had ever been revealed to anyone in the world: neither to Musa, `Isa, nor to anyone else (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

380. Zabur is the name of the Book revealed to Da'ud just as Al-Qur'an is the name of the Book revealed to our Prophet Muhammad (Ibn Jarir).

Some parts, or the whole of what is known as the Psalms of David in the Old Testament, might or might not

be a remnant of the Zabur given to Da'ud (*asws*) - Au.

381. In all, Allah spoke in the Qur'an of the following (twenty-four) Prophets and Messengers: Adam, Idris, Nuh, Hud, Salih, Ibrahim, Lut, Isma'il, Is-haq, Ya`qub, Yusuf, Ayyub, Shu`ayb, Musa, Harun, Yunus, Da'ud, Sulayman, Ilyas, Al-Yasa`, Zackariyyah, Yahya, `Isa and Dhu al-Kifl, with Muhammad as (the twenty-fifth, and) the most prominent of them all (Ibn Kathir).

A long report in Ahmad has come from Abu Dharr. He says, 'Once I entered the mosque to find the Prophet alone there. I asked him:

[164] Messengers of the past, some of whom We have spoken of to you, while others We have not.³⁸¹ And Allah spoke to Musa directly.³⁸²

وَرُسُلًا قَدْ فَصَّصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ
وَرُسُلًا لَمْ تَقْضُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ
مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا ﴿١٦٤﴾

“Messenger of Allah. (How about) the Prayers that you have commanded?” He said: “Prayer is the best thing (to do). Therefore, Pray as much as you can.” I asked him: “Which is the most virtuous deed.” He said: “Belief in Allah and *jihad* in His path.” I asked: “Which believer is the best?” He replied: “The best of them in his morals.” I asked him: “Which Muslim is the most submitted?” He said: “One from whose tongue and hands other Muslims feel secure.” I asked him: “Which emigration is the best?” He replied: “He who gave up evil deeds.” I asked him: “Which is the best Prayer?” He said: “The one in which the standing is the longest.” I asked: “Which fast is the best?” He replied: “The obligatory ones which are best rewarded. And Allah has great quantities of reward.” I asked him: “Which *jihad* is the best?” He said: “He who slaughtered his beast and shed his own blood.” I asked him: “Which freeing (of a slave) is the best?” He replied: “The most expensive and the best among his folk.” I asked him: “Which charity is the

best?” He said: “The efforts of the least possessed and the handing over in secrecy to the needy.” I asked him: “Which is the most magnificent verse revealed to you?” He replied: “*Ayah al-Kursiyyi*.”

Then he added: “Abu Dharr. The seven heavens are no more before the *Kursiyy* than a grain of sand in a patch of land. And the *Kursiyy* is no more before the *‘Arsh* than a grain of sand in a patch of land.”

I asked him: “How many Prophets have there been?” He said: “One hundred and twenty-four thousand.” I asked: “How many of them were Messengers?” He replied: “Three hundred and thirteen: a great lot and a good lot.” I asked him: “Who was the first?” He said: “Adam.” I asked: “Was he a Messenger too?” He replied: “Yes. Allah created him with His Hand, blew into him His spirit, and then straightened him up.” Then he added: “Abu Dharr. Four of them were Syrians: Adam, Shith, Khanukh, i.e., Idris who was the first to write with a pen, and Nuh. Four

from the Arabs: Hud, Shu`ayb, Salih and your own Prophet, O Abu Dharr. The first Prophet among the Israelites was Musa and the last `Isa. The first Messenger was Adam and the last Muhammad.”

I asked: “O Messenger of Allah. How many books did Allah reveal?” He replied: “A hundred and four books: to Shith fifty, to Khanukh thirty, to Ibrahim ten. To Musa He revealed ten books before He revealed the Tawrah. And He revealed the Tawrah, the Injil, the Zabur and the al-Furqan.”

I asked: “What was in the Scriptures of Ibrahim.” He replied: “(Allegories and paradigms) such as, ‘O proud, tyrannous, conceited king! I have not appointed you to amass wealth upon wealth. I have placed you there so that you may attend to the complaints of the oppressed. I myself do not reject the petition of the oppressed, even if it were to be from an unbeliever.’ And, ‘An intelligent man should divide his time into parts: A part in which he will address himself to his Lord. A part in which he will take stock of his deeds, another in which he will ponder over the creation of God, and a part devoted to earning his livelihood...’ And, ‘An intelligent man might not en-

gage himself except in three things: Preparing for the Hereafter, working for the livelihood or enjoying that which is not forbidden.’ And, ‘An intelligent man ought to well understand his times, busy himself with his own affairs, safeguard his tongue; and surely, whoever realized that his words are equal to his deeds, will speak little but about affairs of importance.”

I asked him, “What was in the Scriptures of Musa?” He said, “Alert words (*‘ibar*) such as: ‘I wonder at him who is certain of death yet opts for pleasure...’” I asked him, “And do we have such things in our Scripture?” He said, “Yes,” and recited these verses (87: 14-19),

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى (١٤) وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى
 (١٥) بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا (١٦) وَالْآخِرَةَ خَيْرٌ
 وَأَبْقَى (١٧) إِنَّ هَذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَى (١٨)
 صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى [الأعلى : ١٤ ، ١٩]

‘Surely he prospered who cleansed, remembered his Lord’s Name and Prayed. But you prefer the life of this world, whereas, the Hereafter is better and longer lasting. This is in the Scriptures of old - Scriptures of Ibrahim and Musa.’”

“I said: “Messenger of Allah. Advise me.” He said: “I direct you to observe *taqwa*, for it is the pinnacle of all your affairs.” I said: “Tell me

[165] Messengers as heralds of glad tidings and as warners, so that the people might have no argument against Allah after the Messengers.³⁸³ And Allah is All-mighty, All-wise.

رُسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لَعَلَّ يُكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ
عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا
حَكِيمًا ﴿١٦٥﴾

more.” He said: “Recite the Qur’an and remember Allah much, for you will be remembered in the heavens and it will be a source of light in this life.” I said: “Tell me more.” He said: “Avoid much laughter, for it deadens the heart and takes away the light of your face.” I said: “Tell me more, O Messenger of Allah.” He said: “Observe silence for it drives away Satan and helps you in religious causes.” I said: “Tell me more.” He said: “Look at him who is below you and not at him above you, for it is hoped that this way you will not belittle Allah’s favors to you.” I said: “Tell me more.” He said: “Love the poor (*masakin*) and keep their company. This way it is less likely that you will belittle Allah’s blessings on you.” I said: “Tell me more.” He said: “Join the kin even if they cut you off.” I said: “Tell me more.” He said: “Speak out the truth, even if it were to sound bitter.” I said: “Tell me more.” He said: “Do not fear the censure of the critics in matters of religion” – shortened.

Ibn Kathir presents several reports of this nature but points out that all of them may not be too trustworthy.

382. The words “*spoke to Musa directly*” are to emphasize the fact, and to leave no room for any conjecture, that the speaking was only allegorical (Shawkani).

383. The *Sahibayn* have preserved a *hadith* which says:

لَا أَحَدَ أَغْيَرُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلِذَلِكَ حَرَّمَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ
مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ وَلَا شَيْءَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْهِ أَلْمَدْحُ مِنَ اللَّهِ
وَلِذَلِكَ مَدَحَ تَفْسَهُ

“No one has greater sense of honor than Allah. Accordingly, He has forbidden the obscene, both the open as well as the concealed. No one loves to be praised more than Him. Accordingly, He has praised Himself.”

Another version of Bukhari adds:

وَلَا أَحَدَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْهِ الْعُدْرُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ
بَعَثَ الْمُبَشِّرِينَ وَالْمُنذِرِينَ

“And no one loves to complete

[166] But Allah bears witness³⁸⁴ that whatever He sent to you, He sent with His knowledge. The angels also bear witness, although Allah suffices for a witness.³⁸⁵

لَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا
﴿١٦٦﴾

[167] Surely, those who disbelieved, and bar (others) from the way of Allah, strayed far away in error.

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

[168] Surely, those who disbelieved, and committed evil, Allah is not such as to forgive them or show them the way.

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

[169] Except the way to Jahannum, dwelling therein for ever. And this is easy for Allah.

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

the argument more than Him. Hence He sent the Prophets and Messengers, giving glad tidings and warnings” (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

384. The verse starts with a “but” as if to say that people might deny the sending down of Messengers, but Allah bears witness (Zamakhshari).

385. Ibn `Abbas has said that when a group of Jews visited the Prophet he told them: “I think you know in your heart that I am a Messenger of Allah.” The Jews denied this and Allah revealed this verse, which meant to say that even if the Jews denied the fact, Allah Himself bears witness

to it (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

386. Everything has its limits, overstepping which is evil. Mutarrif b. `Abdullah has said that virtue lies between two vices (Qurtubi).

387. Our own Prophet Muhammad (*saws*) feared that his followers might also commit excesses of the same sort as the previous nations with their prophets, hence he said, in effect, in reports preserved in several books including Bukhari: “(In your veneration of me) Do not commit excesses of the sort the Christians committed with regard to `Isa ibn Maryam. I am no more than a slave, therefore, refer to me as a slave of Allah and His

[170] O people! Surely the Messenger has now come to you with the truth from your Lord, so believe, that will be better for you. However, if you reject, then to Allah belongs all that is in the heaven and the earth. And Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الرَّسُولُ بِالْحَقِّ
مِن رَّبِّكُمْ فَآمِنُوا خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ وَإِن تَكْفُرُوا
فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ
اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧٠﴾

[171] O people of the Book! Do not overstep the bounds of your religion,³⁸⁶ and utter not aught concerning Allah save the truth. Surely Masih, `Isa the son of Maryam, was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah,³⁸⁷ His word that He conveyed unto Maryam,³⁸⁸ and a spirit from Him.³⁸⁹ Therefore, believe in Allah and His Messengers. Do not say (God is) 'three.'³⁹⁰ Desist. It is better for you. Surely Allah is One God. Exalted is He above having a son. To Him belongs all that is in the Heavens and the earth. And Allah suffices for a Guardian.³⁹¹

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا
تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ
عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا
إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَا
تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةٌ انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ
وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَن يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَهُ مَا
فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ
وَكَيْلًا ﴿١٧١﴾

Messenger” (Ibn Kathir).

As the Christians committed excesses with regard to Jesus, so did the Jews, who said (slandorous) things about him (Zamakhshari, Shawkani).

388. The “*kalimah*” of the original either stands for “Messengership,” or, as Qatadah has said, the allusion is to the “Word” “*kun*” (i.e., “be”) by which Maryam became pregnant with `Isa (*asws*) - Ibn Jarir.

But there is room to believe that the

allusion by the word here is to “the signs” of Allah, as in *Surah al-Tahrim*, verse 12 which says,

وَصَدَقَتْ بِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّهَا [التحریم : ١٢]

“She (Maryam) believed in the signs (kalimat) of her Lord”

Or, as in *Surah Luqman*, verse 27,

مَا تَقَدَّتْ كَلِمَاتُ اللَّهِ [لقمان : ٢٧]

“Allah’s signs would never end” (Qurtubi, Shawkani).

389. Various views have been ex-

pressed about the original words “*ruhan minhu*” (i.e., a Spirit from Him). One opinion is that it means “a blow from Him,” since life was blown into the womb directly, without the part played by a sire. Others have said that it means “a life from Him” (Ibn Jarir).

To be sure, there is no strangeness in the combination: “*a spirit from Him.*” It is in the same vein as: “*Allah’s camel*” in *al-Shams*, verse 13, or “*Cleanse My House*” in *Al-Baqarah*, verse 125 (Ibn Kathir).

It is said that a Christian physician in the court of Harun al-Rashid argued that the Qur’an confirmed that Jesus Christ is part of God. He used this verse to substantiate his claim. Hussein al-Waqidi al-Marwazi was present. He rejoined that if that was so then all of the creations have a part of God in them, in view of the verse (45: 13):

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا
مِنْهُ [الجاثية : ١٣]

“*And He subjected to you what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, all together, from Him.*” That convinced the man and he embraced Islam pleasing Harun so much that he rewarded Waqidi heftily (Alusi).

Asad adds: “As regards the expression “a soul from Him” ... it is to be noted that among the various meanings that the word *ruh* bears in the Qur’an (e.g., “*inspiration*” in 2: 87 and 253), it is also used in its primary significance of “breath of life”, “soul”, or “spirit”: thus, for instance, in 32: 9, where the ever-recurring evolution of the human embryo is spoken of: “and then He forms him [i.e., man] ... and breathes into him of His spirit” - that is, endows him with a conscious soul which represents God’s supreme gift to man and is, therefore, described as “a breath of His spirit”. In the verse under discussion, which stresses the purely human nature of Jesus and refutes the belief in his divinity, the Qur’an points out that Jesus, like all other human beings, was “a soul created by Him”.

Rashid Rida writes: (If by the word *Ruh* we understand *Ruh al-Qudus*, (Holy Ghost) then the usage of the word is wide and varied in the New Testament. It has been used both in association with and without Jesus Christ. Matthew 1: 18 for instance, says: “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found

with child of the Holy Ghost.” Or, in Luke 1: 34-35: “Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee ...” Or, in Luke 2: 25 it says: “And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was upon him.” The first two quotes above clearly show that Jesus Christ was created through the agency of the *Ruh al-Qudus* (or Jibril).

390. The belief in Trinity is one of the several variant beliefs that various Christians hold as true. There are numerous such groundless notions. For example, some of them believe that Jesus was the son of God, others that He was God Himself, and so on. In fact, someone has put it aptly when he said that if ten Christians were to get together (and express their opinions about God) they would do it in eleven contradictory ways (Ibn Kathir).

Thanwi adds: “The verse also refutes the entirely baseless notion of hulul held by the ignorant *Sufis*.”

Trinity

Rashid Rida writes: The belief in Trinity is not a novelty of the Christians. Researches undertaken by Western scholars show the idea prevalent among many peoples of the past. The Hindus, for instance, believe in the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. They call it “Trimurthy.” The Chinese Buddhists believe in a Trinity of their own. The basis of Tau beliefs and philosophy is also in trinity. Ancient Egyptian religious system, whose most holy temple was at Memphis, started the initiation of the freshers with the catechism that originally there was one God. He created the second. Then the two created the third and thus the “Holy Trinity” achieved completion. In fact, when their ruler asked the chief priest about God, he replied that the Godhead constituted of a Triad consisting of God, the Word and the Holy Ghost. Ancient Persians had their own trinity of Gods: Ozmerd, Matrat and Ahraman, although later they developed duality, with a god of good and a god of evil. Similarly, the writer of “*The Development of Religious Thoughts*” details that the ancient Greeks believed that god has three hypostasis. Therefore, when their chief priest offered the sacrifices of the worshippers to the

deities they sprayed the sacrifice with three holy sprinkles, sprinkling those present three times, drawing incense with the help of three fingers, under the belief that everything holy has an aspect of three in it. The Hebrew dictionary says that the barbarians who lived in the north of Prussia worshipped a deity that had three heads. It was called "Triclave," where "Tri" is three and "Clave" perhaps for god. Likewise the ancient Scandinavians worshipped three gods called Odin, Thor and Freyr which they believed were three aspects of one reality. Their temples as well as those found in Denmark used to be decorated with the figures of these three gods.

With these findings before us, can we ask: Did the Europeans accept the religion of the Prophets of Israel who believed in One God, or did they continue with their ancient religions, adding Jesus Christ to the long list of deities?!

Surely, had the Christians nothing else to check their beliefs against, except the Gospels, even then they should have been led to One God. The Gospel of John says, in ch.17, v.3: "(Jesus spoke thus) And this life is eternal, that they might know thee, the true God, and Jesus Christ

whom thou hast sent." And in Mark, ch.12, v.29, when Jesus was asked about God's commandments, replied: "The first of all his commandment is, Hear O Israel: The Lord, our God, is one Lord."

To the above, this author would like to add the following:

Although the importance of the subject demands an exhaustive presentation, we shall for the moment content ourselves with a few remarks. Any unprejudiced person who looks into the Gospels, will be amazed to find no support whatsoever for the concept of Trinity or the nature and mission of Jesus Christ as incorporated in the Christian creed. Nowhere does Christ claim himself a son of God, or possessed with divinity, or claim a part in a trinity of gods. It is true that he refers to God as the Father, and to himself as the Son, but the Scriptures use the terms in reference to many others. As for Trinity, the word does not find mention once in the Gospels. A single verse on which the Church rests its argument, could be speaking of anything but Trinity and which Biblical scholars have shown as of later introduction. The concept of Trinity, therefore, has its origin in anything but

the Gospels. Western scholars have shown that early adherents of the Christian church from the northern sphere, were already familiar with the concept as a creed of their pagan religions, and so it was readily accepted by them when adopted by the Church, but opposed by the Eastern churches. Gibbon feels that Greek philosophy had influenced the early churchmen.

Whatever the origin, one or many, historical accounts tell us that it was Paul of Jerusalem, formerly a Jew and persecutor of the Christians, who was the first to introduce the concept into Christian thought and non-Gospel Scriptures. Although initially a disciple of the disciples of Christ, he later claimed independence following revelations and inspirations to him. Ultimately he parted ways with a disciple, but not without a quarrel. Significantly, there must have been something seriously wrong, for a disciple of Christ, one who shared the Last Supper with his Master, whose feet his Master had washed, and who, after him, journeyed across the lands spreading his message on his bidding, should have disapproved of Paul. But, at least on this score, Paul, who never saw Christ, has been dearer to the Catholic Church than an Apostle of Christ.

Expectedly, the ideas introduced by Paul were never accepted wholeheartedly by the Christians anytime in their entire history. Early Church was as divided over the nature of Christ, as the fingers of a hand. From the beginning, there was a strong faction opposed to Paul's ideas. They held the belief that Christ was no more than a human and a Prophet. This faction came to be symbolized in the fourth century by a learned religious figure called Arius, whose piety no one ever questioned; it was of such order that he declined to contest for the grand office of the episcopal throne. He stood firm against Pauline ideas. He and his followers waged a struggle against the established Church. A large majority of the bishops of Asia appeared to support or favor his cause. In fact, the most learned seemed to be on his side.

Arius' ideas however, were not the only ones that were different from those of the established Church. Hillary, a Bishop of the fourth century, lamented that in the ten provinces of Asia that he had visited, "there could be found very few prelates who had preserved the knowledge of the true God." The statement implies that either the prelates subscribed to the Arian creed, which refused to ac-

cept Jesus Christ as the son of God, or believed in Trinity. If we assume that the bishop was referring to Arian creeds, then we get some idea of the popularity of his beliefs. But if he was referring to the prevalence of Trinity, then his words acquire a chilling note, "there could be found very few prelates who had preserved the knowledge of the true God."

Such were the conditions when churchmen from over the world, gathered in Nicene in 325 A.C., to agree on a Christian creed. Arius was there. There are differences in opinion as to how many supported the Arian creed. Some accounts say they were in minority, while one or two accounts say they were actually in majority. Perhaps the confusion about the numbers is because of the fact that several such conferences were held and votes counted. According to one account, supporters to Arian cause at Nicene included two Bishops, seven presbyters, twelve deacons, and, as Gibbon mentioned, seven hundred virgins.

The stand taken by the Arians was that since the nature of controversy was too complicated and, in fact, incomprehensible to most who spoke on it in passionate terms, moderation was to be observed, and there-

fore, such terms of definitions must be avoided which could not be found in the Scriptures. Could he have asked for less? Yet, despite the plea, Homoousion (consubstantiality in a different guise) of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost was established in the council of Nicea and declared a fundamental article of Christian faith. Arian was declared a heretic - for claiming oneness of Divinity!

A modern scholar Brenton wrote: "Official Christianity finally accepted in 325 at the Council of Nicaea, near Constantinople, the Trinitarian, or Athanasian, position. According to this the persons of the Trinity, God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost are real persons, three in number, and yet they are also one. Christianity remained a monotheism, its Trinity well above Mathematics." And, "... But the point must be made again firmly, for if Christianity is so regarded one would expect the triumphant Christianity of the Council of Nicaea, the official faith of the world's greatest empire, to be quite different from Christianity of the fishermen of Galilee. On the other hand, if one takes the New Testament as the final assertion of Christian truth, one is bound to conclude, not just that the Christianity of the fourth century was

different from that of the first, but that the Christianity of the fourth century was not Christian" (*Ideas and Men*, Brinton, Prentice Hall, p. 127).

Arian's cause however did not die out. When the next Council met in Rimini, forty of the bishops, of the total of four hundred bishops were Arians. Most of the non-Arians were, significantly, from the northern regions, who for the first time in their history, after emerging from their forests and caves as pagans, had embraced a divinely revealed religion. In contrast, Arian bishops were highly learned men of the East, from a region where Jesus Christ had appeared about whom the controversy was raging. In truth, the Western bishops, docile followers of the commands of the Latin Church, ignorant of the language of the texts, should have been disqualified from voting. Nevertheless, it seems the Arians seem to have had a better field day, and a more persuasive turn. The word "Homoousion" was dropped by common consent. It was only when the Western bishops had returned home, and perhaps held discussions with the lower clergy in the respective regions, that they realized that they had all become Arians by agreeing to expel the word. Ho-

moousion was therefore hurriedly and more firmly replanted into the churches of the West.

Yet, the issue was far from settled and had not gained popularity. Thirty years after the council, even Hilary the important religious figure we have quoted above, was himself unaware of the exact requirements of the Nicene Creed. The following excerpt from him gives us a view of the then Christian world's confusion over its creeds: "It is a thing, equally deplorable and dangerous that there are so many creeds as opinions among men, as many doctrines as inclinations, and as many sources of blasphemy as there are faults among us; because we make creeds arbitrarily and explain them as arbitrarily. The Homoousion (consubstantiality: Au.) is rejected, and received, and explained away by successive synods. The partial or total resemblance of the Father and of the Son is a subject of dispute for these unhappy times. Every year, nay every moon, we make new creeds to describe invisible mysteries. We repent of what we have done, we defend those who repent, and anathematize those whom we defended. We condemn either the doctrine of others in ourselves, or our own in that of others; and, reciprocally tearing one another to piec-

es, we have been the cause of each other's ruin" (*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon, abridged version, p. 397).

The divisions among the Christians, the infighting, the struggle to control the Church, were threatening to tear apart the Roman Empire in the fourth century. The emperor, Constantine, could not sit idle while the inner turmoil weakened the strength of his empire. He decided to act. He called for another conference and got three hundred bishops assembled together for a fresh attempt at the resolution of the problem of creed. This time, the recent convert to the faith – the Emperor - decided to be the arbiter and the judge. What was to many a question of life and death, hell or heaven, he attributed its origins to a trifle point, at best a subtle question but incomprehensible to the best minds. Ignorant, not of the language of the holy texts, but of the text itself, and disadvantaged by translations into erroneous Latin, he was far from qualified to judge over a credal matter and its metaphysical dimensions. While the issue was being debated hotly, he must have listened more with curiosity than with a sharp sense of right and wrong. Yet, in his resolve to end all controversies, he ratified the older Nicene creed

and threatened those who disagreed with him with exile and confiscation of all property. The Arian votes immediately dropped down from seventeen to two. If majority counts in religion, the Nicene creed was reconfirmed by the majority. Arius himself was banished to a distant province, his writings put to flame and capital punishment pronounced for anyone in possession of them.

However, the edict ink had hardly dried when the Emperor discovered that his own sister was an Arian. We do not know of the happenings, discussions and talks within the palace, but, to be sure, Arius was recalled and reinstated in Royal favor. He was received in court respectfully and his creed approved by the synod of Jerusalem, the seat of Christian learning, if not of political power. But the day he was to be readmitted into the Church of Constantinople, Arius suddenly collapsed and died while walking through the streets of the capitol. It was suspected that the holy Church personalities had done more than merely praying for his death. Three principal enemies of Arius, who had opposed him tooth and nail for decades, Athanasius, Eusthatius and Paul (of Constantinople) were deposed by the Church councils on various counts and banished to dis-

[172] *Masih would never disdain to be a slave of Allah, neither would the angels nearest (to Allah).³⁹² Whosoever disdained to worship Him and waxed proud, He shall surely muster them together to Himself.*

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

tant lands. Constantine himself, the first Christian Emperor of the Roman Empire, who was the author of the Christian creed as held true by the Catholic Church, received the rites of baptism from an Arian bishop shortly before his death. His sons who ascended the throne, and grandsons, remained Arian and the faith of the royals spilled into the following centuries. But the ultimate triumph, thanks for the numbers in the West, was for the Nicene Creed, and for consubstantiality. Such are the ironic historical details of a Creed held dear and true by the Roman Catholic Church (Au.).

391. That is, Jesus is not the Guardian of the people, rather, it is Allah who is the Guardian, and One who suffices as a Guardian.

(Nevertheless, the word “*wakil*” can also lend the meaning of “a Disposer of affairs.” In that case the interpretation would be: Au.): Allah does not need a son to dispose off His affairs. He suffices for that Himself (Alusi).

392. The “*angels nearest*” have, at various times in history, been worshipped by men, hence their inclusion (Ibn Kathir).

Some scholars have argued that since in the Arabic language a well-known rule of rhetoric is that the superior (*afdal*) is always mentioned after the inferior, the verse proves by implication that the angels nearest to Allah are superior to Prophets. This, however, is a minority opinion, since there can be several explanations to the order in the verse. Nonetheless, the best thing in such matters, where reason does not play a role, rather, the dependence is entirely on the received reports, and since, in this case, there is no report (from the Prophet or the Companions), the best course is silence. The sensitiveness of the issue also demands extreme care (Alusi).

393. A *hadith* of Muslim says:

قَالَ « لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مَنْ كَانَ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ
مِنْ كِبْرٍ ». قَالَ رَجُلٌ إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ يُحِبُّ أَنْ يَكُونَ ثَوْبُهُ
حَسَنًا وَتَعَلُّهُ حَسَنَةً. قَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَمِيلٌ يُحِبُّ الْجَمَالَ

[173] Then, as for those who believed and worked righteousness, He shall award them their wages in full - granting them more out of His grace. As for those who disdained and waxed proud, He shall chastise them with a painful chastisement.³⁹³ And they shall not find for themselves besides Allah, a friend or helper.

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
فَيُؤْتِيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ
وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْتَنكَفُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ
عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ
وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٧٣﴾

[174] O Mankind! Verily, a convincing proof has come to you from your Lord.³⁹⁴ And We have sent down to you a clear Light.³⁹⁵

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُم بُرْهَانٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١٧٤﴾

الْكِبْرُ بَطْرُ الْحَقِّ وَعَمَطُ النَّاسِ.

“Whoever harboured pride equal to a mustard seed in his heart will not enter Paradise.” Upon this someone asked: “Messenger of Allah. A man wishes that his clothes be good, his shoes be good (is that pride)?” He replied: “Allah is beautiful and loves the beautiful. Pride is to counter the truth haughtily and look down upon the people” (Alusi).

394. The “*burhan*” of the original, translated as “proof” here, has been widely interpreted as alluding to the Prophet, since it is his personality which demands an explanation and is, consequently, a proof of Allah’s

existence (Au.).

395. Qatadah and Ibn Jurayj have said that by the word “*nur*” (light) the allusion is to the Qur’ān (Ibn Jarir).

396. Ibn Jurayj has said that the pronoun in the “*bihi*” of the original refers to the Qur’ān (Ibn Jarir). Therefore a variant translation could be: “*Those who hold fast unto it,*” i.e., “unto the Qur’ān.”

397. The expression “Guide them to Himself” means He will guide them to the ways of His worship (Zamakhshari).

398. “The seemingly abrupt transition from the preceding passages -

[175] Those then who believed in Allah and held fast unto Him,³⁹⁶ He shall admit them into a mercy from Himself and grace, and shall guide them unto Himself³⁹⁷ (along) a Straight Path.

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ
فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ
إِلَيْهِ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ﴿١٧٥﴾

[176] They consult you (O Prophet).³⁹⁸ Tell them Allah directs you thus in the matter of a person without a heir in the direct line.³⁹⁹ If a man dies without leaving a child, but he has a sister, then her share will be one half of what he leaves.⁴⁰⁰ And (conversely) he would inherit her (wholly) if she were (to die) childless.⁴⁰¹ However, if there be two (sisters, to the deceased), then they share two-thirds of what he leaves. But, if they be brothers and sisters then the share of the male shall be twice that of the females. Allah makes clear to you so that you might not run into error. Allah has knowledge of all things.⁴⁰²

يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ إِنَّ
امْرَأَةً هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَهُ أُخْتٌ فَلَهَا
نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَا إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهَا
وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُمَا الثُّلُثَانِ مِمَّا
تَرَكَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا إِخْوَةً رِجَالًا وَنِسَاءً فَلِلذَّكَرِ
مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثِيَيْنِ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَنْ
تَضِلُّوا وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٦﴾

dealing with questions of theology - to this one is in accord with the Qur'anic principle of deliberately interweaving moral exhortation with practical legislation: and this in pursuance of the teaching that man's life - spiritual and moral, individual and social - is one integral whole, and therefore requires simultaneous consideration of all its aspects if the concept of 'the good life' is to be re-

alized" (Asad).

399. For an explanation of the term *Kalalah* see note 54 above.

Ibn `Umar has reported that (when `Umar was asked about *Kalalah* when he was on the pulpit), he replied, "People! I wish I had asked the Prophet about three things: (Share of) the grandfather, (who) *Kalalah* (is) and details about *riba*." Several

other reports say that he had on several occasions asked the Prophet about who *Kalalah* is, but he only directed him to refer to the last verse of *Surah al-Nisa'*. (It was `Umar's extreme caution in matters of religion that without sufficient grounds, he refused to lend the weight of his personality to an opinion: *Manar*).

And Jabir b. `Abdullah reports that he became the cause of revelation of this verse. He says he was seriously ill. The Prophet visited him. He was unconscious. The Prophet made ablution and then sprinkled water on him from his mouth (some reports say he asked others also to do it). With that Jabir recovered. He asked the Prophet: "How should my wealth be divided?" (According to other versions, he had nine sisters but no brother). Allah revealed this verse (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

The first and the last of the above mentioned reports are in the *Sahihayn* while the middle one is in Muslim and others (Ibn Kathir).

400. The other half will go to distant relatives known as "*asabah*" (Ibn Jarir); which of course, if the man is parentless (Ibn Kathir).

It is reported in Ahmad that a case

was brought before Zayd b. Thabit of a man who had left a wife and a sister by the same father and mother. He ruled that both the wife and sister will get one half each and remarked that that is how the Prophet had also judged (Ibn Kathir).

401. However, if she has a father, and is childless, then the father inherits all, to the exclusion of the brother(s) - Ibn Kathir.

402. Bara' ibn al-`Azib has said (in a report in Muslim) that this was the last verse of the Qur'an to be revealed, although, the last complete *Surah* to be revealed was *al-Tawbah* (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

The report about this is in the *Sahihayn*.

And, Jalaluddin Suyuti has pointed out that it is significant to note that the last verse to be revealed is concerned with what the last thing a man is concerned with before he dies (Alusi).

قَتِينًا



Surah 5
Al-Ma'idah

(The Table Spread)

Madinan



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE KIND, THE COMPAS-
SIONATE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Introductory Notes

Imām Ahmad has recorded Asma' b. Yazid:

عَنْ أَسْمَاءَ بِنْتِ يَزِيدَ قَالَتْ إِنِّي لَأَحِدَةٌ بِرِمَامِ الْعَضْبَاءِ نَاقَةَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذْ أَنْزِلَتْ عَلَيْهِ الْمَائِدَةُ كُلُّهَا فَكَادَتْ مِنْ ثِقَلِهَا تَدُقُّ بِعَصَدِ النَّاقَةِ

“I was holding the rein of the Prophet’s camel ‘*Adba*’, when *al Ma'idah* was revealed to him – the whole of it. It appeared as if its weight would break down the forelegs of the camel.”

Other versions have it that unable to bear, the camel collapsed down. Finally, the Prophet (*saws*) dismounted to unburden her. There are reports that this is the last chapter of the Qur'an to be revealed as one whole, although other chapters have also been named (Ibn Kathir).

With special reference to verse 3 Qurtubi writes that what they meant when they said that this was the last

chapter to be revealed was that this was the last whole chapter that dealt with the lawful and the unlawful, after which no chapter was revealed discussing these subjects.

Ibn Hibban has written however that some parts of this *surah* were revealed during the Prophet’s Hudaibiyah journey; some parts during the Makkah campaign, while others during *Hajjatu al Wada'* (Shafi').

Qurtubi also writes: This *surah* was not revealed in one piece, rather, its parts were revealed at different times: but all of them after the *hijrah*. And whatever was revealed after *hijrah* even if out of the town of Madinah is called Madinan.

Naqqash has reported that once al Kindi (the renowned Muslim philosopher of the 3rd century) was asked by some people: “Wise man. Why do you not produce for us something equal to the Qur'an.” He said

[1] Believers! Fulfill your commitments.¹ Lawful unto you are all beasts of the flock² except that which is now recited to you (and) except for the (hunting of) game animals when you are in a state of consecration. Verily, Allah decrees what He will.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ أُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيمَةُ الْأَنْعَامِ إِلَّا مَا يُنْتَلَى عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرِ مُحْلِي الصَّيْدِ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١﴾

he would and shut himself up in his house for several days. He came out to say: “By God! I can not. I came across the first verse of *al Ma'idah*. It advised to keep the pledges, ordered a thing, then stated an exception, and then an exception over the exception, then described Allah's power and will: all in a line. No human could have done it.”

Asad writes: “The *surah* begins with a call to the believers to fulfill their spiritual and social responsibilities, and ends with a reminder of man's utter dependence on God... Being one of the last revelation vouchsafed to the Prophet, it lays down a series of ordinances relating to religious rites and social obligations; but, at the same time, it warns the followers of the Qur'an not to enlarge the area of divine ordinances by means of subjective deductions (verse 101), since this might make it difficult for them to act in accordance with God's Law, and might ultimately lead them to denying the truth of revelation as such (verse 102). They

are also warned not to take the Jews and the Christians for their 'allies' in the moral sense of the word: that is, not to imitate their way of life and their social concepts at the expense of the principles of Islam (verses 51 ff.) ... The crowning statement of the whole *surah* is found in verse 3, which was revealed to the Prophet shortly before his death: ‘Today have I perfected ...’”

1. That is, O Muslims, be true to your pledges given to Allah, to His Prophet, your vows that you will follow Allah's commandments, and the word of promises that you give to each other (Ibn Jarir).

Hasan has stated that it includes all kinds of pledges: those that one makes to Allah, those that one makes to His creatures, and those that one makes to himself such as, for example, to promise oneself to practice Islam more faithfully (Qurtubi).

Asad adds: “The term *'aqd* (“covenant”) denotes a solemn undertaking or engagement involving more

than one party. According to Raghīb, the covenant referred to in this verse 'are of three kinds: the covenants between God and man, [i.e., man's obligations towards God], between man and his own soul, and between the individual and his fellow men' thus embracing the entire area of man's moral and social responsibilities."

In yet simpler words: commitments of all kinds, including those a man makes to himself (Au.).

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Mutarrif, Rabi`, Dahhak and others have said that *`uqud* of the original is equivalent of *`uhud*, i.e., pacts and pledges (Ibn Jarir).

2. Although the authorities have understood camels, cows, goats and the like as alluded to, according to some scholars, the words "*bahimatu al an'am*" include antelopes, wild cows, wild asses, etc. (Ibn Jarir).

excludes all canine animals, while the addition of *bahimah* includes all quadrupeds that feed on plants (Qurtubi).

Nevertheless, Ibn `Umar, Ibn `Abbas and others have held the opinion that it is the dead fetus found in an animal's wombs that has been alluded to, making it lawful to eat, (if the mother has been duly slaughtered)

Ibn Jarir.

Qurtubi adds: If it emerges alive, it must be slaughtered. As for the dead, Imām Malik has conditioned it to one which has completed its growth and has fully achieved its physical features. If not, it cannot be consumed (Qurtubi).

In fact, there is a *hadīth* in Tirmidhi (who declares it as *hasan sahih*), with another in Abu Da'ud of similar meaning, which says that when the Prophet was asked about the fetus of a slaughtered animal, he said that it might be eaten because slaughtering of her mother was the slaughter of its fetus (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

Mawdudi writes: "... the permission ... embraces all grazing quadrupeds of the cattle type, i.e., which do not possess canine teeth, which feed on plants rather than animals, and which resemble the cattle... This implies that the flesh of those animals which have canine teeth and are carnivorous is not permissible. This implication was elucidated by the Prophet (peace be on him) and is embodied in a tradition in which he prohibited those beasts which kill and eat other animals. Likewise, the Prophet (peace be on him) also prohibited birds with claws and those that feed on carrion."

[2] Believers! Violate not the consecrated of Allah³ nor the Sacred month,⁴ neither the consecrated (animal),⁵ nor the collared ones (marked out for sacrifice),⁶ nor those (pilgrims) repairing⁷ to the Holy House seeking Allah's bounty⁸ and (His) good pleasure. However, after you are out of the state of consecration, you might hunt. Also, detestation for a people - who had prevented you from the Holy Mosque⁹ - might not urge you to commit aggression (against them). Rather, co-operate in matters of piety and godfearing,¹⁰ and do not co-operate in matters involving sin and aggression.¹¹ Fear Allah. Verily Allah is severe in retribution.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْلُوا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ
وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ
وَلَا آمِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا
مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا
وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاَنُ قَوْمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ
عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا وَتَعَاوَنُوا
عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ
وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ



3. Ibn `Abbas and Mujahid have said that it is the rites of Hajj that is meant by *Sha`a'ir Allah* (symbols of Allah) Ibn Jarir.

Another opinion coming from him, as reported by Ibn Jarir and Ibn abi Hatim, is that whatever becomes unlawful after a man dons the pilgrim garb is *Sha`a'ir Allah* (Shawkani). But `Ata' seems to be more apt when he says that "*Sha`a'ir*" (sing. *Sha`irah*) linguistically being "the well known things," would mean those of the commandments of Allah that, by their nature, are well known by the people. Muslims should not violate them (Ibn Jarir).

Qurtubi states that another opinion is that *Sha`a'ir* is from *Ish-`ar* which

is "a mark." Sometimes a camel to be slaughtered was marked with a (minor) wound in its hump. Such of them were known as *Sha`a'ir* and the allusion seems to be to them. According to Imām Abu Hanifah, the practice is now undesirable, because, if it was resorted to by the Prophet himself, as recorded in a *hadith* of Muslim, it was because that was the only way in practice then to mark out a beast for sacrifice. It is said that Abu Hanifah feared its misuse and suffering it causes to the animal.

4. That is, do not fight in the Sacred month: Ibn `Abbas, `Ikrimah (Ibn Jarir).

However, according to the great majority (the rule is now abrogated

and), the Muslims can begin a battle in the Sacred months (which are: *Dhu al Qa'idah*, *Dhu al Hijjah*, *Muharram* and *Rajab*) - Ibn Kathir.

It should be obvious, that of the two parameters, time and space, with which Allah controls this world, He has declared some as sacrosanct, and Muslims are required to treat them as such. Also see note 448 of *surah al Baqarah* (Au.).

5. Although the "*hadyu*" of the original primarily refers to the animals that have been intended for slaughter in the *Haram* area, some commentators have said that anything that one intends to give out in charity in the way of Allah such as a piece of cloth is *hadyu*. It is forbidden for the owner to put the article to personal use after the intention (Qurtubi).

6. The allusion by the *qala'id* (sing: *qaladah*) could either be to the animals that were collared as a mark by the pilgrims who drove them along to the Hajj sites for sacrifice, or, to the people in the days of ignorance who used to tear down the skin of a Makkan tree and collar themselves as the mark of a pilgrim to escape being harmed until they returned home. If the word has been used in the latter sense, then, according to Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Sha'bi, Qatadah and

others, the rule stands abrogated (Qurtubi). Mutarrif b. Shikhkhir has however said that the practice thereof of collaring oneself has itself been declared unlawful by the verse (and thus it is not abrogated) Ibn Jarir. The Prophet himself however, had thus got his camels marked, as confirmed by reports in the *Sahihayn*.

Nevertheless, a general meaning that can be derived is: Do not make lawful unto yourself those animals that you intend to slaughter in the *Haram* area, nor those others that you (or others) have collared for such purposes (Au.).

7. "*'Amminda*" has *ammama* in its root, which means to intend (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi); and, although the application is general, as Ibn 'Abbas has said, to include anyone heading to the *Haram*, the verse came down in particular reference to Hutam b. Hind who came to the Prophet enquiring about Islam. When the Prophet told him about the message he had brought, Hutam (who, according to some sources had embraced Islam) said: "That is a bit tough. However, I shall present it to my people. If they accept it, I shall come back with them. If they do not I will stay back." The Prophet said about him: "The man came in with

the face of an unbeliever and went out with the face of a deceiver.” On his way back, Hutam (became an apostate and) stole some Madinan cattle. Although given a chase, he managed to reach his tribe in Najd safely. The next year he came down to Makkah, as a trader (he was a fabulously rich businessman) and intending Hajj. He had collared himself and his beasts. The Companions sought the Prophet’s permission to capture and punish him. But this verse was revealed which prevented them. Nevertheless, at a later stage, as Ibn ‘Abbas, Suddi and many others named above have pointed out, this verse was abrogated by the verses of *surah al Tawbah* which ordered the Muslims to fight all kinds of unbelievers and prevent the pagans from entering the Holy *Haram* (Ibn Jarir).

Qurtubi adds that Hutam was killed during the sedition of the apostates of Yamamah.

8. The term bounty (*fadl*) has generally been understood to mean trade and business opportunity (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

9. The Muslims were generally prevented by the pagans from entering Makkah after their emigration and specifically on the occasion of the treaty of Hudaibiyyah.

10. Abu al ‘Aliyyah has said that with the birr of the original, the allusion is to what has been ordered and by *Taqwa* to what has been prohibited (Ibn Jarir).

Qurtubi quotes al Mawardi that piety involves deeds that please the people while godfearing involve those deeds that please Allah alone; someone who combined the two, achieved salvation.

Accordingly, when the Prophet said, as in a *hadith* of Bukhari and others:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْصُرْ أَخَاكَ ظَالِمًا أَوْ مَظْلُومًا فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَنْصُرُهُ إِذَا كَانَ مَظْلُومًا أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِذَا كَانَ ظَالِمًا كَيْفَ أَنْصُرُهُ قَالَ تَخَجُّرُهُ أَوْ تَمْنَعُهُ مِنَ الظُّلْمِ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ نَصْرُهُ (بخاري)

“Help thy brother, be he the oppressor or the oppressed,” the Companions reacted: “Messenger of Allah! The oppressed yes, but how can we help the oppressor?” The Prophet replied: “By restraining him from his oppression. That’s the way to help him.”

Another *hadith*, in Ahmad, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah records the Prophet as having said:

عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْمُؤْمِنُ الَّذِي يُخَالِطُ النَّاسَ وَيَصْبِرُ عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ أَكْبَرُ أَجْرًا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِ الَّذِي لَا يُخَالِطُ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَصْبِرُ عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ

“A believer who intermingles with the people and is patient over the inconveniences (that it causes) is better rewarded than he who does not intermingle with them and does not bear the inconveniences with patience.”

The Prophet has also said (Qurtubi), in a *hadith* preserved by Abu Bakr al Bazzar:

الدَّالُّ عَلَى الْخَيْرِ كِفَاعُهُ

“He who leads to a good deed is like the doer.”

Shawkani adds: Ahmad, Ibn Humayd and Bukhari in his Tarikh, have recorded the Prophet as saying:

فَقَالَ الْبِرُّ مَا انْتَشَرَ لَهُ صَدْرُكَ وَالْإِيمُ مَا حَاكَ فِي صَدْرِكَ وَإِنْ أَفْتَاكَ عَنْهُ النَّاسُ

“Virtue is what satisfies the heart and the soul while sin is that which pricks your heart, even if the people assure you of its lawfulness.” (The *hadith* is *sahih*: S. Ibrahim).

Muslim, Tirmidhi and others have also recorded the Prophet as saying:

الْبِرُّ حُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ وَالْإِيمُ مَا حَاكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ وَكَرِهْتُمْ أَنْ يَعْلَمَهُ النَّاسُ

“Virtue is good behavior and sin is what pricks your heart, and you dislike that people should know about it.”

11. In this context Tabarani has a *hadith* which says:

مَنْ مَشَى مَعَ ظَالِمٍ لِيُعِينَهُ وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ ظَالِمٌ ، فَقَدْ خَرَجَ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ

“Whoever strove with an oppressor to help him, while he knew that the man is an oppressor, departed from the fold of Islam” (Ibn Kathir).

According to Haythami, the *isnad* of the above report has one or two unknown narrators (Au.).

12. The pagans ate carrion (and justified their beastly act by) saying: “Will you eat the slaughtered by yourselves but not the slaughtered of

[3] Forbidden unto you are carrion,¹² blood,¹³ swine's flesh, what has been consecrated to other than Allah, a (beast) strangled (to death),¹⁴ or (died) by a violent blow,¹⁵ or by a fall from a height, or one gored with the horns (to death), and (that which was killed and) devoured by the wild beasts¹⁶ - unless you slaughtered them duly¹⁷ - and what is slaughtered on the altars,¹⁸ (or) that you seek shares (in disputed divisions) by the divining arrows.¹⁹ All that is impiety. This day the unbelievers have despaired of your religion.²⁰ Therefore, fear them not. Rather, fear Me. This day I have perfected your religion for you,²¹ have completed My favor unto you,²² and have approved for you as religion al-Islam.²³ However, whoever is forced in extreme hunger (to resort to the unlawful) without any inclination for a sin,²⁴ then, Allah is All-forgiving, All-kind.

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنزِيرِ
وَمَا أَهْلَ لَعْنٍ لَعْنِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْحَنِفَةُ وَالْمَوْفُودَةُ
وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا
مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَأَنْ
تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَامِ ذَلِكُمْ فِسْقٌ الْيَوْمَ
يَكْسِرُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَحْشَوْهُمْ
وَاحْشَوْنَ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ
وَأَتَمَّمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ
الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرِ
مُتَجَانِفٍ لِآثِمٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣﴾

God?" (Razi)

13. It is the running blood that is meant (even if it solidifies after slaughter), in the light of the verse (6: 145):

فَلَنْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ
إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا [الأَنْعَامُ : ١٤٥]

"Say, I do not find anything forbidden in that which has been revealed to me for one wishing to eat, unless it were to be carrion, or running blood ..."
This means liver and spleen are not prohibited.

Also see notes 336 340 of surah al Baqarah of this work.

Ibn Kathir says that in pagan days when a man was hungry and had nothing to eat, he would stab a wound in a camel and suck its blood.

Christians, who joyously relish blood, might note the prohibition in the New Testament. Majid quotes: "Ye abstain from meat offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled" (Ac. 15: 29).

Ibn Kathir also presents the following. Abu Umamah, whose real name was Sudayy b. 'Ajalan, has an incident to narrate of which various parts are recorded by Ibn Abi Hatim,

Ibn Marduwayh and Hakim. Here is a combined report. Abu Umamah says he was commissioned by the Prophet to preach his people. While he was speaking to them about Islam and its message, they brought up a tray filled with (cooked) blood. They gathered around it and invited him to join in. He told them that he was coming from a man who had prohibited it. They wanted to know what exactly the prohibition was about and Abu Umamah recited this verse to them. He continued to invite them to Islam. But they would not accept. Then he asked them for some water as he was extremely thirsty. They refused, saying that they would rather leave him there until he died of thirst. Abu Umamah says: "I had a piece of cloth with me. I covered my head with it and lay down in that terrible heat. As I dozed off, someone came to me with a crystal bowl that was more beautiful than anyone can imagine. It had a drink tastier than anyone could think of. He helped me with it and I drank out of it. With that I woke up. And by God, I was not thirsty anymore and was never in want of clothes after that drink."

"Then I heard them say to each other, 'Look. The man came to you from the people of the uplands but you did

not even give him a drink!' So they presented me with some water mixed with milk. I told them, 'I do not need your drink, for Allah fed me and gave me a drink.' Then I showed them my stomach. At that they became Muslims, to the last of them."

The earlier part of the report is in Hakim who has declared it *sahih* (Shawkani).

14. This includes one that gets stuck between two rocks and dies. Qatadah has said that the pagans used to kill the animals by strangling them and then devour them (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

15. In pre Islamic times the pagans beat an animal until it died. Then they ate it. Those killed in such a manner are unlawful now (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

And the scholars have differed over the animal killed by a bullet or a stone of a catapult, some saying it is lawful, but the majority saying no. Muslim has recorded that 'Adiyy b. Hatim asked the Prophet: "(How about what) I hunt with a broad bodied arrow." He replied: "If it pierces the body, you might eat of it, but if it hits it length wise, do not" (Qurtubi). That is because the important function of removal of blood is not achieved (Razi). An added condition

is that the hunter should have shot the weapon in the name of Allah (Shafi').

Shafi' also writes that Jassas has reported Ibn 'Umar's opinion that what is killed by the bunduqah (an improvised weapon that fired a bullet without fire power: Au.) is unlawful. Imām Abu Hanifah, Shafe'i and Malik are of the same opinion.

Mawdudi adds: "The disadvantage of killing an animal by either guillotine or strangulation is that the greater part of the blood remains within the body, and at various places it sticks to the flesh and forms congealed lump. If an animal is slaughtered by slitting the throat, on the other hand, the connection between mind and body remains intact for a short while, with the result that the blood is thoroughly drained out from all the veins and the flesh becomes fully cleansed of blood."

16. If pre Islamic Arabs found an animal killed by the beasts and partly devoured by them, they ate the rest (Ibn Jarir).

17. This exception is applied to all kinds of animals, otherwise lawful, that if they are found alive after a fall, after being gored etc., and even if just wagging their tails as a sign of

life they might be Islamically slaughtered and eaten thereof. This is the opinion of 'Ali, Ibn 'Abbas, Hasan, Qatadah and others (Ibn Jarir). This is also the opinion of the great majority of jurists including Abu Hanifah, Shafe'i and Ibn Hanbal.

18. Ibn Jurayj, Mujahid, Qatadah and others have said that nusub of the original refers not to idols, which had a facial feature, rather to those stones and rocks that were placed upright, worshipped and offered sacrifices to, but which had no facial features (Ibn Jarir). They dotted the entire town of Makkah and whole of the country (Qurtubi). There were three hundred and sixty of them surrounding the *Ka'bah* itself (Razi, Ibn Kathir).

19. According to Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Hasan and many others azlam were divining arrows that were used during the days of paganism. Whenever a person was in doubt over an affair, whether he should attempt it or not, he would go to a temple wherein they stocked these arrows for consultation. The arrows had various writings on them, such as: "Yes," "No," "My Lord orders it," "My Lord disapproves of it," and so forth. If one in doubt, for instance over a journey, received the arrow

saying: “My Lord disapproves of it,” he would cancel his trip. The Hubal temple had seven such sets of divining arrows: separately for journeys, battles, trade, digging of a well etc. (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir)

During the 2010 Football World Cup, an octopus was often used to predict the winner (Au.).

Qurtubi adds: Rather, every kahin had in stock these seven sets of arrows. It were the same divining arrows that Suraqa b. Malik was carrying and which he had consulted while chasing the Prophet during his *Hijrah* journey.

Az-hari has written in *Taj al Masadir*: “*Istiqsam* is to seek whatever God has in store with Him, hidden from the people, of their share: whether it is life or death, good or bad fortune, or whatever else.” The people endeavored in pre Islamic days to seek their share through God’s own judgment by consulting the arrows (*Lughat*).

Qurtubi also writes that the Prophet approval of *fa’l* has no relationship with the divining methods. *Fa’l* is simply to draw a good omen from a good word that one hears, such as, when a sick man is addressed as “O Salim” (which means “O the hale and healthy one”), he draws a good omen from it and hopes to get well soon.

In contrast, the Prophet disapproved of bad omen, known in Arabic as “*tiyarah*,” which were drawn from a flying bird or a passing woman, etc. The Prophet preferred to fasten good hope on Allah rather than show a lack of trust in Him.

In other words, the Prophet approved of a state of optimism and disapproved of pessimism, a key element in turn of good fortune that has now been proven true after thousands of scientifically satisfying tests conducted in American and European research centers (Au.).

Ibn Kathir writes: The Prophet replaced the divine arrows with *salah al istikharah*. Bukhari has a *hadith* in which Jabir b. `Abdullah says:

عن جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ السَّلْمِيِّ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُعَلِّمُ أَصْحَابَهُ الْإِسْتِخَارَةَ فِي الْأُمُورِ كُلِّهَا كَمَا يُعَلِّمُهُمُ السُّورَةَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ يَقُولُ إِذَا هَمَّ أَحَدُكُمْ بِالْأَمْرِ فَلْيَرْكَعْ رَكَعَتَيْنِ مِنْ غَيْرِ الْفَرِيضَةِ ثُمَّ لِيُثَلِّ اللَّهُمَّ إِلَيَّ أَسْتَحْيِرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَعِيذُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ ثُمَّ تَسَمِّيهِ بِعَيْنِهِ خَيْرًا لِي فِي عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ قَالَ أَوْ فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي فَأَقْدِرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ اللَّهُمَّ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي أَوْ قَالَ فِي عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَأَقْدِرْ لِي الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ رَضِّنِي بِهِ (بخاري)

“The Prophet used to teach us *istikharah* over every affair, in

the manner he used to teach us Qur'ānic chapters. He would say, 'When one of you intends to do something, let him offer two *rak'ah* of Prayers and then say in supplication: "O Allah! I seek your help by Your knowledge, seek Your help by Your power, and seek Your great favor, for You have Power and I have no power, and You know what I do not know. You are the Knower of the Unseen. O Allah! If You know that this affair (let the supplicant name it) is good for me: for my religion, my providence and the ultimate end of my affairs, (or, the Prophet said, 'in the short or the long term'), then give me power over it, make it easy for me, and place barakah in it for me. But, if You know that this affair will be an evil one for me: in my religion, providence, or the ultimate end of my affairs, (or, the Prophet said, 'in the short or the long term'), then turn it away from it, turn me away from it, and give me power over what is better - wherever it might be - and then assign me satisfaction (of heart) in it."

20. That you will ever return to paganism (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Kathir adds: It is in this sense that the Prophet said:

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ آيَسَ أَنْ يَعْبُدَهُ الْمُصَلُّونَ فِي جَزِيرَةِ
الْعَرَبِ وَلَكِنْ فِي التَّحْرِيشِ بَيْنَهُمْ (مسلم)

"*Shaytan* is despaired that he will ever be worshipped again in the Arabian Peninsula, but hopes to create dissension between them."

21. Suddi has said that this verse was revealed in 'Arafah after which nothing was revealed about the lawful and the unlawful. It is also said that when this verse was revealed it brought tears into the eyes of 'Umar. The Prophet asked him the reason and he said: "So far we were experiencing a continuous rise of this religion. Now that it has been completed, it can only experience decline." The Prophet said: "You spoke the truth" (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

Majid quotes Asad (perhaps from his "The Road to Makkah"): "The world," says an European convert to Islam, "has not been able to produce a better system of ethics than that expressed in Islam: it has not been able to put the idea of human brotherhood on a practical footing as Islam did in its supernatural conception of 'Ummat': it has not been able to create a social structure in which the conflicts and confictions between the members are as efficiently reduced to

a minimum as in the social plan of Islam: it has not been able to enhance the dignity of man: his feeling of security: his spiritual hope: and last, but surely not least: his happiness. In all these things the present achievements of the human race fall considerably short of the Islamic programme. Where, then is the justification for saying that Islam is 'out of date?'"

22. Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah, Sha'bi and others have said that after the revelation of this verse the pagans were barred from performing Hajj, thus drawing a line between them and the believers in one God, and this was the completion of the favor that Allah spoke of (Ibn Jarir).

Razi says that at Makkah nothing was declared obligatory. With migration, obligations began to be imposed, until by the ninth year after *Hijrah*, when Hajj was made obligatory. It is to this that the verse alludes. Qurtubi is also very near to this.

23. The Prophet lived for 81 days after the revelation of this verse (Qurtubi, Shawkani and others).

Tariq b. Shihab reports that a Jew said to 'Umar that had the verse, "This day I have perfected your religion ...," revealed to them they would have declared it a day of celebration. 'Umar told him: "I know when and

where it was revealed. It was revealed in 'Arafat on the day of 'Arafah (the ninth day of Dhu al Hijjah)." According to another report he said, "on Friday; and both Friday as well as the day of 'Arafah are the days of celebration for us" (Ibn Jarir). There are *ahadith* to this effect in Muslim (Qurtubi).

24. That is, the person constrained is not at all inclined at heart towards partaking of the unlawful. It is only the need that forces him. Such a person incurs no sin (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Kathir adds: As to when it become lawful to partake of the unlawful, the answer is, it is not necessary to wait for three days, as believed by the common people. Rather, it will depend on the circumstances. If someone fears death, it becomes *wajib*. Yet, one need not wait until then either. Whenever it becomes unbearable, one might resort to the unlawful as prescribed by a *hadith* according to which when the Prophet was asked about when the unlawful could be eaten, he replied:

إذا لم تَصْطَبِحُوا، ولم تَعْتَبِفُوا، ولم يَجْتَفِعُوا بَقِيلاً فَمَا نَكَمَ
بِهَا

"When you have nothing for the morning, nothing for the evening, and cannot manage to lay hands on some vegetables, then

[4] They ask you (concerning) what is lawful unto them.²⁵ Tell them, all things good and clean have been made lawful to you,²⁶ (as also what is seized by) the animals of prey²⁷ that you train by what Allah has taught you and which you let loose (to hunt).²⁸ Therefore eat out of what they hold down for you, but pronounce Allah's name over it.²⁹ Fear Allah, verily Allah is swift at reckoning.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ
الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُم مِّنَ الْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ
تَعَلَّمُونَهُنَّ مِمَّا عَلَّمَكُمُ اللَّهُ فَكُلُوا مِمَّا
أَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ
وَآتَقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٤﴾

eat of it.”

Further, when Allah offers a concession, it must be accepted. A *hadith* of *Sahih Ibn Hibban* says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ أَنْ تُوْتَى رِضْصُهُ كَمَا يَكْرَهُ أَنْ تُوْتَى
مَعْصِيَتُهُ

“Verily, Allah is pleased that His concession be accepted just as He disapproves that He be sinned against.”

25. We have a *hadith* in this context:

عن أبي رافع قال: جاء جبريل إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ليستأذن عليه، فأذن له فقال: قد أذنا لك يا رسول الله. قال: أجل، ولكننا لا ندخل بيتا فيه كلب، قال أبو رافع: فأمرني أن أقتل كل كلب بالمدينة، فقتلت، حتى انتهيت إلى امرأة عندها كلب يبيع عليها، فتركته رحمة لها، ثم جئت إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فأخبرته فأمرني، فرجعت إلى الكلب فقتلته، فجاءوا فقالوا: يا رسول الله، ما يجل لنا من هذه الأمة التي أمرت بقتلها؟ قال: فسكت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: فأنزل الله عز وجل: ﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُم مِّنَ الْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ﴾

Abu Rafi` has reported that once Jibril sought permission to enter the house. The Prophet gave him the permission; but he said: “We do not enter a house in which there is a dog.” The Prophet then ordered me, continues Abu Rafi`, to kill every dog I came across the town. I did as he had ordered until I came across a dog in the outskirts of Madinah which barked for its woman owner. I let it off, out of compassion and reported to the Prophet. He ordered me to kill that one also. So people began to come in enquiring what of these creatures (that is, the dogs) were lawful for them. Allah revealed this verse (Ibn Jarir).

Hakim has graded the report as *Sahih* (Ibn Kathir).

However, it is allowed to keep dogs for hunting or for security purposes. The verse also proves by implication

that the scholars have an edge over the ordinary people. After all, Allah granted a special status to dogs that have been “taught” (Qurtubi).

26. Accordingly, Ibn abi Hatim has reported that Zuhri was asked about the use of urine for medicinal purposes. He replied: “It is not of the good and clean things” (Ibn Kathir).

Imām Razi adds: The point to be remembered however is that “the good and the clean” spoken of here are those things that are good and clean to the people of taste, for we know that to savages of the desert, everything that they eat is good and clean.

Shafi` adds: The Prophet has given us to understand through his various utterances on the topic that all such animals are unlawful that a decent soul detests to eat. He has also prohibited us those animals that feed by tearing apart their prey (such as lions, wolves, etc.), and those birds that use their claws to hold their prey. Following the rule of “things good and clean,” it is also unlawful to eat snakes, scorpions, lizards, flies, hawks, eagles etc. Those are also unlawful that live in filthy surroundings such as rats and the like.

The Prophet himself would not eat of the *dabb* meat (a huge desert lizard) - Au.

27. According to Ibn `Abbas, Hasan, Mujahid and others, trained dogs, lynx (a kind of cheetah), falcons, hawks, etc., are beasts and birds of prey. In fact we have a *hadith* from the Prophet who was asked by `Adiyy b. Hatim about hunting with the help of falcons. He replied:

ما أمسك عليك فكلن

“Eat of that which they hold down for you.”

As regards use of the term “*mukal-labina*” (which has its root in *kalb*: dog), it has been used simply because most often dogs are employed for hunting (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir); and, adds Shafi`, with the passage of time the same word came to be employed for birds of prey also.

Ibn Kathir adds: Imām Ahmad has prohibited hunting with the help of a black dog, which, according to instructions in several *ahadith*, must be destroyed. When the Prophet was asked the difference between a red hound and a black one, he replied:

الْكَلْبُ الْأَسْوَدُ شَيْطَانٌ

“Black dog is a *Shaytan*” (Muslim)

Qurtubi adds: By implication the verse permits the sale and purchase of dogs and birds of prey.

28. A *hadith* in the *Sahihayn* reports

'Adiyy b. Hatim as having asked the Prophet about hunting with dogs. He replied:

إذا أرسلت كلبك المعلمَ وذكرت اسم الله، فكل ما أمسك عليك“. قلت: وإن قتلن؟ قال: ”وإن قتلن ما لم يشركها كلب ليس منها، فإنك إنما سميت على كلبك ولم تسم على غيره“

“If you let loose the dog in the name of Allah, then eat of what it pins down for you.” ‘Adiyy asked: “What if they kill it?” He replied: “Even then, so long as another dog had not participated in it, since you sent your dog (in Allah’s name) but did not send the other dog (in His name).”

Another report adds the words:

فإن أكل فلا تأكل، فإني أخاف أن يكون أمسك على نفسه.“ (متفق عليه)

“However, if they start eating out of it then you do not eat out of the rest, for it is possible that they hunted for themselves; not for you.”

Ibn `Abbas is widely reported as having said: “If the beast of prey hunts an animal, kills it, but starts eating it, then do not eat of the rest, irrespective of whether you had spelt out Allah’s name before letting it loose or not. It had killed it for itself, and is not a “taught one.” Such is also the opinion of Ibn `Umar, Sha`bi, ‘Ata’,

Suddi and others. In fact ‘Adiyy b. Hatim has reported a *hadith* exactly in the words Ibn `Abbas has used in his above statement. However, that is not the condition with birds of prey. All that is required of them by way of training is that they should return to the master when beckoned. If they do that then they are “the taught ones.” Their prey might be eaten, even if they start eating out of their prize. Nevertheless, ‘Ali, Sa`id ibn Jubayr, `Ikrimah and others have said that there is no difference between beasts or birds of prey. If they eat out of what they prey on, the rest might not be eaten. There have been other varying opinions on the subject (Ibn Jarir).

Nevertheless, there are *ahadith* that allow eating from what the dogs begin to eat. One is in Abu Da`ud which reports a bedouin having asked the question and the Prophet replying:

إِذَا أُرْسِلَتْ كَلْبُكَ وَذَكَرْتَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ فَكُلْ وَإِنْ أَكَلَ مِنْهُ

“So long as you have sent your dog in Allah’s name, eat of it even if they begin to eat out of it.”

A *hadith* of similar meaning is in Nasa’i. And both reports are trustworthy. Accordingly, Salman al-

Farsi, Qatadah, Sa`d b. abi Waqqas, Abu Hurayrah and `Abdullah ibn `Umar have also allowed eating from the remaining of what the beasts of prey have begun to eat.

Imām Juwayni and some others have reconciled the two conflicting statements of the Prophet by saying that if the beasts of prey start eating out of the prey immediately after the catch then you better not eat out of it. But if the master is a bit slow in arriving at the scene, and meanwhile, perhaps out of their hunger, if the beasts of prey start eating then you might eat of the rest.

As for spelling out Allah's name, some believe it is obligatory, while others say that it is not a condition. If one forgets, then there is no harm (Razi, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

29. That is, pronounce Allah's name at the time you let loose the beast or bird of prey. However, if you forget, even then there is no harm (Ibn `Abbas: Ibn Jarir).

Fiqh Points

According to the Hanafiyah, the following rules have to be observed for a hunted animal to be lawful to eat:

1. The beasts or birds of pray must

be trained ones; and the test is that if they come back when beckoned, they are trained ones.

2. They should have been let loose by the master. If they catch on their own and kill an animal, then that animal is not lawful to eat.

3. They should not begin to eat immediately after the catch.

4. Allah's name should have been recited when they were let loose.

5. The animal killed should have been injured by the animal of prey. If they fall and die (during the chase) they are not lawful.

6. If found alive, they must be duly slaughtered.

7. The game should be a free forest animal. If it is a captured one, or one domesticated, then killed by a beast or bird of prey would not be lawful. They must be properly slaughtered.

30. For connection, one has to look back at the previous verse wherein it was stated: "*This day I have perfected your religion for you, (and) have completed My favor unto you.*" The favor referred to is that of religion and everything that is part of religion per se. Herein, Allah is impressing upon us the fact that even physical and material favors have been completed:

[5] This day all that is good and clean has been made lawful to you;³⁰ and the food of the people of the Book is lawful for you,³¹ as is your food lawful to them;³² as (are lawful) chaste³³ believing women and chaste women of the people given the Book before you,³⁴ provided you have given them the dower due to them,³⁵ seeking chastity, and not lewdness nor taking them as secret lovers.³⁶ And whoever rejects faith (after belief),³⁷ surely his deeds are lost³⁸ and he shall be of the losers in the Hereafter.

الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَلَلٌ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ
حَلَلٌ لَهُمْ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ
قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ
غَيْرِ مُسَافِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِي أَخْدَانٍ وَمَنْ
يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ وَهُوَ فِي
الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٥﴾

“This day, all that is good and clean has been made lawful unto you” (Razi).

31. Ibn `Abbas, Hasan, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Suddi and many others have said that the slaughtered of the Jews and Christians is lawful to the Muslims, and that's what the verse is talking about. However, `Ali had a different opinion about some of their sects. He said: “Do not eat of the slaughtered of the Banu Taghlib (a north Arabian Christian tribe), for I believe they have taken nothing from Christianity except intoxicants” (Ibn Jarir, Kashshaf, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

Shafi` clarifies a point: Although the Jews and Christians (who are the only two communities to whom the term “people of the Book” is applicable), commit ‘a kind of *shirk* and *kufr*,’ Allah knew of their beliefs and

yet He declared their slaughtered animal lawful. Therefore the (properly) slaughtered of today's Jews and Christians is also lawful. This is because their *Shari`ah* is not at a great distance from ours. For instance, we find in their present day Scriptures also that they were prohibited carrion, blood, an animal killed by another, one strangled to death, that which had been consecrated in the name of other than God, etc.

None the less, if it is known for certain that instead of spelling Allah's name before slaughtering, or spelling no name whatsoever, they spell out other than Allah's name, or intentionally do not recite Allah's name, then, in that case, their slaughtered is unlawful. This is the opinion of Abu Darda', `Ubadah b. Samit and a group of Companions. This is also the opinion of Abu Hanifah, Abu

Yusuf, Muhammad, Zufar, Imām Malik, Nakha`i and Thawri. It is in this light that we must try to understand `Ali's statement about the Christians of Taghlib tribe, who, as he said, had taken nothing from Christianity but drunkenness. It is also possible that `Ali knew that they did not slaughter in Allah's name. Further, if the people of the Book do not kill by slaughtering, rather with a blow (of a bullet) or whatever, then too their slaughtered animal is not lawful to Muslims.

32. A point implicit here has been brought out by Suddi. By saying, "your food is lawful unto them," what is being meant is that what is lawful unto you O Muslims, is lawful unto the people of the Book also, and not all that they have made lawful unto themselves, such as pork, etc. Therefore, if they offer pork to a Muslim, he cannot eat on the pretext that Allah has declared their food lawful unto the Muslims. Rather, pork is unlawful unto them also and they are sinning by consuming it (Alusi, slightly modified).

33. Some scholars have understood the word "*muhsinat*" as meaning the free ones among them (and not their slaves), but the majority understand it as chaste women. Accordingly, if

a man finds that the woman he has wedded was unchaste, the marriage is null and void, and nothing of the dowry is due to the woman. In fact, to contract a marriage with an unchaste woman is unlawful, until she repents. If she repents there is no blame on her (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Shafi` adds: Although marriage to a Jewish or Christian woman is allowed, it is not preferable. When Hudhayfah b. al-Yaman married a Jewish woman in Syria, `Umar wrote to him to divorce her. When Hudhayfah asked him whether it was unlawful, `Umar replied that he foresaw laxity in morals, and a social problem for Muslim women. `Umar had also forbidden Talha and Ka`b b. Malik from marrying women of the people of the Book. Hence, the Hanafiyy view is that marriage with them is undesirable.

34. Accordingly, when Hasan was asked whether women of the people of the Book could be married, he answered: "Where is the need, when there is no shortage of Muslim women? However, if one has to, let him marry chaste ones among them and not the lewd ones." He was asked: "How do you define the lewd ones?" He replied: "Such as one, who, when a man looks at her, follows him with

her looks" (Alusi from Ibn Jarir).

Sayyid points out that if we consider the fact the Catholics and Protestants do not inter-marry, then the generosity of Islam will be better appreciated.

35. Not that the dower is to be necessarily paid before the marriage is legal. It is simply being emphasized here (Alusi and others).

36. The words in the original for "lewdness" is "*musafihin*" and for secret lovers "*akhdan*." Now, "*sifah*" is for a woman to co-habit with several men and "*mukhdanah*" to have sexual relationship with a single man out of wedlock (Sayyid).

37. Although the word used is "faith" the allusion is actually to deeds that follow the *Shari'ah*. Another possibility pointed out by Qaffal is that

the address is to the people of the Book, who, if they have been allowed marriage with Muslims, they should not begin to imagine that they have a share in the Hereafter also (Razi).

38. The word in the original is "*habit*." In its root "*hubut*" is for a cattle to graze on a poisonous grass, resulting in the swelling of its stomach and it dying off (Sayyid Qutb).

39. The words "*When you prepare for Prayers*" have the hint hidden that *Tayammum*, of which the latter part of the verse speaks, can be resorted to only when water is not found at the time one begins to make preparations for Prayers, and not earlier (Razi).

Majid quotes a Christian writer: "The scrupulous cleanliness of the Mohammadans, which contrasts so

[6] Believers! When you prepare for Prayer,³⁹ wash your face,⁴⁰ arms up to the elbows, wipe your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles.⁴¹ However, if you are in a state of major impurity, then wash yourselves (wholly). Yet, were you to be ill, or on a journey, or one of you has come from the privy (requiring minor ablution) or you have been in contact with women (requiring major ablution), but you do not find water, then resort to clean dust and wipe your faces and hands therewith.⁴² Allah does not desire to cause inconveniences to you. Rather, He wishes to purify you⁴³ and complete His favors upon you, haply you will give thanks.⁴⁴

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا مَاءً فَسَيَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهَّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

favourably with the unsavory state of the easterners of other creeds, is an excellent feature in the practical influence of Islam.”

He also contrasts the Islamic statutes with regard to cleanliness with those of Christianity. He quotes: “(In the early Christian centuries) the cleanliness of the body was regarded as a pollution of the soul, and the saints who were most admired had become one hideous mass of clotted filth. St Athanasius relates with enthusiasm how St. Anthony, the patriarch of monarchism, had never, to extreme old age, been guilty of washing his feet ... St. Euphraxia joined a covenant of one hundred and thirty nuns, who never washed their feet, and who shuddered at the mention

of a bath.” (Lecky, History of European Morals, II, p. 47)

He also quotes *Encyclopedia Britannica*: “A pious (Christian) pilgrim, in the 4th century, ‘boasted that she had not washed her face for 18 years for fear of removing the baptismal chrism.”

40. Wetting the periphery of the beard, if it is a thick and flowing one, and passing fingers through it is *mustahab* according to the Hanafiyyah, Shafe`iyyah and Malikiyyah (Ibn Kathir).

41. Abu Musa (al-Ash`ari), Sa`id ibn al-Musayyib, Hasan al-Basri, Abu al-`Aliyyah, Dahhak and many others saw no reason to repeat ablution for a *salah*, if one had not nullified

his ablution, although `Ali and Ibn Sirin would make ablution for every Prayer while `Umar ibn Khattab merely washed his face and hands and wiped his head saying, "This is the *wudu* of one who has not annulled it." (The same is reported of `Ali also: Ibn Kathir). The Prophet himself offered his Prayers of the whole day on the day of the fall of Makkah with a single ablution (the report is in Muslim: Ibn Kathir. The Prophet had also offered Prayers of a whole day with a single *wudu* at the time of Khayber campaign: Qurtubi). His earlier practice was of re-making *wudu* for every *salah*; and he encouraged that one should make a fresh *wudu* at every *salah*. (In fact, the Prophet did not even prefer to reply to *salam* when not in *wudu* saying he did not like to spell Allah's name without *wudu*: Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir). He has also encouraged that one should do a thorough *wudu*, especially taking care of his heels. He warned of punishment with Fire when he noticed some people with dry heels (Ibn Jarir).

Therefore, a fresh *wudu*, even if not required, is *mustahab* (Ibn Kathir).

Qurtubi adds: According to Imām Abu Hanifah and Imām Shafe`i, it is not permitted to wipe on the socks,

unless they are made of leather. But others have allowed it.

Alusi writes several paragraphs to refute the *Shi`ah* who say that wiping, in lieu of washing the feet, is enough in *wudu*.

Their interpretation is based on a reading of the text that has been rejected by consensus (Au.).

42. See notes 152-155 of *surah al-Nisa'* of this work for details of *tayammum*.

The injunctions about *tayammum* have perhaps been repeated in this last chapter to be revealed to emphasize that the concession granted earlier in *surah al-Nisa'*, has not been abrogated (Alusi).

43. Abu Umamah (Sudayy b. `Ajalān) has reported that he heard he Prophet (*saws*) several times saying that *wudu* expiates the previous sins while *salah* helps add on virtue (Ibn Jarir). The Prophet has said in a tradition of the *Sahihayn*:

إِنَّ أُمَّتِي تَأْتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ غُرًّا مُّجَلِّلِينَ مِنْ آثَارِ الْوُضُوءِ ،
فَمَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يُطِيلَ عَرَّتَهُ فَلْيَفْعَلْ ،

"Members of my *Ummah* will appear on the Day of Judgment with brightness on their faces because of the marks of *wudu*. Therefore, he of you who can do

[7] Recall the favors of Allah on you, and His compact that He took from you, when you said, 'We have heard and we shall obey.'⁴⁵ Therefore, fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Aware of what is in the breasts.

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

it thoroughly, let him do it.”

Muslim has another report which reports the Prophet:

إِذَا تَوَضَّأَ الْعَبْدُ الْمُسْلِمُ - أَوْ الْمُؤْمِنُ - فَعَسَلَ وَجْهَهُ
خَرَجَ مِنْ وَجْهِهِ كُلُّ حَاطِيَّةٍ نَظَرَ إِلَيْهَا بِعَيْنَيْهِ مَعَ الْمَاءِ
- أَوْ مَعَ آخِرِ قَطْرِ الْمَاءِ - فَإِذَا عَسَلَ يَدَيْهِ خَرَجَ مِنْ
يَدَيْهِ كُلُّ حَاطِيَّةٍ كَانَ بَطَشَتْهَا يَدَاهُ مَعَ الْمَاءِ - أَوْ
مَعَ آخِرِ قَطْرِ الْمَاءِ - فَإِذَا عَسَلَ رِجْلَيْهِ خَرَجَتْ كُلُّ
حَاطِيَّةٍ مَسَّتْهَا رِجْلَاهُ مَعَ الْمَاءِ - أَوْ مَعَ آخِرِ قَطْرِ
الْمَاءِ - حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ نَعِيمًا مِنَ الدُّنُوبِ

“When a Muslim – or *Mu'min* - makes ablution and washes his face, the sins committed by the eyes are washed off with the water – or with the last drop of water, when he washes his hands, all the sins of the what he held with his hands are washed off – or with the last drop of water, and when he washes his feet, his sins of the feet that he walked with are washed off with water – or with the last drop of water, until he emerges clean and pure of sins” (Ibn Kathir).

44. Scholars have pointed out that this single short verse is composed of 7 elements, all of them in pairs:

i) two kinds of cleansing: real and virtual; ii) of the two, the real is of two kinds: the whole (*ghusl*) and the partial (*wudu*); iii) two types of actions have been mentioned: washing and wiping; iv) the agents of cleaning are of two types: liquid (water) and solid (dust); v) the reasons that make cleaning obligatory are of two types: major impurity (*hadath akbar*) and minor impurity (*hadath asghar*); vi) two situations allow for a substitution (*tayammum*), journey and sickness; and finally, vii) two rewards have been mentioned: purification and completion of favors (Alusi, slightly modified).

45. The reference is either to the compact of obedience that the believers made with the Prophet, or to the promise of obedience that every believer makes when he spells out the *kalimah tayyibah* to enter into Islam.

46. That is, standing out for Allah and bearing testimony for justice should be so often in your life that they should have become your second nature (Alusi).

[8] Believers! Stand out firmly for Allah, bearing testimony to justice;⁴⁶ and let not the detestation of a people lead you to injustice. Be just. That is nearer to taqwa.⁴⁷ Fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Aware of what you do.

[9] Allah has promised those of you who believe and do righteous deeds, forgiveness and a great reward.

[10] As for those who disbelieved and cried lies to Our signs, they are the companions of the Fire.

[11] Believers! Recall the favors of Allah that He bestowed on you when some people tried to stretch their hands at you, He prevented their hands from you.⁴⁸ Therefore, fear Allah. Surely it is Allah in whom the believers should place their trust.⁴⁹

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ
شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَا نُ قَوْمٍ
عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

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

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ
أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٠﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ
عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ أَنْ يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ
أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَعَلَىٰ اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

47. Accordingly, we find Nu`man b. Bashir reporting in the *Sahihayn* that when his father went to the Prophet and told him that he had gifted such and such an orchard to him (Nu`man), the Prophet asked him if he had made similar gifts to other children. When his father said no, the Prophet told him: "I shall not be a witness to injustice" (Ibn Kathir).

Qurtubi writes: It is not allowed, following this verse, that if the enemies of Muslims torture them, kill their women and children, or disfigure their dead, the Muslims also retaliate in a similar manner. Islam does

not allow beastly behavior under any circumstance.

48. `Abdullah ibn abi Bakr, Mujahid, `Ikrimah and some others have said that the allusion is to the attempts at the assassination of the Prophet. Once he was sitting along with Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, `Ali, Talha ibn Zubayr and `Abd al-Rahman ibn `Awf under a wall among the Banu Nadir. He had gone there to settle a blood-wit dispute. The Jews attempted to slide down a rock upon him and his Companions but Allah prevented them and informed the Prophet, who quickly returned from

the place.

Some other assassination attempts have also been mentioned as the cause of revelation (Ibn Jarir, Kashshaf, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

Another instance is reported by Ibn abi Hatim. It says that a group of Jews invited the Prophet to a poisoned dinner. But Allah informed the Prophet. He stayed away and asked his Companions not to attend.

A third reported incident involves Ka'b al-Ahraf and his companions who plotted to assassinate the Prophet in his fort but failed.

And a fourth incident took place during one of the Prophet's journey. At one camping point people spread around seeking shades of the trees to rest. The Prophet also sought rest under a tree and hung his arms by it. When he opened his eyes, he found a bedouin with his sword right over his head. The bedouin asked, "Who will save you from me now." The Prophet calmly answered, "Allah." He repeated his threat and the Prophet repeated his answer, three times. The bedouin was so awe-struck that the sword fell from his hand. The Prophet called his Companions and pointing to the bedouin who was sitting by his side, narrated the story. The bedouin's name was Ghawrath b. al-

Harith. It is reported that a group of pagans had sent the bedouin to assassinate the Prophet.

Thus, the verse was referring to several attempts at the Prophet's life (Ibn Kathir).

Imām Razi has said that the allusion could as well be to the situation in early Islam when the pagans were trying to wipe out Islam.

49. Imām Shafe'i has said that one might recite this verse seven times in the morning and seven times in the evening to keep away plague (Alusi).

The Connection

For a connection we can look back at verse 7 which exhorts Muslims to remain true to the compact they have made with their Lord and not back down as did the Jews and the Christians whose own performance is being described herewith in the following verses (Razi).

Ibn Kathir has another perspective. He says: If we go back to the beginning of this *surah* we notice that after Allah urged the Muslims to keep their covenants and oaths that He took with them through His Messenger Muhammad, peace be upon him, and mentioned the great blessings that He bestowed upon them, He now turns to the Jews and Chris-

[12] Surely, Allah did take compact with the children of Israel. And We raised up from among them twelve chieftains.⁵⁰ Allah told them, 'I am with you.⁵¹ If you perform the Prayer, pay the zakah, believe in My Messengers,⁵² strengthen them, and lend Allah a goodly loan,⁵³ I will acquit you of your evil deeds and admit you to gardens underneath which rivers flow.⁵⁴ Whosoever of you disbelieves thereafter,⁵⁵ surely lost the straight path.'

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا وَقَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَيْتُمُ الزَّكَاةَ وَآمَنْتُمْ بِرُسُلِي وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ﴿١٢﴾

tians to remind them that similar compacts were made with them also, but when they broke them, He settled a curse upon them, which acts a barrier and prevents them from responding to this new call.

50. Razi writes: The word in the original (for what has been rendered as chieftains) is “*naqib*.” Zajjaj has said that its origin is “*naqab*” which is used for a large hole. Hence when it is said that so and so is a “*naqib*” of his people, it means he is one who examines them closely - as one examines through a hole to know someone’s secrets. “*Manaqib*” is another derivation, which means “virtues” because the virtues of a man do not become apparent without a close scrutiny. “*Naqabah*” is an animal disease: so called because it penetrates the body so well that an affected camel’s flesh tastes like tar

coal. Here, adds Razi, the word here is in the sense of one made in charge of the affairs of a group of people, (sort of ‘religious and moral mentors’: Mawdudi), who were also responsible for their welfare.

Asad adds: “The noun *naqib* ... has also the meaning of “investigator” or “spy” inasmuch as it is derived from the verb *naqaba*, which signifies - among other things - “he scrutinized” or “investigated.”

It has also been said that they were also responsible for promoting virtue and curbing vice among their respective tribesmen. It was in this sense that they were appointed chieftains (Shawkani). The chieftains were, thus, to help their people keep the compact they had made with Allah (Thanwi).

When Musa (*asws*) intended to

launch an attack on the pagan populations of the holy land of Palestine, (the town was Jericho: Alusi) he sent these twelve chieftains, representatives of twelve tribes, as scouts to gather news about the enemy's strength. The allusion here is to their appointment as *nuqaba'* and the oath of secrecy taken from them on that occasion (Suddi: Ibn Jarir).

The twelve returned much impressed by the might of the Palestinians, then known as Canaanites, and, instead of confiding only in Musa as they were required to, they slipped the news to their wives, children and friends, who soon spread it among the Israelites. That led to a disheartening attitude among the Israelites and ultimately to the refusal to fight. As a consequence, they were denied entry into Palestine for forty years. See verses 20-27 below. (Au.)

Interestingly, it might be noted that when the Prophet took the first oath of allegiance in Islam, from the *Ansar*, during a night at 'Aqabah, they were 12 in numbers too. Three of them were from Aws and nine from Khazraj. Usayd b. Hudayr, Sa'd b. Khayzumah and Rifa'ah b. al-Mundhir (some say it was Abu al-Haytham al-Tayhan) were from Aws while Abu As'ad b. Zurarah, Sa'd b. Rabi',

'Abdullah ibn Rawaha, Rafe' b. Malik b. al-'Ajalan, Bara' b. Ma'rur, 'Ubadah b. Samit, Sa'd b. 'Ubadah, 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr b. Hizam and Mundhir b. 'Amr b. Hunaysh - may Allah be pleased with them - were from Khazraj. The Prophet made them the *'Urafa'* so that they might represent Islam and take oath of obedience from their people on behalf of the Prophet (Ibn Kathir).

Qurtubi writes: Following Musa's example, peace be on him, the Prophet also chose twelve people to lead the seventy *Ansari* men and two women who had taken the oath of allegiance on the occasion of the second *bay'ah* at 'Aqabah.

Ibn Kathir remarks: In fact, according to some traditions in the *Sahihayn*, the Prophet said: "People (i.e., Muslims) will continue to be until twelve *khulafa'* have appeared among them." Muslim's report adds: "All of them of the Quraysh." Now, it is not necessary that these *khulafa'* should follow each other consecutively. Rather, they might appear intermittently. The four *Khulafa' al-Rashidun* and 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz are definitely of them. Some of the 'Abbasids might have also belonged to the group. The prophesied Mahdi is definitely included who will bear the

same name as that of our Prophet and whose father will also bear the same as name as our Prophet's: Muhammad b. 'Abdullah." Further, they are not the same as the twelve Imāms of the Twelver *Shi'ah*. Their belief in this regard is fictitious. Indeed the Bible also predicts the appearance of Isma'il and the twelve great men of his progeny.

Ibn Kathir's reference to the prediction of the Bible is perhaps to the following (Gen. ch. 17: 20):

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation."

Thanwi adds that the appointment of *khulafa'* by the *shuyukh* is in principle of the same nature as the appointment of the twelve chieftains.

51. The words "I am with you," carry the senses both of awakening the desire to do things well, so that rewards may be earned (*targhib*), as well as a threat at doing things badly with which punishments might descend (*tarhib*) - Razi.

52. Faith in the Prophets had to be additionally stated (not as an after thought: Au.) because the Jews re-

jected many prophets. As if they are being told that the above deeds will be of no profit to them if they persist in believing in some prophets and disbelieving in others (Razi).

53. Although when someone spends for the sake of Allah, he does not lend money to Him, the term (*qard*) has been used here because of a shared meaning viz., as it is binding that loans be returned, so it is binding on Allah that He bestow rewards for the acts of charity (*Bayan*).

54. It can be easily noticed that the Qur'an only portrays the rewards of the righteous believers contrasting them with the punishment of the hardened unbelievers. It does not state anything about the sinning believers: those who fall in between the two extremes. This is because, while on the one hand the matter is dealt with in the traditions of the Prophet, on the other, the fate of those who fall in between can be inferred from the fate of those who are at the two extremes (*Bayan*).

55. That is, whoever broke the compact (by disobeying Allah) will never find a way to truth and guidance (Ibn Kathir).

56. That is, distanced them from Our Grace and Mercy. Yusuf Ali writes: "... because of their breach of their

[13] But, because of their (frequent) breach of the compact We cursed them⁵⁶ and hardened their hearts⁵⁷ (so that) they displace the words from their context,⁵⁸ and have forgotten much of what they were reminded with.⁵⁹ You will never cease to discover a treachery (or the other) on their part,⁶⁰ save for a few of them. Yet, forgive them and overlook, surely, Allah approves of those who do good.

فَبِمَا تَقْضِيهِمْ مِّيثَاقَهُمْ لَعْنَاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِ وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى خَائِنَةٍ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاصْفَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

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

57. The word *qasiyah* (hardened) has its root in *qaswa* which is hardness. Hence for a fake coin they say Dirham qasiyy since pure gold and silver are soft but when adulterated they harden up. (Zamakhshari)

Majid quotes: "Cf. the OT: 'They have refused to receive correction, they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return.' (Jen. 5: 3) 'Yea! They have made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law.' (Ze. 7: 12)

Thanwi writes: The *qasawah* referred to here, is both the result of sins of

the past, as well as the source and origin of sins thereafter.

58. Majid writes: "Look at the Jews' own estimate of the correctness of their Bible:- 'We may infer with certainty that the ancient copies of the *Torah* contained no vowels or accents, and that these have come down to us by oral tradition. For the multiplication of copies, human copyists had to be employed. It is by no means contrary to our faith in the Bible to assume that, as far as the human work of these copyists is concerned, it must have been subject to the fate of all human work, to error and imperfection. And, in fact, there are many copies of the Bible that abound in mistakes: there are passages in Scriptures that vary in the different manuscripts; hence numerous variations met with in the critical editions of the Bible.' (Friedlander, *The Jewish Religion*, p. 53)"

59. Ibn Mas'ud has said sometimes a

man forgets what he has learnt of the knowledge because of his sins. He recited this verse to substantiate his statement. (Zamakhshari)

Imām Shafè`i has said in a famous poetical quartet of his:

شكوت إلى وكيع سوء حفظي
فأرشدني إلى ترك المعاصي
وأخبرني بأن العلم نور
ونور الله لا يهدى لعاصي

*I complained to Waki` of my forgetfulness
He counselled me to give up the ways of
sinfulness*

Knowledge is Light, he said

*And Allah's Light is to the sinner not ar-
rayed.*

60. Such as their several efforts to get the Prophet assassinated, or their efforts at instigating the pagans to attack Madinah. (Au.)

Sayyid Qutb adds: "The address was then to the Prophet depicting for him an aspect of Jewish response to his call. Indeed this was their constant attitude towards the Prophet,

not in Madinah alone, during his life time, but also after they had vacated the city. There never was any change in their attitude. And this has been their attitude towards the Muslims since then, until today, despite the fact that the Muslims alone gave them shelter in the face of persecutions launched against them (in Europe and elsewhere, by the Christians). But they - or most of them - remained the same, armed with treacheries, right from the Prophet's time until this day: plotting, scheming, and waiting for every chance to harm the Muslims."

61. The compact was to the effect that when the Final Prophet appears they would believe in him and support him. Majid writes: "Witness various references to him (the Last Prophet), the well-known and well-recognized "that Prophet" or "the Prophet" found even in the garbled text of the modern Gospels:- 'And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? ... Art thou that prophet! And he an-

[14] As for those who said, 'We are Nasara,'⁶¹ We took a compact with them (also)⁶² but they forgot a great deal of what they were reminded with. Therefore, We stirred up⁶³ among them enmity and hatred (to last) until the Day of Resurrection,⁶⁴ when Allah will inform them of what they were manufacturing.

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

swered, No. ... And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizes thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet.' (Jn. 1: 19-21, 25) 'Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink ... Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, of a truth this is the Prophet.' (7: 37, 40) 'If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.' (14: 15, 16) 'It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but I depart. I will send him unto you. And he is come, he will reprove the word of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement.' (16: 7,8)

62. The word *Nasara* has its origin in *Ansar*, the word the followers of Christ had chosen to identify themselves with when they had answered to Jesus Christ's request for help, in words, "We are the helpers (*Ansar*) of

Allah." Ref. verse 52 of *Aal-'Imran* (Zamakhshari, Razi, Alusi).

With the passage of time, adds Zamakhshari, the *ansarullah* became *ansarus-Shaytan*.

63. The word in the original has its root in "ighra" which is to paste something so that it adheres strongly (Zamakhshari, Razi).

64. While Suddi, Ibn Zayd, Mujahid and others have said that the allusion is to the hatred and enmity between the Jews and the Christians, some others have thought that the allusion is to the hatred among the various Christian sects who can be so often seen at each other's throats (Ibn Jarir).

Majid writes: "And the wordy acrimony has frequently given place to severe religious persecutions, and even massacres. In Dean Milman's admirable summing up of the Christian history, 'Bloodshed, murder, treachery, assassinations, even during the public worship of God - these are the

[15] *People of the Book! Now (another of) Our Messenger has come to you revealing to you much of what you were concealing of the Book⁶⁵ - although He overlooks much.⁶⁶ There have come to you now a Light⁶⁷ and a Book manifest from Allah.*

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

frightful means by which each party strives to maintain its opinions and to defeat its adversary.' (Quoted by Lecky, *History of European Morals*, II. p. 82 n.) 'After having been persecuted by the pagans, the Christians persecuted each other over nonsensical follies. They killed, imprisoned or exiled each other over the word homoousios or the sense of the word physis, nature, which the Nestorian school of Antioch understood differently from the Monophysite school of Alexandria (Dermingham, *Life of Mahomet*, p. 117).

With reference to the words: "... to last until the Day of Judgment," Majid quotes: 'A prophecy which thirteen centuries have not falsified.' (ERE. X. p. 544) 'There is an Abyssinian proverb which says that the Christians never agree except on one point, the birth of Christ.'

Asad comments: "I.e., their going astray from the genuine teachings of Jesus - and thus from the true faith in God - is the innermost cause of

the enmity and hatred which has so often set the so-called Christian nations against one another and led to unceasing wars and mutual persecution."

65. The specific reference through this verse of general application was, as Ibn 'Abbas has said, to the Jewish efforts to conceal the identity of Prophet Muhammad as stated in their Scriptures, and certain instructions of the *Tawrah*, such as punishment of stoning to death for adultery (Ibn Jarir, Razi, Ibn Kathir).

66. That is, the Prophet does not - out of good grace - expose all that he knows of what they conceal (Qurtubi, Thanwi and others).

67. The allusion by the "Light" is to our Prophet who illuminated the Truth (Ibn Jarir). That was the opinion of Qatadah and the preference of Zajjaj (Alusi).

68. The mention of Allah's approval (*ridwan*) before the rewards of Para-

[16] Whereby Allah guides him who searches for His Approval⁶⁸ to paths of peace;⁶⁹ and brings them forth from darkneses into Light by His leave and guides them unto a Straight Path.⁷⁰

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

﴿١٦﴾

dise has the implication that the reward of Paradise follows as a necessary corollary to the search for Allah's approval (Thanwi).

69. The words in the original "*Subul al-Salam*" draw the following commentary from Asad: "The word *salam* ... has no proper equivalent in the English language. It denotes inner peace, soundness and security from evil of any kind, both physical and spiritual, and the achievement of what, in Christian terminology, is described as "salvation": with the difference, however, that the Christian concept of salvation presupposes the existence of an a-priori state of sinfulness, which is justified in Christianity by the doctrine of "original sin", but is not justified in Islam, which does not subscribe to this doctrine. Consequently, the term "salvation" ... does not adequately convey the full meaning of *salam*. Its nearest equivalent in Western languages would be the German *Heil* or the French *salut*, both of which express the idea of spiritual peace and

fulfillment without being necessarily (i.e., linguistically) connected with the Christian doctrine of salvation."

70. Commenting on the "*Sawa' al-Sabil*" of the original, Mawdudi writes that refusal to follow Allah's guidance has led mankind to swing from one extreme to another, unable to find the golden mean that will do full justice to his various potentialities and urges, to all his instincts and predispositions, and to all the multifarious claims of the body and soul. And, instead of accepting defeat, mankind has begun to claim victory for this very swinging from one extreme to another. He concludes: "In the modern times some philosophers have been so impressed by this constant swinging in human life, from one extreme to another, as to have mistakenly argued that the dialectical process is the natural course of human life. They conclude, therefore, that the only way for human life to progress is that a thesis should first swing it in one direction, and then an antithesis swing it in the

opposite direction, after which there will emerge a synthesis which constitutes the course of human progress. These curved lie from one extreme to the other do not indicate the correct course of human progress. Rather they represent the tragic stumbling which again and again obstruct the true progress of human life. Every extreme thesis sets life on a certain course and continues to pull it in that direction for some time. When human life is thus thrown off its 'right course' the result is that certain realities of life - which had not received their due - rise up in revolt, and this revolt often assumes the form of an antithesis. This revolt begins to pull life in the opposite direction. As the 'right way' is approached the conflicting ideas - the thesis and antitheses - begin to effect some kind of mutual compromise, leading to the emergence of a synthesis. This synthesis comprises many elements conducive to the good of mankind. But since societies which do not submit to the guidance from the Prophet are deprived both of the signposts that might indicate the 'right way' and faith to help to steady man's feet thereon this synthesis does not permit human life to maintain the golden mean. Its momentum is so powerful that it once more pushes

life to the opposite extreme."

Mawdudi is obviously alluding to the materialistic life. Mankind, for instance, has swung from the two extremes of capitalism and communism to what they refer to as the golden synthesis, socialism. Much of the workers' rights in the West, for instance, were granted to them after the successes of communism in Eastern Europe. That kind of achievement misleads many. Further, some people believe that even if the society misses the golden mean, individuals can always work out the golden mean for themselves. But that is true only in the material sense. In the overall sense, comprising various dimension of life: the social, moral, spiritual, etc., it remains out of reach. What has to be understood is that whatever man chooses as the mean path, is the extreme path. It might at best satisfy the aspirations of the body. It misses the satisfaction of the soul. It is guidance from above that leads to a mean path that guarantees satisfactions both of the aspirations of the body as well as of the soul. Without the guidance from above - not to the mean path, rather to faith in Allah, recognition of spiritual values, the methods of worship and devotion to Allah, etc., - there is no mean path in existence that can be realized (Au.).

[17] Surely those people disbelieved who said God is Messiah, son of Maryam.⁷¹ Ask them, 'Who can prevail with Allah, if He desires to destroy the Messiah, son of Maryam, his mother?⁷² and all that are on the face of the earth?' And Allah's is the sovereignty over what is in the heavens and the earth and what is between them, creating what He will.⁷³ Allah has power over all things.

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

71. Thanwi comments: In these words is the rejection of the concept of Unity of the Creator and the created.

“The original mistake committed by the Christians in declaring Jesus to be a combination of human and divine essences turned Jesus into a mystery for them, and the more the Christian scholars tried to solve this mystery by resorting to conjecture and rhetorical extravagance the more involved the whole matter became. Those who were more impressed by the humanity of Jesus stressed his being the son of God and considered him to be one of the three gods. Those who were more impressed by the divinity of Jesus considered him to be none other than God, stressing that he was the human incarnation of God, and worshipped him as God. Those who tried to strike a middle path spent all their efforts hammering out subtle verbal formulations of

the Trinity that would allow people to consider the Messiah to be God and man at one and the same time, to affirm that God and the Messiah are independent and simultaneously constitute an inseparable whole.” (Mawdudi)

Majid offers greater depth: “The reference here is mainly to certain less well-known varieties of Christianity such as Docetism, Monarchianism and Sabellianism, which rest on some such propositions as the following:- ‘That one and the same God is the Creator and Father of all things; and when it pleased Him, He appeared.’ ‘When the Father had not been born, He yet was justly styled Father; and when it pleased Him to undergo generation, having been begotten, He himself became His own Son, not another’s.’ ‘Father and Son, so called, are one and the same substance, not an individual produced from different ones, but Himself for

Himself.' (ERE. VII, p. 779) ... But hardly distinguishable from these 'heresies' and equally bewildering to the Muslim mind is the accepted central doctrine of the orthodox Christianity: 'Jesus is very God of very God, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was made Man.' His nature is 'consubstantial' with God. 'He is not inferior to the Father, nor posterior, not merely like unto Him, but identical in substance and in essence with Him. He is truly God, God of very God, consubstantial with the Father, as the Nicene Creed has it, having, or rather, being, the Godhead no less than the Father' (CD. p.252).

72. Maryam (*asws*) has also been included to impress that insofar as the two were creations of Allah, there was no difference between the two (*Kashshaf*).

Majid writes about Maryam, who is also adored and worshipped as a Divinity by a large number of Christians: "In the most widely distributed form of Christianity, the "virgin" mother of God plays an important part as a fourth deity; in the many Catholic countries she is practically taken to be much more powerful and influential than the three male persons of the celestial administration.'

(Haeckel, *Riddle of the Universe*, p. 232). Even as early as the early 3rd century, the title of Mary as the 'Mother of God' and as the 'Queen of Heaven,' were demanded by more fanatical Christians who claimed Divine honours for the ideal and prototype of virginity.' (DB. III, pl 289). 'Mariatology is probably more prevalent in the Church of Home than at any former time.' (p. 291) ... 'According to the Roman Catholic Church, God, without ceasing to be God, in the characteristic phrase of St. Paul, "implied Himself" and was born in human form of Mary's womb and she became Virgin Mother, the Virgin Mother of God.' (Pto-serpie, *The Council of Ephesus and the Divine Motherhood*, p. 4).

73. That is, Allah creates in all manners: sometimes without a father and a mother, such as Adam, sometimes without a mother, such as Hawwa', and sometimes without a father, such as 'Isa. Therefore, the Christians need not be over-perplexed by the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ to ascribe divinity to him (Zamakhshari, Razi).

74. Ibn 'Abbas has said that once Nu'man b. Ada, Bahra b. 'Amr and Shas b. 'Adiyy visited the Prophet. He invited them to Islam and

[18] *The Jews and Christians boast, 'We are God's children⁷⁴ and His beloved ones.'⁷⁵ Ask them, 'Why then does He punish you for your sins?''⁷⁶ Rather, you are a people, just as any other people that He created. He forgives whom He will and punishes whom He will. Allah's is the complete sovereignty in the heavens and the earth and what is between them. And to Him is the returning.*

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَى نَحْنُ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ
وَأَحِبَّاؤُهُ قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ
بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ
مَن يَشَاءُ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾

warned them of the consequences of rejection. They said: "Muhammad. Do not try to scare us. We are the children of God" (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

But S. Ibrahim says there is some weakness in the chain of narration of this report.

It is said that this belief has its basis in the words of *Tawrah* to the effect: "You are my first born son" (Ibn Kathir).

Majid quotes from the Bible: "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first-born." (Ex. 4: 22) 'Ye are the children of Lord your God.' (Dt. 14: 1) 'When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son, out of Egypt.' (Ho. 11: 1)

Asad adds: "Cf. Exodus iv, 22-23 ("Israel is my son"), Jeremiah xxxi, 9 ("I am a father to Israel"), and the many parallel expressions in the Gospels."

The Christians make similar claims. Majid quotes: 'As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of god, even to them that believe on his name.' (Jn. 1: 12) 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.' (Ro. 8: 14) 'Children of God' is a title of the faithful in virtue of special adoption by God.' (*Mcdonald's Concise Encyclopedia*, p. 204). 'Jesus teaches that this relation of sonship to God is connected with his own person, and to be enjoyed through Him.' (*Hastings Dictionary of the Bible*, II, p. 217)

75. Jewish and Christian literature is replete with the claims of a special status with God, it being immaterial how they treat His commandments. They remain His beloved under all circumstances, with their status conferring upon them no special responsibility, but every prerogative (Au.). Majid quotes from Jewish literature: "Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto

them, Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy.' (Le. 19: 2) 'Ye are the children of the Lord your God ... For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord has chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.' (Dt. 14: 1-2) And the Jewish rabbis have said: 'Beloved one Israel, for they are called "Sons of the Highest" ... Even if they are foolish, even if they transgress, even if they are full of blemishes, they are still called "Sons."' (Quoted in Klausner's, *Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 377)."

Then, as to the Christians, Majid quotes the following: "This sonship conferred on men depended not on human descent from Abraham, nor upon the sexual relations of their parents, nor could it be had for willing or wishing it, i.e., human effort. It was a free and supernatural gift from God, inward and spiritual, implanted by the Holy Ghost, and depended for its maintenance on union with Christ.' (Dumalew, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, p. 775) 'The specific condition of the "new man", in contrast to the "old", is that of sonship and installation into sonship after the likeness of Christ's ... God himself is the veritable Father of the Christian believer, the kindred fontal source of his new life ... Baptism is to

him [St. John] the normal condition under which believers came to rank as "Children of God", in virtue of a manifest sealing by Holy Spirit power' (*Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible*, IV. pp. 218-219).

76. It is said that a sufi asked a *faqih*: "Where do you find in the Qur'an that a loved one will not punish the beloved." The *faqih* could not answer. The sufi quoted this verse: "*The Jews and the Christians boast, 'We are the Children of God and His beloved ones.' Ask them, 'Why then does He punish you for your sins?'*"

In fact, there is a tradition to this effect in Ahmad.

عن أنسٍ قال كان صبي على ظهر الطريق فمر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ومعه ناس من أصحابه فلما رأته أم الصبي القوم حشيت أن يوطأ ابنها فسعت وحملته وقالت انبي ابني قال فقال القوم يا رسول الله ما كانت هذه ليثقي ابنتها في النار قال فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لا والله لا يلقي الله حبيته في النار (شعيب): إسناده صحيح على شرط

It is said that a child came across a caravan being led by the Prophet. When his mother saw them she came running, crying, "My child! My child." She was afraid that they would trample him. She snatched him and hurried away. Upon this some of the Companions remarked: "Messenger of Allah! It is not

[19] People of the Book! Our Messenger has come to you now making manifest (the Truth) to you - after a break in the (series of) Messengers:⁷⁷ lest you should say, 'No one - neither one bearing good tidings nor a warner - ever came to us.' Now, one bearing good tidings and a warner has come to you. And Allah has power over all things.

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ
لَكُمْ عَلَى فِتْرَةٍ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا
جَاءَنَا مِنْ بَشِيرٍ وَلَا نَذِيرٍ فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ
بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

expected of this woman that she will throw her child into fire.”

The Prophet replied: “No by Allah. He will not cast His beloved ones into the Fire” (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani

77. The word in the original for break is “*fatrah*.” It is that period between which there is no Prophet among a people; or, in other words, the interval between two Prophets.

The break, according to Salman al-Farsi’s opinion in Bukhari, between our Prophet and Jesus Christ, lasted 600 years, during which no Prophet was commissioned. A *hadith* of the *Sahihayn* reports the Prophet as having said: “I am closest to ‘Isa. And prophets are of the same father. And, there was no Prophet between us.” As for the three mentioned in *Surah Yasin*, they were messengers of ‘Isa sent to a town as his representatives. As regards Khalid b. Sinan, Shihab has said that he was sent before ‘Isa

(*asws*). Further, the report in connection with Ibn Sinan’s daughter meeting the Prophet, mentions her as his daughter only in the figurative sense and not real (*Ruh, Bayan*).

78. The verse implies that to be of the family of the righteous is a blessing of Allah that one must be thankful for. But, there is no room for pride and bragging (Thanwi).

79. “I.e., masters of your own selves. A “*malik*” is not necessarily a king. He may be anybody possessing dominion, authority, or even independence” (Majid).

Shawkani also writes on the same lines: “It has been said that since, after a long spell of slavery at the hands of Fir‘awn’s folk, the Israelites were led to freedom by Musa (*asws*) to be once again in full command of their affairs, their state of freedom was referred to as kingship.”

Asad has written: “According to most

[20] And when Musa told his people: 'My people! Remember the favors of Allah upon you, (such as) when He made Prophets from among you,⁷⁸ made you kings⁷⁹ and gave you what He gave no one else of the worlds.⁸⁰

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ وَجَعَلَكُمْ مُلُوكًا وَآتَاكُمْ مَا لَمْ يُوْتِ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

of the commentators (e.g. Tabari, Zamakhshari, Razi), the “kingship” of the Israelites is a metaphorical allusion to their freedom and independence after their Egyptian bondage, the term “king” being equivalent here to “a free man who is master of his own affairs” (*Manar* VI, 323f.), and can, therefore, adopt any way of life he chooses.”

Ibn `Abbas, Hakam, Mujahid and others have however said that whoever possesses a wife, a house and a servant is a king, and it is in this sense that the word has been used here. It is reported of `Abdullah b. `Amr that someone asked him: “Are we not the destitute *Muhajirun* (that the Qur`ān has mentioned in 59: 8)?” He asked him: “Do you have a wife that you seek comfort with?” He said: “Yes.” He asked him: “Do you have a house?” The man replied: “Yes.” `Abdullah told him: “Then you are a rich man.” The man said: “I have a servant too.” `Abdullah replied: “Then you are a king” (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir). The report is in

Muslim (Qurtubi). And the Prophet has said (in a *hadith* of Ibn Majah: H. Ibrahim):

مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مِنْكُمْ آمِنًا فِي سِرْبِهِ مُعَافًى فِي جَسَدِهِ عِنْدَهُ قُوْتٌ يَوْمِهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا حِيزَتْ لَهُ الدُّنْيَا قَالَ أَبُو عِيسَى هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ غَرِيبٌ

“Whoever woke up in the morning peaceful with himself, hale and hearty, and has enough provision for the day, then as if he has been given the whole of the world” (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

The *hadith* is also in Tirmidhi and is of hasan status (S. Ibrahim).

80. Such as *Mann*, *Salwa*, shelter from the sun, water out of a rock, etc. (Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid: Ibn Jarir).

81. Yusuf Ali beautifully summarizes the background incidents as in the Bible: “We have now come to the events detailed in the 13th and 14th chapters of the Book of Numbers in the Old Testament. Read these as a Commentary, and examine a good map of the Sinai Peninsula, showing its connections with Egypt on the

[21] My people! Enter the holy land⁸¹ which Allah has prescribed for you,⁸² and turn not around, else you will be turning losers.'

يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ
اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا
خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

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

82. Qatadah and Suddi have said

that "*kataba*" of the original is in the sense of a command, i.e., "(Allah has) ordered you (to fight your way through and enter the land)" - Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani.

That is, it is in the same sense as (2: 183) "*kutiba 'alykum al-siyamu*", i.e., "Fasts have been prescribed for you." Yet, other commentators have said that the allusion might be to the promise made to Ibrahim that the land of Palestine would be given to his progeny. Such a promise, however, is not to be found in the present day *Torah*. The best that can be got of the *Torah* are the words of Genesis: "Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'To your descendants I will give this land.'" (12: 7) Abram is presumably Abraham. The earlier verses are however, speaking of the land in which the Canaanites lived: people of an obscure territory who never occupied the whole of the Palestine at any time. Finally, Abraham's progeny include the Isma'ites (Au.).

83. Ibn Kathir rejects the story (in Ibn Jarir and others) as untrustworthy that reports Mujahid and

[22] They said, 'O Musa! Therein are a people of mighty strength.⁸³ We shall never enter it until they leave it. But if they leave it, then we shall enter.'⁸⁴

قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَنَنُودِلُهَا حَتَّىٰ يُخْرَجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دَاخِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

Suddi as saying that the Amalekites (or Canaanites) were of such gigantic size as to reduce the Israelites to Lilliputian size. But it is possible that when the 12 chieftains brought in the reports of the impressive physical stature of the Canaanites, the Israelites blew the description out of all proportions. And those reports might have lingered among the Israelites acquiring the fairy tale status which Mujahid and Suddi were re-narrating (Au.).

Majid quotes what the Israelites had to report: 'We will not be able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we ... The land ... is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof, and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight' (Nu. 13: 31-33).

Majid also quotes Rawlinson from his *Moses, His Life and Times*: 'The Amalekites were ... exceedingly warlike, well-armed, and fairly dis-

ciplined, having been long accustomed to hold their own against the surrounding nations, with whom they had frequent collisions.'

84. It is said that unduly scared by the reports of the chieftains, the Israelites began to moan and even to contemplate returning to Egypt (Ibn Jarir).

The *Torah* says: "Then all the congregation raised a loud cry; and the people wept that night. And all the people of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron; the whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why does the lord bring us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey; would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" (Nu. 14: 1-4) - Au.

85. Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Suddi, and others have said that the two were: Yusha' b. Nun and Kalib b. Yuqanna (Ibn Jarir).

86. That is, prepare yourself to the

[23] Two people,⁸⁵ of those who feared Allah, and whom Allah had blessed, said, 'Assault them at the gate. Once you are in, you will be the victors. And place your trust in Allah if you are believers.'⁸⁶

قَالَ رَجُلَانِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمَا ادْخُلُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَإِنَّكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ غَالِبُونَ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

[24] They replied, 'Musa! We shall not set foot in it, so long as they are there. Go forth, you and your Lord, and the two of you fight. We shall remain seated right here.'⁸⁷

قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى إِنَّا لَنْ نَدْخُلَهَا أَبَدًا مَا دَامُوا فِيهَا فَاذْهَبْ أَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلَا إِنَّا هَاهُنَا قَاعِدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

best of possibility, but do not depend on the material means, rather have trust in Allah (Alusi).

The Bible confirms the remonstrance of the two with their people. Majid quotes: 'And Joshua ... and Caleb ... rent their clothes: And they spoke unto all the company of the children of Israel saying ... Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us; their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us; fear then not. But all the congregation bade stone them with stones' (Nu. 14: 6-10).

87. In contrast, when Muslims were prevented at Hudaibiyyah from entering into Makkah and perform 'Umrah and the news spread of the murder of 'Uthman's b. 'Affan, the Prophet tried to ascertain the support of his Companions. Miqdad b. al-Aswad, spoke out the minds of the

Ansar and *Muhajirun* when he said: "We do not say what the Israelites said, 'Go, you and your Lord, and the two of you fight them. We shall remain seated right here.' Rather, we say, 'Go, you and your Lord, and fight them. We are right with you'" (Ibn Jarir). It is widely reported, including a report in Bukhari, that Miqdad al-Aswad had replied similarly when the Prophet had sought the consent of the *Ansar* whether to fight or not the Makkans at Badr (Ibn Kathir).

In his usual subtle style and mild manner, Shabbir censures the *Ummah al-Muslimah* of today. He writes: "Keep these set of verses before you and consider the situation of the Muslim *Ummah* today. Allah favored this *Ummah* as He favored none before, and will none ever after. He raised a Messenger among them who was the Final Messenger bearing

a final message. He raised up among them such scholars as, although not prophets, gave the peoples of the world lessons in morals and ways of organized life. (Just as the Israelites) this *Ummah* was also commanded to wage *jihad*, not against the Amalekites alone, rather, against all the tyrants of the world; not merely to subdue the Syrian region, rather to raise high the Word of Allah and uproot *shirk* from all parts of the world. The Israelites were promised the holy land. But to the *Ummah* the promise was (24: 55): '*Allah promises those of you who believe and do good deeds that He shall grant them inheritance of the earth as He granted inheritance to those who went before, and shall establish the religion for them that He approves of and shall change their fear to peace...*' If Allah had forbidden the Israelites from turning their backs from *jihad*, then He also addressed this *Ummah* in words (8: 15): '*Believers! When you meet the unbelievers in a hostile encounter, do not turn away showing your backs to them.*' The Israelites however said to their

Prophet: "*Go forth, you and your Lord, and the two of you fight (them).*" But the Companions of the Prophet told him: 'By Allah. If you ask us to rush into the waves of the oceans, we shall do that, not one of us will back out...' The result was that in a period less than that which the Israelites spent wandering in the Sinai, the followers of Muhammad pitched the flags of guidance in the East and the West: "*Allah was pleased with them and they with Him. That (reward), for those who fear their Lord* (98: 8)."

88. The translation of "*faf-ruq*" follows the interpretation of Ibn `Abbas as in Ibn Jarir (Au.).

89. Accordingly, Ibn `Abbas and Qatadah have said that none survived who was above twenty, including Musa and Harun, peace upon them. It was Yusha` b. al-Nun who was appointed a Prophet after them and it is he who led the new generation into the lands of Palestine (Ibn Jarir). Majid writes: "The wandering lasted, according to Sir Charles Marston's

[25] Musa said, 'O my Lord! I have no power over anybody except myself and my brother. Therefore, judge between us and (these) wicked people.'⁸⁸

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَأَخِي
فَافْتَرِقْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

[26] (Allah) said, 'Then it shall remain forbidden unto them for forty years,⁸⁹ (during which time) they shall wander in the land.⁹⁰ Therefore, grieve not for a people wicked.'⁹¹

قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً يَتِيهُونَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

computation, from 1440 to 1400 B.C.”

The *Torah* records: 'And the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron, "How long shall this wicked congregation murmur against me? ... Say to them, 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'what you have said in my hearing I will do to you; your dead bodies shall fall in the wilderness; and all of your number, numbered from twenty year old ... shall come into the land ... And your children shall be shepherd in the wilderness forty years ..." (Nu. 14: 26: 30) - (Au.)

Further, the punishment matched their insolence. The Israelites had said scornfully, 'We shall remain seated here,' therefore, the punishment to them was that they remained where they were, unable to leave the desert and settle into a town" (Au.).

90. Here Imām Razi raises a doubt. Although the commentators have

said that the Israelites wandered aimlessly in the Sinai, without finding a way out, it is not very convincing that that should have happened. Had they simply followed the sun they would have come out of the desert. Therefore, he says, it is possible that the "forbidding" of the original was a religious command, i.e., it is possible that the Israelites were banned from entering the land of Palestine.

Yet another possibility is that although the Israelites could follow the sun and march eastward, they could not be very sure of the exact point at which they would arrive without first determining the geographical location of the place they were in on any given day. After all, from the Sinai they were facing the whole of the 400 km border line of the Syrian region. And that region was divided into several petty states, each well fortified and well defended by its people - the Canaanites, Ama-

lekites, Philistines and others - who were all well known for their ferocity.

Therefore, without being sure of the point at which they would arrive, the Israelites could not venture in any direction, without the risk of arriving at a point where they would come face to face with a hostile people that would slaughter them with little effort. Safety of the desert would have been better for a people, who were in no mood to fight for a land they thought Yahweh should have gifted them. Therefore, they had to wait until the various kingdoms broke down into fragments, with each town declaring its independence. That obviously facilitated the subjugation of the area. Town after town fell to the Israeli onslaught, as depicted in the book entitled Joshua of the Old Testament (Au.).

Muslim has a report that, according to some of the *Salaf*, (as stated in Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir and some others), is referring to Yusha' b. Nun. Abu Hurayrah says the Prophet (*saws*) said (in a *hadith* shortened here):

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَزَا نَبِيٍّ مِنَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ فَقَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ لَا يَبْتَغِي رَجُلٌ مَلَكَ بُضْعَ امْرَأَةٍ وَهُوَ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَبْنِي بِهَا وَلَمَّا يَبْنِ بِهَا وَلَا أَحَدٌ بَنَى بِيوتًا وَمَ يَرْفَعُ سُقُوفَهَا وَلَا أَحَدٌ اشْتَرَى عَنَمًا أَوْ خَلِيفَاتٍ وَهُوَ يَنْتَظِرُ وَلَا دَخَا فَعَزَا فَدَنَا مِنَ الْقَرْيَةِ صَلَاةَ الْعَصْرِ أَوْ قَرِيبًا مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالَ لِلشَّمْسِ إِنَّكَ مَأْمُورَةٌ وَأَنَا مَأْمُورٌ اللَّهُمَّ احْبِسْهَا عَلَيْنَا

فَحَبَسَتْ حَتَّى فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ فَجَمَعَ الْعَنَائِمَ فَجَاءَتْ بِعُغْيِ النَّارِ لِنَأْكُلَهَا فَلَمْ تَتَّعَمَهَا فَقَالَ إِنَّ فِيكُمْ غُلُولًا فَلَيْبِايعني مِنْ كُلِّ قَبِيلَةٍ رَجُلٌ فَلَزَقَتْ يَدُ رَجُلٍ بِيَدِهِ فَقَالَ فِيكُمْ الْغُلُولُ فَلَيْبِايعني قَبِيلَتِكَ فَلَزَقَتْ يَدُ رَجُلَيْنِ أَوْ ثَلَاثَةٍ بِيَدِهِ فَقَالَ فِيكُمْ الْغُلُولُ فَجَاءُوا بِرَأْسٍ مِثْلَ رَأْسِ بَعْرَةَ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ فَوَضَعُوهَا فَجَاءَتْ النَّارُ فَأَكَلَتْهَا ثُمَّ أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَنَا الْعَنَائِمَ رَأَى ضَعْفَنَا وَعَجَزَنَا فَأَحَلَّهَا لَنَا.

“One of the Prophets went out in a campaign. He reached a town at *Asr* time or thereabout. He addressed the sun in words, ‘You are commissioned and I am commissioned. O Allah hold it for me for a couple of hours.’ Accordingly, the sun was held stationary for some time until he captured the town. Then they gathered the booty (and offered it to the heavenly fire for consumption). The fire (appeared, but) would not consume it. He said, ‘One of you is a deceiver.’ Then he ordered that a representative of every tribe give his hand into his in turns. One of them stuck to his. He said, ‘The deceiver is from your tribe. Therefore, bring up everyone.’ When the tribesmen placed their hands in his, in turns, two or three of them got stuck to his. He said, ‘You have deceived.’ So they brought out what they had stolen of the boo-

ty. It was gold the size of a sheep's head. It was placed with the booty which was lying in the field. The fire descended and consumed it all. This is because booty was not lawful unto anyone before us. It has been made lawful to us alone because of the weakness that Allah observed in us and so made it lawful to us."

And the reason why the Prophet in question had requested delaying of the sunset is that it was a Friday. Had evening set in, they would have entered into Saturday - the day of Sabbath. They would then have had to cease fighting (Ibn Kathir). Accordingly, the commentators of the Qur'an as well as of the *hadith* quoted above, guess that it was an Israeli Prophet, and most likely it was Yusha'. But the *hadith* itself does not specify him. The story is in the Bible too (Joshua 10: 12-14), but it alleges there that the Sun stayed in the sky for a whole day (Au.).

91. Although Musa had himself asked for a punishment, he had not expected it to be so severe. Therefore, he felt aggrieved when the judgment was announced, which explains these words of consolation (Ibn Jarir).

It has also been said that although it was much inconvenient for the Isra-

elites to be wandering in the desert, the sojourn was made easy for Musa and Harun so that it turned out to be no punishment for them (Razi, Qurtubi and others). Thanwi adds that in fact it must have been a pleasure for Musa and Harun to be with them since they were there to guide those people, and all efforts toward such objectives are a pleasurable reward in themselves.

The Relationship

The incident of the two sons of Adam seems to be directly connected with verse 11 which said, "*Believers! Recall the favors of Allah that He bestowed upon you ...*" until the end of the verse. With the incident of the two sons they are now being told, 'If the people of the Book are envious of you, O Muslims, and respond with machinations, deceptions and conspiracies, it is nothing new in the history of man. The first murder in fact took place because of envy.'

The story also implies that the Jews and Christians opposing Islam would end up a regretters. Also, the Jews and Christians used to proudly link themselves to great historical figures, in which vein they would claim, as in verse 18 above, "We are the children of God." Allah tells them that even Qabil was the son of a virtuous man

[27] And narrate to them with truth⁹² the story of the two sons of Adam when they made an offering.⁹³ It was accepted of one of them and not accepted of the other. He threatened, 'I'll surely kill you.' The other replied, 'Allah accepts only of the godfearing.'⁹⁴

وَأَثَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ تَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقْبِلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَمَنْ يُتَّخَلَّ مِنْ الْآخِرِ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

and a Prophet, but stood condemned because of his evil deed (based on Razi's notes).

Further, in the injunction concerning highway robbers, and their exemplary punishment that follows immediately (verse 30), is the implied meaning that those who wage war against a Prophet and his message, are equal in crime with them (Au.).

92. While, on the one hand, the addition of the words "*with truth*" is to emphasize the accuracy of the story narrated, Allah has, on the other hand, by adding similar words at every place where historical stories have been narrated, taught us that when narrating history we too have to be precise, narrating only that which can be proved as authentic. Addition of a few innocent words can sometimes change the direction of the whole story or rob it of its admonitory aspect (*Ma'arif*).

Majid adds: "With truth' is added to distinguish the story as related

here from its corrupted form in the OT."

The narration in the Bible is in Genesis vi, 1: 16 (Au.).

93. It is widely reported of Ibn Mas'ud, Ibn 'Abbas, Murrah, and several other Companions of the Prophet that with every pregnancy Hawwa' gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl. Adam married off the girl of one birth to the boy of another, and vice versa. Two of his sons were called Qabil and Habil (Cain and Abel of the Bible), the former being elder. Adam ordered Habil to marry Qabil's sister and Qabil the sister of Habil. But, because the girl born along with Qabil was prettier, he refused to marry Habil's sister, rather wanted to marry the girl that was with him in the womb. Adam told him that she, having being with him in the womb, was not lawful to him. But he insisted. They decided to present an offering each to Allah to check whose would be accepted. Now those very days Adam was ordered

by Allah to make his first visit to the House of Allah at Makkah. He took promise from Qabil that he would look after the family in his absence. The two sons decided to present their offerings. Habil was a shepherd and he presented the best of sheep he had. Qabil tended farms and presented the worst kind of vegetables he could lay his hands on. The fire descended and consumed the sheep but left the vegetables untouched. This angered Qabil who threatened him with death (Shortened). Similar reports have come from `Ali ibn abi Talib, `Atiyyah, Qatadah, Mujahid and others. (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Ibn Kathir and Suyuti in his *Al-Durr al-Manthur* (Shawkani) have said that the chain of narrators is reliable. However, there is no *hadith* confirming the above (Au.).

It is said that Qabil presented a rotten offering because the results did not matter to him. He was bent upon marrying the girl anyway (Razi).

94. It is said that when people found `Amir b. `Abdullah crying at his death bed, they reminded him that he had spent his life devoted to Allah's worship. He replied, "The verse, '*Allah accepts only of the godfearing*'

troubles me."

Ibn Mas`ud has said, "If I knew for sure that any of my good deed has been accepted by Allah, that would be dearer to me than an earth weight of gold."

`Umar ibn `Abdul `Aziz wrote to someone: "I admonish you to observe *Taqwa*, without which no deed is accepted by Allah. And none deserve mercy and kindness, save the people of *Taqwa*. There are many who use these words for sermonizing the people, but few who observe it in their lives" (*Ma`arif*).

Thanwi adds: The verse implies that to speak of one's religious achievements by way of thanks, and not by way of pride, is permissible.

95. `Abdullah ibn `Umar has said that a man those days was prohibited from killing another even in self defense (Ibn Jarir). Although, adds Razi, the same opinion has been reported of Mujahid, Habil's statement could also mean, "I shall not be the first to stretch my hands against you, despite your threats." And therefore, being the weaker of the two, Qabil waited until he found him asleep in a remote place with his head on

[28] If you stretch your hand against me to kill me, I shall not lift mine to kill you.⁹⁵ I fear Allah the Lord of the worlds.

لَئِن بَسَطْتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا أَنَا بِبَاسِطٍ يَدَيَّ إِلَيْكَ لِأَقْتُلَنَّكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

[29] Rather, I wish that you add on my sin⁹⁶ to your sins and end up a companion of the Fire.⁹⁷ And that is the recompense of the transgressors.⁹⁸

إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبْتُوءَ بِإِغْمِي وَإِغْمِكَ فَتَكُونَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

a stone. He dropped a rock on his head.

Qurtubi writes: We of this *Ummah* have been allowed self defense, even if it means killing the attacker. Nonetheless, the question has been asked: is it obligatory to defend oneself, or should one act like the son of Adam? The answer is that it is obligatory to defend oneself. It is only in times of tribulation and general disorder that one might remain passive, from the fear of falling into a fitnah (e.g., what `Uthman did: Au).

As for the legality of self defense, the *Sahihayn* have Abu Hurayrah narrating that a man came to the Prophet and enquired:

يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ جَاءَ رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَخَذَ مَالِي قَالَ « فَلَا تُعْطِهِ مَالِكَ ». قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ قَاتَلَنِي قَالَ « قَاتِلْهُ ». قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ قَتَلَنِي قَالَ « فَأَنْتَ شَهِيدٌ ». قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ قَتَلْتُهُ قَالَ « هُوَ فِي النَّارِ ».

“Messenger of Allah! What have you to say if someone wants to take away my wealth by force?”

He replied: “Do not let him take away your wealth.” He asked: “What if he attacks me?” He replied: “Fight him.” He asked: “What if he kills me?” He replied: “You are a martyr.” He asked: “What if I kill him?” The Prophet replied: “He is in the Fire.”

96. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Murrah and several other Companions have said that Habil was alluding to the sin that Qabil would earn by murdering him and to the sins he had previously earned (Ibn Jarir, Razi and others).

97. Ibn `Abbas has said that with these words he meant to, in addition, warn Qabil of the consequence of his murder (Ibn Kathir).

98. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud has reported the Prophet as saying:

لَا تَقْتُلْ تَفْسٌ ظَلَمًا إِلَّا سَكَانَ عَلَى ابْنِ آدَمَ الْأَوَّلِ كَيْفُلٌ مِنْ دَوْمِهَا وَذَلِكَ لِأَنَّهُ أَوَّلُ مَنْ سَنَّ الْقَتْلَ

“No innocent person is ever killed but a part of the sin is laid on the son of Adam; because he was the first to set up the example.” The *hadith* is in all the six books except Abu Da’ud (Ibn Kathir).

In another report of the *Sahihayn*, the Prophet said:

« إِذَا تَوَاجَعَا الْمُسْلِمَانِ بِسَيْمِهِمَا فَأَلْقَا تِلْكَ وَالْمَقْتُولُ فِي النَّارِ ». قَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَذَا الْقَاتِلُ فَمَا بَأْسُ الْمَقْتُولِ قَالَ « إِنَّهُ أَرَادَ قَتْلَ صَاحِبِهِ »

“When two Muslims face one another with their swords, then the killer and the killed are both in the Fire.” He was asked: “Messenger of Allah, the killer we can understand, but what about the killed?” He replied: “He was (equally) prepared to kill the other man.”

Ahmad has another *hadith* which Sa’d ibn abi Waqqas narrated at the time of the insurrection during the time of `Uthman. It reports the Prophet as having said:

إِنَّهَا سَتَكُونُ فِتْنَةٌ الْقَاعِدُ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْقَائِمِ وَالْقَائِمِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْمَاشِي وَالْمَاشِي خَيْرٌ مِنَ السَّاعِي قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ دَخَلَ عَلَيَّ بَيْتِي فَبَسَطَ يَدَهُ إِلَيَّ لِيُغْتَابِلَنِي قَالَ كُنْ كَأَبْنِ آدَمَ

“Soon there will be tribulations when the one sitting will be bet-

ter than the one standing, the one standing better than the one walking, and the one walking better than the one striving.” (Sa’d ibn `Abbas) asked: “What happens if a man enters my house and stretches his hand against me to kill me?” The Prophet replied: “Be like one of the two sons of Adam” (i.e., do not fight back).

In another *hadith*, that can be found in Muslim, Abu Da’ud, Nasa’i and Ahmad, Abu Dharr says he was the pillion rider of the Prophet’s donkey when he asked him:

يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ أَصَابَ النَّاسَ جُوعٌ شَدِيدٌ لَا تَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ فِرَاشِكَ إِلَى مَسْجِدِكَ كَيْفَ تَصْنَعُ قَالَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ قَالَ يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ أَصَابَ النَّاسَ مَوْتُ شَدِيدٌ يَكُونُ الْبَيْتُ فِيهِ بِالْعَبْدِ يَعْنِي الْقَبْرَ كَيْفَ تَصْنَعُ قُلْتُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ قَالَ يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ قَتَلَ النَّاسُ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا يَعْنِي حَتَّى تَغْرُقَ حِجَارَةُ الرَّيْتِ مِنْ الدِّمَاءِ كَيْفَ تَصْنَعُ قَالَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ قَالَ اقْتَعِدْ فِي بَيْتِكَ وَأَغْلِقْ عَلَيْكَ بَابَكَ قَالَ فَإِنْ لَمْ أُثْرِكْ قَالَ فَأَتِ مَنْ أَنْتَ مِنْهُمْ فَكُنْ فِيهِمْ قَالَ فَآخُذْ سِلَاحِي قَالَ إِذْ تُشَارِكُهُمْ فِيمَا هُمْ فِيهِ وَلَكِنْ إِنْ حَشِيتَ أَنْ يَرُوعَكَ شِعَاعُ السَّيْفِ فَالْقَى طَرَفَ رِدَائِكَ عَلَى وَجْهِكَ حَتَّى يَبُوءَ بِإِثْمِهِ وَإِثْمِكَ

“Abu Dharr! What if starvation strikes the people to the extent that you are not able to get up and walk to the mosque? What will you do?” Abu Dharr re-

[30] Thereupon⁹⁹ his self drove him to the murder of his brother. So he murdered him,¹⁰⁰ and became of the losers.

فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَ
مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

plied: "Allah and His Messenger know better." He said: "Abstain (from asking)." He asked: "Abu Dharr! What if death strikes the people so that homes turn into graveyards? What will you do?" Abu Dharr replied: "Allah and Messenger know better." He said: "Observe patience." Then he asked: "Abu Dharr! What if people start killing each other so that grinding stones are filled in blood? What will you do?" Abu Dharr replied: "Allah and His Messenger know better." He said: "Remain in your house and lock the door from within." He asked: "What if I am not left alone?" He replied: "Then go to the people you belong to and be with them." Abu Dharr asked: "Should I take up the arms?" He replied: "Then you will be one of the participants. Rather, if you fear the shine of the sword then throw a corner of your shroud over your face in order that (the assaulter kills you and) bears your sins and his sins" (Ibn Kathir).

Ahadith of similar meaning have been reported by Abu Bakr, Sa'd

ibn abi Waqqas, Ibn Mas'ud, Abu Hurayrah, Khabbab b. al Art and Abu Waqid (Shawkani).

99. Qabil knew from his words that Habil was not even going to bother himself with self defense. That made it easier for him to resolve on his murder. Hence the "fa" of the Qur'an rendered as "thereupon" (Based on *Bayan*).

100. Most of the early commentators have said that he murdered him by dropping a rock over his head as he slept with his head over a stone (Ibn Jarir).

101. It is noticed of the ravens that they make a big hue and cry when they notice the carcass of another raven (Shabbir).

102. Although the word in the original is "saw'ah" which means the private part of a person, male or female, it is generally understood that here it is the dead body that is meant (Ibn Jarir). The word "saw'ah" has perhaps been used because the whole of a dead body is "awrah" that should be shrouded in coffin cloth and buried (Rashid).

[31] Then Allah sent a raven¹⁰¹ that scratched the ground to show him how he could conceal his brother's corpse.¹⁰² He said, 'Woe to me!' was I incapable of even being equal to this raven to conceal my brother's corpse?!¹⁰³ And he turned a regretter.¹⁰⁴

فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُؤَارِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ قَالَ يَا وَيْلَتَا أَعَجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُوَارِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِي فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّادِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

[32] On that account, We prescribed for the Children of Israel, that whosoever killed a soul not for retaliation of another, or for spreading disorder in the land, as if killed the whole of the mankind. And whosoever saved a life as if saved the life of the whole of mankind.¹⁰⁵ And Our messengers came to them with definite signs, yet, notwithstanding that, many of them thereafter remained committing excesses in the land.¹⁰⁶

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ بَعَدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

103. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Murrah and several other Companions have said that since that was the first ever death, Qabil did not know how to dispose off the corpse. Therefore Allah sent two ravens that fought each other, one of them killing the other. The raven then dug a hole in the ground and hid the corpse of the dead raven. Qabil followed the example.

104. This proves that not every regretter or remorseful person is also a repentant (Thanwi).

105. Although the literal meaning of ahyaa is to give life, or revive, the meaning given by Ibn `Abbas for

“*ahyaa*” at this point is, “one who restrained another from killing,” but Mujahid has generalized it to mean anyone who saved another from death, such as saved someone from drowning, from getting burnt, or the like (Ibn Jarir).

Abu Hurayrah has reported that (during the time `Uthman was besieged in his house) he entered upon him and told him: “Leader of the faithful! I have come to defend you. And surely you have a right to strike.” He replied: “No, Abu Hurayrah. Would it please you that you kill all the people with me along with them?” I said: “No.” He said: “If you kill one

[33] Indeed, the punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger,¹⁰⁷ and strive to spread disorder in the land¹⁰⁸ is that they be slaughtered, or crucified, or their hands and feet be severed from the opposite sides, or be exiled from the land.¹⁰⁹ This is their ignominy in this life, and for them is a mighty chastisement (in the Hereafter).

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

man, it is like killing all the people. Therefore, go away, freely, rewarded (for your good intention) without any sin upon you.” Abu Hurayrah says: “So I left, and did not confront the besiegers” (Ibn Kathir).

106. Yusuf Ali writes: “The story of Cain (Qabil) is referred to in a few graphic details in order to tell the story of Israel. Israel rebelled against Allah, slew and insulted righteous men who did them no harm but on the contrary came in all humility. When Allah withdrew His favor from Israel because of its sins and bestowed it on a brother nation, the jealousy of Israel plunged it deeper into sin...”

107. To flout the rules of the *Shari'ah*, to disobey the Messenger sent by Allah, to destroy peace of the people and to cast terror into their hearts is a declaration of war against Allah (who disapproves of such acts) and against His Messenger (who is

sent to work for peace) Au.

108. Ibn `Abbas and Dahhak have said that some Jews had entered into a treaty with the Prophet, but broke it, causing corruption and disorder and, therefore, Allah revealed these verses. But `Ikrimah and Hasan al Busri have said that the allusion is to some pagans. Yet others, such as Anas, Qatadah and Suddi have said that the reference is to the particular incident of the people of `Uraynah who visited Madinah, embraced Islam, complained of sicknesses, were sent by the Prophet to the outskirts of Madinah for recuperation, but, as soon as they had recovered, they blinded the eyes of a Muslim looking after the cattle of Madinah, murdered him, escaped with the cattle, were given a chase and, finally, captured. This verse was revealed in connection with that incident. The Prophet punished them by blinding them, cutting off their alternative

limbs and abandoned them lying in the desert until they died. However, whatever the cause of revelation, according to Qatadah, 'Ata' Khurasani (and the great majority of scholars: Qurtubi) the punishment stated here is applicable to Muslim high-way robbers and their like (Ibn Jarir, Razi and others). The *hadith* is well reported, including by Bukhari and Muslim. And some reports state that the criminals were eight in number (Ibn Kathir). Reports suggest that it took place in 6 A.H. (Qurtubi).

109. The *Salaf* have differed over the exact implication; but the general consensus is over what Ibn 'Abbas has said, which is as follows. If a man attacks the wayfarers, he is the one waging war. If he kills and plunders he should be crucified (for one to three days) and then killed (by firing, or stabbing in the stomach etc.). If he kills but does not plunder he is to be killed but not crucified. If he plunders but does not kill, his limbs should be severed from opposite sides (i.e., the right hand from the wrist and left foot from the ankle: *Bayan*). If he threatens the security of the way and is captured before he commits any of the above then he is to be banished (Razi). Abu Miqlaz, Sa'id ibn Jubayr, Ibrahim Nakha'i, Hasan, Qatadah, Suddi and 'Ata' are

with Ibn 'Abbas in this opinion (Ibn Kathir). In fact, if some kill, and others do not, then too all of them should be given the punishment as stated by the Qur'an (Qurtubi). Nevertheless, others have said that the ruler or the judge has the option to punish in either of the ways suggested by the Qur'an. Further, Ibn 'Abbas, Sa'id b. Jubayr, Suddi and others have said with reference to banishment that the criminal should be chased by the Muslim law keepers until the borders of the Muslim lands so that the harm from him is mitigated. But Imām Abu Hanifah and his followers have said that such a criminal should be imprisoned (Ibn Jarir). This is because they feared that if the men are banished from one town to another, they would commit the same crimes in those towns. And, if they are pushed out of the borders of Muslim lands altogether, they might join up with the unbelievers. Therefore, "*nafyūm min al ard*" is to be understood as imprisonment (Razi).

It has also been said that the form here is plural, "*those who wage a war ...*," because such criminals normally operate in bands helping and defending each other. Hence, Imām Shafe'i has concluded that if a team of men commits theft together, within a city, the whole team should be handed

down the same punishment (Razi). Accordingly, it is reported of Qadi Ibn al 'Arabiyy that when a case was brought to him of a man who held a knife against the breast of another, while his companions looted his house, he ruled that they all were *muharibin*, i.e., "those who wage a war" (Qurtubi).

Capital Punishments

Mufti Shafi` writes: A lack of understanding of Islamic punishments has led to much confusion among the people. Firstly, it must be understood that the secular law hands down no punishment save under one kind of it: what is known as the criminal law. In contrast, Islam has prescribed three kinds of punishments known by three terms: "*Hudud*, *Qisas* and *Ta`zirat*." But, before we explain the three, the following might be needed as a preamble.

Crimes in Islam are considered a transgression against the rights of Allah as well as the rights of man. However, there are some crimes that transgress more the rights of Allah, than the rights of man. Conversely, there are crimes that transgress more the rights of man than those of Allah. Another point to be understood is that the Islamic *Shari`ah* has not prescribed punishment for all kinds

of crimes, rather, has done so for some, and left the others to the discretion of the judges. It is also possible that the government takes away this discretion from the judges, and binds them to a set of laws formulated in the light of the punishments prescribed by the *Shari`ah*. This was largely the case in the Muslim world of the past and this is the situation in most of the Muslim countries today where *Shari`ah* law is in application.

Now, punishments for those crimes which are left to the discretion of the judges are called "*Ta`zirat*," while those crimes for which punishments have been prescribed by the Qur`an and *Sunnah* are known as "*Hudud* and *Qisas*." The difference between the two, *Hudud* and *Qisas*, is that the punishments for those crimes that transgress more the rights of Allah than those of man, are known as "*Hudud*" (singular: *Hadd*, or what is commonly rendered as "capital punishment") while punishment for those crimes that transgress more the rights of man than of Allah are known as "*Qisas*." Now, as far as "*Hudud*" are concerned, they have been prescribed for five types of crimes: robbery, burglary, adultery (and fornication), false allegation of adultery, and, intoxication. Of these, pun-

ishment for the first four have been prescribed by the Qur'ān and for the last one for drinking wine by the consensus of the Companions. Now, no one, no government, or judge can reduce or rescind the punishments that have been prescribed for these crimes by the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Even repentance cannot save a man from *Hudud* punishments in this world. As for the punishment in the Hereafter, that is in the hand of Allah.

As for "*Qisas*," these are also punishments prescribed by the Qur'ān. The difference is that the discretionary power has been delegated to those whose rights are transgressed. For example, in case of murder, the kin have the discretion to either claim the criminal's life or accept blood wit. Further, it must also be understood that where enough proof is not available, or the crime is not established beyond doubt, the courts still have their discretionary power to prescribe a *Ta'zir* punishment instead of a *Hadd*. For instance, the punishment for theft (one of the "*Hudud*" crimes) is amputation of a hand. But, if indisputable proof cannot be produced, yet, the evidence is very strong, then the judge might prescribe a *Ta'zir*, such as imprisonment for a while. This also ap-

plies to *Qisas*. So that, if, in a case, a murderer is forgiven by the kin, the judges might still hand down a suitable "*Ta'zir*" by imposing a fine or certain number of cane strikes. This is to discourage crimes. Finally, there is one exception. It is that of the highway robbers or rebels who repent before they are overpowered. That is, when they have not been besieged, and it does not seem likely at that moment that they can be overpowered. If, at that time they repent, their crimes, including those of murder, robbery etc., would be forgiven. They will not even be subjected to a *Ta'zir*. And the wisdom seems to be that sometimes bandits, pirates, rebels and the like are in such large numbers that either their capture is beyond the government's power, or their killing, if overpowered, proves to be a dreadful human loss. Therefore, a door for peaceful settlement between them and the government has been left open. Yet, there should be no confusion. It is the "*Hadd*" that is forgiven: the right of Allah viz., the punishment as stated in the verse under discussion and which Allah has relinquished. But, if they have shed blood or looted wealth, that is, transgressed the rights of some people, then that cannot be forgiven. Either they pay for their crimes to

[34] Except for those who repent before you can overpower them. And be aware that Allah is very Forgiving, very Merciful.¹¹⁰

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْرَبُوا عَلَيْهِمْ
فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَمُّورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

the victims or their kin, or seek their pardon, or, according to the Hanafiyah, *Qisas* will be resorted to.

Quote from Shafi` ends here.

110. Ibn `Abbas, Hasan al Busri, `Ikrimah, Mujahid and others believe that this part of the verse is applicable to those of the unbelieving dacoits, robbers and others who embrace Islam. Some others believe it is applicable to Muslim robbers, bandits and the like alone, who, if they come seeking a pardon, they might be forgiven by the ruler. In support of their view, they cite an incident involving Haritha b. Badr al Tamimi during the time of `Ali ibn abi Talib, who came repentant before he was overpowered and `Ali forgave him. Another incident involving `Ali al Asadi took place during the time of Mu`awiyah ibn abi Sufyan. `Ali al Asadi was a highway robber who, despite several attempts eluded capture. One day he heard the Qur`anic verse: "Tell them, 'O those of My slaves who have wronged their souls, do not despair of Allah's mercy. Verily Allah forgives all sins. Surely He is very Forgiving, very Kind.'" `Ali al Asadi was

so powerfully moved by the verse that he decided to repent. He went to Madinah and gave himself up. He was pardoned.

But some scholars hold the opinion that they might be pardoned the crime of robbery etc., but if they had shed blood or plundered wealth and property, they should be punished for those crimes (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir and others). Imām Shafe`i is also one of them who has said that in view of the transgression of two kinds of rights, (those of Allah and those of the people), even if those of Allah are forgiven by Himself, those of the people will have to be restored to them (Razi); so that, the criminal will be required to requite for the property seized or, in case of murder, pay blood wit for (*Bayan*).

111. "Taqwa ... might be translated as "fear of Allah," but the very next clause shows that "fear of Allah" does not mean "fear" in the ordinary sense, which would make you avoid the object of fear. On the contrary the "fear of Allah" is the intense desire to avoid everything that is against His Will and Law. It is in fact (a) duty

[35] Believers! Fear Allah,¹¹¹ seek nearness to Him¹¹² and struggle in His cause¹¹³ haply you will prosper.

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

to Allah, for we are told to seek the means by which we may approach Him, and that can only be done by striving with might and means for His cause” (Yusuf Ali).

112. *Wasilah* has been interpreted as “nearness” by Ibn ‘Abbas, Mujahid, Qatadah, Suddi, Hasan, ‘Ata’, Abu Wa’il and others. Thus the meaning is, seek Allah’s nearness with righteous deeds (Ibn Jarir, Razi, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir and others). The statement of Ibn ‘Abbas to this effect has been evaluated as *sahih* by Hakim (Shawkani, Manar).

In contrast to the word wasl (with saad) which stands for any joining, this wasl (with sin) stands, in its origin, for unison with love (Shafi’ from *Lisan al-‘Arab*).

Ibn Zayd however has interpreted *Wasilah* as love, basing his opinion on verse (17: 57): “Such are those who call (upon Him) and seek the *Wasilah* of their Lord” (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Wasilah has, however, another meaning. It is a place of honor in Paradise (Qurtubi).

Jabir b. ‘Abdullah has been reported in Bukhari as narrating that the Prophet said: “Whoever heard the call (*adhan*) and said:

اللَّهُمَّ رَبِّ هَذِهِ الدَّعْوَةُ التَّامَّةُ وَالصَّلَاةُ الْفَائِمَةُ آتِ
مُحَمَّدًا الْوَسِيلَةَ وَالْقَضِيْلَةَ وَابْعَثْهُ مَقَامًا مَحْمُودًا الَّذِي
وَعَدْتَهُ إِلَّا حَلَّتْ لَهُ الشَّقَاعَةُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

‘O Allah, the Lord of this complete call and the Prayer that is to be offered, grant Muhammad the excellent *Wasilah*, and the special rank You have promised him’ - but my intercession will become lawful for him on the Day of Judgment.”

Muslim has another report which quotes the Prophet through ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr in words:

إِذَا سَمِعْتُمُ الْمُؤَدِّنَ فَمَقُولُوا مِثْلَ مَا يَقُولُ ثُمَّ صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ
فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ بِمَا عَشَرَ ثُمَّ
سَلُّوا اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لِي الْوَسِيلَةَ فَإِنَّهَا مَنْزِلَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ لَا
تَنْبَغِي إِلَّا لِعَبْدٍ مِنْ عِبَادِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَأَرْجُو أَنْ أَكُونَ
أَنَا هُوَ فَمَنْ سَأَلَ اللَّهَ لِي الْوَسِيلَةَ حَلَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الشَّقَاعَةُ

“When you hear the caller (*mu’adhdhin*) calling out, repeat his words. Then send peace to me. For, he who sent peace to me will have Allah send peace to him

ten times. After that ask Allah to grant me *Wasilah*. It is a place in Paradise that is not deserving of anyone of the slaves of Allah except one. And I hope to be that one. Therefore, whoever prayed to Allah that He grant me that, will enjoy my intercession.”

There are *ahadith* to this effect in Ahmad, Tabarani and Ibn Marduwayh also. (Ibn Kathir)

Mufti Shafi` writes that *Wasilah* written with a *saad* and *Wasilah* written with a *seen* both have the same meaning of joining something with another, but since *Wasilah* written with a *seen* has the additional nuance of joining with love, Mujaddid Alf-Thani has written in his “*Correspondences*” that an advancement into higher states depends entirely on the love of Allah and His Messenger. And an increase in love depends on following the ways of the Prophet.

The famous *Mufasssir* Alusi, a one time Hanafiyy Mufti of Baghdad deals with the subject of *Wasilah* in a thorough fashion. Here is an abridged translation:

Some people have used this verse to prove the correctness of supplicating to Allah by the *Wasilah* of the righteous people, placing them between themselves and Allah as the means.

They say, for instance, ‘I supplicate to You (O Allah) in the name of so and so (‘that You grant me Your grace,’ - or whatever else they seek). Some of them say, (naming a dead or a living person), ‘O so and so, supplicate to Allah that He grant me such and such (a thing).’ They believe this is the *Wasilah* that is the subject of this verse. They even quote some *ahadith* to the effect that one might supplicate by the *Wasilah* of the dead. All of this, of course, adds Alusi, is far from the truth.

He writes further down: There is no difference of opinion among the scholars that one might seek the help of the living in supplications, such as to say to someone that he pray for him. However, in such an event, it is not necessary that the more virtuous pray for the less virtuous. It can be vice versa also. The Prophet, for instance, told `Umar when he was leaving for an *Umrah*: “Do not forget to pray for me, brother.” Similarly, the Prophet had instructed `Umar to ask Uways al-Qarni to pray to Allah and seek forgiveness for his (`Umar’s) sins. (The *hadith* is in Muslim: Au.) However, if the person is dead, or not present, then, there is no difference in opinion among the scholars that seeking his *Wasilah* is prohibited. It is a *bid’ah* that none of the *Salaf* ever

committed. We know very definitely of the Companions that they never sought the Prophet's *Wasilah* when they visited his grave. All that is allowed when one visits the graves is to say *Salam* to the dead. The Prophet had himself taught his followers to say when they enter a graveyard:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ
إِنَّا إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ لَاجِثُونَ نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ لَنَا وَلَكُمْ
الْعَافِيَةَ.

“Peace upon you O Muslim and *Mu'min* residents of these dwellings. We are, by the Will of Allah, to join you soon. We seek Allah's refuge for you and for us.”

Accordingly, we see that the Companions never asked the dead for anything when they entered the graveyards - although they were very greedy of virtuous acts. We also know of 'Umar that when he visited the Prophet's grave, he merely said *Salam* to him and to Abu Bakr, and departed without saying another word. The other Companions too used to supplicate to Allah facing the *qiblah*. It is not reported of any of them that he supplicated facing the Prophet's grave - although the grave of the Prophet is superior to the *'Arsh*. Indeed, Abu Hanifah has ruled that while one offers his *Salam* to the Prophet, when visiting his

grave, he should show his back to the grave and face the *qiblah*, although some others have said that one could face the grave when saying *Salam*, but face the *qiblah* from the right or the left side of the grave while supplicating. What then should one do when visiting the graves of lesser people?

There is, however, continues Alusi, one exception with regard to *Wasilah*. One might supplicate by the *Wasilah* of the Prophet but none else: neither any other Prophet, an angel, nor any other righteous person. This is the opinion of Ibn 'Abdul Salam as reported by Munawi in his *Al-Fayd Al-Qadir* which is a commentary on (Suyuti's) *Al-Jami' al-Saghir*. This is because of the extremely high status that the Prophet enjoys with his Lord. The opinion also derives its strength from a *hadith* in Tirmidhi, evaluated *hasan sahih* by him, (as also in Ahmad):

عَنْ عُمَانَ بْنِ حُنَيْفٍ أَنَّ رَجُلًا ضَرَبَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهُ ادْعُ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُعَافِيَنِي
فَقَالَ إِنْ شِئْتَ أَحْرَثُ ذَلِكَ فَهُوَ أَفْضَلُ لِأَجْرَتِكَ
وَإِنْ شِئْتَ دَعَوْتُ لَكَ قَالَ لَا بَلْ ادْعُ اللَّهَ لِي فَأَمَرَهُ
أَنْ يَتَوَضَّأَ وَأَنْ يُصَلِّيَ رَكَعَتَيْنِ وَأَنْ يَدْعُو بِهَذَا الدُّعَاءِ
اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ وَأَتَوَجَّهُ إِلَيْكَ بِنَبِيِّكَ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ نَبِيِّ الرَّحْمَةِ يَا مُحَمَّدُ إِنِّي أَتَوَجَّهُ بِكَ إِلَى
رَبِّي فِي حَاجَتِي هَذِهِ فَتَقْضِي فِيهِ وَتُسَقِّعِي فِيهِ وَتُسَقِّعُهُ
عِنْدِي قَالَ فَفَعَلَ الرَّجُلُ فَبَرًّا - تعليق شعيب الأرنؤوط

: إسناده صحيح رجاله ثقات

A blind man came to the Prophet and requested him to pray for his eyesight. The Prophet told him: "If you wish I supplicate for you. But if you observe patience (and remain blind), that would be better for you." The man said: "But rather, pray to Allah." The Prophet ordered him to make to make an ablution (*wudu*). He may then offer two *rak`ah* of Prayer and then supplicate in these words: "O Allah, I ask You and turn to You through Your Prophet - the Prophet of Mercy. O Messenger of Allah, I turn to my Lord by you in this my need so that You might - (O Allah) - so grant this to me, and O Allah accept his intercession in this (affair) of mine." The man did as he was told and he was cured of blindness.

However, continues Alusi, many scholars have interpreted the *hadith* differently and, consequently, have disallowed that the Prophet's name be cited as *Wasilah*. In the forefront of those who prohibit *Wasilah* of the Prophet are: Imām Abu Hanifah, Imām Abu Yusuf (Abu Hanifa's successor), Imām Ibn Taymiyyah and

many others. Nonetheless, those who believe that the Prophet's intercession might be sought, have another *hadith* in their favor in Abu Da'ud in which a man is reported to have said, addressing the Prophet:

فإِنَّا نَسْتَشْفِعُ بِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَنَسْتَشْفِعُ بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ.
قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- « وَبِحُكِّكَ
أَتَدْرِي مَا تَقُولُ » وَسَبَّحَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه
وسلم- فَمَا زَالَ يُسَبِّحُ حَتَّى عُرِفَ ذَلِكَ فِي وُجُوهِ
أَصْحَابِهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ « وَبِحُكِّكَ إِنَّهُ لَا يُسْتَشْفَعُ بِاللَّهِ عَلَى
أَحَدٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ شَأْنُ اللَّهِ أَعْظَمُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ ... »

"We seek your intercession with Allah, and seek Allah's intercession with you." The Prophet responded angrily: "Woe unto you man, do you realize what you are saying?" Then he glorified Him and kept glorifying until its effect was seen on his face by his Companions. Then he said, "Woe unto you, Allah cannot be cited as interceding for any of His creation. He is far above that.."

Thus we see that the Prophet prohibited that someone seek Allah's intercession for any of His creation, but he did not disapprove the rest of the supplication words, that is, his own intercession be sought with Allah.

As for seeking Allah's favor through someone else saying, in supplication, "O Allah grant me such and such

a thing by the grace of so and so," well, this is completely prohibited. The *Salaf* never used to supplicate in this manner. Other *ahadith* that are quoted in favor of such a practice are untrustworthy. The one in Ibn Majah, for instance, which quotes Abu Sa'id al-Khudri as saying that the Prophet told him to supplicate in words:

اللهم إني أسألك عليك وبحق السائلين عليك

"O Allah, I ask you by the right of the seekers ..." (until the end of the *hadith*) ... well, this is a weak report.

Similarly, what is reported of Ma'ruf al-Karkhi that he told his pupils to place him as an intermediary while supplicating to Allah, is also an untrustworthy report. In fact, the Prophet taught his Companions to supplicate with words of Allah's praise and by His Good Names and Perfect Attributes, such as to say:

أعوذ برضاك من سخطك وبمعافاتك من عقوبتك
وأعوذ بك منك

"O Allah I seek refuge in Your Approval and Forgiveness from Your anger and Your retribution, and I seek Your refuge from You.."

Such are the words that the Prophet

has taught us to supplicate with.

Indeed, seeking help of the dead is one of the most ludicrous things to do. (Far from the dead, even the living are helpless). Ba Yezid Bustami has said that for the creations to seek the help of other creations is like a prisoner seeking the help of another prisoner. As for the reports of the appearances, (either when awake or in dreams), of those figures whose *Wasilah* was sought while making supplications, and they assuring the suppliant that his supplications have been heard, (or forwarded to Allah), well, that is one of the tricks of Shaytan. It is he who appears to the misguided. In fact, sometimes he speaks through the idols of the pagans too to keep them firm in their religion. The fact is, those who are dead are either the righteous ones who are too busy enjoying the life of *barzakh*, or they are the wretched ones licking their wounds of punishment, and therefore, also too busy to pay any attention to those seeking their help in the affairs of this life.

Alusi's quote ends here.

Rashid Rida adds: The practice of seeking *Wasilah* of the people first appeared in the Middle Ages and gradually such things as seeking blessings

by the names of the righteous, abjuring Allah by their names, seeking their help in overcoming a difficulty or obtaining a thing of one's desire, or seeking the help of those who are in the grave, caught the imagination of Muslim masses in the subsequent periods. The fact is overlooked that, as the Prophet has said,

إن الدعاء هو العبادة

'Supplication is nothing but a kind of worship.'

Allah has also said (72: 18),

فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا [الجن : ١٨]

"Do not call upon any other than Allah."

And, elsewhere, (7: 194),

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ
[الأعراف : ١٩٤]

"Those you call upon apart from Him are slaves like your."

He also said (35: 13-14),

وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْ قِطْمِيرٍ
(١٣) إِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا دُعَاءَكُمْ وَلَوْ سَمِعُوا
مَا اسْتَجَابُوا لَكُمْ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُونَ بِشِرْكِكُمْ وَلَا
يُنَبِّئُكَ مِنْهُ خَبِيرٌ [فاطر : ١٣ ، ١٤]

"Those whom you call upon apart from Allah do not own even a date-skin. If you call upon them, they cannot hear you. And, if they hear, they cannot answer you. Further, they will disown you on the Day of Judgment. And no one can inform you the way the All-knowing can."

The ignorant are unaware of all these texts.

113. That is, conduct *jihad* (Ibn Jarir).

114. The implication is: good deeds are the *Wasilah*. In the absence of good deeds, all the wealth of the world would be of no profit (*Bayan*).

Sayyid Qutb writes: "The most a mind can imagine is the unbelievers coming to possess the whole world. But the Qur'anic statement suggests

[36] Surely those who have disbelieved, were they to possess all that is in the earth, and the like of it with it, to ransom themselves from the chastisement of the Day of Judgment thereby, it would not be accepted of them.¹¹⁴ Rather, there is for them a painful chastisement.¹¹⁵

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لِيَفْتَدُوا بِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ
يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا تُقْبَلُ مِنْهُمْ وَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

[37] They would wish to get out of the Fire, but they will not be able to get out of it. Rather, there is for them a lasting chastisement.¹¹⁶

يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُخْرَجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا هُمْ
بِخَارِجِينَ مِنْهَا وَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّصِيبٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

what is beyond the imagination. It supposes that they possess all that the earth holds, and, in addition, a treasure similar to it; yet, granted that possession, it will prove to be of no profit to them.”

115. Muslim has reported the Prophet as having said:

وَيُؤْتَى بِالرَّجُلِ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ فَيَقُولُ لَهُ يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ
كَيْفَ وَجَدْتَ مَنْزِلَكَ فَيَقُولُ أَيُّ رَبِّ شَرِّ مَنْزِلٍ
فَيَقُولُ لَهُ أَتَقْتَدِي مِنْهُ بِطِلَاعِ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا فَيَقُولُ
أَيُّ رَبِّ نَعَمْ فَيَقُولُ كَذَبْتَ قَدْ سَأَلْتُكَ أَقْلًا مِنْ ذَلِكَ
وَأَيْسَرَ فَلَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَيُرَدُّ إِلَى النَّارِ - تعليق شعيب
الأرنؤوط : إسناده صحيح على شرط مسلم

“A man will be brought out of the Fire. He will be asked: ‘Son of Adam. How do you find your place of rest?’ He will reply: ‘An evil resting place.’ He will be asked: ‘Would you ransom yourself with earthful of gold?’ He will reply: ‘Yes my Lord.’ Allah will tell him: ‘You have lied. You

were asked for something much simpler than that, but you refused.’ Then he will be ordered hurled back into the Fire.” Similar reports are in Bukhari and Nasa’i (Ibn Kathir).

116. Nafi` b. Azraq (the Khariji: Au.) is reported to have objected to Ibn `Abbas, in words: “Do you believe people will get out of the Fire? Here is a verse which says: ‘Rather, they will suffer a permanent chastisement.’ Ibn `Abbas answered: “Look up man. The verse is talking of unbelievers” (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

The Relationship

When Allah (*swt*) spoke of highway robbery in verse 33 above, He followed it up with the mention of burglary in homes.

117. Ibn Jarir comments: There was no consensus among the Companions of the Prophet over the value of

[38] As for the thief¹¹⁷ - man or woman¹¹⁸ - amputate their hands,¹¹⁹ - as a recompense for what they have earned.¹²⁰ a punishment exemplary from Allah.¹²¹ Allah is Mighty, Wise.¹²²

وَالسَّارِقِ وَالسَّارِقَةَ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا
جَزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالاً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

a stolen article which would earn a person the appellant sariq (generally speaking, a thief) and entail the amputation of his hand. It is said that in an incident, the value of goods for which the Prophet ordered amputation was 3 Dirhams (or about 10.9 gm of gold). Some say the value was equal to 10 Dirhams (36.3 gm of gold). The Prophet would perhaps have ordered amputation for a Daniq (smallest coin of those times) had there been a theft of that value. Ibn `Abbas has also said that there is no lower limit to the amount. Nevertheless, a *hadith* reported by `A'isha says that the Prophet said:

القطع في ربع دينار ، فصاعدا

“Amputation is for a quarter Dinar or above.”

This last mentioned *hadith* is in the *Sahihayn* (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

(Quarter Dinar of those times was roughly 6.35 gm of gold: Au.).

Imām Razi points out that the implication of this verse is that it is incumbent upon the Muslims to set up an Islamic state ruled by an Amir.

Capital punishments cannot be carried out without a proper Islamic government headed by an *Amir*. A group of people cannot execute Islamic punishments.

118. It is noticeable that ordinarily the Qur`ān does not make a separate mention of women, since what applies to man applies to woman. But when it came to commandments pertaining to theft and adultery, both sexes were specifically named. This is because in matters of capital punishments, no doubts whatsoever can be entertained. Therefore women were also specifically mentioned. Further, in theft, men were mentioned first, while in adultery women were mentioned first when it was said (24: 2):

الرَّائِيَةَ وَالرَّائِي فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ
[النور : ٢]

“The (unmarried) adulteress and the (unmarried) adulterer, give them both a hundred lashes.” This is because in an Islamic society, women are well protected from immorality. If one of them gets involved in adultery, then surely, she would have broken all bounds and measures imposed

by the society to be able to do that. Hence she was mentioned earlier to man in adultery. Whereas, so far as theft is concerned, men have several opportunities and options open to them to earn their livelihood. Yet, if one of them chooses to commit theft, surely there is a trace of criminality in him. Therefore, he was mentioned first (Shafi`).

119. With reference to another verse Majid writes: "Next to high moral education and deep religious upbringing it is fear of consequences as world-wide human experience proves, that keeps in check the very natural tendency, almost inherent in human nature, to stealing and thieving."

Legal Points

1. The word in the original is *sariqah*. Theft is not the precise equivalent for the word since larceny, picking of the pocket, burglary, mugging, felony and all kinds of similar crimes are covered by the term theft, whereas, *sariqah* is that theft in which i) the value reaches a certain amount, ii) the property was kept well secured, iii) the money was taken stealthily, and iv) it should have been taken without permission. If, for instance, the thief is a part owner, such as, to take an extreme example, in public property (parks, state railways), or an

inheritor, share-holder of a company, etc., or the goods were not kept in a secured place, then technically it is not *sariqah*. It might be some kind of crime, punishable by the court of law, but amputation cannot be ordered. Or, in another case, if the person involved had the permission to use the material, and not to take it home, but he moves it off to his house, then also it might be some kind of a crime, but amputation cannot be ordered. The definition of stealth also removes snatching away of purses, or embezzlement of money, or falsification of accounts, or coffin-stealing, etc. from the definition of *sariqah*, (Shafi`). Since slavery is no more prevalent, Mufti Shafi` has not pointed out that a fifth condition is that the accused should be a free person and not a slave. Under no condition will slaves undergo capital punishments. Half slaves therefore, as for instance, foreign labor in the Arab countries, cannot be subjected to *sariqah* rules (Au.).

2. Theft of quickly perishable articles of food is not *sariqah*.

3. A thief's hand cannot be amputated if the article stolen has no conventional value, even if the thing be greatly valued (Majid), such as, for example, an old stamp or an ancient

artifact (Au.).

4. Any doubt, however minor, with regard to the conditions of amputation, will work in favor of the accused, and, following the famous fiqh principle: "Doubts repulse capital punishments," amputation will not be ordered (Shafi').

5. If the accused does not admit, at least two trustworthy eye-witnesses are essential to prove the crime and order amputation (Shafi').

6. While in other criminal cases delayed testimony is admissible in the Islamic courts, in cases involving *sariqah* the witnesses have to be produced within a reasonably short time after the crime. A delay, say of a month, is inadmissible, and in which case, amputation cannot be ordered (Shafi').

7. If *sariqah* cannot be proved and amputation cannot be ordered, then the courts are free, (following *Ta'aziri* rules: Au.) to hand out the punishment they think befits the crime: say imprisonment or monetary fines etc.

8. Since *sariqah* falls under the General Law, non-Muslims living as *dhimmi*s in a Muslim state will also be punished with amputation (Shafi'). But non-*dhimmi*s, tourists

and others are exempted. However, according to the Hanafiyyah, unbelievers cannot be stoned to death for adultery. If the Prophet had ordered it in case of the Jewish pair, it was firstly because it was a very special case and secondly because they had come to him for judgment, and, finally, he ordered a punishment that they admitted was according to the *Torah* (Thanwi). A corollary of this is that now, in our times, the Jews do not accept the Law of the *Torah*, rather, have devised their own laws. Accordingly, stoning to death in crimes involving them or their likes, cannot be ordered (Au.).

9. Testimony of the unbelievers, even if *dhimmi*s, in cases involving *Hudud* (capital punishments) is not admissible (Qurtubi).

10. According to Imām Shafe'i, (also Imām Malik) with the first theft the right hand should be severed from the wrist; with the second, the left foot from the ankle; with the third left hand, and with the fourth left foot. However, Imām Abu Hanifa's (and Imām Ahmad's: Qurtubi) opinion is that there is no amputation after the loss of a hand and a foot (Razi).

11. According to Imām Shafe'i, the criminal is bound to return the sto-

len goods even if he undergoes the punishment of amputation. (This is also the opinion of Imām Ahmad: Qurtubi). Imām Malik has said that amputation is to be administered in all cases. As for return of the stolen goods, if the criminal is rich then yes, but if he is poor, then no. But, according to Imām Abu Hanifah, it is either amputation or return of the goods. Both punishments cannot be administered at the same time to the same person (Razi).

12. Security (i.e., wealth or property should have been kept in a secured place) is one of the conditions of amputation that has the consensus of the scholars. It is implied from some *ahadith*. An untied animal or an unanchored boat, for example, are not secured property (Qurtubi).

13. A hungry person cannot be punished with amputation for stealing food (Qurtubi). Accordingly we see, Sayyid adds, that `Umar temporarily annulled the punishment of amputation during the famous starvation of his times. Also, when the slaves of ibn Hatib ibn abi Balta`ah stole a camel belonging to the Muzayyinah tribe, he initially ordered amputation, but later, when he learned that the slaves were kept starved by their masters, he rescinded the punish-

ment, and, as a measure of disciplinary punishment, ordered their masters to pay fine which amounted to eight camels.

14. In opposition to many others, Imām Abu Hanifah has ruled that the close kinsfolk cannot be punished with amputation for stealing from one another (Qurtubi).

15. If the master of the stolen property forgives the thief before he is presented to the court, amputation cannot be ordered (*Manar*).

16. So also, amputation is annulled during an active *jihad* (*Manar*).

17. A group of people (such as people of a town or village) cannot enforce capital punishments of Islam on themselves, or a section of the population. A proper Islamic government is an essential requirement (Au.).

18. In addition to the above, Qurtubi states some other conditions for amputation such as:

i) Maturity: (i.e., a minor's hand cannot be amputated: Au.).

ii) Sanity

iii) Non-ownership: (i.e., the criminal should not have been an owner or a co-owner of the stolen goods: Au.). A father's hand cannot be amputated for stealing from his son, since a son

is himself the father's property.

iv) Non-custodianship: so that a slave or servant's hand will not be amputated for stealing from his master's goods.

120. Asad writes: "The extreme severity of this Qur'anic punishment can be understood only if one bears in mind the fundamental principle of Islamic Law that no duty (*taklif*) is ever imposed on man without his being granted a corresponding right (*haqq*); and the term "duty" also comprises, in this context, liability to punishment. Now, among the inalienable rights of every member of the Islamic society - Muslim and non-Muslim alike - is the right to protection (in every sense of the word) by the community as a whole. As is evident from innumerable Qur'anic ordinances as well as the Prophet's injunctions forthcoming from authentic Traditions, every citizen is entitled to a share in the community's economic resources and, thus, to the enjoyment of social security: in other words, he or she must be assured of an equitable standard of living commensurate with the resources at the disposal of the community. For, although the Qur'an makes it clear that the human life cannot be expressed in

terms of physical existence alone - the ultimate values of life being spiritual in nature - the believers are not entitled to look upon spiritual truths and values as something that could be divorced from physical and social factors of human existence. In short, Islam envisages and demands a society that provides not only for the spiritual needs of man, but for his bodily and intellectual needs as well. It follows, therefore, that - in order to be truly Islamic - a society (or state) must be so constituted that every individual, man and woman, may enjoy the minimum of material well-being and security without which there can be no human dignity, no real freedom, and, in the last resort, no spiritual progress: for, there can be no real happiness and strength in a society that permits some of its members to suffer undeserved want while others have more than they need. If the whole society suffers privations owing to circumstances beyond its control (as it happened, for instance, to the Muslim community in the early days of Islam), such shared privations may become a source of spiritual strength and, through it, of future greatness. But if the available resources of a community are so unevenly distributed that certain groups within it lives in afflu-

ence while the majority of the people are forced to use up all their energies in search of their daily bread, poverty becomes the most dangerous enemy of spiritual progress, and occasionally drives whole communities away from God-consciousness ... Consequently, the social legislation of Islam aims at a state of affairs in which every man, woman and child has (a) enough to eat and wear, (b) an adequate home, (c) equal opportunities and facilities for education, and (d) free medical care in health and sickness. A corollary of these rights is the right to productive and remunerative work while of working age and good health, and a provision (by the community or the state) of adequate nourishment, shelter, etc., in cases of disability resulting from illness, widowhood, enforced unemployment, old age, or under-age. As already mentioned, the communal obligation to create such a comprehensive social scheme has been laid down in many Qur'anic verses, and has been amplified and explained by a great number of the Prophet's commandments. It was the second Caliph, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, who began to translate these ordinances into a concrete administrative scheme ...

"It is against the background of this social security scheme envisaged by

Islam that the Qur'an imposes the severe sentence of hand-cutting as a deterrent punishment..."

Ibn Kathir notes: It is said that Abu al-'Ala Mu'arri criticized the scholars in one of his poetical pieces ridiculing their opinion that a man's hand be amputated for an amount as small as three Dirhams: as if a hand was as cheap as that. Qadi Abdul Wahhab Maliki replied that so long as it was a trusted hand, it was a precious one, but after the theft it became worthless. The injunction in fact, is completely in line with the demands of wisdom. If the people's property is to be safe, hands that threaten them have to be amputated. And, to save people's hands from the risk of amputation, its price should be kept high, viz., five hundred Dirhams, which is the compensation (*diyab*) a man gets if his hand is severed by someone either accidentally or willfully. (Today the *diyab* for a severed hand is an amount equal to about 1300 grams of gold: Au.)

Yusuf Ali comments: "... (the cutting of the hand follows) the principle that "if thy hand or thy foot offend thee: cut them off, and cast them from thee" (Matthew, xviii, 8). Apparently in the age of Jesus thieves were crucified (Matt. xxvii, 38)".

[39] Nevertheless, whoso repents after his evildoing, and makes amends,¹²³ then surely Allah will turn to him.¹²⁴ Indeed, Allah is Forgiving, Kind.

فَمَنْ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

121. Alusi writes: The punishment for theft, until the time of Musa (*asws*) was slavery. That is, the thief became a slave of the one he had offended.

122. *Allah is Mighty, Wise*: Asma`i says, "I was reciting these verses and, instead of reading out '*Allah is Mighty, Wise*,' I read out '*Allah is Forgiving, Kind*.' A bedouin was listening. He asked, 'Whose words are these?' I replied, 'Allah's.' He said, 'Read again.' So I repeated ending with, '*Allah is Forgiving, Kind*,' and then realizing the error I corrected, '*Allah is Mighty, Wise*.' He said, 'Now you have read it right.' I asked, 'How did you know?' He said, 'Man. He is Mighty, Wise, so He ordered the amputation. Had He forgiven, out of kindness, He would not have ordered the amputation'" (Razi).

123. Making amends includes returning - if possible - of the goods stolen or seeking forgiveness of the wronged (*Bayan*).

124. Amputation of a repentant will be carried out all the same (Qurtubi). Mujahid said that amputation is the

thief's repentance. This is based on a *hadith*:

عن عبد الله بن عمرو أن امرأة سرقت على عهد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فجاء بها إلى الذين سرقتهم، فقالوا: يا رسول الله، أن هذه المرأة سرقتنا. قال قومها: فنحن نفديها، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "اقطعوا يدها"، فقالوا: نحن نفديها بخمسمائة دينار، فقال "اقطعوا يدها" فقطعت يدها اليمنى، فقالت المرأة: هل لي من توبة يا رسول الله؟ قال "نعم أنت اليوم من خطيئتكم كيوم ولدتك أمك"، فأنزل الله في سورة المائدة {فَمَنْ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ}

It says in sum that a woman's hand was to be amputated by the order of the Prophet, despite the fact that her tribe offered ransom amounting to 500 Dinar. She asked him after the amputation whether there was repentance for her. He replied: "Today, you are as clean of sins as you were the day you were born" (Ibn Jarir).

The above report is also in Ahmad and the *Sahihayn*. It speaks of the famous incident involving the Makhzumi woman after whose theft people sought a concession in her punishment since she belonged to a noble

family. Usama b. Zayd was given the tough job of speaking about her to the Prophet. The Prophet was upset when Zayd spoke to him. He asked him: "Do you want to intervene in a punishment ordered by Allah?" Zayd begged him that he should seek Allah's forgiveness for him. The Prophet climbed the pulpit, praised Allah and then said:

أما بعد فإنما أهلك الذين من قبلكم أنهم كانوا إذا سرق فيهم الشريف تركوه، وإذا سرق فيهم الضعيف أقاموا عليه الحد، وإني والذي نفسي بيده لو أن فاطمة بنت محمد سرقت، لقطعت يدها

"Indeed, people before you were destroyed because when one of their nobility committed theft, he was spared, but when a weak one did it, they punished him by the Divine law. By Allah in whose hand is my life! If Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, were to steal, her hand would be cut." Then he ordered that the woman's hand be amputated.

'A'isha and others have reported that previous to amputation she used to borrow jewelry from women and then deny that she had borrowed them.

'A'isha says the concerned woman later repented well. Later, she got

married. She used to visit her seeking the Prophet's help and counsel.

Finally, the Prophet ordered amputation for stealing a camel. Ibn Majah has another report which says that a man called 'Umar ibn Samurah came to the Prophet and said:

يا رسول الله، إني سرقت جملاً لبني فلان، فطهرني فأرسل إليهم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقالوا: إنا افتقدنا جملاً لنا، فأمر به فقطعت يده وهو يقول: الحمد لله الذي طهرني منك، أردت أن تدخلني جسدني النار

"Messenger of Allah. I have stolen a camel belonging to such and such (a tribe). So cleanse me." The Prophet sent a man to the people whose camel he had stolen. They sent word that they were short of a camel. So the Prophet ordered his hand amputated. When that was done, the man said (addressing his hand): "Allah be praised he cleansed me of you. You tried to shove me into the Fire" (Ibn Kathir).

125. Sayyid comments: "'Do you not you know that to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth?': Thus, it is a single dominion ... dominion of the Sovereign ... from whom emanates the punishment in this world and from whom emanates

[40] Do you not know that to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth?¹²⁵ He punishes whom He will and forgives whom He will. Allah has power over all things.¹²⁶

[41] O Messenger!¹²⁷ Let not those who plunge headlong into disbelief grieve you: such of them as claim with their mouths, 'We believe,' but their hearts do not believe; and those who are Judized¹²⁸ - great patrons of lies, spying for a people who did not come to you (themselves)¹²⁹ perverting the words from their meaning¹³⁰ saying, 'If you are handed over this (kind of judgment), accept it, but if you are not given it, then watch out.'¹³¹ And whomsoever Allah desires to test, you cannot avail anything for him against Allah. These are a people whom Allah did not desire to cleanse their hearts; for them is disgrace in this life, and a mighty chastisement in the Hereafter.

أَمْ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن
يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزَنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ
فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا
تُرْمِنُ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمَاعُونَ
لِلْكَذِبِ سَمَاعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ
يُحْرِفُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ يَفْهَمُونَ إِنْ
أُوتِيتُمْ هَذَا فَخُذُوهُ وَإِن لَّمْ تُؤْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوا
وَمَن يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَن تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ
شَيْئًا أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَن يُطَهِّرْ
قُلُوبَهُمْ هُم فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَهُمْ فِي
الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾

the punishment in the Hereafter. So there is no division (of authority), no plurality and no break. And, obviously, people's affairs can never be set right without the consolidation of the legalizing and punishing authority into one hand - in this world and in the Hereafter: 'Were there to be in them another deity, surely they would be destroyed', and 'It is He who is the deity in the heavens and the deity in the earth.'

126. Majid writes: "This refutes the doctrine of Karma as promulgated in scores of Indian religions, that there

is no remission of sins, and that God Himself is powerless to forgo and forgive!"

127. Rashid Rida points out that the choice of the words while addressing the Prophet tells us something about the high regard in which he is held with Allah, for He did not say, "O Muhammad," rather, "O Messenger." Consequently, we should also exercise care in the choice of words while mentioning him.

The Relationship

The verses above spoke of the *Hudud* of Allah. Now, in the verses that

follow Allah gives us an account of those who tampered with the *Hudud* of Allah and earned chastisement. Then, with verse 44, a new passage begins with a note on *Tawrah* and *Injil*: those beautiful revelations that their followers neglected (Shabbir).

128. “*Those who are Judized*” implies that at some point in their history, the Israelites became distinctly different as a people from their forefathers, the Children of Israel. They became Jews (Au.).

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

129. “Because they cannot stand the sight of you out of hatred” (Zamakhshari).

130. “These are men among the Jews who were eager to catch up any lie against the Prophet. They had their ears open even to tales from people who had never so much as come near to the Prophet. If we understand ‘for’ instead of ‘to’ before ‘others’ (for the

Arabic word would bear both meanings), the sense will be: They are keen listeners or spies for any lies they can catch; and they will act as spies for others (their Rabbis, etc.) who are in the background but to whom they carry false tales” (Yusuf Ali).

131. According to Abu Hurayrah the revelation of these verses was occasioned by an incident involving a Jewish pair that had committed adultery. The Jews referred the case to the Prophet with the intention to accept his judgment if he would order whipping but reject otherwise. The Prophet went to their dwellings to enquire what the *Tawrah* prescribed as the punishment for such a crime. They said, ‘Whipping and then parading them around the town on a donkey with faces blackened, facing the tail - as a measure of humiliation.’ He asked Ibn Suriyah, a fairly young man, one-eyed, but an acclaimed scholar of the *Torah*, in the name of all that was holy to the Jews if it was not stoning to death that the *Torah* had prescribed. After some hesitation the man admitted that that was the punishment, and the Prophet ordered the pair stoned to death. However, notwithstanding the context of revelation, the verses also seem to be dealing with the hypocrites (Ibn Ja-

rir).

Another cause of revelation has been reported. Ibn `Abbas said that in pre-Islamic times some Jewish tribes did not consider themselves equal to other Jewish tribes. Banu Nadir for instance, considered themselves superior to Banu Qurayzah. Therefore, in cases involving murder, they would not allow their man to be killed in retaliation of a murder, rather, forced Banu Qurayzah to accept blood wit. Now, the murder of a Qurazi at the hands of a Banu Nadir man took place after the Prophet's migration to Madinah. Banu Qurayzah demanded that the murderer be handed over to them. Banu Nadir would only agree to blood wit. Banu Qurayzah - long victims of Banu Nadir's oppression - began to moan about it. They said: "We believe in the same Prophet, follow the same Scripture, believe in the same Law, and are one people. Why then should we be treated unequal?" Finally, when no solution could be found, Banu Nadir were advised by their rabbis to refer the case to the Prophet and accept the decision only if he gave a favorable judgment. The rabbis themselves remained behind the scene (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

The above report is in Ahmad, Abu

Da'ud, Ibn al-Mundhir, Tabarani, Abu al-Sheikh and Ibn Marduwayh (Shawkani). Ahmad Shakir has evaluated the report in *Musnad Ahmad* as *sahih*. (S. Ibrahim)

Nonetheless, a second opinion, that of Ibn `Abbas, Abu Hurayrah, Mujahid, Jabir and others, is that this refers to the incident of the Jews forwarding a case to the Prophet of a pair of adulterers. The rabbis had given instructions to their people that they were to accept the judgment only if he ordered whipping. But if he ordered the punishment as prescribed in the *Torah*, viz., stoning to death, then it was to be rejected (Ibn Jarir).

Rejecting the Prophet's judgment would not, of course, have been difficult. But, had the Prophet judged in accordance with what they desired, they would have accepted it. For, if criticized, they would have explained to the Muslims that they had accepted the judgment of a Prophet, and to the Jews that they had accepted the judgment of a political authority. Further, some reports say that the Jews came to the Prophet, but some other reports say that he went to them. Well, it is possible that first they came to him and then, subsequently, he visited them for a

first hand assessment of the crime (*Bayan*).

Reports supporting the opinion of Ibn `Abbas vis a vis the cause of revelation, are in Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi and Abu Da'ud (Qurtubi).

The *Sahihayn* have a report which confirms the report of Ibn Jarir. Narrated by `Abdullah ibn `Umar, it says that the Jews presented to the Prophet the case of a Jewish man and woman who had committed adultery. They did that in the hope of a light punishment as his religion sounded to be less demanding. He asked them: "What has the *Tawrah* to say about it?" They replied: "Well. We disgrace them and whip them." `Abdullah ibn Sallam interjected: "You have lied. It commands stoning to death. Bring the *Torah*."

Accordingly, they brought in the *Torah* and began to read. When they reached the portion speaking of the punishment by stoning to death, the reader placed his hand on the line and read what was before and after it. `Abdullah ibn Sallam said: "Move away your hand and read." It was speaking of stoning to death. They said, "Muhammad. You spoke the truth. It has the commandment about stoning to death." So the Prophet ordered that they be stoned

to death. "I was one of those," Ibn `Umar added, "who threw the stones. And I saw the man shielding the woman as the stones were being pelted at them." The version of Abu Da'ud gives some more details such as that the Prophet was invited to their dwellings. He went into a house called Midrash in a locality called Quff. They asked him to judge a case involving a pair that had adulterated. They presented a cushion for him to sit on. He sat on it and asked them to produce the *Torah*. When they brought in the *Torah*, he got down the cushion, placed the *Torah* on it and said, "I believe in you and in what has been revealed to me."

A report in Ahmad also says that the Jews followed the *Torah* commandment only when a weak among them was involved, sparing the noble ones. But when adultery spread among them then they decided that they should rather have one punishment for all, and so they agreed on whipping, blackening the faces and parading the offenders around the town on a donkey with faces turned toward the tail. Abu Da'ud has several versions of this report. According to one, the Prophet ordered them to produce four witnesses who would swear that they saw the very act of copulation. When they did, he

[42] (They are) Great patrons of lies, great devourers of the unlawful.¹³² If they come to you, judge between them or turn away from them.¹³³ If you turn away from them, they shall not be able to harm you. However, if you judge between them, then judge with equity.¹³⁴ Surely, Allah loves the just.

سَمَاعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكْأَلُونَ لِلسُّخْتِ فَإِنْ جَاؤُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

ordered the stoning (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

Asad adds: "Although this verse is, in the first instance, addressed to the Prophet, it concerns all followers of the Qur'an and is, therefore, valid for all times. The same observation applies to the people of whom this verse speaks: although it mentions only the hypocrites and Jews, it refers, by implication, to all people who are prejudiced against Islam and willingly lend ear to any false statement about its teachings, preferring to listen to unfriendly non-Muslim 'experts' rather than to turn to the Qur'an itself for enlightenment..."

Thanwi comments: In the words, 'If you are given this accept it, but if you are not given it, then be on the guard,' there is a lot of similarity between this Jewish attitude and that of those Muslims who go to the scholars with enquiries, but with the intention that if they rule according

to their desires they would follow them, but if they would not, the affair would be subject to further enquiry and consideration.

132. In its root the word suht means something that destroys. The unlawful has been termed suht because it destroys the person's character as it does his good deeds. Elsewhere the Qur'an has used the word in this sense. It said (20: 61):

فَيَسْحَتُكُمْ بِعَذَابٍ [طه : ٦١]

"Lest the punishment destroys you."

According to `Umar ibn al-Khattab, `Abdullah (ibn Mas`ud), Mujahid, Hasan, Qatadah, Suddi and others the word suht alludes to bribes. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud has ruled that if bribes are accepted to offer a judgment following laws other than the revealed ones, then it amounts to disbelief. To substantiate, he recited the verse (5: 44):

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

[المائدة : ٤٤]

"He who did not rule by what Allah has revealed, such then are the unbelievers."

It is said that upon Masruq's recommendation, someone's pending work was completed (by a contractor). So the man gifted a slave girl to Masruq. Masruq was upset about it. He said: "Had I known that you will behave this way, I would never have recommended your case. And I shall never do it in the future. I have heard Ibn Mas'ud say, 'Whoever did something to get someone obtain his right or get a wrong righted, and is gifted something which he accepts, then that is *suht*.'" He was told: "We did not know that. We had always thought that playing with the rules (of the *Shari'ah*) to favor someone is *suht*." Masruq replied: "That is disbelief."

'Ali ibn abi Talib has said, "The following are *suht*: A cupper's earnings, the earnings of a prostitute, the price of a dog, expedition of a case (upon receipt of bribe), a soothsayer's earnings, the fees for lending out a bull for mating, bribes, the price of wine and the price of carrion." The Prophet has said:

وَمَنْ تَبَّتْ حُمُهُ عَلَى السُّحْتِ ، فَالنَّارُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِ .

"He who nurtured his flesh on *suht* is better deserving of the Fire."

He was asked: "What is *suht*, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied: "Bribes for judging in one's favor" (Ibn Jarir).

The second part of the above *hadith* could not be found in *Sahih hadith* works (Au).

As for the price for a dog, perhaps, those would be exempted that are used for security purposes or for hunting. See note 27 above (Au.).

Qurtubi writes: Imām Abu Hanifah has said that if a ruler accepts bribes, he loses the right to rule even if he does not abdicate. Therefore, all his rulings and judgments after that are null and void. The Prophet has forbidden bribes in very strong terms. He said:

الرَّاشِي وَالْمُرْتَشِي فِي النَّارِ

"He who gives and he who accepts bribe are in the Fire."

However, there is no difference of opinion that if a person finds it impossible to obtain his right without bribes, then he might bribe without incurring a sin. The sin will be upon he who received it.

133. Authorities have differed over whether a Muslim ruler is bound to

[43] But how can they seek your judgment seeing that they have the Tawrah wherein are Allah's commandments?¹³⁵ But they turn back after that. They are not believers.

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

judge the affairs of the unbelievers within his jurisdiction according to the *Shari`ah* law, or, has he a choice? Scholars such as Hasan, `Ikrimah, Suddi, Mujahid and Qatadah have said that the choice has been abrogated by another verse (5: 49):

وَأَنْ أَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ
[المائدة : ٤٩]

“And that you should judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and follow not their vain desires.”

However, others, such as Sha`bi, Ibrahim, `Ata' and Qatadah have said that a Muslim ruler has the choice to either judge between them or turn them away to be judged by their own laws. Zuhri has stated that the practice has always been to let them be judged by their own laws in matters of “personal affairs” unless they apply to the *Shari`ah* courts. But, without sufficient evidence of abrogation, I am inclined to believe that the second opinion is correct (Ibn Jarir).

Qurtubi adds: Imām Abu Hanifa’s opinion is that non-Muslims cannot be judged by Islamic laws, un-

less they seek judgment by them, in which case the judge is bound to rule by the Islamic law alone. But, if there is no such request, then they have to be judged by their own laws. For example, if a Muslim and a non-Muslim commit adultery, the Muslim would be stoned to death but not the non-Muslim partner in the crime. And, if a pair of non-Muslims commits adultery, the two might be whipped but not stoned to death. Nevertheless, the issue is complicated and other jurists hold different opinions (Qurtubi).

134. Sha`bi, Ibrahim and Mujahid have said that the allusion by the term “equity” is to the *Shari`ah*, i.e., “If you judge between them, judge by what Allah has revealed” (Ibn Jarir).

135. That is, why at all should the Jews come to a Muslim authority for judgment when it is already clearly mentioned in the *Torah* that the adulterer and adulteress should be stoned to death? Says the *Torah* in Deutronomy: 22.20 But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity

be not found for the damsel, (unmarried women)

22.21 then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die, because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house; so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

22.22 "If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman and the woman; so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.

22.23 If a damsel who is a virgin be betrothed unto a husband, and a man find her in the city and lie with her,

22.24 then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones, that they die — the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city, and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbor's wife; so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

The Gospels too confirm that stoning to death was the punishment in the Jewish Law. The Gospel of John recounts the following famous story:

8:1 Jesus went to the mount of Ol-

ives: 8:2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came to him; and he sat down and taught them. 8:3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought to him a woman taken in adultery: and when they had set her in the midst, 8:4 They say to him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. 8:5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou? 8:6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with [his] finger wrote on the ground, [as though he heard them not]. 8:7 So when they continued asking him, he raised himself, and said to them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. 8:8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 8:9 And they who heard [it], being convicted by [their own] conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, [even] to the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 8:10 When Jesus had raised himself, and saw none but the woman, he said to her, Woman, where are those thy accusers? hath no man condemned thee? 8:11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said to her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

[44] Surely, We sent down the Tawrah wherein was guidance¹³⁶ and a Light. The Prophets who had surrendered themselves gave judgment thereby for those of the Jewry (who believed in it),¹³⁷ as did the godly men and the scholars,¹³⁸ following what of Allah's book they were charged to preserve - and they were witnesses to it. So fear not the people, rather, fear Me and sell not My revelations for a paltry price.¹³⁹ And whoso judges not by what Allah has ... such ... they are the unbelievers.¹⁴⁰

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ
بِمَا التَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا
وَالرَّبَّانِيُونَ وَالْأَخْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ
كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا
النَّاسَ وَاحْشَوْنِي وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا
قَلِيلًا وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

136. The guidance therein included instructions pertaining to the enquiry that the Jews had made, i.e., adultery (Razi). That is, We had sent down earlier, O Prophet, a revelation to the Israelites which contained commandments pertaining to the crime of adultery about which the Jews had sought your judgment (Ibn Jarir).

137. One of the interpretations (Qurtubi) is that the “*lam*” of “*lilladhina hadu*” is in the sense of “*‘ala*”. Further, the use of the words “*alladhina hadu*” instead of “*al-yahud*” is perhaps to point out that the prophets who followed Musa were Muslims and did not refer to themselves as Jews (Au.).

138. Explaining the word *rabbaniyyun* of the original, Asad writes under *surah* 3 in note 62: “According

to Sibawayh (as quoted by Razi), a *rabbani* is “one who devotes himself exclusively to the endeavor to know the Sustainer (*ar-rabb*) and to obey Him.” Also see note 133 of *Surah Aal-`Imrān* of this work.

Shafi` writes: The revelation of Allah has two aspects: (i) knowledge and, (ii) its application (i.e., ‘*ilm wa ‘amal*). Now, although it is expected of every knowledgeable (‘*alim*) that he should also be good in application, as it is expected of everyone who applies, to be good in knowledge, the fact remains that while there are some who treat application as more serious than knowledge, there are others who dedicate themselves more to knowledge. Now those who are meticulous about application aspect of the revelation are known as *rabbaniyyun* while those

who concentrate more on knowledge are known as Ahbar. Thus, the *sufiya* and the *'ulama* are only two faces of the same coin.

Rashid Rida has something similar to state: "It seems to me that the *rabbaniyyun* with the Jews were similar to our *awliya'* and *'arifin*, while ahbar as our common scholars. It is said that Ibn 'Abbas was the Habr of the *Ummah*, while 'Ali the Rabbaniyy.

139. It should be obvious that in this verse the address by implication is to the *Ummah* of the Prophet through him (Au.).

140. Basing their opinion on these words, the *Khawarij* have argued that someone who commits a major sin (in other words, every *fasiq*) is an unbeliever. The answer that has been given by the *Ahl al-Sunnah* is that although the verse is general in meaning, it is specifically applicable to the act of the heart, so that whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed out of disbelief in it, then, he is an unbeliever (Alusi).

Not Judging by Allah's Command:

Qurtubi points out that the report of Bara' b. 'Aazib, as in Muslim, (concerning the Prophet's judgment of stoning to death the pair of Jews that had committed adultery) demon-

strates that the following three verses, have unbelievers as their subject: 1. 'And whoso judges not by what Allah has revealed, such, they are the unbelievers;' 2. 'And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such, they are the transgressors;' and, 3. 'And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such, they are the corrupt.'

Abu Salih, 'Ikrimah, Dahhak, Qatadah and Abu Mijlaz were of the same opinion. (So were Ibn Mas'ud and Hasan, who have said that whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, believing another set of laws as better, is an unbeliever: Qurtubi).

In fact, it is reported of Abu Mijlaz that once some people of Banu 'Amr came to him and asked him about these three verses whether they were making a true statement or not. He said, "Yes, they are." They said: "Let these then (the rulers of their time) also judge by what Allah has revealed." He replied: "It is their religion in which they believe. They claim they live by it (i.e., Islam). And to it they are invited. But if they do not live by a portion of it, then, they are aware that they have sinned." They said: "No, by Allah. Rather, you know for sure (rather, you fear them)." He replied: "That's not true.

You might look at it that way. But I do not. These verses were revealed censuring the Jews and Christians.”

Nevertheless, it is reported of Hudhayfah (b. al-Yaman: Au., whose report is in Hakim who declared it *sahih*: Alusi) that when he was asked whether these verses were not revealed to censure the Jews and Christians, he replied: “The Jews are a comfortable set of brothers unto you. So that, all that is bitter is for them while all that is sweet is for you. Rather, you will follow them in their footsteps in even the most insignificant affairs.”

‘Aamir and Sha’bi have said that the first verse is talking of Muslims, the second of the Jews and the third of the Christians. Ta’us has however said that the “disbelief” in the verse is not the kind that will dislodge a person out of the *millah* altogether. When Ibn ‘Abbas was asked he replied: “When he does that (i.e., does not judge by what Allah has revealed) he is a disbeliever in it, but not a disbeliever in Him, His Prophets, in the Angels and so on.” According to other reports (which is in ibn al-Mundhir and declared *sahih* by Hakim: Alusi) he said: “Yes, disbelief, true; but of a lower order. Not a disbelief of the kind your minds

imagine, and not the kind that will exclude a person from the *millah*.”

Ibn ‘Abbas also said: “Whoever argued against what Allah has revealed, is a *kafir*, while he who admits that it is the commandment of Allah, yet does not judge by it, such a one is a *zalim* and a *fasiq*.”

Ibn Zayd clarified the issue in another manner. He said: “Whoever judged by a book that he wrote with his hands, rejecting the Book of Allah, and believed that what he has in his hands is the word of God, such a man is a *kafir*” (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

After stating that none of the *fuyaha* has ever said that a man becomes a *kafir* simply by failing to judge by what Allah has revealed, Rashid Rida discusses the situation in which Muslim rulers choose to ignore the *Shari’ah* and enforce non-*Shari’ah* laws. What should the Muslims of such a state do? Should they simply avoid getting involved in the state machinery? Then he answers that if, despite their efforts to change the situation, they fail, their land is “*Dar al-Harb*.” It is no different from the land of the unbelievers where Muslims are in minority. (But Rashid Rida does not offer an evidence for why the land in which Allah’s laws

are not enforced is *Dar al-Harb*. After all, even a *Dar al-Kufr* is not necessarily a *Dar al-Harb*; it being a land which has openly declared war against a Muslim country: Au.).

Nonetheless, so far as the Muslim minority lands are concerned, Rashid Rida thinks that the avoidance of involvement in state machinery is not the best course for Muslims in those places. For, of the religious commandments there are two kinds: first, those that pertain to the personal life of an individual and second, those that are concerned with the functioning of the state. Now, there is no way in which a Muslim can rule against the *Shari'ah* in matters of "personal law." Muslims should avoid involvement in a machinery that fiddles with this area of the Islamic laws. As for the state laws, which are truly quite few, such as, for instance, capital punishments, it has been clearly stated by the *fugaha'* that capital punishments

cannot be enforced in *Dar al-Kufr*. This is the opinion of persons such as 'Umar, Abu Darda', Hudhayfah and Imām Abu Hanifah. Ibn Qayyim has stated in "*A'lam al-Mawqi'in*" that such is also the opinion of Imām Ahmad, Ishaq b. Rahwayh, Awza'i and others. As for *Ta'zirat* punishments, we know that they have been left to the discretion of the ruling authorities. Therefore, there should be no harm in accepting judicial posts, so long as one does not enforce a law which is harmful to the Muslims of the state. Otherwise, he might. Though of course, in all situations, a Muslim should endeavor to enforce the laws of Islam and work for the establishment of a true Islamic state (Abridged).

141. Ibn 'Abbas has said that blood wit in place of life or an organ was not allowed for the Israelites. It was granted to this *Ummah* as a mercy from Allah (Ibn Jarir).

142. Basing their judgment on this

[45] Therein We had decreed for them: a life for a life,¹⁴¹ an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth and for wounds retaliation.¹⁴² Nevertheless, whosoever forgives in charity, then that is an expiation for him.¹⁴³ And whoso does not judge by what Allah has revealed ... such ... they (indeed) are the transgressors.

وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ
وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ وَالْأُذْنَ
بِالْأُذُنِ وَالْيَسْنَ بِالْيَسَنِ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ
فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَهُ وَمَنْ لَمْ
يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

verse, the great majority of scholars are of the opinion that the Law of the previous nations (who received revelations), is our Law, unless the Qur'an abrogated it (Qurtubi).

We have a *hadith* in the *Sahihayn* which says that once a woman called Rabi' slapped a slave-girl and broke her tooth. The Prophet ordered the offender's tooth broken. Her brother Anas b. Nadr remonstrated: "Will her tooth be broken, O Apostle of Allah?" The Prophet said: "Anas. Allah's Book demands retaliation." Anas replied: "No by the God who sent you with truth, her tooth will not be broken." It so happened that the victim's kinsfolk agreed to monetary compensation and withdrew their claim of retaliation. The Prophet remarked: "There are people who, if they swear by Allah a thing, He does it their way." However, this retaliatory law is applicable only if the injury is caused intentionally. If it is accidental, monetary compensation

alone will be resorted to (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

The *hadith* in Muslim reports the mother of Rabi' as having said, "No by God who sent you with truth ..." (and not Anas). But it is possible that both Umm Anas as well as Anas b. Nadr had sworn by Allah (Qurtubi).

Fiqh Points

1. There is no retaliation for broken bones, intentional or intentional. Only monetary compensation will have to be accepted (Razi). It is only teeth about which there is no differences in opinion that a just retaliation (*Qisas*) may follow (Ibn Kathir).
2. The judgment about monetary compensation will be withheld until the wounds have healed. However, if a man demands and accepts monetary compensation before his wounds have healed, he can make no further claims, if, after healing,

he suffers from a permanent disability (Ibn Kathir).

3. What happens if the offender dies as a result of retaliation for a wound? Imām Shafē'i has said that there is nothing upon the victim who had demanded the retaliation. But, according to Abu Hanifah, blood-wit is due upon the man who had demanded retaliation (Ibn Kathir).

4. The monetary compensation for two eyes is equal to a man's blood wit (so that, of one eye, it is one half of the blood wit); of the nose one blood wit; of the two ears one blood wit, (so that of one ear it is one half of the blood wit); and of each tooth it is five camels, which is also the blood wit for every finger and toe (Qurtubi).

5. There is no *Qisas* for killing one's own progeny (Thanwi).

6. If one of the claimants forgives his share, (such as one of the several children in case of a murder: Au.) then *Qisas* will stand annulled. Others can only receive monetary compensation.

143. That is, if the victim forgave, equal amount of his sins was forgiven in appreciation of his charitable act. And the rule holds good for this *Ummah* also. It happened

during Mu'awiyah's rule that a Qurayshi pushed an *Ansari* who fell and broke his tooth. He complained to Mu'awiyah and the Qurayshi tried to win some concession. But Mu'awiyah told him that he will have to settle the issue with the *Ansari* alone. Abu Darda' happened to be present. He interjected: "I have heard the Prophet say,

ما من مسلم يُصَاب بشيء من جسده فيهبه، إلا رفعه الله به درجةً وحطَّ عنه به خطيئة. فقال له الأنصاري: أنت سمعته من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ قال: سمعته أذناي ووعاه قلبي! فخلَّى سبيل القرشي

"No hurt Muslim will forgive for a hurt but Allah will raise his status in Paradise and forgive his sins." The *Ansari* turned to him and asked: "Did you hear that from the Prophet yourself?" When he said yes, the *Ansari* forgave the Qurayshi and Mu'awiyah ordered that the *Ansari* be gifted some money. (The report is in Ahmad and Tirmidhi: Ibn Kathir; but Tirmidhi declared it weak). Another opinion, that of Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid and Ibrahim, is that if the victim forgives, the atonement is for the aggressor (in the sense that he has no sin upon him after that) while the victim will be rewarded by Allah

[46] And, in their footsteps We sent 'Isa, son of Maryam, confirming that which came before it of the Tawrah.¹⁴⁴ And We gave him Injil wherein was guidance and a Light,¹⁴⁵ confirming that which came before it of the Tawrah, a guidance and an admonition unto the godfearing.

[47] Therefore, let the people of Injil judge by what Allah has revealed therein. And whoso does not judge by what Allah has revealed ... such ... they (indeed) are the ungodly.

[48] And (now) We have sent down a Book to you in truth, confirming the Book which came before it and a guardian over it.¹⁴⁶ Therefore, judge between them by what Allah has revealed; and follow not their caprices in lieu of what has come to you of the Truth.¹⁴⁷ For every one of you We have prescribed a Law and a Way.¹⁴⁸ And, had Allah desired, He would have made you all one nation.¹⁴⁹ But in order that He may try you in what He has given to (each of) you. Therefore, vie in good deeds; unto Allah is the return of you all. He will then lay open the things in which you were differing.

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَلِيَحْكُمَ أَهْلَ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

(Ibn Jarir).

144. That is, Allah sent 'Isa, son of Maryam, with the message that what was revealed to Musa was the truth, and unless abrogated, stood in force, despite his own appointment as a Messenger (Ibn Jarir).

145. That is, it showed the way to guidance, and, in addition, gave

light in which was cure for doubts and skepticism (Ibn Kathir).

146. Muhaymin of the original has been interpreted by Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah, Mujahid and many others as a guardian and a witness (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Asad writes: "The participle *muhaymin* is derived from the quadrilateral

verb *haymana*, “he watched [over a thing]” or “controlled [it]”, and is used here to describe the Qur’ān as the determinant factor in deciding what is genuine and what is false in earlier Scriptures.”

Yusuf Ali comments: “The Arabic word *muhaimin* is very comprehensive in meaning. It means one who safeguards, watches over, stands witness, preserves, and upholds. The Qur’ān safeguards “the Book”, for it has preserved within it the teachings of all the former Books. It watches over these Books in the sense that it will not let their true teaching to be lost. It supports and upholds these Books in the sense that it corroborates the Word of Allah which has remained intact in them. It stands a witness because it bears testimony to the Word of Allah contained in these Books and helps to sort it out from the interpretation and commentaries of the people which were mixed with it: what is confirmed by the Qur’ān is the Word of Allah and what is against it is that of the people.”

147. Since the Prophet was not expected to follow his caprice, it is his followers that have been addressed through him (Razi, Qurtubi).

148. Qatadah has said that although

all the previous nations followed one religion - that of faith in Oneness of Allah - they all had different *Shari`ah*. Ibn `Abbas, Hasan, Mujahid, Suddi, Dahhak and others have said that the term *shir`ah* here is equivalent of *Sunnah* (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Abu al-`Abbas Muhammad b. Yezid, has, however, given the linguistic meaning of *shir`ah* as the beginning of a path, and of *minhaj* as its continuation (Qurtubi).

Originally *shir`ah* or *Shari`ah* were used for a path that led to a water source. Raghīb and others have said that the word has probably been employed because living and practicing the *Shari`ah* (of Islam) re-invigorates spiritual life as water re-invigorates material life (Alusi).

What the verse is saying is that although the religion of all the Prophets was one, in the sense of basic beliefs and faiths, the Laws differed from nation to nation. The Prophet (*saws*) said, in a *hadīth* of Bukhari:

الْأَنْبِيَاءُ إِخْوَةٌ مِنْ عِلَاقٍ وَأُمَّهَاتُهُمْ شَيْءٌ وَدِينُهُمْ وَاحِدٌ

“Prophets are brothers, sons of the same father but different mothers. Theirs was one religion” (Ibn Kathir).

Asad writes: “The expression ‘every

[49] Judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and follow not their caprices; and be on the guard lest they beguile you from any of what Allah has revealed to you.¹⁵⁰ If they turn away, then know that Allah desires to punish them for some of their sins. And, truly, most people are ungodly.

وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

one of you' denotes the various communities of which mankind is composed. The term *shir'ah* (or *Shari'ah*) signifies, literally, "the way to a watering place" (from which men and animals derive the element indispensable to their life), and is used in the Qur'an to denote a system of law necessary for a community's social and spiritual welfare. The term *minhaj*, on the other hand, denotes an "open road", usually in an abstract sense: that is, "a way of life". The terms *shir'ah* and *minhaj* are more restricted in their meanings than the term *din*, which comprises not merely the laws relating to a particular religion but also the basic, unchanging spiritual truths which, according to the Qur'an, have been preached by every one of God's apostles, while the particular body of laws (*shir'ah* or *Shari'ah*) promulgated through them, and the way of life (*minhaj*) recommended by them, varied in accordance with the exigencies of the time and of each community's cul-

tural development. This "unity in diversity" is frequently stressed in the Qur'an..."

Shawkani adds the pointer that the statement "For every one of you We have prescribed a Law and a Way" is to be understood as a truth of the past. That is, it used to be so. Now, after the Final revelation, there is no Law and no Way, but one. All others stand abrogated.

149. That is, Allah could have given them all the same set of Laws, but He did not for reasons of trying out different people by different means (Ibn Kathir).

150. Ibn 'Abbas has said that once the Jewish rabbis wanted to test the Prophet. So three of them, Ka'b b. Usad, Ibn Suriyyah and Shas b. Qays went to him and said: "You know our position with the Jews. If we declare our belief in you the common people will follow suit. Now there are a few cases pending between us and them. If you will promise to judge in our

[50] Do they seek judgment by the (law of the days of) Ignorance?¹⁵¹ But who is better than Allah in judgment unto a people firm in faith?¹⁵²

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

favor, we will now at this moment declare our faith in you. The Prophet refused and Allah revealed this verse (Ibn Jarir, Zamakhshari, Razi, Qurtubi).

Ibn abi Hatim has also reported this (Ibn Kathir).

151. Ibn Kathir writes: "As do the Tartars (Ibn Kathir's contemporary). Chengis Khan has handed them down a set of laws, compiled by a fellow called Al-Yasiq, who used Judaism, Christianity and Islam as his sources - apart from others. They give this set of laws precedence over the Laws of Islam. Now, whoever did that is an unbeliever. War should be waged against him - whether such transcendence is of the minor type or major - until he submits to the *Shari'ah* of Islam. Bukhari has recorded the Prophet's statement through Ibn 'Abbas:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قَالَ
: « أَبْغَضُ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مُلْجِدٌ فِي الْحَرَمِ وَمُبْتِغٍ فِي
الْإِسْلَامِ سَنَةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَمُطَلِّبٌ دِمَّ امْرِئٍ بغيرِ حَقِّ
لِيُهْرَيْقَ دَمَهُ

"The most despicable in the sight

of Allah is he who spreads corruption in the Makkan Sanctuary, someone who sought *Jahiliyy* ways in Islam, and he who demanded life of a person in an unproven case of retaliation, in order that he might shed innocent blood."

Mawdudi comments: "The word *Jahiliyyah* (gross ignorance) is used as an antonym to Islam. Islam is the way of 'ilm (true knowledge), since it is God Himself Who has shown this way, and His knowledge embraces everything. In contrast is the way that diverges from Islam - the path of Ignorance (*Jahiliyyah*). The pre-Islamic period in Arabia is designated as *Jahiliyyah*, because this was the era when human beings derived their norms from either superstitious beliefs, conjectures and imaginations or from their desires. Whenever such an attitude is adopted, it is bound to be designated as Ignorance. The appellation '*Jahiliyyah*' will apply to every aspect of life which is developed in disregard of the knowledge made available by God..."

152. Sayyid writes: "The text of the

Qur'an defines *Jahiliyyah* at this point. *Jahiliyyah* is man's legislation for man. That is tantamount to the worship of man by man, a denial to worship Allah and refusal to acknowledge His Lordship substituting it with the Lordship of humans and submission to them.

"In this light *Jahiliyyah* is not a phase in human history, rather a phenomenon that has existed all along. It existed yesterday, exists today, and will exist tomorrow. Its character and quality are diagonally opposed to Islam and are totally contradictory to it.

"As for the people - at any time and in any part of the world - they are either governed by the Law of Allah, without any exemption of any kind whatsoever, and they accept that wholeheartedly - in which case they are within the folds of the din of Allah - or they are not governed by the Law of Allah. If they are ruled by the laws of man's making, in whatever form and fashion, and they are satisfied with it, then, in that case they live in *Jahiliyyah*. They are the followers of the religion of those who legislate for them. They are not, in any sense, in the din of Allah. Further, whosoever does not desire to be judged by the Law of Allah, actually

desires to be judged by the *Jahiliyyah*. Whoever denies to accept the *Shari'ah* of Allah, but rather desires to live by the *Jahiliyy Shari'ah* ... lives in a state of *Jahiliyyah*.

"This then is the dividing line ... the parting of ways ... and the people have to make a choice.

"Therefore they are asked, '*Who is better than Allah in judgment unto a people of firm faith?*'

"Of course, who is better than Allah in judgment?

"Who can claim to legislate for the people and judge between them in a way better than what Allah can legislate and judge? If someone does that, what proof he has for such a claim?

"Is it possible for him to say that he understands the people's nature better than their Creator? Can he claim to be kinder towards the people than their Lord? Can he say that he knows in what lies the welfare of the people better than the Sustainer of the people? Can he say that Allah - who legislated for the people for the last time, who sent the Final Messenger, with no Prophet to follow, who declared the Law He sent through him as the everlasting Law - was ignorant of the circumstances that were to follow, of needs that were to arise, the

phenomena that were yet to appear, and therefore, could not take them into account, since they were hidden from Him, and which came to light only much later?

“What is it that he would say who divorces Allah’s Law from everyday life, replacing it with the rule of the Days of Ignorance, placing his own fanciful thoughts, or those of some other people, or those of the people of a particular generation, over Allah’s Judgment and His Laws?

“What is it that he will say ... especially if he claims to be a Muslim?

“Will he point to the circumstances? Situations? People’s disinclination? Fear of enemies? Were all these things not in Allah’s knowledge, while He was ordering the Muslims to establish the religion of Allah, and put it to practice in their everyday life, not to be beguiled of some of what He has revealed?

“Or, will he say that the *Shari`ah* did not take into account the contingent situations that arose subsequently, or of circumstances that presented themselves newly, or of predicaments that showed up latterly? But, were not these things in the knowledge of Allah, while He was emphasizing on the application of His laws

so forcefully, and warning in such severe terms?

“A non-Muslim is free to say what he will ... But a Muslim? Or those who claim to be Muslims? ... About that which is stated above, what will he choose to say and still remain within the fold of Islam, or will there remain in his soul anything of Islam?

“The truth is that this is the parting of ways. There is no escape from a choice. There need be no contention, nor arguments: it is either Islam or *Jahiliyyah*; either belief or disbelief; either Allah’s judgment, or that of the Days of Ignorance.

“Those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed ... they are the unbelievers, the transgressors, the ungodly. And those of the ruled who do not accept to be ruled by Allah’s commandments ... they are unbelievers.

“This is an issue that should be very clear to the Muslim conscience. He should not hesitate from applying this reality to the people of his time and to accept the consequences of such an application on his friends and foes.

“So long as this issue is not clear to the Muslim, he will not be able to set straight his scales. The methods

[51] Believers! Take not the Jews and Christians as intimate friends.¹⁵³ They are friends of each other.¹⁵⁴ Whoso of you befriends them intimately, is one of them.¹⁵⁵ Verily, Allah does not guide a transgressing people.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ
وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ
وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنَّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا
يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

and procedures would not be clear to him. His conscience will not be able to distinguish between the truth and falsehood. He will not be able to take a single step in the right direction. Even if it happens that this issue remains unclear to the great majority of the people, it cannot remain unclear to those who are ‘Muslims,’ and who wish to deserve this majestic appellation.”

153. Although the verse addresses the common believers and is general in its application, it seems to be specially speaking of the hypocrites. And the prohibition is for Muslims from entering into alliance with the Jews and Christians in opposition of Islam and Muslims. It was originally revealed in connection with ‘Ubadah ibn Samit and ‘Abdullah ibn Ubayy. After Badr, ‘Ubadah went to the Prophet and told him that he had several hundred Jewish allies whom he was intending to disown in favor of the friendship with Allah and his Messenger. But ‘Ubayy insisted on their friendship and this verse was

revealed. That is the opinion of ‘Atiyah b. Sa`id, Zuhri and Ibn Is-haq. However, Suddi has said that after the defeat of Uhud, some Muslims suggested that they befriend the Jews against the pagans. Allah revealed this verse (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Ishaq provides the background when he says that the statements of ‘Ubadah ibn Samit and ‘Abdullah ibn Ubayy were made at the time the Muslims laid siege to the forts of the Jewish tribe Banu Qaynuqa, who had broken their treaty with the Prophet. ‘Abdullah ibn Ubayy thrust his hand in the pocket of the mail coat the Prophet had on him, and held him until he had obtained pardon for the Jews locked in their forts. It was then that the two made their statements and Allah revealed this verse. Further, it is reported in Ahmad and Abu Da`ud that on another occasion, when the Prophet visited ‘Abdullah ibn Ubayy, who had fallen sick, he reminded him that he had told him not to befriend the Jews. Ibn Ubayy replied: “As`ad b. Zurarah had an-

gered them and (as a consequence) he died” (Ibn Kathir).

(‘Umar did not even approve of their employment in key positions: Au.). It is reported that when Abu Musa al-Ash‘ari presented the accounts of his governorate prepared by his secretary, ‘Umar was much impressed by the presentation and asked him if his secretary could read out in the mosque a letter that ‘Umar had received from Syria. Abu Musa said he could not because he can not enter the mosque. “Why not?” asked ‘Umar. “Is he in a state of impurity?” Abu Musa told him: “That’s not the reason. Rather, the man is a Christian.” ‘Umar recited this verse and told him to remove him from the post (Ibn Kathir).

154. Most commentators have said that the meaning is: “Jews are friends to Jews, and Christians are friends to Christians,” since the two communities are pitted against each other in hatred and distrust. However, some have pointed out the possibility of the two communities allying with each other in opposition of the Muslims (Au.).

Majid comments: “The Jews and Christians have much in common, and can, and do, readily form a com-

bination against Islam. As the most recent instance of their animosity against Islam, witness the Christian Britain’s zealous sponsoring of ‘Zionism’ and ‘Jewish home in Palestine.’”

Asad writes: “However ... this prohibition of a “moral alliance” with non-Muslims does not constitute an injunction against normal, friendly relations with such of them as are well-disposed towards Muslims. It should be borne in mind that the term *waliyy* has several shades of meaning: “ally”, “friend”, “helper”, “protector”, etc. The choice of the particular term - and sometimes a combination of two terms - is always dependent on the context.”

For a fuller understanding refer to Thanwi’s explanation as in 3: 48 of this work.

155. In sum, Allah forbid the believers from taking the Jews and Christians as their allies against the believers and has declared that those who take them as allies against the believers in Islam are one of them.

Hence we see that although Banu Taqhlub were not Christians in the true sense, but since they were the allies of, and friendly to the (Roman) Christians, inclining toward them in many religious matters, Ibn

[52] Wherefore you will notice those in whose heart is sickness hastening toward them saying: 'We fear a turn of misfortune that might smite us.' But, it may be¹⁵⁶ that Allah will bring you either victory, or a command from Himself,¹⁵⁷ then they will turn regretful of what they conceal in their hearts.

فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يُسَارِعُونَ فِيهِمْ يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَى أَنْ تُصِيبَنَا دَائِرَةٌ فَعَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِّنْ عِنْدِهِ فَيُضْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا أَسْرُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ نَادِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

[53] And the believers will say (amazingly): 'Are these the people who used to so forcefully swear by Allah that they are with you?!' Their works have failed and they are the losers.¹⁵⁸

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ إِنَّهُمْ لَمَعَكُمْ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

`Abbas had ruled that they were to be treated as Christians and their slaughtered animal was lawful to the Muslims, although Hasan and Ibn Sirin (also `Ali: Au.) did not think their slaughtered animal was lawful to the Muslims (Ibn Jarir).

156. 'Asa is literally "may be" or "perhaps" but "when used in reference to an act of God it signifies surety of the happening" (Majid).

157. Suddi has said that by "victory" the allusion is to the fall of Makkah, and by "command" it is *jizyah* (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

158. That's exactly what happened. The Jews of Madinah were either killed or expelled and those of the pagans who befriended them gained nothing from their alliance (Qurtubi); and, throughout history, Mus-

lims never gained anything from the alliance of the unbelievers, nor will they ever (Au.).

Wilayah and Friendship

Despite their personal experiences in every day dealings with the Muslims, both at the individual as well as state level, the non-Muslims level the charge against them that their religion is intolerant and unaccommodating. It is against peaceful co-existence. One of the Qur'anic verses cited as an example is the one under discussion. But, since Arabic words frequently occurring in the translation can be irksome to many, we have resorted to an easier rendering. Otherwise, a proper rendering should be as follows: "O ye who believe, take not the Jews and Christians for *awliya'*. They are friends to each other. And whosoever amongst you

takes them for *awliya'*, he is indeed of them. Surely Allah guides not the unjust people." That is, the verse in question is speaking of *Wilayah* (of which "friendship" is an inadequate equivalent). *Wilayah* is to take someone close to what is in one's bosom, sharing the secrets therein keeping back nothing, and trusting him to the fullest degree, as one would trust his own self. It is in this sense that the Muslims have been ordered not to take the Jews and Christians their *awliya'* (sing. *waliyy*). The verse does not disapprove of friendship in the ordinary sense: in the sense, in which Jews and Christians themselves understand the word, and the sense in which Jews and Christians, or any other people, are friends unto each other. Islam does not bar the Muslims from that kind of friendship at the individual or state level.

The term the Qur'an has used, *wilayah*, is, quite alien to non-Muslims. They have no concept of it at all. It exists among Muslims alone, and manifests itself by way of complete faith, trust and love for the sake of Allah, between two Muslims otherwise totally strangers to each other. It can exist between two Muslims that do not even speak each other's language and have run across each other only a moment earlier. They

might not be friends to each other, yet, they can be *awliya'* to each other.

In contrast friendship requires sharing of certain opinions (not necessarily faith), language, culture, long companionship, and proving true under trying circumstances. Yet, friendship can break off. Two Christians, for instance, can be good friends for a long spell but break off for ever. That cannot happen between two *awliya'*.

Now, since non-Muslims are totally ignorant of this concept of *wilayah*, they can never be *awliya'* to one another, far from being so to a Muslim. Muslims therefore, have been told not to attempt *wilayah* with them. If they do, it will be a one sided affair: an affair in which the Muslim will try to be a *waliyy*, whereas the non-Muslim will only try to be a good friend. Surely that would be an odd arrangement, in which the non-Muslim will draw full advantage, whereas the Muslim will be a loser.

As for friendship with non-Muslims, Islam encourages it. Islam encourages its adherents to be friendly with everyone around. Indeed, it expects them to be not merely friendly with the people, rather, one step ahead, it expects them to be good toward them. If they happen to be within the

gamut of interactions, then Islam expects the Muslims to treat them well and look after their interests. If they happen to be neighbors, Islam disapproves that Muslims sleep well fed, while they go hungry. The Prophet himself, when there was famine, sent across food to the Makkans although they were at war with him and were attempting to get him assassinated.

Again, as for relations between one state and another, Islam does not approve of the state of a perpetual belligerency. The Qur'an says (8: 61):

{ وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ }
[الأنفال: ٦١]

"If they are inclined toward peace, make peace with them, and place trust in Allah."

When the Muslims made peace at Hudaibiyyah in 6 A.H., the Qur'an called it a "victory" despite the disadvantageous terms of the treaty. Yes, it allows - rather orders - the Muslims to retaliate if attacked, and fight to the end. In fact, in case of declared state of war, it recommends that the Muslims launch preemptory attack to weaken the enemy. But in the normal course of things its dictum is (28: 77): *"Do not look for corruption in the land. Verily, Allah does not approve of the corrupt."* For ordinary, peaceful circumstances, it tells the

Muslims (5: 2):

{ وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ
وَالْعُدْوَانِ } [المائدة: ٢]

"Co-operate with each other in matters of virtue and piety but do not cooperate in matters of sins and transgression."

It also tells them to co-operate with people and go with them, hand in hand, to the extent they can go. The Qur'an said (3: 64):

{ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ
أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا
بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ } [آل عمران: ٦٤]

"O people of the Book! Come to an equitable term between us and you: that we worship none but Allah and associate not aught with Him, and that some of us do not declare others as lords besides Allah."

This short note should help remove some misconceptions about Islam, particularly the idea, originally spread by the Orientalists, that Muslims are required by Islam to be perpetually at war with the outside world. Yes, there are lots of things over which the two, Islam and non-Islam, differ with each other. But, they are not sufficient causes for a permanent state of war between them. So long as both are just, equitable, do not interfere in each other's affairs, and are ready to resolve their issues peace-

[54] Believers! Whosoever of you turns from his religion,¹⁵⁹ (might know that) soon Allah will bring forth a people whom He loves, and who love Him:¹⁶⁰ soft with the believers, firm with the unbelievers,¹⁶¹ fighting in the cause of Allah,¹⁶² fearing not the criticism of a critic.¹⁶³ That is a bounty of Allah that He bestows upon whom He will.¹⁶⁴ Allah is All-embracing, All-knowing.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

fully, they can co-exist and meet on many platforms for mutual benefit.

Finally, it should also be noted that the term for friendship in Arabic is sadaqah or *khullah*. But, they are rarely used in Arabic. Therefore, the Qur'an employs this one term for two meanings: depending on the context. When it is employed for Muslims, it is in the meaning of *awliya'*. But when it employs for non-Muslims, such as, "some of them are *awliya'* to others," it uses the term in the sense of "friendship." And so, a proper rendering would be, "they are friends to each other" (Au.).

159. In this verse a prediction was hidden that soon there would be apostasy (Shafi'). And the apostasy referred to here started to appear even before the Prophet's death when Musaylimah the Liar, Aswad al-'Ansi and Tulayha b. Khuwaylid, claimed prophethood and gained some of

their own following among the Muslims. Of these, Wahshi killed Musaylimah, and used to say, "Before Islam I killed the best of Muslims and after Islam I killed the worst of the (unbelievers)." Khuwaylid was defeated in a battle, ran away to Syria, but subsequently became a good Muslim. Aswad al-'Ansi was killed just one day before the Prophet's death. Nonetheless, the truly serious apostasy took place immediately after the death of the Prophet, as a result of which there was a time when Prayers were being offered in no more than three places: Makkah, Madinah and in the Ju'aatha mosque of the 'Abdul Qays tribe in Bahrayn (area above Oman in the south, and south of Kuwait in the north of the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula). The apostates were of two kinds: 1) those who had repudiated the religion of Islam itself, and 2) those who had refused to pay the *zakah*, although they be-

lieved in the rest of the religion of Islam. They said, "We shall pray and fast, but shall not pay the *zakah*." It was Abu Bakr who fought against them and subdued both the classes (Zamakhshari, Qurtubi).

Initially, none of the other Companions seconded his opinion to fight them until Abu Bakr addressed them in words: "It is my obligation that I fight those who, after their Islam during the time of the Prophet, should refuse now to live by its commandments. If they were to assemble together against me, all the forces of the Jinns, the trees and the rocks, and I am alone against them, even then I shall conduct *Jihad* against them." With those words he climbed his horse and was taking off when other Companions went after him, brought him back to his seat, and then it was that plans were laid down for military action against various apostate groups (Shafi').

160. Ibn Jarir writes that according to the earliest interpretation, the allusion by those "*who will turn away from their religion*" is to the renegades immediately after the death of the Prophet, and by the words "those whom He loves, and who love Him," the allusion is to Abu Bakr and others (the *Muhajirun* and *Ansar*) who

fought against the renegades. It is also widely reported that when the verse about those "*whom He loves and who love Him*," was revealed, the Prophet pointed to Abu Musa al-Ash'ari and said: "It is this man and his people who have been alluded to." (The report is in many *hadith* collections including Hakim who has assessed it as *sahih*: Shawkani). But Mujahid, Shahr b. Hawshab and Muhammad ibn Ka'b have said that it is whole of the Yemeni people that have been alluded to (and not merely the Ash'ari of them: Au.) Ibn Jarir himself prefers the second interpretation and says that those who were alluded to (of the people of Yemen), appeared only at the time of `Umar, since, the earlier generations were of the renegades.

Imām Razi however disagrees that the verse under discussion is applicable to Salman al-Farsi or the second-generation Yemenis. (Although it might be applicable in the general sense: Au.). Rather, the context says that it is applicable to Abu Bakr and those who swore allegiance to him and who fought against: (i) false prophets (ii) apostates after the Prophet, and (iii) those who refused to pay *zakah*. It was they who gave Islam the upper hand that lasts to this day.

Mahabbah

Love of Allah by His bondsmen draws a good deal of commentary from Alusi. Herewith the sum and substance: Apparently, there is nothing wrong in the answer which is normally given out when scholars are asked about the exact nature and essence of a believer's love of Allah. The usual answer is: it is nothing but His obedience. That is to say, obedience is a demand as well as a proof of one's love of Allah. In other words obedience is equated with love and love with obedience, each treated as a synonym of the other. (But love itself is not defined). Therefore, this answer needs some modification because, firstly, it is disallowed that the text of the Qur'an be given an allegorical meaning unless the apparent and literal meaning is completely out of question. (In this context, love cannot be replaced with obedience). We might, rather, look at the literal meaning of the term *mahabbah* to find out if can be understood in its original sense and meaning. Now, the lexical meaning of the term *mahabbah* is one's inclination toward someone or something with a feeling of delight. Now, this feeling of delight is of two kinds: sensual, such as what one derives when he looks at a beautiful face, or when he eats

a delicious food, etc.; the other kind is known as the rational kind (*`aqliyy*), such as the delight one derives out of status, power, knowledge and the like. Further, the intensity of the feelings also differs. For instance, the pleasure one derives out of ruling over a large nation is not the same as what he derives out of ruling over a village. Consequently, the pleasure derived from knowledge will depend upon the kind and nature of knowledge. If it is high quality knowledge then the pleasure would also be of a high degree, and vice versa. Now, man's knowledge tells him that there is nothing that is better or more perfect than our Lord. Consequently, the pleasure derived from the knowledge of His Person and Attributes can be the most delightful thing, and therefore, the love arising out of it can only be the most soothing (to the soul). It is when one has gained this *mahabbah* that he is inspired to obedience and concordance (*al-ta'at wa al-muwafiqat*). Thus, it is demonstrated that a believer's love of Allah is not only possible, rather, a reality, and, in fact, a necessary condition of faith. And, thus, in the light of the above discussion, it is possible to interpret the word *mahabbah* in this context in its literal sense, without having to look for alterna-

tive interpretations. It should also be clear that Allah's obedience is an outgrowth, demand, or effect of the *mahabbah* (and not its cause, even if its value toward that effect cannot be underestimated: Au.). Consider for instance, the report of the bedouin who asked about the Hour of Doom. The Prophet asked him: "What have you prepared for it?" The man answered: "Not much by way of acts and deeds. But I love Allah and His Messenger." The Prophet replied: "A man will be with those he loved." It is evident from this that acts of obedience and good deeds are not a necessary ingredient of love, nor they are love themselves. The bedouin in fact denied their absence but claimed the existence of love. And the Prophet did not deny him rather acknowledged his claim.

Again, continues Alusi, the feelings of love differ in intensity. *Ishq* is the higher and more intensive form of love. But those who have not experienced it deny it, just as a child does not believe that older people draw great pleasure from sexual intercourse. For him, to be playing with the toys, is the supreme end of pleasure. In the like manner, one who is immersed in sensual or sexual pleasures cannot imagine that there is any other pleasure beyond what

he experiences, such as, for example, that of power, or popularity. Thus, every group makes fun of the one that is above it and believes that the others are wasting their time.

Alusi also adds a little below: Al-Sulami has said that it is by the grace of Allah's love of His slaves that they love Him. Otherwise, how can they ever find His love? What comparison is there, after all, between dust and the Lord of all lords? He also said that a sure sign of love is drunkenness. Otherwise, it is not the real thing. A bedouin woman said about love that it is "too secret to be shown and too revealing to be successfully hidden." It is hidden like fire in the stones. If you strike you might see a spark. But, if you leave it alone, you will suspect nothing. Another point that might be considered is that if this is the description of the love of the incorporeal, then what do you imagine of the love of the corporeal - that of Allah toward His slaves?!

Sayyid Qutb adds: "When, as we know, love is beyond description, being a feeling that defies the power of words and expression, little of it, therefore, do we come across in human writings. The following lines of Rabi'a 'Adawiyyah have always had a special effect on me:

*Were it not for Your Being sweetening
this bitter life,*

*Were it not for Your approval, while
the people are irate,*

*Were it not for the making between me
and You,*

*Between me and the worlds is all but
destruction.*

*Your Love assured, all else is endurable
For, all that is above the dust is dust."*

The lines however, belong to Abu Firas, famously known by his *kunniyyah* as Farazdaq who died in 110 AH (Au.).

161. Being soft implies that if there is, for instance, a dispute between two believers over rights, both are yielding to each other (Shafi').

162. Imām Razi points out that this verse is a definite repudiation of the *Shi'ah's* faith which holds that Abu Bakr and those who swore allegiance to him turned apostates when they denied `Ali the right of caliphate. Had that been the case, surely Allah would have kept His promise and brought forth a people who would have fought those renegades. But, as a matter of fact, it is exactly the opposite that happened. It was Abu Bakr and those who had declared allegiance to him that fought against the renegades and subdued them to the rule of Islam.

163. Musnad Ahmad has recorded a narration of Abu Dharr in which he says,

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ قَالَ قَالَ أَمْرِي خَلِيلِي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِسَبْعِ أَمْرِي بِحُبِّ الْمَسَاكِينِ وَالِدُنُوبِ مِنْهُمْ وَأَمْرِي أَنْ أَنْظُرَ إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ دُونِي وَلَا أَنْظُرَ إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ فَتَوَقَّي وَأَمْرِي أَنْ أَصِلَ الرَّجْمَ وَإِنْ أَدْبِرْتَ وَأَمْرِي أَنْ لَا أَسْأَلَ أَحَدًا شَيْئًا وَأَمْرِي أَنْ أَقُولَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنْ كَانَ مُرًّا وَأَمْرِي أَنْ لَا أَخَافَ فِي اللَّهِ لَوْمَةً لَأَنِّمِ وَأَمْرِي أَنْ أَكْثِرَ مِنْ قَوْلٍ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ فَإِنَّهُنَّ مِنْ كَنْزٍ تَحْتَ الْعَرْشِ: مسند أحمد

“My friend enjoined me seven things: that I should love the poor and seek their company, that I should look at one below me and not at one above me, that I should join the kin even if they abandon me, that I should not ask anyone anything, that I should speak out the truth, even if it were to be bitter, that I should not fear in Allah’s affairs the criticism of a critic, and, that I should often say the words (tr.: “There is no power nor strength but with Allah”); because they are from the treasures below the *`Arsh*.”

Ahmad has another tradition narrated by Abu Sa'id al-Khudri which reports the Prophet as saying:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَلَا لَا يَمْتَعَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ رَهْبَةَ النَّاسِ أَنْ يَقُولَ بِحَقِّي إِذَا رَأَهُ أَوْ شَهَدَهُ فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَقْرَبُ مِنْ أَجْلِ وَلَا يُبَاعِدُ مِنْ رِزْقِي أَنْ يَقُولَ بِحَقِّي أَوْ يَذْكُرَ بِعَظِيمِ

“Lo! Let not someone’s fear prevent you from speaking out the truth that he has observed. For, it will neither distance him away nor bring him closer to his sustenance if he should speak out the truth or make a statement of import.”

Another report of Abu Sa’id al-Khudri, also in Ahmad as well in Ibn Majah, quotes the Prophet (*saws*) as having said:

لَا يَخْتَرَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ تَفْسَهُ أَنْ يَرَى أَمْرًا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْهِ فِيهِ
مَقَالٌ لَا يَشُومُ بِهِ فَيُلْقِي اللَّهَ فَيَقُولَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ
تَقُولَ يَوْمَ كَذَا وَكَذَا قَالَ يَا رَبِّ إِنِّي خَشِيتُ النَّاسَ
قَالَ قَالَ إِيَّايَ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَى

“Let not one of you belittle himself to say in an affair pertaining to Allah whatever that ought to be said, to be asked on the Day of Judgment as to what prevented him from speaking out in connection with such and such an affair. He will reply, ‘I feared the people.’ He will be told, ‘I was more deserving that you feared Me.’” (Nevertheless, the above *ahadith* have to be balanced with) the *sahih* one in Ibn Majah which

reports that the Prophet once said:

“ما ينبغي لمؤمن أن يذلل نفسه، قالوا: وكيف يذلل نفسه يا رسول الله؟ قال: ”يتحمل من البلاء ما لا يطيق“

“Let not one of you belittle himself.” He was asked: “How can a believer do that?” He replied: “By bringing upon himself a tribulation that he cannot bear” (Ibn Kathir).

164. Shabbir writes: Allah’s act of strengthening Islam goes on and on. In every age we observe that whenever a set of foolish Muslims intend to give up their religion, Allah raises another set of people who embrace Islam and who prove to be more knowledgeable and more capable than the old Muslims.

165. The word in the original is “*Raki’un*.” It draws the following comment from Rashid Rida: “In pre-Islamic times, when a man abandoned the duties devoting himself to one God alone, he was referred to as “*Raki’*”. He also quotes a couple of poetical pieces to prove the point.

[55] Surely, your true friend is Allah, His Messenger, and the believers: those who perform the Prayers, spend in charity and are humble.¹⁶⁵

[56] And whosoever makes Allah his friend, His Messenger and the believers, (might know that) it is the party of Allah that is victorious.

[57] Believers! Take not those who take your religion in mockery and as a sport - of those who were given the Book before you, and the unbelievers - as intimate friends. Fear Allah if you are believers.

[58] When you call to Prayer,¹⁶⁶ they take it in mockery and as a sport.¹⁶⁷ That is because they are a people who do not use reason.¹⁶⁸

[59] Say, 'People of the Book! Do you take revenge from us for any cause other than that we believe in Allah, in what was sent down to us and what was sent down before? Surely, most of you are ungodly.'

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

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ
حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْعَالِيُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ
اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُؤًا وَلَعِبًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكَافِرَ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَإِذَا نَادَيْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ اتَّخَذُوهَا هُزُؤًا وَلَعِبًا
ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ هَلْ تَنْقِمُونَ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ
آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلُ
وَأَنْ أَكْثَرُكُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

Suddi, Mujahid and others have said that the verse was especially referring to `Ali ibn abi Talib who gave a ring to a beggar while he was in the act of *ruku`* in a Prayer (Ibn Jarir). But Ibn Kathir traces several reports concerning `Ali and this particular act of charity and proves the untrustworthiness of all of them. Further, he adds that linguistically also it would be erroneous to translate the verse as: "... those who spend in charity while they are bowing down."

166. Kalbi has said that when the Prayer-call was raised and the Muslims began to pray, the Jews made fun of their bows and prostrations, saying about the Prayer-call, 'Why do they have to bray like donkeys?' These verses were revealed in response to it (Qurtubi).

The Adhan

Qurtubi writes: There was no *Adhan* at Makkah. People were brought into assembly by the word that went

around. It was introduced in Madinah. Three people seem to have dreamt of its wordings: `Abdullah ibn Zayd, `Umar ibn al-Khattab and Abu Bakr. It is also reported that the Prophet had heard these words in his *Mi`raj* journey. As for its legality, it is, according to some scholars, *wajib* on the Muslims, whenever and wherever they gather for Prayers. A *hadith* of Muslim says that when the Prophet went out in a campaign, he waited for the *Adhan* of *Fajr*. If the villagers did not raise the call, he attacked them. According to others it is *Sunnah mu`akkadah*. Therefore, according to Imām Shafē`i, Abu Hanifah, his two pupils, Thawri, Ahmad, Ishaq, Abu Thawr and Tabari, if a traveler did not say the *Adhan*, (and Prayed without saying it) he need not repeat his Prayers, but it is strongly reprehensible that he should do so. Further, Abu `Amr has said that Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Ishaq b. Rahwayh, Da`ud b. `Ali and Muhammad ibn Jarir Tabari have ruled that in view of various reports, it seems to be perfectly alright to say both in the *Adhan* and *Iqamah Allahu Akbar* either four times, or, just twice. The Prophet and his Companions did it either way. Also, there is no difference in opinion that *qad qamat al-Salah* should be added in *Iqamah* and said

twice. Also, there is no difference of opinion over the issue that every *Adhan* has to be said after the entry of the Prayer-time (not before), except for the *Fajr Adhan* which can be said before dawn.

167. Suddi has reported that there was a Christian in the outskirts of Madinah who made fun of the Prayer-call. When the caller said, "I bear witness that Muhammad is His Messenger," he said in response, "Burnt be the liar." It so happened that once his slave-girl entered his room with a burning lamp. Something caught fire and spread quickly. It reduced the house to ashes along with the occupants (Ibn Jarir, Zamakhshari, Razi, Qurtubi).

Ibn Majah has an interesting report coming from Abu Mahzurah. He said: "I was travelling along with some people when we came across the Prophet and his party returning from Hunayn. (That is, he was in another party: Au.). It so happened that the Prophet's caller called for the Prayers. We moved aside and began to make fun of the call by shouting out in repetition. The Prophet heard us and sent for us. When we were presented he asked: 'Whose voice was it that I heard rising highest?' Everyone pointed his finger at

me. And they were not wrong. The Prophet ordered: 'Get up now and say the *adhan*.' So I rose up although nothing was more hateful to me than the Prophet and what he was ordering me do. Never the less, I stood before him and he began to say the words saying: 'Say, "*Allahu Akbar*,"' and so on, until I had called out the whole of the *adhan*. When I was finished he beckoned me and gave me a little purse which had some sliver in it. Then he placed his hand upon the forehead (of Abu Mahzurah) and passed it over his face, then his chest, then his liver, until his hands had reached Abu Mahzura's navel. Then he said: 'May Allah bless in you and over you.' I pleaded: 'O Apostle of Allah. Allow me to call for Prayers in Makkah.' He said: 'You have my permission.' With that all the hatred that was in me for him was gone from me and was replaced by love. I went up to 'Itab b. Usayd - the Prophet's governor over Makkah - and by the order of the Prophet began to call for Prayers" (Qurtubi). IN varying details, the report is in Ahmad, Muslim and in four of the *Sunan* (i.e., Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, Abu Da'ud and Nasa'i: Au.). Abu Mahzurah's real name was Samurah b. Mu'ayyir.

He was one of the four *Mu'adhhdhins* of the Prophet's time and enjoyed a long life (Ibn Kathir).

168. The reference of course, is to a certain class of them, for, there have always been people who have been deeply impressed by the Prayer-call. Majid quotes an English lady's response: "As the beautiful cadences are elaborated to rise and fall as the Muezzin moves around the minaret to call the four corners of the world beneath, I wonder how anyone can listen to that call unmoved. Surely does the Koranic Arabic hold as spell-bound as the reading of the Sacred Book thrills its hearers."

In his article on Bilal, 'Aqqad has quoted La Fcadio Hern as saying: "Without any doubt, the serene Muslim call to Prayer, especially when one happens to hear it for the first time, has an entirely tranquilizing effect upon the heart" (Au.).

169. Ibn 'Abbas has said that a group of Jews comprising of such important men as Abu Yasir, Rafi' b. abi Rafi', Zayd, Khalid and others came to the Prophet and asked him what he thought of the previous Prophets. He told them that he believed in the Prophethood of Ibrahim, Isma'i,

[60] Say, 'Shall I tell you a recompense with Allah worse than that?¹⁶⁹ Those whom Allah cursed, with whom He is angry, some of whom He made apes and swine¹⁷⁰ and those who worshipped Evil: these are the worse situated and the further astray from the straight path.

[61] When they come to you they say, 'We have believed.' But the truth is, they entered with disbelief and departed with it. Allah is well aware of what they were concealing.

قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِّنْ ذَلِكَ مَثُوبَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْقِرَدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوتَ أُولَئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ عَن سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٦٠﴾

وَإِذَا جَاؤُوكُمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَقَدْ دَخَلُوا بِالْكُفْرِ وَهُمْ قَدْ حَرَجُوا بِهِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

counting many others including Jesus. When they heard his name they jumped and said that they did not know of any religion worse than that of the Prophet. Thereupon Allah revealed this verse (Ibn Jarir, Zamakhshari, Qurtubi).

The above report explains why the following verse used the words, "worse than that." It was first the Jews who had used the words "worse than that" to describe the Islamic message (Au.).

170. Are the present-day monkeys and swine the transfigured people of the past? Ahmad has a report which says that the Companions of the Prophet asked him whether the present day swine and apes were descendants of those who were transformed for their sins. He replied:

« إن الله تعالى لم يهلك قوما أو يمسخ قوما فيجعل لهم نسلا ولا عاقبة ، وإن القردة والخنازير كانت قبل ذلك »

“No. Allah Most High did not destroy a nation, or disfigure them and then brought out their progeny nor did He leave anyone behind (i.e., they all perished). As for the swine and apes of today, they were in existence since before them” (Ibn Kathir).

171. The use of the prefix “fi” before “yusari`una” (instead of “ila”) gives out the sense of a people who are sunk in perfidy and debauchery and run to every evil they discover (Manar).

172. Majid writes: “Compare the denunciation in their own Scriptures:

[62] You will find most of them competing¹⁷¹ in sin, rebellion,¹⁷² and in devouring the unlawful.¹⁷³ Surely, evil is that they have been doing.¹⁷⁴

وَتَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتِ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

[63] Why should not the godly men and the rabbis forbid them the words of sin and consumption of the unlawful?¹⁷⁵ Evil indeed is that which they have been doing.¹⁷⁶

لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتِ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

‘Their feet run fast to evil, and make haste to shed blood.’ (Pr. 1: 16) ‘Your iniquities have separated you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you... Your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongues hath muttered perverseness. None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth; they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity ... Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their path’ (Is. 59: 2-7).”

173. Majid quotes again: “Compare the OT:- ‘They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire’ (Mi. 3: 10-11).”

Note how true this is when applied to today’s Israelis. (Au.)

Majid also quotes: ‘Thy princes are

rebellious and companions of thieves; every one loveth gifts and followeth after rewards; they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.’ (Is. 1: 23) ‘Yea, they are greatly dogs which can never have enough’ (56: 11).”

174. That is, evil was their transgression (Ibn Kathir).

175. The *Salaf*, such as Ibn ‘Abbas and Dahhak, used to say that this is the toughest of Allah’s indictments against the scholars (Ibn Jarir, Razi, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani). This is because, as they say, “He who does not prevent an evil is a doer himself.”

And the Prophet has said in a *sahih hadith* of Abu Da’ud and others:

مَا مِنْ قَوْمٍ يُعْمَلُ فِيهِمْ بِالْمَعَاصِي هُمْ أَكْثَرُ وَأَكْثَرُ مِمَّنْ يُعْمَلُهُمْ لَمْ يُعْبِرُوهُ إِلَّا عَمَّهُمُ اللَّهُ بِعِقَابٍ

“No people in whom sins are committed while they are stronger and larger in numbers against those who commit the sins, ex-

[64] The Jews said, 'Allah's hand is fettered.'¹⁷⁷ Fettered are their hands,¹⁷⁸ and cursed for what they utter. Rather, both His hands are outstretched;¹⁷⁹ He dispenses as He will.¹⁸⁰ What has been sent down to you by your Lord will actually increase insolence and disbelief in many of them. We have cast between them enmity and hatred (to last) until the Day of Judgement.¹⁸¹ Every time they kindle a fire for war, Allah extinguishes it.¹⁸² Yet they strive mischief in the land, while Allah does not approve of the mischief-mongers.

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

cept that Allah sends down a common punishment” (Qurtubi).

Ahmad also has this report. In fact, Ibn Majah has the additional comment that they are punished before their death (Ibn Kathir).

The above *hadith* has been declared Hasan (Au.).

176. The word *sana`a* of the original implies a crafty act or one which requires some skill (Qurtubi).

As Raghib has pointed out, the “*sana`a*” of the original implies not only a more forceful act, but also a more deliberate one than the simple “*fa`ala*.” Every “*saani`*” is also a “*faa`il*” but every “*faa`il*” is not a “*saani`*” (*Manar*).

177. Ibn Is-haq, Tabarani (in his *Awsat*) and Ibn Marduwayh have re-

ported Ibn `Abbas as saying that a Jew called Nabbash b. Qays said to the Prophet: “Your Lord is miserly. He does not spend.” But Abu al-Sheikh has said that it was Finhas who had made this statement, prompting the revelation of this verse (Shawkani).

Shabbir comments: “The people of the Book contemporaneous to the Prophet were so advanced in their rebellious attitudes and insolence toward religion that they had lost all distinction between mortal men and God. They could utter such blasphemies against Allah that could raise the hair on any believer’s head, but to them it was no more than a casual statement of no consequence.

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Qatadah, Suddi and Dahhak have said that what the Jews meant when they said: “Allah’s hands are fettered” is that God

is miserly (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

In other words, the word “hand,” its fettering, or its outstretching is not to be understood in the literal sense (Au.).

Imām Razi points out that some people believe that the phrase “*Allah's hand*” is to be understood in the literal sense. They cite verses, such as 175 of *surah al-A'raf*, to substantiate their claim. But there are several problems with this kind of literal interpretation. Firstly, such an interpretation leads to Allah having a form, or a body. But a body cannot be separated from movement. That makes Him a caused being, which is unacceptable. Further, limbs necessarily have dimensions. And dimensions impose limits, which is also wrong to imagine of Allah. Therefore, He cannot have Hands in the literal sense. As for the *Salaf*, their belief was that Allah has Hands and other limbs that He has spoken of. But we do not know anything about their reality. Therefore, we believe in the words, without taking them in the literal sense and without seeking further clarification.

178. Whether this is taken as a curse, or as a statement of fact or not, it remains true that the Jews are the most

miserly people on the earth. Apart from the dictionary definition of the term in olden dictionaries and the stories that circulated in the West, including one dramatized by Shakespeare, immortalizing the Jewish attitude to money, it might also be noted that despite being much richer than the Arabs in its neighborhood, thanks to the billions sent to it by the Jews of the West and because of the monetary and non-monetary help by the Western nations to this outpost, the state of Israel has not spent a penny as aid on any of the extremely poor nations such as those of Africa, while an ordinary Jew enjoys the life standard of American citizens at the cost of their taxes (Au.).

179. That is, Allah is extremely generous, bestowing without measure. The phrase “*both His hands*” has been interpreted to be alluding to His bounties of this present and the next world (Shawkani).

A *hadith* of the *Sahihayn* says:

إِنَّ يَمِينَ اللَّهِ مَلَأَى لَا يَغِيظُهَا تَفَقُّةٌ سَحَابُ اللَّيْلِ
وَالنَّهَارِ أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا أَنْتَقِقُ مِنْهُ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَنْقُصْ مَا فِي يَمِينِهِ وَعَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ وَبِيَدِهِ
الْأُخْرَى الْفَيْضُ أَوْ الْقَبْضُ يَرْفَعُ وَيُخْفِضُ

“Allah’s Right Hand is full. Ex-
pending day and night does not
exhaust what He has. Do you not

you see that He has been expending from the day He created this world, but that has not exhausted what His right hand possesses?" (The Prophet further said): "His *ʿArsh* is on water. In His other hand is "*al-Fayd*" (the bestowal) or "*al-Qabd*" (withholding) – [according to other versions, "the Balance": Au.]. He elevates or lowers."

He also said,

أَنْفِقْ يُنْفَقَ عَلَيْكَ

"Expend, and you will be expended upon." - Ibn Kathir.

180. That is, Allah bestows upon whom He will and in measures He will. He said at another place (42: 27):

وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَكِنْ يُنزِّلُ بِقَدَرٍ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ [الشورى
: ٢٧]

"Were Allah to plentifully bestow upon His slaves, surely they would rebel in the land. Therefore, He sends down (sustenance) in measures He will" (Au.).

Keeping in mind that the Jews had actually uttered the words the Qur'an has mentioned here, the following from Asad might yet be read with profit: "The phrase "one's

hand is shackled" is a metaphorical expression denoting niggardliness, just as its opposite - "his hands is stretched out wide" - signifies generosity (Zamakhshari). However, these two phrases have a wider meaning as well, namely, "lack of power" and "unlimited power", respectively (Razi). It would appear that the Jews of Medina, seeing the poverty of the Muslims, derided the latter's conviction that they were struggling in God's cause and that the Qur'an was divinely revealed. Thus, the "saying" of the Jews mentioned in this verse, "God's hand is shackled", as well as the parallel one in 3: 181, "God is poor while we are rich", is an elliptical description of their attitude towards Islam and the Muslims - an attitude of disbelief and sarcasm which could be thus paraphrased: "If it were true that you Muslims are doing God's will, He would have bestowed upon you power and riches; but your poverty and your weakness contradict your claim - or else this claim of yours amounts, in effect, to saying that God cannot help you." This outstanding example of the elliptical mode of expression (*ijaz*) so often employed in the Qur'an has, however, a meaning that goes far beyond the historical circumstances to which it refers: it illustrates an

[65] Had the people of the Book believed and been godfearing,¹⁸³ surely We would have acquitted them of their evil deeds and admitted them to gardens of delight.

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَكَفَّرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَا دَخَلْنَاَهُمْ جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٦٥﴾

[66] And, had they observed the Tawrah and Injil,¹⁸⁴ and that which has (now) been sent down to them by their Lord, surely they would have enjoyed (sustenance) from their above and from their feet below.¹⁸⁵ Some of them are a just people;¹⁸⁶ but most of them - evil are the things they do.

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَأَكْلُوا مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ إِنَّهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُّقْتَصِدَةٌ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

attitude of mind which mistakenly identifies worldly riches or power with one's being, spiritually, "on the right way". In the next sentence the Qur'an takes issue with this attitude and declares, in an equally elliptical manner, that all who see in material success an alleged evidence of God's approval are blind to spiritual truths and, therefore, morally powerless and utterly self-condemned in the sight of God."

181. That is, Allah has cast hatred among the Jews, so that there will never be any internal unity among them. However, some have thought that the allusion is to the enmity between the Jews and Christians (Alusi and others).

182. It was customary of the pre-Islamic Arabs that when they decided on a war, they kindled a fire on a hill

top (Alusi).

183. The importance of *Taqwa* is apparent. (When someone spoke of faith) Hasan (al-Busri) exclaimed:

هذا العمود فأين الاطناب

"Well. This is the post (i.e., faith), but where are the ropes (i.e., *Taqwa* for erecting the tent of Islam)?" – *Kashshaf*.

184. (That is, had they lived by those Revelations which is supported by a *hadith* according to which: Au.):

عَنْ زِيَادِ بْنِ لَبِيدٍ قَالَ ذَكَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ شَيْئًا قَالَ وَذَلِكَ عِنْدَ أَوَّانٍ ذَهَابِ الْعِلْمِ قَالَ قُلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ يَذْهَبُ الْعِلْمُ وَتَحْتَهُ تَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ وَتَقْرَأُهُ أَبْنَاءُنَا وَيَقْرَأُهُ أَبْنَاءُنَا أَوْ أَبْنَاءُهُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ قَالَ تَكَلِّتُكَ أُمَّكَ يَا ابْنَ أُمِّ لَبِيدٍ إِنْ كُنْتَ لِأَرَاكَ مِنْ أَقْتَمِهِ رَجُلٍ بِالْمَدِينَةِ أَوْلَيْتَسِ هَذِهِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَى يَقْرَأُونَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ فَلَا يَتَّقِعُونَ بِمَا فِيهِمَا بِشَيْءٍ

Once the Prophet was speak-

ing of something when he said: "That would happen (to the Muslims) because they would have lost knowledge;" at that Ziyad b. Labeed asked: "How could that happen, O Messenger of Allah, when we teach our children the Qur'ān and they will teach their children (and that will go on) until the Day of Resurrection?" The Prophet replied: "Your mother may lose you O Ibn Labeed. I thought you were the most learned man of Madinah. Do the Jews and Christians not read the *Tawrah* and *Injil*, but profit nothing from them?" The *hadith* is in Ahmad and Ibn Majah, and is a *sahih* narration (Ibn Kathir).

185. Some scholars have interpreted these words to mean that as a consequence of their belief, they would have drawn their sustenance in abundance, without much hardship (Ibn Kathir).

Mufti Shafi` points out that this is not the general rule, rather a reminder to a specific people to the effect that had they observed their Book, Allah would have given them free sustenance. Otherwise, the general promise to all believers of all times is that of a "goodly life," which has nothing to do with their material

well-being.

Alusi writes: The promise of forgiveness and rewards in the Hereafter is of general nature: applicable to all the peoples of the Book of all times. However, the worldly rewards stated in the verse seem to be especially for the people of the Book contemporary to the Prophet. Had they believed in the Prophet, they would have been blessed with an easy sustenance in this world. This later promise of immediate ease is, obviously, not for all the peoples of the Book of all times, for we see many of them those who believed in our Prophet, but are poor in application, yet living a life of great comfort, while, conversely, many of the newly-converted people of the Book who observe the *Tawrah*, *Injil* and the Qur'ān meticulously, live a life of stress and wants. Indeed, the observation is that some of those who had been leading a luxurious life previous to acceptance of Islam, actually ran their ship into rough waters after the acceptance of Islam and a faithful application of its commandments to their lives.

Probably it is the difficulty of verse 66 which prompts the following from Asad. "(This) is an allusion to the blessing which accompanies the realization of a spiritual truth, as

[67] O Messenger, deliver that which has been sent down to you from your Lord.¹⁸⁷ If you do not, then you would not have conveyed His message.¹⁸⁸ Allah will protect you from the people.¹⁸⁹ Surely, Allah does not show the way to an unbelieving people.¹⁹⁰

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

well as the social happiness which is bound to follow an observance of the moral principles laid down in the genuine teachings of the Bible.” He also adds: “It should be borne in mind that the phrase “if they would but truly observe (*law annahum aqamu*) the *Torah* and Gospel”, etc., implies an observance of those scriptures in their genuine spirit, free of the arbitrary distortions due to that “wishful thinking” of which the Qur’ān so often accuses the Jews and the Christians - such as the Jewish concept of “the chosen people”, or the Christian doctrines relating to the alleged divinity of Jesus and the “vicarious redemption” of his followers.”

186. Such as Najashi the king of Negus, the former Jew `Abdullah ibn Sallam, and many others who saw in the Prophet a true Messenger and fearlessly acknowledged it (Ibn Kathir, Razi, Qurtubi and others).

187. Alusi writes: Some scholars have said that the Prophet was re-

quired to convey to the people only that which had anything to do with their spiritual or material welfare. That which was not of that category was not to be necessarily conveyed to the people. There were things that were only for the Prophet. Verse 10 of *surah Al-Najm* says:

فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ مَا أَوْحَىٰ [النجم : ١٠]

“Then He revealed unto His slave what He revealed,” is in this vein. Allah did not reveal to the people what He revealed then, at that moment, to His Messenger. And, what was especially for the Prophet could have remained unknown to others. AL-Tibi has added that with this in the background the report of Bukhari has to be understood in which Abu Hurayrah said:

حَفِظْتُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَعَاءَيْنِ فَأَمَّا أَحَدُهُمَا فَبَيَّنْتُهُ وَأَمَّا الْآخَرُ فَلَوْ بَيَّنْتُهُ قُطِعَ هَذَا الْبَلْعُومُ

“I obtained two kinds of knowledge from the Prophet. The first kind I have spread across.

As for the other kind, were I to narrate it, my throat would be slit.” He was alluding to esoteric knowledge. That is how it seems Bukhari also understood it. (Alusi’s note ends here).

(Alusi might have a point. But the esoteric interpretation of the *hadith* of Abu Hurayrah has not been universally accepted. See Ibn Hajr: Au.)

Nevertheless, Alusi continues: ‘Abdul Wahhab Sha’rani has however warned that the best of Sufi knowledge that has been handed down to us is the result of faithful following of the Qur’ān and the *Sunnah*. Whoever lives by what he knows, would also be given to talk in the manner they talked and is likely to possess a part of what they jointly possessed. It all depends on how God-conscious one is and how devoted to Him. The more one acts in accordance with what he knows, the more difficult appreciation of his words become. It is said that somebody reported to his Sheikh that the words of another were quite incomprehensible. The Sheikh replied: “That is because you possess two shirts while he has one.” This then is what the non-Sufis call as the *‘ilm al-batin* (esoteric knowledge) of the *Sufiyya*, although, in reality, it is not *‘ilm al-batin* since, in

truth, *‘ilm al-batin* is “the knowledge about Allah.” As for what Allah has taught the people of the knowledge of the *Shari’ah* or any other kind, it is *‘ilm al-zahir* and not *‘ilm al-batin*.

Alusi further writes: My own considered opinion is that all that the Prophet had of knowledge, whether of the secrets pertaining to the divinity or those pertaining to the *Shari’ah* is contained in the Qur’ān. Allah has said (16: 89):

وَوَيْلٌ لَّنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تَيْمَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ [النحل :
[١٨٩

“Surely, We have sent down a Book to you making clear everything.” The Prophet said in a report of Tirmidhi and others: “There would be trials and tribulations.” He was asked: “What’s the way out?” He replied: “Allah’s Book. It contains the tidings about you as well about those after you.” Imām Shafe’i has said that all that is in the *Sunnah* is what the Prophet understood from the Qur’ān. This is strengthened by that *hadith* of the Prophet in the *Awsat* of Tabarani which reports the Prophet as having said: “I do not declare anything as lawful or unlawful but that which Allah has declared lawful or unlawful in His Book.” This knowledge he passed on to his senior Companions and others such as Ibn

Mas`ud. (Not surprisingly, therefore,) it is reported of Ibn `Abbas that he said that if he lost his camel's halter he would search it in the Qur`ān. But, gradually, the later generations lost the proficiency. In fact, some people have even worked out the age of the Prophet as sixty-three years from a verse of the chapter *al-Munafiqun* which says:

وَلَنْ يُؤَخِّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهَا [المنافقون : ١١]

"Allah will never delay a soul's term when its term has come." For, *surah al-Munafiqun* is the sixty-third chapter of the Qur`ān followed by *surah al-Taghabun*. And it was *taghabun* (mutual loss) that the Companions suffered with the loss of the Prophet.

Continuing to discuss the esoteric knowledge of the *Sufiya*, Alusi writes: I have several times heard my Sheikh assert, 'Whoever thinks that the "Truth" is in sharp contrast to the *Shari`ah*, or the other way round, is an ignorant man. Rather, they go together, hand in hand, so that, the *Shari`ah* is falsehood without "haqiqah" and haqiqah falsehood without the *Shari`ah*. As for some people saying, (as a way of rejecting what the *Sufiya* have said), that what the *Sufiya* claim to have, either conforms with what is in the Qur`ān and *Sunnah*

or it is opposed to it. If it conforms with the Qur`ān and *Sunnah*, then we already have them (so we stand in no need of the special knowledge that they claim). But if it is opposed to the two texts, then, obviously, we are in no need of it either ... As for this kind of statement, the answer is that there is no doubt about it that what they have of the special knowledge is from the Qur`ān and *Sunnah*. But is it impossible that some people are given an understanding of the Qur`ān and *Sunnah* which others miss? So long as they do not say anything that goes against the "consensus of the *Ummah*," their differences with "some" of the scholars should be of no concern. After all, how many great scholars of *fiqh* and *hadith* have not been there with whose opinions "some" scholars have disagreed?

Abridged remarks of Alusi end here.

188. (Since the belief - to later crystallize as a *Shi`ah* article of faith - had begun to surface, to the effect that the Prophet had not made all of the Qur`ānic revelations public, rather, had passed on some text secretly to `Ali ibn abi Talib: Au.), `Ali was asked by Wahab b. `Abdullah whether there was anything of the Revelation with him that was not there in

the Qur'an. He stoutly denied, saying: "No by Allah who splits the seed and brings out the verdure, nothing save the understanding of the Qur'an that Allah bestows upon a man and that which is in this parchment." He was asked: "And what's in the parchment?" He answered: "(Commandments concerning blood-wit, freeing of prisoners, and that a Muslim should not be killed in retaliation of the murder of an unbeliever" (Ibn Kathir).

Ghadir Khumm

Alusi writes: The *Shi'ah* have a report in their books narrated by Abu Ja'far and Abu 'Abdullah which says that Allah ordered the Prophet to declare 'Ali ibn abi Talib as the first *khalifah* after him. But he delayed breaking the news fearing that some of his Companions might not accept it cheerfully. Therefore, Allah revealed this verse, i.e., "O Messenger, deliver (all) that has been sent down to you from your Lord. If you do not, then you would not have conveyed His message." The *Shi'ah* further claim that to allay his fears that some of his Companions might not accept the order in good spirit, Allah reassured the Prophet in the following verse which said: "Allah will protect you from the people." They

further claim that the Prophet finally made the announcement about the *khalifah* of 'Ali to a group of Companions assembled at a place called *Ghadir Khumm* (the *Khumm*-well). There he addressed them in words:

مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَعَلَيْهِ مَوْلَاهُ اللَّهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالَاهُ وَعَادِ
مَنْ عَادَاهُ

"Whoever accepts me as his friend also accepts 'Ali as his friend. O Allah, befriend him who befriends him (i.e., 'Ali) and antagonize him who antagonizes him." (Dhahabi has declared it a trust-worthy report: Rashid Rida).

Alusi refutes the claim by saying that although it is true that the Prophet had gathered his Companions in a place between Makkah and Madinah near Juhfa called *Ghadir Khumm* and had spoken those words, the background story is not as widely known. It was on a Sunday, the 18th of Dhu al-Hijjah. (The *Shi'ah* began to celebrate this day as a day of 'Eid from the time of Banu Buwayh in the fifth Islamic century: Rashid Rida). It was after the famous Farewell Pilgrimage. The Prophet collected his followers under a tree and spoke out those words. And the reason why he had to do so was that when 'Ali re-

turned from Yemen (from where he was bringing in a hundred sacrificial camels for the Prophet: Au.), he went straight to the Hajj sites, leaving behind him a group of people who had accompanied him from Yemen, appointing one of them as their amir. Now, in his absence the *amir* ordered his companions to dress themselves in an expensive cloak that they were carrying. When they neared (Makkah) `Ali returned to receive them. But he was surprised to see the men dressed up in that apparel. He asked the amir: "Woe unto you man. What's all this?" The *amir* told him that he had got them dressed up in that manner in order to impress the people. `Ali told him: "Woe unto you man. Get them remove that stuff before we meet the Prophet." They obeyed him but were not too pleased about it. They began to complain of his harshness and frugality. When the complaints reached the Prophet's ears, he ordered his men assembled at *Ghadir Khumm* and spoke those words.

Other reports say that even those people who had accompanied `Ali (to Yemen from Madinah: Au.), had complained about his harshness (in religious matters). A report in Ahmad, of sound *isnād*, records Buraydah al-Aslami as saying: "I was in the

contingent sent to Yemen under `Ali's command. I found him a dry, tough man. So, when I met the Prophet I told him about what I thought of `Ali. The Prophet was displeased. He asked me,

أَلَسْتُ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ قُلْتُ بَلَىٰ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَعَلَيْ مَوْلَاهُ

'Do I not come first to the believers before their own souls?' I said, 'Sure, you do, O Messenger of Allah.' He said, '(Then) whoever has me as a friend has (to have) `Ali as a friend.'

Such were the complaints against `Ali then, that led the Prophet to speak out those words. The *Shi'ah* however, derive strange meanings from it. For instance, they understand the term "*mawla*" ("friend") in the sense of "*awla*" which of course means, one who comes first: that is, `Ali comes first. (That is, he should have been the first *khalifah*). But, linguistically, it is impossible to understand "*mawla*" in the sense of "*awla*." Further, even if the word is understood in the sense of "*awla*," it does not prove that the Prophet was speaking about *khalifah*. Had he intended that, he would not have spoken about it in such a round about way. Rather, as (a person no less than) Hasan al-Muthanna b. Hasan (a de-

scendant of 'Ali) has put it, he would have said: "People! 'Ali is going to be my immediate successor. Therefore, listen and obey." (Moreover, if the Prophet had intended that 'Ali should be the first *khalifah* after him, then surely, the best time and place for an announcement to this effect was the day of 'Arafah, when he delivered his famous sermon: Rashid Rida). Further, had 'Ali been named the first *khalifah* after the Prophet he would have surely made his claim after him. To this, the *Shi'ah* reply that if he did not do it, it was either out of fear of the people or out of *taqiyyah*. But that is not acceptable, because 'Ali was a fearless, outspoken person - the Asadullah al-Ghalib - far from cowardice, who did not need to resort to feigning attitudes of obedience. Finally, the Prophet himself was a fearless person. When he was ordered by Allah to do a thing, he went ahead and did it, unmindful of the consequences, fearless of the people. We have several reports of him facing hostile crowds all alone in Makkah, before *Hijrah*.

Alusi's abridged comments end here.

189. 'A'isha, Muhammad b. Ka'b al-Qurazi, Sa'id ibn Jubayr and others have said that the Prophet used to be guarded by his Companions, un-

til the revelation of this verse. (This verse came down in a journey, even as the guards were posted outside the Prophet's tent). The Prophet peeped out of his tent and told them to disperse as Allah had promised to guard him (Ibn Jarir). Another report in Ahmad and the *Sahihayn*, has 'A'isha saying:

عَائِشَةُ كَانَتْ تَحَدِّثُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَهَرَ ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ وَهِيَ إِلَى جَنْبِهِ قَالَتْ فَقُلْتُ مَا شَأْنُكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَتْ فَقَالَ لَيْتَ رَجُلًا صَالِحًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِي يُخْرِشُنِي اللَّيْلَةَ قَالَ فَبَيْنَمَا أَنَا عَلَى ذَلِكَ إِذْ سَمِعْتُ صَوْتَ السِّبْلَاحِ فَقَالَ مَنْ هَذَا قَالَ أَنَا سَعْدُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ فَقَالَ مَا جَاءَ بِكَ قَالَ جِئْتُ لِأَحْرُسَكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَتْ فَسَمِعْتُ عَظِيمًا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي تَوَمِهِ

"One night, while I was by his side in the bed, the Prophet evinced restlessness. I asked him, 'What makes you restless?' He said, 'I wish someone would guard me this night.' Thus we were (continues 'A'isha) when we heard the sounds of steel outside. 'Who is this,' the Prophet asked. 'It is me, Sa'd b. Malik,' the man replied. The Prophet asked, 'What brings you here?' Sa'd answered: 'I thought I would guard you.' 'A'isha says, "After that I heard the Prophet snore lightly."

190. That is, your mission is to convey. It is Allah who will guide whom

[68] Say, 'O people of the Book, you do not stand on anything until you observe the Tawrah and Injil and what has been sent down to you from your Lord.'¹⁹¹ But surely what has been sent down unto you by your Lord will (only) increase them in insolence and unbelief. Therefore, grieve not over an unbelieving people.

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ تُتَيْمَمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

[69] Verily, those who have believed, those of the Jewry, the Sabians,¹⁹² the Christians: whoever believed in Allah, in the Last Day, and worked righteousness, they shall have nothing to fear nor shall they ever grieve.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئُونَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

He will. However, He does not guide a people who have decided against receiving guidance (Au.).

191. The verse holds the clear implication that no achievement is of any worth without following of the *Shari'ah* (Thanwi).

192. The word *Sabi'un* as it appears in the nominative, presents a grammatical difficulty since, apparently, it should have been *Sabi'in* - in the genitive. Zamakhshari and others have said that the best answer is that the word is *mubtada'* of a *khobar* which has been suppressed. Alusi quotes some poetical pieces as illustrative of this kind of usage.

For an explanation of the term *Saabi'* as well as of the whole verse see verse 62 of *surah Al-Baqarah* of this work.

Majid adds: "It was on the banks of lower Euphrates that the Sabians or Christians of St. John the Baptist had, settle, whom the Arabs called *Mughtasilah*, 'Ablutionists', because they were always washing in the river: not only were they still living there in the time of Muhammad but they are there to this day, under the name of *Saban'* (Hyart, *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilization*, p. 179).

Notwithstanding his comments at verse 62 of *Al-Baqarah*, Mufti Shafi' once again attempts to clear the doubt that commonly surfaces at this point. He says: A superficial mind would conclude that the verse is promising salvation to those of the Jews, Christians and others who deny Prophet Muhammad. Apart from other points that can be presented to

refute the notion, the following verse can be quoted. It declares unbeliever anyone who denies any of the Messengers of Allah.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا
بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ
وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُتَّخَذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا (١٥٠) أُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا [النساء : ١٥٠ ، ١٥١]

“Verily, those who deny Allah and His messengers and wish to make division between Allah and His messengers and say, ‘We shall believe in some and deny others,’ wishing to take between this and that a way, such are the true unbelievers” (4: 150-151).

Then Mufti Shafi` points out that the religion (that is acceptable to Allah) is not a brotherhood gift by which new alliances can be created. One might create alliances, be kind

towards non-Muslims, do what he can to alleviate their sufferings, or co-operate with them in constructive affairs, but so far as the religion of Allah is concerned, one cannot gift away its brotherhood to anyone he wishes.

193. This verse goes a long way in proving that it is the following of the base desires - a point emphasized by the *Sufiya* - that is at the root of all major sins (Thanwi).

194. Majid writes: “Compare the O.T.:- ‘They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. Yet they say, The Lord shall not see’ (Ps. 94: 6, 7).”

195. Most of the earlier commentators have thought that by the first mention of “blindness and deafness”

[70] Surely, We took compact with the Children of Israel and sent them Messengers. (But) whenever a Messenger came to them with what their base selves would not approve of,¹⁹³ they cried lies to some of them, and the others they slew.

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَارْسَلْنَا
إِلَيْهِمْ رُسُلًا كَلَّمَا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا
تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُهُمْ فَرِيحًا كَذَبُوا وَفَرِيحًا يُقْتَلُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

[71] And they thought that there would be no punishment and, therefore, they became blind and deaf.¹⁹⁴ Yet Allah turned to them (in mercy,) but most of them became blind and deaf.¹⁹⁵ And Allah is Aware of the things they do.

وَحَسِبُوا أَلَّا تَكُونَ فِئْتَةً فَعَمُوا وَصَمُوا ثُمَّ
تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ عَمُوا وَصَمُوا كَثِيرٌ
مِّنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

the allusion is to the first of the two “great rebellions” of the Israelites against God and His Prophets, when they slew Sha`ya (Isaiah) and imprisoned Armiyyah (Jeremiah). By the “turning to them in mercy” the allusion is to their release from Babil (Babylon) where Nebuchadnezzar had enslaved them, and their return to Palestine. The allusion by the second mention of “blindness and deafness” is to the second of their two “great rebellions” against God and His Prophets when they slew Zackariyyah and Yahya (John the Baptist), and attempted to assassinate

‘Isa (asws) - Au.

196. Majid quotes a Christian source: “To the orthodox Christian ‘Jesus is without qualification God, and the greater the contradiction to the mind, the more the heart responds to the wonder of the mystery.’ (HJ. Oct. 1934, p.6)”

197. In this verse is the refutation of the Union and Absorption (*Ittihad wa Hulul*) that some ignorant Sufis believe in (Thanwi).

198. Majid quotes from the Bible: “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy

[72] Surely, those people disbelieved who declared that God is Christ,¹⁹⁶ son of Maryam;¹⁹⁷ whereas Christ proclaimed, 'O Children of Israel, worship Allah: my Lord and your Lord.'¹⁹⁸ Verily, whoso associated partners with Allah - Allah has forbidden Paradise for him.¹⁹⁹ His abode is Hell-fire; and the transgressors shall have no helpers.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ
ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ
اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ
فَعَدَّ حَرْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا
لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾

God, and him alone shall thou serve.' (Mt. 4: 10; Lk. 4: 8) 'And Jesus said unto him, why callest thou me good? none is good save one, that is, God.' (Lk. 18: 19) 'Jesus never refers to Himself as "Son of God," and the title when bestowed upon Him by others, probably involves no more than the acknowledgement that He was the Messiah.' (EBr. XIII, p. 23) 'That the trinitarian baptismal formula does not go back to Jesus himself is evident and recognized by all independent critics.' (EBi, c. 4689) 'A critical study of the synoptical material leads invariably to the conclusion that Jesus never called himself the "son of God" and never was addressed by that title' (EBi. c. 4701).

199. Majid once again quotes: "That

the Christians are proud of their Christolatry is a fact self-evident. It is noted in their books with self-adulation that the Church in the course of its long history has never ceased to offer prayers to Christ with the Father' (ERE. I, p. 104).

200. That is, if Union is wrong, Trinity is no less preposterous (Au.).

Majid presents a variety of criticism coming from Christian sources: 'There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.' (I. Jn. 5: 7). The Athanasian Creed runs:- 'There is one person of the Father, another of the Son and another of the Holy Ghost: the Father is God and Lord: the Son is God and Lord: and the Holy Ghost is God

[73] Surely, those people disbelieved who declared that God is the third of the three.²⁰⁰ There is no deity save one God. If they do not desist from what they say, soon a painful chastisement shall afflict those of them who disbelieved.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ
وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ وَإِنَّمَا يَنْتَهُوْا
عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

[74] Will they not then turn to Allah and seek His forgiveness, when Allah is All-forgiving, All-kind?

أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونََّهُ وَاللَّهُ
عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

and Lord.’ These words of the Creed, says Swendberg, make it ‘as clear as water in a crystal cup, that there are three persons, each of whom is God and Lord.’ (*The True Christian Religion*, p. 244). This central doctrine of the Christian religion can only mean that God ‘is three really distinct Persons: the son, the father and the Holy Ghost ... Three persons are co-equal, co-eternal, and consubstantial, and deserve co-equal glory and adoration.’ (CD. p. 973). ‘The dogma of the “Trinity”, which still comprises three of the chief articles of faith in the creed of Christian peoples, culminates in the notion that the one God of Christianity is really made up of three different persons: (1) God the Father ... (2) Jesus Christ; and (3) Holy Ghost, a mystical being over whose incomprehensible relation to the Father and the Son millions of Christians theologians have racked their brains in vain for the last 1900

years’ (Haeckel, op. cit. p. 227).

Shabbir expresses his frustration over the failure of the rationalists the world over to convince the Trinitarians of their folly and cleanse the religious atmosphere of the West in words: “The truth is expressed (in an Arabic proverb), ‘The perfumist will not manage to cleanse the pollution of the atmosphere.’”

Further, how difficult the concept has been for the Christians, whether for the learned or the laymen, is illustrated by the following story as narrated by Sheikh Rahmatullah al-Hindi in his *Izhar al-Haq*. It is said that three persons embraced Christianity and a priest taught them the basic tenets of the religion, especially, of course, the concept of Trinity. The three were in his service. It happened one day that the priest had a guest. The guest enquired whether he had been able to convert anyone to the

Christian faith. When the priest told him about his success with the three, the guest enquired whether they had been taught the necessary catechism. The priest replied in affirmation and wished to test them before the guest. He called one of them in and asked him to explain how he understood Trinity. The man replied: "You have taught me that there are three gods. One is in the heaven. The second was born to Virgin Mary. The third is the one who descended upon the second - when he was thirty-three - in the form of a pigeon." The priest was angry, and remarking, "This is an ignorant man," dismissed him. He called in the second man and asked him the same question. The man replied: "You have taught me that there used to be three gods. Then one of them was crucified. That leaves two alive." The priest also sent him out and ordered the third to be presented. This man seemed to be cleverer than the other two. When asked about Trinity he answered: "Master! I have preserved all that you have taught me. And I have understood too - by the

grace of Jesus Christ (all that you have taught). You have taught me that there are three are in one and one in three. One of them was crucified and is dead. Consequently, all of them died, since the three were in one. Now, at this moment, there is no god in existence. For if we suppose that there is one, then, it would amount to refuting Unity!" (Rashid Rida).

See *Surah Nisa'*, note no. 390 for discussions in greater detail, especially concerning the Councils of Nicea.

201. "This refutes the outrageous calumny of the Jews who held her guilty of misconduct, and reinforces her in her pure, saintly character" (Majid).

Siddiqah

The verse points out to a historical truth. Maryam was a woman, like any other woman, except that she was a lady of high integrity, godfearing, and, pious to the highest degree. Yet, she was a mortal in every sense

[75] Jesus son of Maryam, was no more than a Messenger. Surely, Messengers have passed before him. His mother was a person of high integrity.²⁰¹ Both of them ate food.²⁰² Behold, how We make Our signs clear to them. Yet behold, how they are beguiled.²⁰³

مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ
مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ
الطَّعَامَ انظُرْ كَيْفَ تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ
انظُرْ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

of the word. Interestingly, in none of the Gospels she claims to be a mother of God, nor does she claim divinity for her son Jesus Christ. Why? Did she forget? That is unimaginable, especially in view of the salvation of billions of people who have every right to be skeptic of a concept so important for them yet so unimportant for the divinity to forget! As for the word in the original - *Siddiqah* - it has its root in *sadaqa*, which is to speak the truth or to be truthful. *Saddaqa* is to confirm, acknowledge, testify or believe. Elsewhere, Allah said about her (66: 12):

وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّهَا [التحریم : ١٢]

"She confirmed in the Words of Her Lord and His Books."

Siddiq (of which *Siddiqah* is the female form) is also a rank attained by those who are complete in their submission and the most devoted to their Lord. Allah said (4: 69):

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ

وَحَسَنٌ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا [النساء : ٦٩]

"And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, they are with those whom Allah has favored: the Prophets, Siddiqun, the martyrs and the righteous: and good companions they are."

The note here is to refute the Jewish claims of impropriety on her part, who took that extreme position, in contrast to one Christian group who believes in her divinity. Further, basing their opinion on this verse, and on another (12: 109):

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ [يوسف : ١٠٩]

"We sent not before you but men as Messengers," the great majority of scholars believe that Maryam was not a Prophetess (Au.).

202. It has been conjectured that the hint by the words "*they both ate food*" is to their need to attend to nature's call. How could those who were human to that extent be gods? (Razi, Alusi).

[76] Say, 'Do you worship besides Allah that²⁰⁴ which has no power to harm or benefit you?'²⁰⁵ Whereas Allah is the All hearing, the All knowing

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

203. That is, see how the common Christians are beguiled by their priestly class!

Yet the Qur'an did influence Christian belief. Majid quotes *Encyclopedia Britannica*: "That the Holy Qur'an did, to some extent, exert modifying influence on certain Christian sects is now an admitted truth. 'The opposition of Islam' also partly determined the form of men's views on the doctrine of Christ's person.' (EBr. I, p. 177)

204. "That" (*ma* of the original) is normally employed for the non living, and the allusion could be to the Christian worship of the Cross (Alusi).

205. Majid writes: "Christianity gradually 'assumed a form that was quite as polytheistic and quite as idolatrous as the ancient paganism.' (Lecky, op. cit., II, p. 97). 'The polytheist peoples the world with a va-

riety of gods and goddesses, which enter into its machinery more or less independently ... It reaches its highest stage in Hellenic polytheism ... At a much lower stage we have Catholic polytheism, in which innumerable "saints" (many of them of equivocal repute) are venerated as subordinate divinities, and prayed to exert their mediation with the supreme divinity' (Haeckel, op. cit., p. 226)."

206. This in essence has been the main problem with the people. Either they have gone to one extreme, or to the other. For instance, with regard to the Prophets, either they have gone to one extreme of worshipping them, in fact, even the graves of their followers, or have gone to the other extreme of treating them as no better than couriers (Shafi').

207. The concept of Trinity is so vigorously unacceptable to human mind that no devoted Christian is

[77] Say, 'People of the Book! Do not exceed the limits in your religion other than the truth²⁰⁶ and follow not the caprices of a people who lost the way earlier, misled many, and swerved off the right course.²⁰⁷

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

[78] Cursed were the unbelievers of the Children of Israel by the tongue of Da'ud and 'Isa ibn Maryam: that because they disobeyed and were ceaselessly crossing the bounds.

لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى
لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ذَلِكَ بِمَا
عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

questioned about it, but, after initial defense, he falls silent, and, mentally disturbed. Herewith we present some criticism of it.

Trinity

Majid comments: "Now who are these erring peoples the prototype of the Christian error? The allusion may well be to the 'highly cultured' yet polytheistic and idolatrous nations of Greece and Rome many of whose superstitions and blasphemies the early church, inspired by Paul of Tarsus, was only too prone to imbibe. St. Paul, the founder of latter day Christianity, 'owed much to the Greek philosophy and thought, gained partly in formal education at Tarsus, partly by assimilation of the knowledge which floated on the surface of a more or less educated society and became insensibly the property of all its members.'

Mawdudi's quotation from *Encyclopedia Britannica* is abridged here: "... there is nothing in these three Gospels to suggest that their writers thought of Jesus as other than human, a human being specially endowed with the Spirit of God and standing in an unbroken relation to God which justifies His being spoken of as the 'Son of God.' Even Matthew refers to Him as the carpenter's son and records that after Peter had acknowledged Him as Messiah he 'took Him aside and began to rebuke Him' (Matthew, xvi. 22). And in Luke the two disciples on the way to Emmaus can still speak of Him as 'a prophet, mighty indeed in word before God and all the people' (Luke, xxiv, 19).

Further on: "... The Gospels leave no room for doubt as to the completeness with which these statements (about the human nature of Christ: au.) are to be accepted. From them

we learn that Jesus passed through the natural stages of development, physical and mental, that He hungered, thirsted, was weary and slept, that He could be surprised and require information, that He suffered pain and died. He not only made no claim to omniscience, He distinctly waived it.”

The same source states: “... It may not be possible to decide whether it was the primitive community or Paul himself who first put full religious content into the title ‘Lord’ as used of Christ. Probably it was the former. But the Apostle (Paul: Au.) undoubtedly adopted the title in its full meaning, and did much to make that meaning clear by transferring to ‘the Lord Jesus Christ’ many of the ideas and phrases which in the Old Testament had been specifically assigned to the Lord Jehovah. God ‘gave unto Him that name that is above every name the name of “Lord”. At the same time by equating Christ with the Wisdom of God and with the Glory of God, as well as ascribing to Him Sonship in an absolute sense, Paul claimed for Jesus Christ a relation to God which was inherent and unique, ethical and personal, eternal. While, however, Paul in many ways and in many aspects, equated Christ with God, he

definitely stopped short of speaking of him as ‘God’ (xiv edition, title, ‘Christianity.’).

(Mawdudi goes on), “In another article in Encyclopedia Britannica (xiv edition), under the title ‘Christianity’, the Reverend George William Knox writes as follows about the fundamental beliefs of Christianity:

‘Its moulds of thought are those of Greek philosophy, and into these were run the Jewish teachings. We have thus a peculiar combination the religious doctrines of the Bible, as culmination in the person of Jesus, run through the forms of an alien philosophy.

The Doctrine of Trinity: Jewish sources furnished the terms Father, Son and Spirit. Jesus seldom employed the last term and Paul’s use of it is not altogether clear. Already in Jewish literature it had been personified (Cf. the Wisdom of Solomon). Thus the material is Jewish, though already doubtless modified by Greek influences: but the problem is Greek; it is not primarily ethical nor even religious, but it is metaphysical. What is the ontological relationship between these three factors? The answer of the Church is given in the Nicene formula, which is characteristically Greek ...’

Also significant (Mawdudi continues) in this connection are the following passages of another article in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (xiv edition), entitled 'Church History':

"The recognition of Christ as the incarnation of the Logos was practically universal before the close of the 3rd century, but His deity was still widely denied, and the Arian controversy which distracted the Church of the 4th century concerned the latter question. At the Council of Nicaea in 325 the deity of Christ received official sanction and was given formulation in the original Nicene creed. Controversy continued for some time, but finally the Nicene decision was recognized both in East and West as the orthodox faith. The deity of the Son was believed to carry with it that of the Spirit, who was associated with Father and Son in the baptismal formula and in the current symbols, and so the victory of the Nicene Christology meant the recognition of the doctrine of Trinity as part of the orthodox faith."

Mawdudi's quotes end here.

At this point, the reader might wonder if the above are not stray thoughts, of odd figures, prejudiced against the Church, since the Roman Catholic Church does not seem to

take any notice of them. But that is not true. From the time people began to read the Bible for themselves, no generation of Christians has been without eminent men raising their voice against the Christian doctrines that have no basis either in reason and logic, nor do they have any basis in the New or Old Testaments. Many learned men of the Christian world have either denounced Trinity unequivocally or have expressed serious doubts and reservations about it. But such dissensions have been carefully suppressed. Sir Isaac Newton, for instance, who revolutionized science, was one of them. A recent work on the Church's relationship with science says: "In the early 1670s Newton began serious theological study, which came to focus almost at once on the doctrine of the Trinity. As he read on, with his eye riveted on the allied problems of the nature of Christ and the nature of God, the conviction took hold of him that a monstrous fraud had perverted the nature of Christianity in the fourth and fifth centuries. The fraud had altered the Bible. Newton began to collect evidence that the passages on which Trinitarians relied had been inserted into the Bible in the fourth and fifth centuries ... Although he did not say so directly, Newton clearly believed

that the Protestant Reformation had only scratched the surface. It has left the source of infection, Trinitarianism, untouched" (*God and Nature*, Ed. David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers, p. 230-231). A little before him, John Milton, the great English poet, also differed with the doctrines taught by the Church, but did not have the courage, as scores of others also did not have the courage, to denounce them publicly. He preferred to put the idea in his writings in a somewhat camouflaged manner. Nonetheless, in a book, "*A Treatise Relating to God*," not intended to be published during his life-time, he was somewhat outspoken. In Book One, Chapter two, Milton writes: "... what can be plainer, what more distinct, what more suitable to general comprehension and the ordinary forms of speech, for the purposes of impression on the people of God that there was numerically One God and One Spirit in the common acceptance of numerical unity? ...it must always be remembered in this place that nothing can be said of the One God which is inconsistent with His Unity, and which assigns to Him at the same time the attributes of unity and plurality. Mark 12: 29-32, "Hear O Israel, the Lord Our God is One Lord." (Muhammad Ata ur

Rahim, *Jesus the Prophet of Islam*, Riyadh Pub., p. 152).

There have been many others who have said similar things. For instance, Brinton wrote: "... The point must be made again firmly, for if Christianity is so regarded one would expect the triumphant Christianity of the Council of Nicaea, the official faith of the world's greatest empire, to be quite different from Christianity of the fishermen of Galilee. On the other hand, if one takes the New Testament as the final assertion of Christian truth, one is bound to conclude, not just that the Christianity of the fourth century was different from that of the first, but that the Christianity of the fourth century was not Christian" (Clarence Crane Brinton, *Ideas and Men*, Prentice Hall Pub. p. 127).

H.G. Wells presented the result his own research on the subject. An excerpt: "Then appeared in time a great teacher whom many critics consider as the true founder of Christianity, viz. Saul of Tartus, or otherwise known as Paul. It is apparent that he was Jewish by birth, although the Jews disown him. However, the fact is uncontested that he received education at the hands of the Jewish masters and was extremely good in

the theology of the Alexandrian Hellenism. Therefore, he was influenced by the Hellenistic school on the one hand and by the methods of the Stoicists on the other. Thus he became a man of sound opinions and a teacher of religious sciences even much before he heard about Jesus Christ. It is also strongly possible that he was influenced by Mithraian thought, as he uses very strange sounding words taken from the Mithraians. It is apparent to every reader of his letters of diverse nature in comparison with the Gospels themselves that the foremost thought in his mind was, (which does not seem to receive the same emphasis in the writings of the Apostles), that of an individual who offers his sacrifices to God as an atonement for sins. Therefore, what Jesus presented promised a new life to the human soul, but what Paul offered, alas, is the ancient religion: religion of the priests, sacrifices, blood offerings in search of God's Pleasure" (*The Fundamental Interpolations in the Teachings of Jesus*).

Earnest Renan, whose crusade against the church is well known, wrote the following: "In order to understand the true teachings of Christ, as he himself understood it, it is necessary that we search for

those details and false explanations which have obscured the real teachings of Christ and placed it behind a barrier of thick layers of clouds. That will take us right back to the days of Paul who did not understand the teachings of Christ, rather, who gave it a new interpretation adding to it a lot of ideas and practices of the Pharisians and the teachings of the Old Testament. And Paul, as it appears, was a people's messenger, or a messenger of disputes and religious contests. He was inclined towards the outward appearances of religious nature such as, circumcision and so forth. He introduced his own personal inclinations and proclivities in the religion of Christ and perverted it" (*Discourses on Christianity*).

And, finally, here are the words of the most learned man of Europe of his day, Edward Gibbon: "He adopted the Platonian theory of the Logos and gave it a Christian coloring, explaining that 'the Logos, who was with God from the beginning and was God, who had made all things and for whom all things had been made, was incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth'" (*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol 1, p. 611) - Au.

208. On the importance of enjoin-

[79] They forbid not one another the vile things they committed.²⁰⁸ Surely evil were the things they were doing.

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

[80] You will see many of them befriending those who have disbelieved. Surely, evil is that which their souls have forwarded for themselves that Allah is angry with them. And in chastisement shall they abide forever.

تَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَبِئْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ أَنْ سَخِطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِي الْعَذَابِ لَهُمْ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

[81] Had they believed in Allah and the Prophet (Moses), and in that which was sent down to him, they would not have befriended them; but many of them are ungodly.

وَلَوْ كَانُوا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالنَّبِيِّ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَا اتَّخَذُوهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَلَكِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

ing good and forbidding evil, Ibn Jarir has the following reports. Ibn Mas`ud has reported the Prophet as having said (to the effect):

”إنه من كان قبلكم من بني إسرائيل إذا عمل فيهم العامل الخطيئة فنهاه الناهي تعذيراً فإذا كان الغد جالسه وواكله وشاربه كأنه لم يره على خطيئة بالأمس فلما رأى الله تعالى ذلك منهم ضرب قلوب بعضهم على بعض على لسان داود وعيسى بن مريم { ذلك بما عصوا وكانوا يعتدون } والذي نفسي بيده لتأمرن بالمعروف ولتنهين عن المنكر ولتأخذن على أيدي المسيء ولتأطرنه على الحق أطراً أو ليضربن الله بقلوب بعضكم على بعض ويلعنكم كما لعنهم.“ (مجمع الزوائد ومنبع الفوائد - رواه الطبراني ورجاله رجال الصحيح).

“When one of the Israelite saw someone committing a sin he forbid him. But, the next time he saw him doing the same thing, he did not prevent him because they ate, drank and interacted

with each other. When that went on for a while, Allah transformed the hearts of some of them in the mold of the hearts of others. As a result they were cursed by the tongue of Da`ud and `Isa ibn Maryam. (That because they disobeyed and were ceaselessly crossing the bounds).” The Prophet then added: “By Him in whose hand is my life, you (O Muslims) will enjoin the good, forbid the evil, restrict the evil doer by holding his hand, and bend him down to the truth, or, Allah will transform the heart of some of you into the mold of the hearts of the others and lay a curse upon you as He laid a curse upon them.”

There are several versions of the above report, and, therefore, we have

resorted to a free translation.

According to several other reports the Prophet recited this verse and then, sitting up from a reclining position, added:

ثم جلس رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم وكان متكئا ثم قال : كلا والذي نفسي بيده حتى تأطروهم على الحق أطرا

“No! Not until you restrain the hand of the oppressor and force him to act justly.”

Another report coming through Ibn Zayd quotes the Prophet as having said:

إِنَّ رَحَى الْإِيمَانِ قَدْ دَارَتْ، فَذُورُوا مَعَ الْقُرْآنِ حَيْثُ دَارَ [١] فَإِنَّهُ... قَدْ فَرَّغَ اللَّهُ مِمَّا افْتَرَضَ فِيهِ... .. كَانَ أُمَّةً مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ، كَانُوا أَهْلَ عَدْلِ، يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، فَأَخَذَهُ قَوْمُهُمْ فَنَشَرُوهُمْ بِالْمَنَاشِيرِ، وَصَلَبُوهُمْ عَلَى الْخَشَبِ، وَبَقِيَتْ مِنْهُمْ بَقِيَّةٌ، فَلَمْ يَرْضُوا حَتَّى دَاخَلُوا الْمُلُوكَ وَجَالَسُوهُمْ، ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْضُوا حَتَّى وَآكَلُوهُمْ، فَضْرَبَ اللَّهُ تِلْكَ الْقُلُوبَ بَعْضُهَا بِبَعْضٍ فَجَعَلَهَا وَاحِدَةً. فَذَلِكَ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى: ”لَعْنُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ“ إِلَى: ”ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ“، مَاذَا كَانَتْ مَعْصِيَتُهُمْ؟ قَالَ: ”كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مَنكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ“.

“The mill stone of faith has taken a full circle. Therefore, turn with the Qur’ān, whichever way it turns. For, Allah has finished stating the obligations in it. Among the Israelites were a people who enjoined virtues and

forbid evil. But their people slit them through with saws and crucified them over wooden crosses. A few escaped. But they were not spared until they accepted the rulers. With that also they were not satisfied until they interacted with them. Consequently Allah transformed the hearts of some of them in the mold of others, unifying them. It is in reference to this that Allah revealed, ‘Cursed were the unbelievers of the Children of Israel by the tongue of Da’ud and ‘Isa ibn Maryam: that because they disobeyed and continuously crossed the bounds. And, what was their sin? They forbid not one another the evil they committed. Surely vile were the things they did.’”

The above report of Ibn Jarir could not be found in any *hadith* collection. However, the following is found in Tabarani’s *Mu’jam al-Saghir*, which, but for disconnection in the chain, Haythami declared the narrators trustworthy. It says:

أَلَا إِنَّ رَحَى الْإِسْلَامِ دَائِرَةٌ ، فَذُورُوا مَعَ الْكِتَابِ حَيْثُ دَارَ ، أَلَا إِنَّ الْكِتَابَ وَالسُّلْطَانَ سَيَقْتَرِقَانِ فَلَا تَفَارِقُوا الْكِتَابَ ، أَلَا إِنَّهُ سَيَكُونُ أَمْرًا يُقْضُونَ لَكُمْ ، فَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ أَضَلُّوكُمْ وَإِنْ عَصَيْتُمُوهُمْ قَتَلُوكُمْ ، قَالَ : يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، فَكَيْفَ نَصْنَعُ ؟ قَالَ : كَمَا صَنَعَ أَصْحَابُ عِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ، نُشِرُوا بِالْمَنَاشِيرِ وَجُمِلُوا عَلَى الْخَشَبِ مَوْتٌ فِي طَاعَةٍ خَيْرٌ مِنْ حَيَاةٍ فِي

مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

“Lo, the mill-stone of Islam is a full circle, so turn with the Book wheresoever it turns. Lo, the Book and political power will soon split pathways. So, do not part ways with the Book. Lo, there will be rulers who will judge for you but if you obeyed them they will take you off the right path. On the other hand, if you disobeyed them, they will kill you.” The narrator asked, “What shall we do, Messenger of Allah?” He replied, “Do as the Companions of `Isa ibn Maryam did. They were split with saws and were hung by the wooden crosses. Indeed, death in obedience is better than life in disobedience of Allah Most High.”

Ibn Kathir adds: *Ahadith* similar to the above are found in various collections such as Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and others. The following can be added for emphasis. A report in Ahmad backed by one in Tirmidhi of hasan status has Hudhayfah ibn al Yaman quoting the Prophet (*saws*):

”والذي تُفسي بيده لتأمرنَّ بالمعروف ولتنهونَّ عن المنكر، أو ليؤشكنَّ الله أن يبعث عليكم عقاباً من عنده، ثم لتدعنه فلا يستجيب لكم“ . (رواه الترمذي وقال: هذا حديث حسن)

“By Him in whose hands is my life, you will either enjoin good, forbid evil or, it is feared that Allah sends down a chastisement from Him so that you supplicate but are not answered.”

Ibn Majah has a *hadith* of `A'isha saying:

مُروا بالمعروف، واثهوا عن المنكر، قبل أن تدعوا فلا يستجاب لكم

“I heard the Prophet say, ‘Enjoin good, forbid evil before it happens that you supplicate but are not answered.’”

The *hadith* however, is weak. But Abu Sa'id al Khudri has been recorded in Muslim as reporting the Prophet:

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ

“Whoever of you sees an evil should rectify it with his hand; if he cannot, then with the tongue; if he cannot, then with his heart. And that's the weakest (state) of faith.”

The *Musnad* of Ahmad has another *hadith* which reports the Prophet as having said:

إن الله لا يُعَذِّبُ الْعَامَّةَ بِعَمَلِ الْخَاصَّةِ، حَتَّى يَرَوْا الْمُنْكَرَ بَيْنَ ظَهْرَانِيهِمْ، وَهُمْ قَادِرُونَ عَلَى أَنْ يَنْكَرُوهُ. فَلَا يَنْكَرُونَهُ فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ عَذَّبَ اللَّهُ الْعَامَّةَ وَالْخَاصَّةَ

“Allah does not punish a people for the deeds of a few, until they see evils among themselves, and, despite their ability to prevent it, do nothing about it. When that happens then Allah punishes everyone: the few as well as the whole lot.”

Abu Da'ud has a report which says:

إِذَا عُمِلَ بِالْحَطِيئَةِ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَانَ مَنْ شَهِدَهَا فَكَّرَهَا كَمَنْ كَمَنْ غَابَ عَنْهَا وَمَنْ غَابَ عَنْهَا فَضِيحًا كَانَ كَمَنْ شَهِدَهَا.

“When a wrong is committed on the earth, then someone who saw it but disapproved of it, is like he who was away from the scene. In contrast, he who was away from the scene but approved of it, is like he who was present at the scene.” (The report has been declared *hasan*: Au.)

Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah with Tirmidhi grading it *hasan gharib* have a report from the Prophet:

أَفْضَلُ الْجِهَادِ كَلِمَةٌ حَقٌّ عِنْدَ سُلْطَانٍ جَائِرٍ

“The best *jihad* is a word of truth before a tyrannical ruler.”

Another *hadith* of Ibn Majah says that:

عَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ قَالَ جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَهُوَ عِنْدَ الْجُمُرَةِ الْأُولَى فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَيُّ الْجِهَادِ أَفْضَلُ قَالَ فَسَكَتَ عَنْهُ وَمَمْ يُجِيبُهُ ثُمَّ سَأَلَهُ عِنْدَ

الْجُمُرَةِ الثَّانِيَةِ فَقَالَ لَهُ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ فَلَمَّا رَمَى النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ جُمُرَةَ الْعَقَبَةِ وَوَضَعَ رِجْلَهُ فِي الْعَزْرِ قَالَ أَيْنَ السَّائِلُ قَالَ كَلِمَةٌ عَدْلٍ عِنْدَ إِمَامٍ جَائِرٍ

A man presented himself to the Prophet near the First Jamurah. He asked: “Messenger of Allah, which *jihad* is the best.” The Prophet did not answer him. When he had thrown the pebbles at the Second Jamurah, the man asked the same question. The Prophet did not answer him. Then, after he had thrown the pebbles at the Jamurah al `Aqabah and had placed his foot in the stirrup to mount, he turned and enquired: “Where is the questioner?” And then said: “A word of truth spoken out before a tyrannical ruler.”

Yet another report of Ibn Majah says the Prophet said:

”لَا يَجْتَرُ أَحَدُكُمْ نَفْسَهُ“. قالوا: يا رسول الله، كيف يجتر أحدنا نفسه؟ قال: ”يرى أمرًا لله فيه مقال، ثم لا يقول فيه. فيقول الله له يوم القيامة: ما منعك أن تقول في كذا وكذا وكذا؟ فيقول: خشية الناس، فيقول: فيأياي كنت أحق أن تخشى“

“Let not one of you belittle himself.” He was asked, “How can one belittle himself?” He replied: “He sees something happening, but does not say a word about it. Allah will ask him on the Day of

[82] You will find the most hostile of men to the believers, the Jews²⁰⁹ and those who associate partners (unto Allah). And you will find nearest of them in love to the believers those who say, 'We are Christians.' That is because among them are priests and monks²¹⁰ and because they do not wax proud.²¹¹

لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ
مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَى
ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ مِنْهُمْ قِسِيَسِينَ وَرُهْبَانًا وَأَنَّهُمْ لَا
يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

Judgment: 'What prevented you from speaking out on such and such a day?' He will reply: 'Fear of the people.' Allah will say, 'It was more deserving that you feared Me.'" (Haythami declared it trustworthy: Au.).

Quotes from Ibn Kathir end here.

209. Verse 81 spoke of the Jews be-friending the pagans. This verse, 82, speaks of their enmity with the Mus- lims (Shafi').

210. *Ruhban* (sing. *rahib*) and *Ruh- baniyyah* have the same root, and, as Raghib has said, the latter means 'to devote oneself to acts of worship to an extreme degree out of an im- moderate fear.' Accordingly, we have a *hadith*, 'There is no *Ruhbaniyyah* in Islam (*Ruh*). In fact, the indirect praise here, adds Thanwi, is not di- rected at *Ruhbaniyyah*, rather, one aspect of it, viz., abandonment of this world.

211. When there are a large number

of people among a nation who have such qualities as renunciation of the world, devotion to God, and, who are not proud such as the Christians of the Prophet's time then, their in- fluence reaches the masses, who also tend to take a soft line to the Truth, even if not as soft as to embrace it in the first instance. In contrast, when there are many in a nation who love this world, follow their carnal self and are proud such as the Jews then their masses too are little in- clined to the Truth, even if a few of them might embrace it with the first call. It was the same problem with the Quraysh of Makkah: they were extremely proud. It was when their pride was broken that they became receptive to the Truth (Thanwi).

Shafi' adds: Nevertheless, the situa- tion today is that the so called Chris- tians are no better than Jews in their enmity of Islam and Muslims. So far as their faiths are concerned, surely they are nearer to polytheism than

[83] When they hear that which has been sent down to the Messenger, you will find their eyes overflow with tears because of the truth they recognize. They say, 'Our Lord! We have believed, therefore, write us down among the witnesses.'²¹²

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

[84] And why should we not believe in Allah and the truth that has come to us, seeing that we long that our Lord should admit us with the righteous?'

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

[85] So, because of what they maintained, Allah rewarded them with gardens underneath which rivers flow, abiding therein forever. That is the recompense of those who do good.

فَأَنَابَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

the Jews. The verse then is not speaking of the Christians of all times, as Jassas has pointed out, rather of a specific group of people. Indeed, writes Thanwi, the Qur'anic verse in question, has not been revealed in appreciation of the Christians, rather, when the Jews were condemned for exhibiting certain characteristics, the sense of justice required that the Christian attitudes be also mentioned. Therefore, Shabbir adds, in effect, why should (the *Ummah*) look for friends among those who lack the qualities stated here?

212. Hakim has narrated a *sahih* report from 'Abdullah ibn Zubayr to the effect that these verses were revealed in reference to Najashi of Ab-

yssinia. Others have said that they were revealed in reference to a group of Abyssinians who had visited Madinah. The Prophet recited a few verses to them. They were in tears and readily declared their faith in Islam. Nonetheless, it seems more reasonable to assume a general import and application of the verses rather than a specific one (Ibn Jarir).

The latter report is in Nasa'i and Hakim who has termed it as *sahih* of *isnād* (Ibn Kathir).

213. A little above, the verses spoke in favorable terms of the Christian asceticism, and its good effect on their masses. This verse warns the Muslims to beware of excessive re-

[86] As for those who disbelieved and cried lies to Our signs, they are the companions of the Fire.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾

[87] Believers! Treat not as unlawful that which has been made lawful unto you and exceed not the bounds.²¹³ Verily, Allah does not approve of those who exceed the bounds.²¹⁴

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

nunciation (Shafi`).

Although, once again, the application is common, it is reported that this verse was occasioned by three Companions of the Prophet who met together. One of them promised that then onward he would pray the whole night and not sleep. The other said he would fast uninterruptedly. The third said that he would not go into women anymore. When the Prophet came to know about them he told them:

أَمَّا وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لِأَحْشَاكُمْ لِلَّهِ وَأَتَّقَاهُ لَهُ ، لِكَيْتِي أَصُومُ وَأُفْطِرُ ، وَأُصَلِّي وَأَرْقُدُ ، وَأَتَزَوَّجُ ، فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَنِّي سُنَّتِي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي

“As for me, I am more fearful of Allah than you, and more God-conscious, yet I fast and discontinue fasting, sleep but also pray in the night and I marry women. Lo! Whoever fought shy of my *Sunnah* is not of me.”

(A similar report narrated by `A'isha is also in the *Sahihayn*: Ibn Kathir).

Other reports suggest that it was `Uthman b. Maz'un's conduct toward his wife that invoked the revelation of this verse. It is said that his wife visited `A'isha in a shabby state. On enquiry she complained that `Uthman would not even touch her. `A'isha mentioned it to the Prophet who spoke to `Uthman the words of the above *hadith* (Zamakhshari, Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Kathir adds: Masruq said in a report of Hakim, who said it meets with the requirement of the *Sahihayn*:

أَبِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بِضَرْعٍ فَتَنَحَّى رَجُلًا ، فَقَالَ : إِنِّي حَرَمْتُهُ ، فَقَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ : “ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ” [المائدة: ٨٧] أَطْعِمِمْ ، وَاكْفَرْ .

“We were with `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud when he was presented with a dish of udder. A man turned away saying, ‘I have declared it unlawful unto myself.’ Ibn Mas`ud recited this verse:

‘Believers! Treat not as unlawful that which has been made lawful unto you,’ and then said, ‘(Begin to) eat, and expiate for your oath.’”

Imām Razi raises a question. It is well known that the love of this world gets the better of the people’s heart. Now, if a person freely indulges in the pleasures of this world, his inclination to the lower world spirals down. With every increase in his inclination, there is a proportionate increase in his greed of the worldly goods and pleasures, taking away much of his time and efforts which are entirely devoted to obtaining those goods and the pleasures. This weakens his spiritual contacts with the higher world, hinders his obedience to Allah’s commands, and causes a decrease in his efforts to seek the Hereafter. His base self is little inclined, if at all, towards seeking the knowledge of the divine. What then is the wisdom in Allah’s behest: “*Believers! Treat not as unlawful that which has been made lawful unto you?*” Answering the question Imām Razi writes: Firstly, excessive asceticism and a total abnegation of the material blessings and the sensual things weakens the mind and the heart. With (an extremely low indulgence) thoughts become polluted and the mind gets muddled.

Whereas, as it is well known, the best of blessings and the greatest of bounties is the ma`rifah of Allah. If excessive asceticism hinders it, then it better be prohibited. Secondly, it is recognized that a free indulgence in the world hinders a man from attaining spiritual heights. That is true. But that is true of only the weak ones. The strong of will are not thus affected. Therefore, an indulgence in the world is of no harm to them. We notice for instance, with regard to a weak person, that when he attends to an affair, he cannot do justice to another affair at the same time. But that is not true of a people of strong character. Extreme asceticism is itself a kind of weakness, and a middle road is best suited for most people. Thirdly, by indulgence in this world, a person might aim at the next, as a total avoidance creates disinclination in the carnal self for anything sublime. Finally, excessive asceticism promises destruction of this world. It prides in non productive attitudes. Giving up such an attitude, coupled with a firm knowledge of the divine, promotes the development of this world as well as the Hereafter.

214. There are three ways in which a man can declare a lawful, unlawful unto himself. First, he believes that one of Allah’s lawful things is actual-

[88] Eat of the lawful and the clean that Allah has provided you;²¹⁵ and fear Allah in whom you believe.

وَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

ly unlawful. That is *kufr*. Second, he swears that he will not partake of one of Allah's lawful things. He should break the oath and expiate. Third, he does not believe in its unlawfulness nor declares it so to himself verbally, but does not partake of it for a good reason. It might, for instance, be harmful to his body. This kind of abstinence is permissible (Thanwi).

While Thanwi adds that the abstinence of certain articles of food that has been reported of the *Sufiya*, belongs to the last class mentioned above and was a means of avoiding certain harmful spiritual effects, he also states that such abstaining can only be for a short period. If someone abstains from one of the lawful blessings of Allah, lifelong, without the reasons of physical harm to him, then, surely, that would be treating a lawful thing of Allah as unlawful (Au.).

215. It is said that Hasan was told about a man who would not drink *faaludha* (a kind of soft drink) be-

cause he did not think he would be able to give thanks to Allah. Hasan asked: "Does the man drink cold water?" They said yes. He said: "That is an ignorant man. The blessing of Allah in cold water is greater than it is in *faaludha*."

216. When Allah chided those who had vowed not to partake of the good things of the world, he showed a way in which they could break their vows and expiate them (Razi).

Qurtubi adds: If the oath is about a sinful thing, then a man is neither bound to act by it, nor is he required to offer expiation for it. Expiation is for an oath about a lawful thing. The Prophet has said:

مَنْ حَلَفَ عَلَى يَمِينٍ فَرَأَى غَيْرَهَا خَيْرًا مِنْهَا فَلْيَأْتِهَا
وَلْيُكْفِرْ عَنْ يَمِينِهِ

"If someone swears about a thing but finds something better than that, then, let him break the oath and expiate it" (Qurtubi).

For some more commentary see note

[89] Allah will not call you to account for your unintentional oaths, but will call you to account for your deliberate oaths,²¹⁶ whereof the expiation is feeding of ten poor (souls) with what you normally feed your homefolk, or their clothing, or freeing of a slave. Yet, whoever does not find (these means),²¹⁷ then for him are three days of fasts. That is the expiation of the oaths when you have sworn. But keep your oaths. Thus Allah makes clear His commands to you, haply you will give thanks.

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَّدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانَ فَكَفَّارَتُهُ إِطْعَامُ عَشْرَةِ مَسْكِينٍ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعَمُونَ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ كَفَّارَةُ أَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ وَاحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

[90] Believers!²¹⁸ Verily, intoxicants,²¹⁹ game of chance,²²⁰ stone altars²²¹ and divining arrows²²² are an abomination handiwork of Shaytan; therefore, shun it, haply you will prosper.

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

467 of *surah al Baqarah* of this work.

The *hadith* is in the *Sahihayn* (Au.).

217. A *ghayr mustati`* is defined as one on whom *zakah* is not obligatory (Alusi, Shabbir).

218. When Allah Most High instructed the believers in the previous verses, not to declare the lawful as unlawful unto themselves, He followed it up by stating that they ought not to declare the unlawful as lawful unto themselves, crossing the bounds set by Him (Ibn Jarir).

219. Asad writes: "According to all the lexicographers, the word *khamr*, (derived from the verb *khamara* "he

concealed" or "obscured") denotes every substance the use of which obscures the intellect, i.e., intoxicates. Hence, the prohibition of intoxicants laid down in this verse comprises not merely alcoholic drinks, but also drugs which have a similar effect. The only exception from this total prohibition arises in case of "dire necessity" (in the strictest sense of the word), as stipulated in the last sentence of verse 3 of this *surah*: that is to say, in cases where illness or a bodily accident makes the administration of intoxicating drugs or of alcohol imperative and unavoidable."

The above seems to have its source in *Al Manar*, where Rashid Rida has

added the condition (apart from lack of an alternative medicine), of recommendation by a trustworthy medical authority for administration of the unlawful. This is in view of the strong disapproval expressed in a *hadith* in Muslim, Tirmidhi, Abu Da'ud and others which reports the Prophet (*saws*) as having said when asked about the healing qualities of wine:

إِنَّهَا لَيْسَتْ بِدَوَاءٍ وَلَكِنَّهَا دَاءٌ

“It is not a medicine, rather, a disease” (Au.).

Prohibition of Wine

Ahmad has the following report:

عَنْ نَافِعِ بْنِ كَيْسَانَ الدِّمَشْقِيِّ، أَنَّ أَبَاهُ كَيْسَانَ تَفَسَّهُ أَحْبَرَهُ، أَنَّهُ كَانَ يَتَّجِرُ فِي الْخَمْرِ فِي زَمَانِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَأَقْبَلَ مِنَ الشَّامِ وَمَعَهُ خَمْرٌ فِي الرِّقَاقِ يُرِيدُ بِهِ التَّجَارَةَ، فَأَتَى رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنِّي جِئْتُ بِشَرَابٍ جَيِّدٍ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: “يَا كَيْسَانُ، إِنَّهَا قَدْ حُرِّمَتْ”، قَالَ كَيْسَانُ: فَأَذْهَبُ فَأَبِيعُهَا يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ؟، قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: “إِنَّهَا قَدْ حُرِّمَتْ، وَحَرَامٌ مِثْلُهَا”، فَانْطَلَقَ كَيْسَانُ إِلَى الرِّقَاقِ فَأَخَذَهَا بِأَرْجُلِهِ، ثُمَّ أَهْرَقَهَا جَمِيعًا.

Nafi` b. Kaysan reports from his father that he used to trade in wine during the time of the Prophet. He came back from Syria with wine with several skin-bags of wine to sell them down

here. He met the Prophet and told him, “Messenger of Allah, I have brought some fine wine.” He told him, “O Kaysan, it has been prohibited.” Kaysan asked, “Should I sell it all, Prophet of Allah.” He replied, “That has been prohibited and its price is unlawful.” So Kaysan upturned the bags and poured out all of it.”

(One of the narrators of the above report was not too trustworthy: Au.).

Ibn Jarir reports Ibn `Abbas as saying:

إِنَّمَا نَزَلَ تَحْرِيمَ الْخَمْرِ فِي قَبِيلَتَيْنِ مِنْ قِبَائِلِ الْأَنْصَارِ، شَرَبُوا فَلَمَّا أَنْ ثَمَلَ عَثَبَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا، فَلَمَّا أَنْ صَحُوا جَعَلَ الرَّجُلُ يَرَى الْأَثَرَ بِوَجْهِهِ وَرَأْسِهِ وَلِحْيَتِهِ، فَيَقُولُ: صَنَعَ هَذَا بِي، أَخِي فَلَانَ - وَكَانُوا إِخْوَةً لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ ضَغَائِنٌ وَاللَّهِ لَوْ كَانَ بِي رَوْوْفًا رَحِيمًا مَا صَنَعَ هَذَا بِي، حَتَّى وَقَعَتِ الضَّغَائِنُ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ

“What occurred between two tribes of the *Ansar* became a cause of prohibition of wine. They drank until they were intoxicated. They played pranks with each other in that state. When they recovered some of them saw marks on their faces and said, ‘So and so did this to me. By Allah, if he had any regard for me he would not have done it.’ That aroused rancor in their

hearts, while there was never any rancor in their hearts before that. So Allah revealed this verse.

Ibn Kathir writes: Abu Buraydah reported his father:

عن أبي بريدة، عن أبيه قال: بينا نحن قعود على شراب لنا، ونحن رَمْلَةٌ، ونحن ثلاثة أو أربعة، وعندنا باطية لنا، ونحن نشرب الخمر حلا إذ قمت حتى أتى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فأسلم عليه، إذ نزل تحريم الخمر: { يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ } إلى آخر الآيتين { فَهَلْ أَنتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ } ؟ فجئت إلى أصحابي فقرأتها إلى قوله: { فَهَلْ أَنتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ } ؟ قال: وبعض القوم شربته في يده، قد شرب بعضها وبقي بعض في الإناء، فقال بالإناء تحت شفته العليا، كما يفعل الحجام، ثم صبوا ما في باطيتهم فقالوا: انتهينا ربنا

“During the days when wine was lawful, I drank in the company of a few friends. Later, I went up to the Prophet. By that time the verse prohibiting it had been revealed. I went back to those with whom I was drinking and read out this verse. Some of them had wine-cups in their hands, half emptied. When they heard the exhortation, ‘Will you then desist?’ they threw it away saying, ‘We desist, O Our Lord.’”

It is also reported in Muslim and Nasa'i that:

كان لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم صديق من ثقيف -أو: من دوس- فلقيه يوم الفتح براوية خمر

يهديها إليه، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ”يا فلان، أما علمت أن الله حرمها؟“ فأقبل الرجل على غلامه فقال: اذهب فبعها. فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ”يا فلان، بماذا أمرته؟“ فقال: أمرته أن يبيعها. قال: ”إن الذي حرم شرابها حرم بيعها“. فأمر بها فأفرغت في البطحاء.

A Thaqafi or Dawsī friend of the Prophet met him on the day Makkah fell. He had wine in his hand. The Prophet asked him if he did not know that wine was prohibited. The man turned to his slave and ordered him to sell it off. The Prophet asked him about his instructions to his slave. He said, “I have asked him to sell it off.” The Prophet said: “He who declared its drinking unlawful has declared its trading unlawful too.” The man ordered his slave to throw it all away. (Humaydi’s version says that the man then expressed his intention to gift it away to the Jews but the Prophet prevented him from doing that also: Rashid Rida).

Another report in Abu Ya`la and Ahmad says that:

عن تميم الداري أنه كان يهدي لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم راوية من خمر، فلما أنزل الله تحريم الخمر جاء بها، فلما رآها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ضحك وقال: ”إنها قد حرمت بعدك“. قال: يا رسول الله، فأبيعها وأنتفع بثمنها؟ فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ”لئن الله اليهود، حرم عليهم

شُحُومِ الْبَقْرِ وَالْغَنَمِ، فَأَذَابُوهُ، وَبَاعُوهُ، وَاللَّهُ حَرَّمَ الْخَمْرَ
وَمِنْهَا“

Tamim Dari used to gift the Prophet a pitcher of wine. After wine was prohibited, he came with it. When he saw it, the Prophet smiled and told him, “It has been prohibited after you met me last.” He asked him if he could sell it off. He replied: “Allah cursed the Jews who, when fat was prohibited to them, they liquefied it and sold it. Allah has declared wine as well as its price unlawful.”

Abu Da'ud, Ibn Majah and Ahmad have preserved a *hadith* of Ibn `Umar which reports the Prophet as having said:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ لَعَنَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الْخَمْرِ عَشْرَةَ عَاصِرِهَا وَمُعْتَصِرِهَا
وَشَارِبِهَا وَحَامِلِهَا وَالْمَحْمُولَةَ إِلَيْهِ وَسَاقِيَهَا وَبَائِعَهَا
وَأَكِلَ ثَمَنِهَا وَالْمُشْتَرِيَ لَهَا وَالْمُشْتَرَاةَ

“Allah has cursed wine in ten different ways. He cursed its squeezer, the one for whom it was squeezed, its drinker, transporter, he for whom it was transported, the server, buyer, he who consumed its price, buyer and one for whom it was bought.”

And, according to a *hadith* in the *Sunan* of Bayhaqi, Thabit has reported

that he asked Ibn `Umar about the sale (and purchase) of wine. He said, “Let me tell you about it. I was with the Prophet in the mosque. He was sitting with his legs folded against his breast and tied up with a cloth to his breast. He ordered, ‘Whoever has any wine in his house, let him bring it.’ They began to bring in. Someone said, ‘I have a leather bottle.’ Another said, ‘I have a wine skin.’ When they had all brought in the wine, he ordered, ‘Let all of you assemble at such and such a place at Baqi` and then call me over.’ When they had done that they called him over. He rose up to go, and I accompanied him. I was on his right side and he was supporting himself on my shoulder. Then Abu Bakr arrived. He pulled me to his left side, making room for Abu Bakr on the right. Then `Umar arrived. He abandoned me and took `Umar to his left side. When he arrived at the site, he asked the people, ‘Do you know what this is?’ They answered, ‘Yes, O Messenger of Allah. It is wine.’ He said, ‘You spoke the truth.’ Then he said, ‘Allah has cursed it, its drinker, supplier, seller, buyer, squeezer, the one who it is squeezed for, the carrier, the one who it is carried to, and making use of its earnings.’ Then he asked for a knife and ordered it sharpened.

With that he began to make holes in the skins. The people protested, 'These leather bags are useful to us.' He replied, 'I know. I am doing it for Allah's sake who is angry with it.' 'Umar asked, 'Shall I help you, O Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'No.'"

Shabbir points out that the reason why the prohibition was so easily accepted is that the Companions, after the refinement of their tastes and spiritual sensibilities, with the effects of the Prophet's companionship added to it, were sure that wine drinking simply did not fit into the scheme of life as projected by Islam, and that the announcement of its prohibition was simply a matter of time. Hence, when a single man brought in the news of its prohibition to their wine assemblies, they did not think it necessary to go to the Prophet and check up the authenticity of the news, (although, one or two wished to do that but the rest did not think it necessary: Au.) rather, simply emptied their cups, jars, and containers. The situation was analogous to that of the change in *qiblah*. When a crier cried out that the *qiblah* had been changed to Makkah, the while a group of them were in Prayers, with an Imām leading them, they immediately turned around by 180 deg.,

rather than complete the Prayers and make enquiries about it, although, the importance of the matter demanded enquiry and clarification. That is because of the fact that they were anticipating a change in *qiblah*, which injunction, although paraphrased by the Qur'ānic revelation, was attributed to the Prophet alone when it said (2: 144): "We have seen your face (O Prophet) turning (oft) towards the heavens. We will surely turn you toward the *qiblah* dear to you."

Consequences of Wine Drinking

Ibn Kathir quotes the following *ahadith*: Bayhaqi and Ahmad have a report which says that:

مَنْ تَرَكَ الصَّلَاةَ سُكْرًا أَرْبَعَ مَرَّاتٍ كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يَسْقِيَهُ مِنْ طَبِينَةِ الْحَبَالِ. قِيلَ وَمَا طَبِينَةُ الْحَبَالِ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: «عَصَاةُ أَهْلِ جَهَنَّمَ»

"Allah will have the right to offer in drink blood and puss of the people of the Fire, to someone who missed four of his prayers because he was drunk." (Tr. abridged).

A *hadith* in Bukhari says:

من شرب الخمر في الدنيا، ثم لم يتب منها حُرِّمَها في الآخرة

"Whoever drank wine in this world and did not repent, will miss it in the Hereafter."

Bayhaqi has recorded the Prophet as having said,

ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الْعَاقُ لَوَالِدَيْهِ،
وَالْمُدْمِنُ الْخَمْرَ، وَالْمَنَانُ بِمَا أُعْطِيَ

“Allah will not look at three people in the Hereafter: one who disobeyed his parents, a habitual drinker and one who reminded after expending (in charity).”

Bayhaqi has also reported through a trustworthy chain `Uthman as saying, “Do not drink wine. It is the mother of all evils. There was a man before you given to much devotion. A prostitute was enchanted by him. She got him into her house on the pretext of a testimony. She locked up every entry door that he left behind. In the inner chambers, there was a young man and some wine. She told him that she would not let him go until he would either kill the man, drink wine or have sex with her. The pious man thought wine would be the lightest of the three. So he drank. Then he asked for more. And more. When drunk, he killed the man and had sex with her.”

Rashid adds: Tabarani has recorded the words of the Prophet:

فِيَّانَهَا رَأْسُ كُلِّ شَرٍّ

“Wine is the source of all evils.”

Another *hadith* says:

الْخَمْرُ أُمُّ الْفَوَاحِشِ وَأَكْبَرُ الْكِبَائِرِ مِنْ شَرِّهَا وَقَعَ عَلَى
أُمِّهِ وَخَالَتِهِ وَعَمَّتِهِ

“Wine is the head of all evils and the greatest of the Great sins. Whoever drank leapt on his mother and aunts.”

In another report, narrated by Ibn `Abbas, he said: “Whoever drank rapes his mother.” Suyuti has classified these reports as *sahih*.

Rashid Rida also writes that wine drinking can lead the Muslims to those moral and spiritual consequences that the non Muslims escape. This can be commonly noticed. This is because non Muslims have not received a revelation warning them of the ill consequences. In contrast, the Muslim is fully conscious of the ill effects of not acting according to the commands and, consequently, suffers heavy effects upon his mind and soul. (This can be demonstrated as true from psychological point of view: Au.).

Building upon some of the points stated by Razi, Rashid Rida also points out to a total of fourteen ways by which Allah emphasized the prohibition of intoxicants: (1) He started the sentence with “*innama*” (verily) which is for emphasis. (2) He equat-

ed it with idol worship. (3) He called it an abomination. (4) He called it a handiwork of *Shaytan*. (5) He ordered the prohibition not through a direct decree, rather through exhortation, which, according to the rules of rhetoric, is a more emphatic way of doing it. (6) He declared abstinence from it a way to success. (7) He declared that it leads to enmity. (8) He declared that it causes rancor. (9) He declared that it prevents from His remembrance. (10) He declared that it prevents from Praying. (11) He brought a causative “*fa*” before ending with a question, indicating that the “cause” and “effect” are inseparable: they will appear together. (12) In the next sentence He exhorted the believers to obey Allah and His Messenger: the Messenger saying, “Every intoxicant is forbidden.” (13) Allah saying, “Beware.” And, (14) the threat hidden in words, “*If you turn away...*”

For a further discussion of the subject of intoxicants refer to notes 455 of *Surah al Baqarah* and 149 of *Surah al Nisa'* of this work (Au.).

In the contemporary world, Islam seems to be the only religion on earth that scorns intoxicants. Majid writes: “Wine is considered a sacred drink among the Jews. Far from be-

ing forbidden, it is an integral part of their religious festivities. ‘As wine gladdens the heart of men and forms an important element in a festive meal, it has been ordered that our meal on the evening of Sabbath and Festival should begin with a cup of wine in the honour of the day, and that mention should be made of the holiness of the day before partaking of the wine. The Kidduah consists of two blessings: one over the wine, and one that refers to the holiness of the day’ (Friedlander, *The Jewish Religion*, p. 341).”

Other Scriptures on Wine

Nevertheless, the Bible is not entirely without a few lines of disfavor. Rashid Rida quotes the following:

“Woe to those who rise early in the morning,
that they may run after strong drink,
who tarry late into the evening
till wine inflames them!
They have lyre and harp,
timbrel and flute and wine at their feasts;
but they do not regard the deeds of their Lord,
or see the work of his hand.
Therefore my people go into exile
for want of knowledge;

their men are dying of hunger, and their multitude is parched with thirst.”

(*Isaiah*, 5: 11 13)

And,

“Woe to the proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim, and to the fading flower of its glorious beauty,”

(*Isaiah* 28: 1)

And,

“The proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim will be trodden under foot.”

(*Isaiah* 28: 3)

As for the New Testament, it has also one or two unkind sentences:

“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery;” (*Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians*, 5: 18).

And,

“Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, drunkenness.”

(*Paul’s Letter to the Galatians* 5: 20).

Rashid’s quote ends here.

It appears that it is only the concept of Divinity of Jesus Christ, which he himself never claimed, that is taken from Paul’s teachings by the Chris-

tians, but not the Law. A kind of vague prohibition is to be found in the *Torah* also:

“And the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying, ‘Drink no wine nor strong drink, you nor your sons with you, when you go into the tent of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations’”

(*Leviticus*, 10: 8,9) Au.

On the special need for the Muslims to be true to the prohibition, we have a good point from Sayyid. He writes: “Suspension of sensibilities however caused goes against the awareness that Islam instills into the hearts of its adherents. A believer is required to be in constant spiritual contact with his Lord and turn to Him in every situation of peril (major or minor). Moreover, the awareness on his part is required to be a positive, constructive one, leading to a growth and renewal of life and in its defense against any weakness or corruption attacking it from any direction. He is also required to be in a state of readiness for the protection of his self, property and honor and the protection of the peace of the Muslim society and its safety against any efforts toward a destabilization. A Muslim personality is not given

to his own self or to his pleasures. There is on him, in every moment of life, demands that require a constant vigilance: demands of his Lord, demands of his self, demands of his dependents, demands of the Muslim society in which he lives and the demands of the humanity at large which he has to guide and invite to the path of salvation. These demands require a constant vigilance. In fact, even when he indulges in pleasures, Islam demands that he, during those very moments of pleasure and indulgence, remain mindful of his pleasures, enjoying them conscientiously and not given away totally to them to be a slave of those indulgences. He is the master of the situations of pleasure welcoming them in the manner of someone in control of the situation. The state of intoxication works against all these.

Sayyid's quote ends here.

Finally, the following are extracts from a book, *Contemporary Topics In Islamic Medicine*, (Saudi Publishing & Dist. House, Riyadh), by Dr. Muhammad Ali Albar, an FRCP medical practitioner.

Production, Consumption and Problems

"Today, millions of gallons of wine is consumed throughout the world

every year. In West Germany alone, wine consumption was worth \$30 billion in 1982. In Scotland, 92 percent of boys and 85 percent of girls experience alcohol by the age of 14. In France and Germany, 2.5 million of each country are incurable alcoholics. In the former USSR, it was 25 million. As a result hundreds of billions of production loss are recorded annually. In USA alone the loss was estimated at \$120 billion in 1984. Almost 90 percent of murders and 50 percent of rapes are committed by alcoholics. It is estimated that in Britain an estimated 40,000 deaths occur annually due to alcohol consumption. Despite these consequences, the production of wine is on the rise world wide. In 1982 alone the rise noted by WHO in certain Asian countries, was a staggering 500 percent over the previous years."

Physical Effects

There is a general misconception, especially among the youth, that alcohol beverages enhance libido. Dr. Albar writes: "Alcoholic beverages are still used by layman because they are believed to have an aphrodisiac effect, a claim that was refuted by the renowned English poet, Shakespeare, who said, 'It provokes the desire, but takes away the performance.' Never-

theless, this misconception continues because of the many sexual crimes which are committed under the influence of alcohol. Fifty percent of all rapes are committed under its influence. Crimes of incest are reported to occur mainly under the effects of intoxicating liquor. The force of advertising, which connects liquor with manliness and sexual prowess, is so strong that it promotes the mistaken concept, especially among teenagers, that alcohol enhances libido and sexuality. But the reality is quite the opposite – the cumulative effect of alcohol on sex is deleterious.

“Alcohol acts as a direct toxin to the testicles where the male sex hormones and semen are produced. The autonomic nervous system, which controls erection and ejaculation, is also affected by chronic consumption of alcohol. In addition, the affected liver of the alcoholic is incapable of destroying the oestrogenic hormones normally produced by the male suprarenal gland. This results in decreased libido, impotence and gynecomastia. (Ref. Gordon, D. Olivo, Jr., Rafir, R., et al., Conversion of androgens to estrogens in cirrhosis of the liver. J. Clin. Endocrinal, Metabl. 1982; 55:583 6 and Van Thiel, D., Evidence of adrenal origin of plasma estrogens in subjects

with liver disease, Gastroenterology, 1975, 69:819).”

Alcohol and Cold Climates

Dr. Albar also writes: “Alcohol dilates the cutaneous blood vessels, which provides a sense of warmth. It also abolishes the shivering reflex, which is a protective mechanism of the body against cold. Therefore, if a person drinks alcohol and is exposed to cold weather, as often occurs at Christmas and New Year festivals, such a person will be greatly endangering his health – being liable to lose body heat and suffer hypothermia. The level of consciousness declines progressively with decreasing body temperature; pupils contract and tendon reflexes are lost. (Ref. Weyman, A., Greenhouse, D., Grace W., Accidental hypothermia in an alcoholic population, A. J., Med. 1974; 56:13 21, and others).”

220. Apart from the game of chance involving money or property, also prohibited are those games that might lead to gambling, such as, for instance, backgammon and chess. In a *hadith* of Muslim the Prophet said:

مَنْ لَعِبَ بِالرَّرْدَشِيرِ فَكَأَنَّمَا صَبَّغَ يَدَهُ فِي لَحْمِ خَنْزِيرٍ
وَدَمِهِ

“Whoever played backgammon colored his hand with the flesh

and blood of swine.”

Imām Malik, Abu Hanifah and Ahmad have declared playing of chess unlawful with Imām Shafē'i considering it merely undesirable (Ibn Kathir).

221. The word in the original, *nusub*, is for those stone altars at which the pre Islamic Arabs slaughtered their offerings (Ibn Kathir). The difference between *asnam* and *ansab* is that the former enjoyed some kind of form and shape, while the latter was simply a stone altar erected, worshipped and slaughtered at (Alusi).

To declare the prohibition of wine and idols in one sentence is as if to say that the two are equal in sin and abomination (Zamakhshari). Accordingly, we find that the Prophet said:

مُذْمَبٌ الْحُمْرِ إِنْ مَاتَ لَقِيَ اللَّهَ كَعَابِدٍ وَثَنٍ

“A (regular) wine-drinker – if he dies – will meet Allah as an idol-worshipper.”

The last quoted *hadīth* is in Ibn Majah. Suyuti said in his *Jami' al Saghir* that it is *hasan* (Au.).

222. (Apart from using the divining arrows for “do” or “don't do” purposes, see note 19 of this *surah*: au.) the pre Islamic Arabs also used them

for drawing lots. For example, ten of them would put in their money and slaughter a camel. But, instead of dividing the meat equally between themselves, they would take ten arrows with figures one, two or three inscribed on them along with a few blank ones. Then, after a mix up in the quiver, every participant would draw. Some would get maybe two or three shares of the meat, but others might draw a blank arrow and get nothing. This kind of gambling has been banned in Islam. However, when the shares are equal, but the sharers are unable to decide as to which part should go to whom, then resorting to drawing lots is admissible (Shafi').

223. Rashid Rida writes: A good case in point is that of Hamza. He was once drinking wine with some *Ansar*. They also had a singer among them. She sang out some poetical pieces extolling the virtue of those who slaughtered beautiful and expensive camels for their friends. In his drunkenness Hamza got up and slaughtered two camels belonging to 'Ali. Now, 'Ali was not in an envious financial situation. The loss of camels was quite depressing. He complained to the Prophet. He came with 'Ali and Zayd b. Haritha and reproached Hamza. Hamza was drunk with his

[91] *Shaytan seeks only to stir up enmity and hatred among you by means of intoxicants²²³ and gambling and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from Prayer.²²⁴ Will you then desist?*

[92] *Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger and beware; yet, if you turn away then know that upon Our Messenger is (no more than) a clear proclamation.*

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَاحذَرُوا فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا إِنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٩٢﴾

eyes red. He said, addressing him and those who were with him, “Are you not but my father’s slaves?” The Prophet turned back and left the place (without a word). And, obviously, if it was not Hamza, the valiant defendant of Islam, an uncle of the Prophet, and, were he not to be drunk, matters would not have ended as quietly as they did.

224. (That a drunken man loses his head, uttering nonsense, leading to fights, hatred and enmity is well known. But such are the consequences of gambling too. The loser hates the winner: Au.). Qatadah has said that the pre Islamic Arabs lost even their wives, children, wealth, and property in gambling (Ibn Jarir). (And so did the ancient Hindus). Majid writes: “And who has not heard of the ancient king Yuddisthira playing away all his wealth and kingdom; and finally, his brothers,

himself and his wife Draupadi in a game of dice?”

Shabbir writes: It is common observation that not only Prayers, the chess players forget even their food and drink.

225. Most of the commentators have found the verse difficult to understand. The “*ittaqaw*” could also be understood as “they refrained from indulging in what was prohibited in their time,” and the whole verse could be paraphrased as, ‘There is no sin upon the men of the past who believed and worked righteousness in what they ate or drank, so long as they refrained from what was prohibited at that time, and then refrained from what (ever else that) was subsequently prohibited, provided they were of faith and worked righteousness, and then, remained for the rest of their lives, refraining from all unlawful things: gen-

[93] *There is no sin upon those (of the dead) who believed and worked righteousness in what they partook of, so long as they feared,*²²⁵ *believed, and worked righteousness; then they feared and believed; and then*²²⁶ *they feared and did things well.*²²⁷ *And Allah loves those who do things well.*²²⁸

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعُمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا
وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا
وَأَحْسَنُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

erally doing things well. And Allah loves those who do things well.' This rendering would cover both those believers who died before some of the lawful of their time was later declared unlawful, as well as those who lived through both the eras. It also stipulates the rule that sin does not consist in eating this or not eating that, rather in total submission and zealous application. Hence we find, as Alusi has pointed out, that when this verse ("There is no sin upon those who believed and worked righteousness ...") was revealed, the Prophet said to Ibn Mas'ud, in a *hadith* preserved by Muslim, Nasa'i and others, "I was told, 'you (i.e., Ibn Mas'ud) are one of them.'" That is, you are one of those upon whom there is no sin (Au.).

226. (Looked at from a different angle: Au.) the *thumma* of the original, translated as "then" indicates "a sequence expressing growth and intensification" (Razi and Asad).

227. Ibn 'Abbas, Bara', Mujahid and Dahhak have said that when the verse declaring wine unlawful was revealed, some people asked the Prophet about the fate of those who had died before the prohibition came into force. Allah revealed this verse (Ibn Jarir).

Rashid Rida adds the following. Ibn al Mundhir has recorded Sa'id ibn Jubayr as saying that when Allah revealed the verse 219 of *al Baqarah*, "They ask you concerning wine and gambling. Tell them: 'There are grave sins in both, although there are (some) benefits (also) for mankind,'" some of the people continued to drink following Allah's words: "there are some benefits also," while others gave up following His words: "there are grave sins in it." 'Uthman b. Maz'un was one of those who had given up. Then verse 34 of *al Nisa'* came down which said, "Believers! Draw not near to Prayers while you are in a state of drunkenness." Thereupon,

some more people gave up, while some others continued to drink in the evenings, until this present verse was revealed. Then everyone gave up. But it was hard upon them. So that, when one of them came across another he would say, in effect, "I have an empty feeling inside me." The other man would ask, "Perhaps you have been thinking of wine." When the first admitted, the second would say, "Me too." Finally, as if to seek a concession, they went to the Prophet and asked: "Aren't Hamza b. `Abdul Muttalib, Mus`ab b. `Umayr and `Abdullah b. Jahsh in Paradise?!" When the Prophet said yes, they reminded him that they used to drink wine. So Allah revealed this verse.

Someone understood the verse wrong during the time of `Umar ibn al Khattab. When brought to him for drinking wine, the man, Qudamah, argued that since he had believed, performed righteous deeds, and was godfearing, his drinking was forgivable. `Umar told him, (according to some reports it was Ibn `Abbas) that if he had believed, acted righteously and been God fearing, he would not have drunk in the first place. He or-

dered the man whipped (Qurtubi).

228. Shabbir writes: The verse tells us by implication that of *Taqwa* and iman there are many grades and levels and that their every subsequent mention is alluding to a new and higher level, ending with the highest level in Islam known as *ihsan*.

229. Ibn `Abbas and Mujahid have said that the allusion by the easy reach of your "hands" is to small game, such as wild chicken, birds' eggs etc., and with "spear" to big game (Ibn Jarir).

Others have suggested that the allusion by "hands" could be to the nests, snares etc. that are set up for small game and by "spear" to those that are hunted with the help of weapons (Alusi).

However, Muqatil ibn Hayyan has said that these verses were revealed during the *`Umrah* of Hudaybiyyah, when, it so happened that the Muslims encountered so much game that they could have caught some of them with their bare hands. By "the easy reach of your hands" the allusion is to that (Ibn Kathir).

Keeping in mind the precarious eco-

[94] Believers! Surely, Allah will test you with some game within easy reach of your hands and spears²²⁹ so that Allah may know who fears Him in the unseen.²³⁰ Whoso transgresses thereafter shall face a painful chastisement.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِيَبْلُوكُمْ اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الصَّيْدِ تَتَّالُهُ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَرِمَاحُكُمْ لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَخَافُهُ بِالْغَيْبِ فَمَنِ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾

nomic conditions which the Muslims were facing those days and years, and, considering the fondness of the Arabs for game, surely, appearance of the game, within easy reach, in large numbers, to the hungry travelers must have been quite a test. If the boycott of all transaction with them by the Makkans is added, then, surely, the prohibition must have been as difficult and trying to them, as the stream water for the followers of Talut, to which incident some commentators have rightly compared this one (Au.).

230. People are normally afraid of the Unseen. Behind all superstitious practices is the effort to please those evil forces that the people imagine are hidden in the Unseen. Allah tells us that there is nothing in the world that has any power besides Him. Therefore, if people have to fear anything of the unseen, let them fear

Him who is in the Unseen (Au.).

231. Excluded from the general prohibition are harmful animals such as wolves, snakes, a rabid dog, eagles etc., as clarified by a *ahadith* (Au.).

232. Mujahid, Ibn Jurayj and Hasan have said that the verse is speaking of someone who has forgotten that he is in a state of *ihram* or, has forgotten that it is forbidden to hunt while he is in *ihram*, or, alternatively, throws his weapon at something, but it hits a game animal. He has to expiate it. In contrast, if he is well aware that he is in a state of *ihram* and is also aware that hunting is prohibited in that state, but still hunts a game animal, then, his Hajj or `Umrah is null and void. Never the less, Ibn `Abbas and Sa`id b. Jubayr made no such distinction, declaring all situations as requiring expiation, and that seems to be the correct position (Ibn Jarir).

[95] Believers! Kill not the game while you are in a state of consecration.²³¹ Whosoever of you kills it, intentionally,²³² the compensation is the like of what he killed in domestic beasts,²³³ to be determined by two of your just persons - an offering to reach the Ka`bah,²³⁴ or, as expiation, feeding of a poor, or equivalent of that in fasts,²³⁵ in order that he might taste the bitter consequence of his action. Allah has forgiven what was in the past, but Allah shall take revenge of the repeater. And Allah is All-Mighty, the Lord of Retribution.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ وَمَنْ قَتَلَهُ مِنْكُمْ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعْمِ بِكُمْ بِهِ ذَوْا عَدْلٍ مِّنْكُمْ هَدْيًا بَالِغَ الْكَعْبَةِ أَوْ كَفَّارَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسَاكِينَ أَوْ عَدْلٌ ذَلِكِ صِيَامًا لَّيْدُوقَ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ﴿٩٥﴾

233. Ibn `Abbas, Suddi and others have explained that if a man kills, for instance, a wild cow, he should expiate with a domestic cow, if he kills a deer, he should offer a goat in expiation, etc. Accordingly, when Qubaysah ibn Jabir and another person killed a deer together and consulted `Umar ibn al-Khattab, he consulted a man sitting next to him and then ordered them to sacrifice a sheep (Ibn Jarir).

Obviously, `Umar did not need to consult another person to arrive at the conclusion that a sheep was equivalent of a deer; he did that following the Qur`anic dictum: "to be determined by two of your just persons" (Au.).

Asad writes: "The 'two persons of probity' are supposed to determine

the approximate flesh-value of the wild animal which has been killed, and to decide on this basis as to what domestic animal should be offered in compensation." He writes further: "... two alternatives are open to a pilgrim who is too poor to provide a head or heads of cattle corresponding in value to the game which he has killed, or - in the last-named alternative - too poor even to feed other poor people."

234. That is, the slaughtering has to be done within the *Haram* area and the meat to be distributed among the poor of Makkah (Ibn Kathir).

235. Neither the Qur`an nor the *hadith* have any direction about how the number of fasts may be computed. The *Fuqaha'* have, therefore, as in Qurtubi, filled in the gap. Abu

[96] However, game of the water and its food²³⁶ has been made lawful unto you²³⁷ - a provision for you and the traveller;²³⁸ but forbidden unto you is the game of the land so long as you are in the state of consecration.²³⁹ And fear Allah to whom you shall be returned.

أَجَلًا لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ وَلِلسَّيَّارَةِ وَحَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدَ الْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرْمًا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

Haneefah's opinion is that he who kills an animal in the state of consecration may assess the quantity of the flesh the animal yields. Convert it into handfuls. Then for every two handfuls (where each handful involves both the hands cupped together), fast a day as expiation. Imām Shaf'e'i and Malik have suggested other methods of computation, leading perhaps to more or less the same results. However, all agree that if a big animal is involved, then, there is no need to fast for more than two months in expiation.

This is a good instance of how the claim of the rejecters of *hadith*, (believers in the Qur'an alone), stands refuted. To act by Qur'anic directions, not only the *hadith* is indispensable, even the rulings of the *Fuqaha'* cannot be denied their role (Au.).

Ka'bah has been named instead of the *Haram* (the Sacred precincts) because of its honor (Alusi).

236. Abu Bakr, 'Umar and many others have interpreted the original *ta'amuhu* as that which the seas throw out: dead or alive, although some have interpreted *ta'amuhu* as the dead of it (Ibn Jarir).

Asad adds: "Zamakhshari, however, regards the pronoun (of *ta'amuhu*) as relating to the object of the game (sayd) as such, and, consequently, understands the phrase as meaning 'eating thereof'."

Ibn Kathir writes: The *Sahihayn* have a report of Abu 'Ubaydah leading a campaign. They came across a whale that had anchored itself ashore and died. Abu 'Ubaydah said, 'We are messengers of the Messenger, and in dire need, therefore, eat of it.' They ate of it for a whole month. It was a huge thing and Abu 'Ubaydah ordered one of its bow-like bone to be erected. Ten men in a row passed through it. They carried some of its meat to Madinah and enquired the Prophet whether what they had done was right. He said yes and asked for

some and ate of it.

As for sea animals, there are differences in opinion over which of them is lawful and which is not. At least frogs are not lawful according to Imām Shafe`i in view of a *hadith* in Nasa'i which prohibits their killing.

237. In the words, "Game of the water and its food has been made lawful unto you," (coming as they do, after prohibition of the game of land: Au.) is the hint that exaggerations in asceticism is disapproved (Thanwi).

238. The allusion is to the salted sea-food that travelers in those days carried as provision, or the sedentary preserved for future use (Ibn Jarir).

239. With regard to what a muhrim kills, the question is, is it lawful for an unconnected muhrim to eat of it or not? There are two opinions: some declaring it unlawful and others lawful (Ibn Jarir). Imām Malik, Shafe`i and Ibn Hanbal are of the opinion that if the hunter (a non-muhrim) had intended to offer it to a muhrim, he might not eat of it. But, if he did not intend that then the muhrim is free to eat of it, as did the Prophet.

He was offered the meat of a wild ass, hunted down by Abu Qatadah. But, before eating he enquired any of the muhrim had expressed the desire that it be hunted for him. When they said no, he allowed them to eat of it. The report is in the *Sahihayn* (Ibn Kathir).

240. "The noun *Ka`bah*, by which, owing to its shape, the sanctuary has always been known, denoting any 'cubical building'. It would seem that he who first built the *Ka`bah* consciously chose the simplest three-dimensional form imaginable - a cube - as a parable of man's humility and awe before the idea of God, whose glory is beyond anything that man could conceive by way of architectural beauty. This symbolism is clearly expressed in the term *qiyam* (lit. 'support' or 'mainstay') which - in the abstract sense - signifies 'a standard by which [men's] affairs are made sound or improved' (Razi)" - Asad

241. The *Ka`bah* is the focal point and the axis around which the wheel of human activities turn. When this focal point is destroyed, life on

[97] Allah has appointed Ka`bah,²⁴⁰ the Sacred House, as an establishment for men,²⁴¹ as also (He consecrated) the Sacred Month, the sacrificial beast, and the collared ones:²⁴² so that you may know that Allah knows all that is in the heavens and in the earth and that Allah has knowledge of everything.

جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَامًا لِلنَّاسِ
وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالهَدْيَ وَالْقَلَائِدَ ذَلِكَ
لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٧﴾

[98] You should know that Allah is stern in retribution and that Allah is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.

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

[99] There is nothing more upon Our Messenger but delivery (of the message). And Allah knows what you reveal and what you conceal.

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

earth would be destroyed. This is how Imām Bukhari seems to have understood the verse. He has recorded the *hadith* of the Abyssinian slave demolishing the Ka`bah, stone by stone, a little before the Hour of Doom, as explanation of this verse. The consecration of the other three: the Sacred Month, the offering, and the collared ones, are extensions of the sacredness of the Holy House (based on Shabbir).

Since Allah has made Ka`bah a means of establishment, or support, Sa`id ibn Jubayr has said that whoever travelled to Makkah seeking either this world or the other, will be rewarded (Alusi).

242. See note 6 above.

243. The unbeliever and the believer, the rebellious and the submissive, the evil and the virtuous, the unlawful and the lawful, the unclean and the clean, etc., are all examples of “*khabith*” and “*tayyib*” (Shafi` and others).

It is perhaps in view of the superabundance of the *khabith* that its mention has preceded that of the *tayyib* in this verse, although, the normal order is to say “the good and the evil,” the “clean and the unclean,” etc. (Au.).

Yusuf Ali writes: “People often judge by quantity rather than quality. They are dazzled by numbers: their hearts are captured by what they see everywhere around them. But the man of understanding and discrimination

[100] Say: 'Not alike are the good and the evil,²⁴³ even if abundance of the evil bedazzles you.²⁴⁴ Therefore, fear Allah, O people of understanding, haply you will prosper.

[101] Believers! Question not concerning things²⁴⁵ which, if disclosed to you, would vex you.²⁴⁶ Yet, if you question concerning them while the Qur'an is being revealed, they will be disclosed to you.²⁴⁷ Allah has forgiven you over the issue.²⁴⁸ And Allah is Very Forgiving, Very Compassionate.

قُلْ لَّا يَسْتَوِي الْحَيِّثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ
أَعَجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْحَيِّثِ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَا أُولِي
الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنَ أَشْيَاءَ
إِن تَبَدَّ لَكُمْ تَسْؤُكُمْ وَإِن تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا
حِينَ يُنزَّلَ الْقُرْآنُ تَبَدَّ لَكُمْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهَا
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾

judges by a different standard. He knows that good and bad things are not to be lumped together, and carefully chooses the best, which may be the scarcest, and avoids the bad, though evil may meet him at every step.”

244. When `Umar ibn `Abdul `Aziz rescinded all tyrannical taxes and returned to the people the wealth and property that had been unjustly appropriated by the rulers preceding him, one of his governors wrote to him that his measures had emptied the state treasury. `Umar ibn `Abdul `Aziz wrote back to him this verse: 'Not alike are the good and the evil, even if abundance of the evil bedazzles you (Shafi`).

245. Ordinarily, the word "ashya'a" should have been in the genitive. Imām Razi cites reasons on the au-

thority of grammarians such as Khalil, Akhfash, Farra', Kisa'i and Sibawayh to explain, why it is accusative.

246. The Prophet has said in a *hadith* of Bukhari,

إِنَّ أَعْظَمَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فِي الْمُسْلِمِينَ جُرْمًا مَنْ سَأَلَ
عَنْ أَمْرٍ لَمْ يُحْرَمْ فَحَرَّمَ مِنْ أَجْلِ مَسْأَلَتِهِ

“The most sinful of Muslims is he who asked about a thing that was not declared unlawful but whose unlawfulness was brought to light because of a question he asked.”

Another *sahih hadith* says:

ذروني ما تركتم فإنما هلك الذين قبلكم بكثره سؤالهم
واختلافهم على أنبيائهم

“Let me alone so long as you are left alone. Those before you were destroyed because of their myri-

ad questioning and (subsequent) disagreement with their Prophets.”

Another *sahih hadith* says,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَرَضَ فَرَائِضَ فَلَا تُضَيِّعُوهَا، وَحَدَّ حُدُودًا فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا، وَحَرَّمَ أَشْيَاءَ فَلَا تَنْتَهِكُوهَا، وَسَكَتَ عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ رَحْمَةً بِكُمْ غَيَّرَ نِسْبَانَ فَلَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا

“Allah has obligated some acts, so do not ignore them. He has set some bounds, so do not cross them. He has declared certain things unlawful, so do not violate them and has remained silent over certain things, out of His mercy, not out of forgetfulness, therefore, do not ask about them” (Ibn Kathir).

Ibn `Abdul Barr has pointed out however, that the above prohibition was for the time when revelation was coming down. In subsequent times, there is no harm in someone seeking details, or making enquiries in order to improve upon one's knowledge, for the cure of ignorance is in asking (Qurtubi).

The Qur'an has said (16: 43):

فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Ask the men of admonition if you do not know” (Au.).

Some modernist scholars have leveled criticism against the jurists (*fuqaha*)

of Islam who have worked out details of the law, that their exercises have lent complications to the issues and made violation more likely. It is also said that the believers should not try to deduce additional laws from the injunctions clearly laid down by the Qur'an or the *Sunnah*, since this might cause the people hardship. These critics forget that greater the knowledge, the more polished one's deeds, and, coarser the knowledge, coarser the deeds. After all, every religion has provided a rough idea of things: “do not lie, do not drink, be good to your neighbors,” and so on. The beauty of Islam is in its details. What is it but detailed knowledge of things that lends a man refinement? As for violation, those who violate will do so, whether they possess a nominal knowledge of things or a detailed knowledge of them. In contrast, great spiritual pleasure is derived from the knowledge and the feeling, that one attempted perfection and came very close to achieving it. Should the refined abandon their spiritual joy for the sake of the coarse minds to whom it does not matter either way? Further, evolved circumstances demand changes in the law. And, since, the core is inalterable. It is the surrounding details that will undergo changes in changed cir-

cumstances. Left to their bare bones, Islamic Law would have soon met with a summary rejection - as unfit for modern life and its complications, as the Hamurabi or the Jewish Law. If the *Ummah* remains following only the *Shari'ah* as brought to light during the Prophet's time, what will the community do in the face of drugs, insurances of various kinds, gambling, leas business of dubious nature, interest-lending in surreptitious ways, surrogate motherhood, cloning, and multitude of new problems? Again, the Qur'an is not saying: "Do not seek details of religion." It prohibited that its first converts ask about things that the Qur'an had remained silent during its revelation. There is a sea of a difference between the two. Finally, what the people inquire is "details" of what has been already revealed. They do not seek new laws from their Lord.

It has also been said, 'Many of our jurists have, by their subjective deductions, unduly widened the range of man's religious obligations (*taklif*), thus giving rise to difficulties and complications which the clear wordings [of the Qur'an] had put an end to; and this has led to the abandoning, by many individual Muslims as well as by their governments, of Islamic Law in its entirety.' In the words of

another commentator, "Now there are some people who make unnecessary inquiries, cause elaborately prescribed, inflexibly determined and restrictive regulations to be added to the Law. Some others, in cases where such details are in no way deducible from the text, resort to analogical reasoning, thereby turning a broad general rule into an elaborate law, full or restrictive details, and an unspecified into a specified rule. Both sort of people put Muslims in general danger. For, in the area of belief, the more detailed the doctrine to which people are required to subscribe, the more problematic it becomes to do so. Likewise, in legal matters, greater the restrictions, greater the likelihood of violations."

Although, what has been stated in the lines above touch an aspect of the truth, in the overall, these are irresponsible statements. What has to be primarily understood is that it was not the difficulties and complications of the Laws of Islam that led to their abandoning. Rather, in the new age, the ruling class, the elite, and those educated on Western lines, abandoned Islamic Law and way of life wholesale in favor of Western Laws and way of life in the hope of achieving the same personal material progress as the West had achieved in

the course of past few centuries. In the words of an Arab thinker: "If we wish to achieve progress, of the kind they (the Westerners) have achieved, we will have to eat like they eat and drink like they drink ..." To give a specific example, it was not the details of the Islamic Law pertaining to the unlawfulness of intoxicants that led to their violation, and acceptance of its sale in Muslim countries. On the contrary, it was because the ruling elite was brought up in a culture of which intoxicants are a necessary ingredient, and because it was quite willing to abandon a religious Law for the sake of fattening state exchequer through taxation on liquor.

Further, it is one thing for a thinker to work out in his mind what could have led to this or that particular historical situation. But it is another thing to sit in the jurists benches and decided on complicated issues day in and day out. If the jurist insists on simply following the "clear injunctions of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*," probably he will not be able to pass a judgment on a single case of the dozens of extremely complicated ones filed in the courts every day.

It is perfectly alright to say to an ordinary Muslim that he ought to adhere to the basic teachings of the

Qur'an and *Sunnah*. But to say that to the Jurist is something incredible. It is like telling the secular judges to stick to the constitution alone of the country and disregard the precedence. How many cases can they settle every day?

Finally, if what is understood by the prohibition in the verse, as discouragement from seeking further details of the Law, how can one explain the Companions asking the Prophet several questions on several occasions, such as, for example, during Hajj, when they were free to perform it following the simplest of rules of the *Shari'ah*?

The fact is, the thinkers of Islam have to reconcile themselves to the fact that it is not the complications of the *Shari'ah* Law, worked out to its finer details by the jurists and others, that has led to the Muslim downfall. It is the refusal to accept Islam as a way of life.

Finally, in this particular case, it is not the details of the *Shari'ah* that the Companions had asked; but rather, their question was opening a door to further obligations, such as, for instance, should Hajj be performed every year? See the next note also (Au.).

Yusuf Ali has another, but very per-

continent aspect to point out. He says: "Many secrets are wisely hidden from us. If the future were known to us, we need not necessarily be happy. In many cases we should be miserable. If the inner meaning of some of the things we see before our eyes were disclosed to us, it might cause a lot of mischief. Allah's Message, in so far as it is necessary for shaping our conduct, is plain and open to us. But there are many things too deep for us to understand, either individually or collectively. It should be foolish to pry into them ..."

247. Ibn Jarir writes: Anas has reported (as in Bukhari: Au.) that:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ سَأَلُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى أَحْفَوهُ الْمَسْأَلَةَ فَغَضِبَ فَصَعَدَ الْمِنْبَرَ فَقَالَ لَا تَسْأَلُونِي الْيَوْمَ عَنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا بِيَسْئَلِكُمْ فَجَعَلْتُ أَنْظُرُ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَالَا إِذَا كُلُّ رَجُلٍ لَافَّ رَأْسَهُ فِي ثَوْبِهِ يَبْكِي فَإِذَا رَجُلٌ كَانَ إِذَا لَاحَى الرَّجَالَ يُدْعَى لِعَبْرِ أَبِيهِ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَنْ أَبِي قَالَ حُدَافَةُ ثُمَّ أَنْشَأَ عُمَرُ فَقَالَ رَضِينَا بِاللَّهِ رَبًّا وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَسُولًا نَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الْفِتَنِ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَا رَأَيْتُ فِي الْحَبِيرِ وَالشَّرِّ كَالْيَوْمِ قَطُّ إِنَّهُ صُوِّرَتْ لِي الْجَنَّةُ وَالنَّارُ حَتَّى رَأَيْتُهُمَا وَرَاءَ الْحَائِطِ

Once the people asked the Prophet (*saws*) several questions. A bit furious, he went up the pulpit and said, "You will not ask me a question now, but I will lay bare its truth to you." (Accord-

ing to another version: "So long as I am standing here": Qurtubi). Anas says, "I looked around, and there was none who had not hidden his face in his cloth and crying." At that moment a man who used to be attributed to other than his father, rose up and asked, "Messenger of Allah? Who is my father?" The Prophet replied, "Your father is Hudhafah (and not the one alleged)." At that `Umar stood up (according to one version went on his knees) and said, "We are satisfied with Allah as our Lord, Islam as our religion, Muhammad as a Messenger and I seek Allah's protection from the evil of trials." The Prophet said, "I have never seen of the good and evil as I did today. Paradise and Hell-fire were both depicted to me as if I saw them beyond this wall." Then Allah revealed this verse. According to some other versions, another man asked him on that occasion about his father, as to where he is, the Prophet replied, "In Hell-fire."

It is said that `Abdullah b. Hudhafah's mother chided him saying, "You are a headless man. Did you not think that were your mother to have committed what women in pre-Islamic

days committed, would not you have put her to shame?" `Abdullah replied, "Had the Prophet named a black slave, I would have accepted him": Qurtubi). Nevertheless, Abu Hurayrah and Abu Umamah al-Bahiliyy, as also Ibn `Abbas, have said that once the Prophet told his followers that Hajj had been prescribed unto them. Someone asked him whether it was a yearly obligation. The Prophet did not reply. The man repeated his question twice or thrice. The Prophet was angry with him. He said, "Had I said yes, it would have become a yearly obligation and you would not have been able to perform it. And, were you to neglect it, you would become unbelievers." And this verse was revealed. (This *hadith* is in Ibn Hibban and is *sahih*: S. Ibrahim). It is apparent, Ibn Jarir adds, that there were several incidents in which useless questions were asked which led to the revelation of this verse.

The report of the Prophet's speech is in Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i, Tirmidhi and others, with the addition of the words by Anas that he never heard such a moving and fearful speech from him earlier, in which he also said, "Were you to know what I know, surely you would have laughed less and cried much." That sent the

Companions to crying. Bukhari has another report which says that some of them used to ask him senseless questions such as, "Who is my father," or "Where is my camel," etc. As for the reported question about Hajj quoted by Tabari, it is in Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah, as well as in some other compilations, but some of them appear to suffer some weaknesses (Ibn Kathir).

248. Another interpretation of the words "*afa Allahu `anha*" is that what Allah has not mentioned in His revelation (as forbidden), has been (deliberately) overlooked (Ibn Kathir).

249. There has been a considerable difference in opinion over what exactly *Bahira*, *Sa'iba* and others constituted. We shall give here the definitions as given by Sa'id b. Jubayr in Bukhari. *Bahira* was a she-camel whose milk was dedicated to the deities and no man was allowed to milk it, or use it in any other way. *Sa'iba* was that male animal that was let free in the name of a deity. *Wasila* was a camel that gave birth to several she camels without a male in between. Such a camel was also consecrated to a deity and let loose. And *Haam* was that stallion camel which had copulated with several females. It was also

[102] A people before you raised questions, then in consequence thereof became disbelievers (by disagreeing).

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

[103] It was not Allah who instituted Bahira, Sa'iba, Wasila or Haam,²⁴⁹ rather, the unbelievers fabricated a lie against Allah.²⁵⁰ In fact, most of them have no understanding.²⁵¹

مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَحِيرَةَ وَلَا سَائِبَةَ وَلَا وَصِيلَةَ وَلَا حَامٍ وَلَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

dedicated to a deity and freed of all services (*Ma`arif*). But there seem to be a few other classes of freed animals, involving other cattle, that were known by these names (Ibn Kathir). The practice is still common among the pagans of the world (Au.).

250. Abu Hurayrah has reported the Prophet as having said,

عرضت علي النار فرأيت فيها عمرو بن لحي بن قمعة بن خندف أبو عمرو و هو يجر قصبه في النار و هو أول من سيب السوائب و غير عهد إبراهيم عليه السلام و أشبه من رأيت به أكثم بن أبي الجون قال : فقال أكثم : يا رسول الله يضرنني شبهه ؟ قال : لا إنك مسلم و إنه كافر

“I was shown the Fire. I saw therein `Amr b. Luhayy (otherwise named as `Aamir al-Khuza'i: Ibn Kathir) dragging his intestine in the Fire. He was the first to introduce the concept of *Sa'iba* and to corrupt the religion of Ibrahim. The most similar to him I find Aktham b. abi al-

Jawn.” (This much is in Bukhari: Ibn Kathir). Thereupon, Aktham asked, “Messenger of Allah, will his similarity to me do me any harm?” The Prophet told him, “No. For you are a believer and he was an unbeliever.”

In another report transmitted by Zayd b. Aslam, the Prophet said:

قد عرفت أول الناس بحر البحائر رجل من بني مدلج كانت له ناقتان فجدع آذانهما وحرّم ألبانها وظهورهما ، ولقد رأيت به وإياهما في النار : تحبطانه بأخفافهما وتفضمانه بأفواههما

“I know who the first to institute the practice of *Bahira* was. It was a man from Mudlij tribe who slit the ears of two she-camels, and declared their milk as unlawful. Subsequently he made their milk lawful unto himself. I saw him in the Fire. The two (she-camels) were pounding with their hoofs, and and biting him with their mouths” (Ibn Jarir, Razi, Qur-

[104] When it was said to them, 'Come now to what Allah has revealed, and to His Messenger,' they said, 'Enough for us what we found our forefathers on.'²⁵² What! Even if their forefathers did not know anything and were not (rightly) guided?²⁵³

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَىٰ الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَّلُو كَانُوا آبَاؤَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

tubi).

251. Imām Razi points out that man has been created for the worship of Allah. When he rebels, he loses his freedom to others. In contrast, animals have been enslaved to him for his various benefits. In freeing them from that slavery is his own loss as well as that of the cattle, which become no one's responsibility and are left to suffer a life worse than what they would suffer if they remain in the slavery of man and be tended by him.

252. In this is the refutation of the ignorant Sufis who argue about the ways of their *Masha'ikh* when confronted with the *Shari'ah* (Thanwi).

253. To most of the polytheistic peoples, like the Arab pagans, religion is not a matter of sound reason and Divine Revelation, but a mere usage - a set of rites and dogmas handed down

from the fathers to the sons (Majid).

254. Ibn Mas'ud was asked about this verse. He said, "It is not applicable to our times. Rather, a time will come when you will enjoin good but people will respond with violence. It is in those times that a man might look after his own soul."

Similar reports have come from Ibn 'Umar. In fact, Abu Tha'labh has reported that he enquired the Prophet himself about the exact implication of this verse. He replied:

بَلْ أَنتُمْ أَتَّبِعُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَتَّاهُوا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَيْتَ شَيْئًا مُطَاعًا وَهَوَىٰ مُتَّبَعًا وَدُتِيَا مُؤْتَرَةً وَإِعْجَابَ كُلِّ ذِي رَأْيٍ بِرَأْيِهِ وَرَأَيْتَ أَمْرًا لَا يَدَانِ لَكَ بِهِ فَعَلَيْكَ تَفْسُكَ وَدَعَّ عَنْكَ أَمْرَ الْعَوَامِّ فَإِنَّ مِنْ وَرَائِكَ أَيَّامَ الصَّبْرِ الصَّبْرُ فِيهِمْ مِثْلُ قَبْضِ عَلَى الْجُمْرِ لِلْعَامِلِ فِيهِمْ كَأَجْرِ حَمْسِينَ رَجُلًا يَعْمَلُونَ مِثْلَ عَمَلِهِ «. لَقَطُ حَدِيثِ ابْنِ شُعَيْبٍ رَادَ ابْنَ الْمُبَارَكِ فِي رِوَايَتِهِ قَالَ وَزَادَنِي غَيْرُهُ قَالُوا : يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَجْرُ حَمْسِينَ مِنْهُمْ. قَالَ : « أَجْرُ حَمْسِينَ مِنْكُمْ

“Rather, keep enjoining right and

[105] Believers! Look after your own souls.²⁵⁴ Whoso is misguided can do you no harm if you are guided.²⁵⁵ Unto Allah is the return of you all. He will then inform you of all that you were doing.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَن ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

﴿١٠٥﴾

forbidding wrong. But, when you find the people preferring this world over the next, greed followed, and every man boastful of his opinion, and you see affairs in which you have no say at all, then it is that you have to look after your own souls and avoid affairs of the common people. I can see after you days demanding a lot of patience when observing patience would be like holding burning coal in the hand. So, he who holds fast unto the truth that day will have the reward of fifty men doing the same thing as he.” They asked, “Messenger of Allah, (his reward will be equal to the rewards of fifty of them?” He replied, “No. (His reward will be equal to the reward of) fifty of you.”

(The *hadith* is in Tirmidhi, who classified it as *sahih*, as also in Abu Da'ud: Ibn Kathir, and in Ibn Majah and Hakim, with the latter declaring it *sahih*: Shawkani). Nevertheless, many of the *Salaf*, such as Abu Bakr,

Hudhayfah, Sa'id ibn Musayyib, Suddi and others have said that in those times too the obligation of enjoining right and forbidding evil will remain in force (Ibn Jarir).

It is reported that Abu Bakr once climbed the pulpit and said:

أيها الناس، إنكم تقرؤون هذه الآية: { يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَن ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ } إلى آخر الآية، وإنكم تضعونها على غير موضعها، وإني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: ”إن الناس إذا رأوا المنكر ولا يغيرونه أوشك الله، عز وجل، أن يعذبهم بعقابهِ“

“People! You read this verse but misinterpret it; and misplace it in (meaning). I have heard the Prophet that if a people see wrongs committed but do nothing to stop them, it is feared that a punishment touching all will descend upon them” (Ibn Kathir).

Rashid Rida adds: Ibn abi Hatim has recorded Ka'b's statement that when the church of the Dimashq mosque is pulled down and made a mosque and when `Asab appears amongst the people then will be the time for the

application of the verse: *“Look after your own souls. Whoso is misguided can do you no harm if you are (rightly) guided.”*

And the background story of the Dimashq mosque/church is as follows. It is said that one half of the city of Dimashq fell to the Muslim army advancing upon it from one side, while from the other side another contingent entered into the city under a peace treaty. The two forces of the Companions met at the Church of Mary. They decided that one of half of the building would be converted to a mosque since it was taken by force, while the other half would be left as a Church following the treaty clause that the places of worship of the Christians would be left to themselves. It is said that the Muslims offered a hefty price for the place but the Christians were adamant. At the time of the Umayyads, they were coerced into giving their part to the Muslims. But `Umar ibn `Abdul `Aziz restored it back to them during his reign. What Ka'b meant is that when the collective dishonesty of the Muslims would reach such a level that they occupy the Church by force and convert it into a mosque, then it will be time for each soul to look after itself, as the admonition of the admonish-

ers would do them no good. As for `Asab, it is a kind of expensive cloak that came from Yemen.

255. `Abdullah ibn Mubarak has pointed out that far from absolving the Muslims of their responsibility of enjoining good and forbidding evil, the words in this verse actually confirm it. The verse says, “*alaykum anfusakum*,” meaning, “Upon you is the responsibility of the souls of the Muslims.” It is in the same vein as the Israelites were told: “Kill yourselves,” meaning, “Kill each other,” and not meaning “Commit suicide.” Similarly, here the words “*alaykum anfusakum*” would mean, “Look after each other (and work to improve each other’s commitment to Islam)” - Razi, Qurtubi.

256. The Qur’anic text, and the incident that became a cause of revelation of these verses, tell us that the non-Muslims can be allowed to testify against Muslims, not excluding in disputes of inheritance. This is the opinion of Abu Musa al-Ash`ari, Ibn `Abbas and others (Shawkani).

Thanwi remarks: The verse tells us by implication that one ought to organize his affairs, to the inclusion of worldly affairs, and be mindful to safeguard the rights of others. Disorganization results in some people

[106] Believers! When death approaches one of you, the testimony at the time of bequest shall be of two just ones among you, or two of other (non-believing) folk - if you were be journeying in the land, and the disaster of death strikes you.²⁵⁶ You shall detain²⁵⁷ them after the Prayer²⁵⁸ and they shall - if you are in doubt - swear by Allah,²⁵⁹ 'We do not desire any wealth, even if he happens to be a kinsfolk, and we are not concealing Allah's testimony. Surely, in that event we are of the sinners.'

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا شَهَادَةُ بَيْنَكُمْ إِذَا
حَضَرَ أَحَدُكُمْ الْمَوْتُ حِينَ الْوَصِيَّةِ اثْنَانِ
ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ أَوْ آخَرَانِ مِنْ غَيْرِكُمْ إِنْ
أَنْتُمْ ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَأَصَابَتْكُمْ مُصِيبَةُ
الْمَوْتِ تَحْسِبُونَهُمَا مِنْ بَعْدِ الصَّلَاةِ
فَيُقْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ ارْتَبْتُمْ لَا نَشْتَرِي بِهِ
ثَمَنًا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَى وَلَا نَكْتُمُ شَهَادَةَ اللَّهِ
إِنَّا إِذَا لَمِنَ الْآثِمِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

losing their rights, which will bring sin upon the disorganized person.

257. The word “*tahbisunahuma*” imply that if the ruler or the judge should remand the accused to custody, for some reason or the other, then that is permissible (Qurtubi).

258. Since “*al-Salah*” of the original is definitive, it has been subjected to enquiry as to which *Salah* is meant. Sa'id b. Jubayr, Ibrahim and Qatadah have said that it is the 'Asr Prayer, since the Prophet, in a similar case, had conducted the testimonial proceedings after 'Asr Prayer (Ibn Jarir). This is also in view of the fact that the Arabs used to conduct their governmental affairs after *Zuhr* and 'Asr (Zamakhshari, Razi and others). Also, 'Asr congregation in the mosques used to be, in those times, larger than at other times and the

presence of a large number of people would have - in addition to the holiness of the place - discouraged the testifiers from lying (Thanwi and others).

259. Qurtubi mentions that Ibn Zubayr, Mutarrif, Ibn Mazin and Qatadah also accepted oaths by the Qur'an. Ahmad and Ishaq also did not see anything wrong in that. In fact, following them, Imām Shafe'i has allowed swearing by the Qur'an, although Ibn al-'Arabi has declared it a *bid'ah*.

260. Ibn 'Abbas has reported that a man from Banu Sahm (called Budayl, a Muslim: Shafi'), went out for trade in the company of Tamim al-Daari and 'Adi b. Bada' (both Christians then). The Sahmi died on the way. When they returned his people found a gold-plated silver bowl

[107] But, were it to be discovered that they have merited accusation of sin, then two other men shall stand forth in their place - of those whose rights have been usurped by the two - and testify in the name of Allah, 'Our testimony is truer than the testimony of the two, and that we have not transgressed. If we do that, then, in such an event, we are of the transgressors.'²⁶⁰

فَإِنْ عُبِّرَ عَلَىٰ أَتَّهَمَا اسْتَحَقَّا إِيْمًا فَآخِرَانِ
يُقَوْمَانِ مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَحَقَّ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَوْلِيَانِ فِيْهِمَا بِاللَّهِ لَشَهَادَتِنَا
أَحَقُّ مِنْ شَهَادَتِهِمَا وَمَا اعْتَدَيْنَا إِنَّا إِذَا
لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِيْنَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

[108] That is nearer to assurance that they bear the testimony in the correct form, or they fear that (other) oaths might be taken after their oaths. Fear Allah, and hearken. Allah does not guide an ungodly people.²⁶¹

ذَلِكَ أَذْنَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِالشَّهَادَةِ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهَا
أَوْ يَخَافُوا أَنْ تَرَءَ الْإِيمَانُ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ وَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ وَاسْمَعُوا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِيْنَ
﴿١٠٨﴾

missing from his baggage. The two companions said on oath that they knew nothing about it. But, later, it was found in the Makkan market. Upon enquiry the new owners said they had purchased it from Tamim al-Dari and 'Adi b. Bada'. Then two of the kinsfolk of the Sahmi stood up and testified that the cup belonged to the Sahmi and Allah revealed this verse (Ibn Jarir, Zamakhshari, Razi).

261. The commentators consider these last two verses as the most difficult verses of the Qur'an in meaning, implication, and grammatical construction (Razi, Qurtubi).

262. Suddi, Hasan and Mujahid have said that it is out of the terror of

the Day that the Messengers would say, 'We do not know how they responded.' Subsequently, however, when things will calm down and they would have regained their selves, they would bear witness against those they were raised amongst (Ibn Jarir).

Zamakhshari thinks however that since they would know that such questioning was a prelude to the questioning of those they had been commissioned to, and that, it concealed a threat of punishment, they would say that they have no knowledge, thus washing their hands off the issue and leaving it to Allah to judge and punish the people if He may. Another possibility is that they

[109] The Day when Allah shall gather together the Messengers and ask, 'How were you answered?' They will reply, 'We have no knowledge.'²⁶² You indeed are the Knower of the Unseen.'

[110] When Allah will say, 'O `Isa ibn Maryam! Recall My favor on you and on your mother when I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit,²⁶³ you spoke to the people from the cradle and in maturity,²⁶⁴ and when I taught you the Book, the Wisdom, the Tawrah and the Injil; when you made from clay the form of a bird by My leave then blew into it, it became thereof a (real) bird by My leave; you cured the born blind and the leper by My leave, and you brought out the dead by My leave;²⁶⁵ and when I shielded you from the Israelites when you brought them the manifest signs, whereupon those of them who had disbelieved declared, "This is nothing but magic, plain and simple."²⁶⁶

يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا أُجِبْتُمْ
قَالُوا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ
﴿١٠٩﴾

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ادْكُرْ
نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَبَدْتُكَ
بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا
وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ
وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ
بِأُذُنِي فَتَنْفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِأُذُنِي وَتُبْرِئُ
الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِأُذُنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَى
بِأُذُنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ
جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ
إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

would belittle their knowledge before Allah's.

263. The obvious explanation of "Ruh al-Qudus" is Jibril. But, since there are many kinds of souls, from the brightest to the darkest, an alternative explanation is that the allusion could be to a very bright soul of a very high order bestowed to `Isa (Razi).

264. By saying "from the cradle as well as in maturity," (although "maturity" did not need to be men-

tioned) the allusion perhaps is to the quality of "talk" as being of the class of Prophets - in both the stages of life - and not merely the naive talk of an infant miraculously begun to speak (Based on Razi).

Further, the use of the term "kahl," which is for a person of age between 34 and 51, while `Isa ibn Maryam was raised up to the heaven when he was only 33, is for the implicit assertion that he will come back and attain that age (Alusi).

[111] And when I inspired²⁶⁷ the Apostles to the effect, 'You believe in Me and My messenger.' They said, 'We have believed. Bear witness that we have surrendered (unto You).'

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

265. In the repetition of the words "by My leave" is perhaps the indication that the ability to accomplish these feats did not rest with 'Isa all the time, rather, every time he wished to accomplish one of them, he needed to freshly invoke Allah's help (*Al-Manar*).

266. Majid writes: "According to the Jewish sources: 'Jesus learned magic in Egypt and performed his miracle by means of it ... The accusation of magic is frequently brought against Jesus.' (*Jewish Encyclopedia* VII, p. 171). 'The nearest approach to a definite opinion about Him in the Talmud is the statement that 'he practiced magic and deceived and led astray Israel.' (ERE. VII, p. 551). 'Now when the wise men saw that all were believing in him, straightaway they bound him fast and led him before Helene, the queen, under whose hand was the land of Israel. They said unto her, This man is a sorcerer, and he deceived the world.' (Schouffield, *According to the Hebrews*, p. 41)"

267. "Wahyun" is any secret, quick signaling (*Manar*). It is used in various senses of: revelation, inspiration, bestowing the knowledge either during sleep or awakening, as well as ordering a thing done (Qurtubi).

268. Being believers, the Apostles were not questioning the capability of their Lord. Rather it was in the same vein as one would say to another person, 'I am going. Do you think you can come along with me?' By the choice of such words the speaker is not questioning the ability of the person, rather, seeking to know his willingness (based on Ibn Jarir).

Zamakhshari however believes that they were a few skeptic followers of 'Isa (sitting mixed up with his true disciples: Qurtubi), who demanded to be shown a sign. The construction of the verse too does not give an emphatic proof of their faith.

A variant reading, as taught by the Prophet to Mu'adh ibn Jabal is "*tastati'u rabbaka*" meaning, "Is it possible that you ask your Lord"

(112) When the Apostles asked, 'O `Isa ibn Maryam! Could²⁶⁸ your Lord send down upon us a *ma'idah*²⁶⁹ out of heaven?'²⁷⁰ He replied, 'Fear Allah if you are believers.'

إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

﴿١١٢﴾

(113) They said, 'We only wish to eat out of it and strengthen our hearts, and know that you spoke the truth to us, and so that we might be of the witnesses thereto.'

قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا وَتَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتُنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

﴿١١٣﴾

(Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir). The report is also in Hakim who has declared it of *sahih* status (Shawkani).

`Ali, `A'isha and Ibn `Abbas were of the opinion that the correct reading is "*tastati` rabbaka*," but the Hijazi scholars have read it as "*yastati`u rabbuka*" (Ibn Jarir, Razi, Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir and others).

269. Although the word in the original is "*ma'idah*" (which is for a half-height table, around which people gathered, sitting on the floor to partake their meals arranged on it), the term has been used here, in this verse, in the sense of "*sufrah*" (which is a circular piece of skin that was laid down on the floor and on which in turn a large platter of food was placed out of which the people ate). Never did our Prophet, (as reported by Anas in a trustworthy report), eat on a "*ma'idah*" rather, only on the "*sufra*." Although some *ahadith* use

the term "*ma'idah*" but it has been used in the sense of "*sufrah*." In fact, in its origin "*ma'idah*" is anything that is stretched out. Further, when it was said "*ma'idah*" by the Apostles, it was understood that it was food that they were requesting and not the table (Qurtubi).

Alusi adds: Eating on a table is *bid'ah* if it is out of pride. (So far as its usage here), the word *ma'idah* is synonymous with food.

"Indeed," writes Rashid Rida, "a '*ma'idah*' is not a '*ma'idah*' without any food on it."

270. Ibn `Abbas has narrated the following as background story to the request for the *ma'idah*. Once, `Isa ibn Maryam asked his Apostles to fast for thirty days and then make supplications. It was likely to be answered. For, every wage earner is given his wages at the end of his work.

[114] `Isa the son of Maryam prayed, 'O Lord our God! Send down upon us a ma'idah out of heaven so that it might be a (day of) prayers, and celebration for the first and the last of us,²⁷¹ and a Sign from You. And provide for us. Surely, You are the best of providers.²⁷²

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيداً لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِنْكَ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

So they fasted and at the end of the fasts made the request to their Lord to send them food from the heaven (Ibn Jarir).

271. That is, a day of prayers and celebration for the people of our times as well as of those that will follow (Au.).

Majid writes: “*Eid* is not necessarily ‘a festival’ or ‘a periodical festival’ as generally mistranslated. It is ‘an occurrence that befalls, or besides, one or that happens to one,’ or ‘the time of return of joy and of grief.’ There is no allusion here to the ‘Last Supper’ or any other Christian legend.”

272. Note the difference between the two statements of `Isa (*asws*) and his followers. When they gave out the reasons for the plate of meals, it was material reason that was stated first (so that we might eat out of it) and the spiritual reason next. But when `Isa spoke he gave the spiritual reason first, (so that we might declare

it a day of prayers) and the material reason last. Further, he did not stop at provision alone, rather moved on from the provision to the Provider Himself (Razi).

273. Contradictory reports have come down from the *Salaf*. The same authorities have been reported as saying on the one hand that a plate of food was actually sent down, and, on the other hand, that the Apostles withdrew their request, fearing the punishment and so it was not sent down (Ibn Jarir). Since there is no mention of it in the traditions of the Christians, it is more likely that the plate of meals was not sent down (Ibn Kathir). And the *hadith* that has been quoted in Tirmidhi, to the effect that food was sent down but the followers of Jesus Christ stored the remains, despite orders against it, and were, in consequence, transformed into swine and apes, is most probably an opinion of the narrator (Shawkani).

[115] Allah said, 'I will send it down to you. But whoso of you disbelieves after that, I shall surely chastise him in a way I have not chastised anyone in the worlds.'²⁷³

[116] When Allah will say to `Isa ibn Maryam, 'Did you suggest to the people, "Take me and my mother as gods besides Allah?"'²⁷⁴ He will answer, 'Glory to You.'²⁷⁵ It was not for me to say things I had no right (to say). Had I said that, surely You would have known about it. You know what is in my thoughts, whereas I do not know what is in Your thoughts.'²⁷⁶ Surely, You are the Knower of the unseen.

قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مُنَزِّلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بَعْدَ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنِّي أُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا لَّا أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ أَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّي إِهْتِنِينَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقِّ إِنْ كُنْتُ قَائِلُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ تَعْلَمَ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿١١٦﴾

274. Worship of Mary in the Eastern Churches is a common practice. Father Louis Sheikhu has written: "The worship of Mary, the mother of God, by the Armenian Churches is a well known fact." So is the case with the Coptian Churches (*Al-Manar*).

Mawdudi writes: "...During the first three centuries after the Messiah ... (the concept of the divinity of Mary) ... was totally alien to Christian thinking. Towards the end of the third century of the Christian era, some theologians of Alexandria employed, for the first time, the expression 'Mother of God' in connection with Mary... It was not until the Council of Ephesus in 431 that the Church officially used the expression 'Mother of God' for Mary. The result

was the Mariatology began to spread fast within the Church itself... Statues of Mary adorned the cathedrals. She became the object of worship... In the preamble of his code, Justinian had declared Mary to be the defender and supporter of his empire, and his general, Marses, sought Mary's guidance on the battlefield... Several centuries later the Protestants argued strongly against Mariatology... (but the) Roman Catholic Church has, nevertheless, managed so far to cling to Mariatology in one form or the other."

Majid writes: "Compare the Angelical Salutations of the Roman Catholics:-

'Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for our sinners, now, and at the hour

of our death. Amen.'

And their Angelo Domini:-

'Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.'

And the prayer of Saint Bernard:-

'O most pious Virgin Mary! ... I cast myself at thy sacred feet, humbly deploring my sins, and beseeching thee to adopt me for thy child, and to take upon thee the care of my eternal salvation.'

And this Litany of the Blessed Virgin:-

'We fly to thy patronage, O Holy Mother of God! Despise not our petition in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers.'

"The Anatolian aspiration, according to another distinguished scholar, was to look for the divine nature in a feminine personality, 'and this was found at last in the ideas of thee "Mother of God." It was at Ephesus, thee city of the goddess, that the earlier proof is found of an established cult of the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God; and in the Council held at Ephesus in A.D. 431 this cult was definitely established as a feature of

the Orthodox ritual" (ERE, IX, p. 908).

275. Note that 'Isa ibn Maryam will begin his reply with the glorification of Allah (Qurtubi).

276. That is, I do not know what you keep to Yourself that remains unknown to me. (Ibn Jarir)

277. Our Prophet too will quote this verse on the Day of Judgment. A *hadith* in the *Sahihayn* says:

إِنَّكُمْ مَحْشُورُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ حُفَاءَ عُرَاءَ غُرْلًا ثُمَّ قَالَ { كَمَا
بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُعِيدُهُ وَعَدَّا عَلَيْنا إِنَّا كُنَّا فاعِلِينَ } إِلَى
آخِرِ الآيَةِ ثُمَّ قَالَ أَلَا وَإِنَّ أَوَّلَ الخَلائِقِ يُكْسَى يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ أَلَا وَإِنَّهُ يُجَاءُ بِرِجَالٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي فَيُؤَخَذُ
بِهِمْ ذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ فَأَقُولُ يَا رَبِّ أَصِيحَابِي فَيَقَالُ
إِنَّكَ لَا تَدْرِي مَا أَحَدَثُوا بِعَدِّكَ فَأَقُولُ كَمَا قَالَ العَبْدُ
الصَّالِحُ { وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا
تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ } فَيَقَالُ إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ لَمْ يَرَالُوا مُرْتَدِينَ عَلَى
أَعْقَابِهِمْ مِنْذُ فَارَقْتَهُمْ

"Once the Prophet stood up and gave a sermon. He said, 'People! You will be raised up before your Lord naked, bare-footed, and uncircumcised, 'As We began the creation, We shall repeat it.' The first ever of those to be dressed on

[117] I did not say to them save that which You ordered me to say, namely, "Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord." I was a witness over them so long as I dwelt with them. But, after You completed my term, You were Yourself the Watcher over them. And You are a Witness over all things.²⁷⁷

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

the Day of Judgment would be Ibrahim. Lo! A people would be brought who will be taken away to the left. I will say, 'My Companions, my Companions.' It will be said, 'You do not know what they did after you.' So I will say as the righteous slave of Allah said, "I was a witness over them so long as I dwelt with them. But, after You completed my term, You were Yourself the Watcher over them. And You are a Witness over everything. If You punish them then, surely they are Your slaves. But, if You forgive them, then surely, You are the Mighty, the Wise." It will be said, "These people remained turning back upon their heels, apostates, from the time you parted with them (Ibn Kathir).

Qabeesah said that the allusion is to the apostates that Abu Bakr fought

(Au.).

278. Abu Dharr has reported in a *hadith* (preserved in Ahmad: Ibn Kathir):

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ قَالَ : سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- وَهُوَ يُصَلِّي ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ ، وَهُوَ يُرَدُّ آيَةً حَتَّى أَصْبَحَ بِهَا يَرْكَعُ وَبِهَا يَسْجُدُ (إِنْ تَعَدَّبْتُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ) قُلْتُ : يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا زِلْتَ تَرُدُّ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ حَتَّى أَصْبَحْتَ. قَالَ : « إِنْ سَأَلْتُ رَبِّي الشَّفَاعَةَ لِأُمَّتِي ، وَهِيَ نَائِلَةٌ لِمَنْ لَا يُشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا ».

Once the Prophet recited nothing but this verse in his night Prayer that lasted until the dawn, repeating it in his bows and prostrations. I asked him the reason. He replied: "I asked for intercession for my *Ummah*. It shall be for whoso that did not attribute aught with Allah."

Another *hadith* in Muslim narrated by `Abdullah b. `Amr b. al-As says

[118] (Nevertheless), If You punish them (today), well then, surely they are Your slaves. But, if You forgive them, then, surely, You are the Mighty, the Wise.²⁷⁸

إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ وَإِنْ تَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾

[119] Allah will say, 'This is a Day when the truth of the truthful will benefit them. For them are gardens underneath which rivers flow, abiding therein forever and ever. Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him. That is a great success.'

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

[120] To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and all that is within them. And He has power over all things.

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

that once the Prophet recited the words of Ibrahim (14: 36):

رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ أَضَلَّلَن كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ فَمَنْ تَبِعَنِي فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي
وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَإِنَّكَ غَمُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ [إبراهيم : ٣٦]

'My Lord. Surely, they (the deities) led astray many a people. Therefore, whoso followed me is of me. As for him who disobeyed me, well, You are the Forgiving, the Kind.' Then the Prophet recited the words of `Isa ibn Maryam:

إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ وَإِنْ تَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ [المائدة : ١١٨]

'If You punish them then, surely they are Your slaves. But, if You forgive them, then surely, You are the Mighty, the Wise.'

فَرَفَعَ يَدَيْهِ وَقَالَ «اللَّهُمَّ أُمَّتِي أُمَّتِي». وَبَكَى فَقَالَ

اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَا جِبْرِيْلُ اذْهَبْ إِلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَرَبِّكَ أَعْلَمُ
فَسَأَلَهُ مَا يَبْكِيكَ فَأَتَاهُ جِبْرِيْلُ - عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ -
فَسَأَلَهُ فَأَخْبَرَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم-
بِمَا قَالَ. وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ. فَقَالَ اللَّهُ يَا جِبْرِيْلُ اذْهَبْ إِلَى
مُحَمَّدٍ فَقُلْ إِنَّا سَنُرْضِيكَ فِي أُمَّتِكَ وَلَا نَسْؤُوكَ.

Then he raised his hand and prayed: "My Lord! My people, my people," and cried. Allah sent Jibril and said, "Go to Muhammad – and although you Lord knows – ask him, 'What makes you cry?'" Jibril came to him and asked him. The Prophet told him what he had said, although He knows. Allah said, "Jibril. Go to Muhammad and tell him, 'We shall please you in the affair of your Ummah, and shall not give you pain'" (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

Also note that `Isa ibn Maryam ended with “*You are the Mighty, the Wise*” and not with “*You are the Forgiving, the Kind,*” because the latter words would take forgiveness for granted, or, would be a way of interceding for them (Razi). مَقْتَدِرًا

Surah 6
Al An`am

(The Cattle)

Makkan



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE KIND, THE COMPAS-
 SIONATE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Merits of the *Surah*

Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Anas b. Malik, Asma' bint Yezid, Jabir and many others have been reported in Tabarani, Ibn Marduwayh and Hakim, with the latter declaring it *Sahih* by Muslim's standards, that this *Surah* was revealed in Makkah as one whole, with so many angels accompanying the revelation that they filled the space between the earth and the heaven. They were chanting glorifications and the earth seemed to be vibrating (Qurtubi).

Asma' bint Yezid added: "I was holding the rein of the camel, and it was as if it would break the beast's bones" (Ibn Kathir).

Nevertheless, Ibn Salah has doubted the strength of these reports (Alusi, Shabbir).

Rashid Rida adds: The fact that so many reports have been received through so many transmitters means

that they have a basis. It is possible that Ibn Salah was doubting only the addition of the words, "Except three verses," as included in certain versions.

Tha`labi has said that six verses of this *Surah* are Madinan, 91, 92 93, 151, 152 and 153 (Shawkani). Further, the fact that the revelation of the *Surah* was accompanied by seventy thousand angels, and that it incorporates proofs of Allah's Oneness, the Messengership of the Prophet, the Hereafter, and rejection of false religions, means, these are the loftiest of all kinds of knowledge. It also follows that mastering of the proofs and evidences is to be taken up as a priority by a believer (Razi).

Ibn `Abbas has been recorded in Bukhari as having said that if you wish to know something about the vile practices of pre Islamic Arab society, read verses 136 to 140 (Qurtubi).

[1] (All) Praise¹ belongs to Allah who created the heavens and the earth, and appointed² darkneses³ and light.⁴ Yet, those who have disbelieved equate (others) with their Lord.⁵

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ
وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١﴾

1. Razi writes: Five chapters of the Qur'an open with these words: viz., nos. 1, 6, 18, 34, and 35. Differences between the words *mad-h*, *hamd* and *shukr* may be noted. *Mad-h* is commonly used for all beings, living or non living. One might say *mad-h* words for a flower or a horse. *Hamd* is specific to living beings. But *hamd* can be said both for something or somebody one draws benefit from as well for someone of no benefit. For example, one might say *hamd* words for a person because of his good qualities, even if the person saying the *hamd* might not have drawn any benefit from the one praised. In contrast, *shukr* is the most specific. One says *shukr* words only to someone from whom he has benefitted in some way. Otherwise the occasion for *shukr* words does not arise. The use of the word *hamd* in this verse is to say that Allah deserves our praises, every moment of our lives, whether or not we feel that we are experiencing one of His graces. Incidentally, *hamd* is the proof of one's sincerity. Finally, whoever knows the depth and extent of the created worlds, and

has some knowledge of the Attributes of Allah, will realize that *hamd* is an ocean that has no shores.

2. The word in the original is *ja'ala* which indicates a creative action that is connected with a previous activity as well one that involves continuity (Ibn Jarir, Razi).

3. The fact that Allah mentioned darkneses before light supports the theory of the ancients that He created his creations in darkness and then threw light upon them (Razi).

Thus darkness has, according to the Qur'an, its own existence. It is not simply the absence of light as most people - including the scientists - believe (Au.).

4. Qatadah has said, "Allah created the heavens before earth, the darkneses before light, and the Fire before Paradise" (Ibn Jarir).

The Zoroastrians believed in two gods of creation, first, Yezdan, the creator of good, and second, Ahra-man, the creator of evil, associating the former with light and the latter with darkness (Shabbir).

In fact, Mujahid has been reported by Abu al Sheikh and Ibn Abi Hatim as of the opinion that the verse was revealed to refute the belief of the freethinkers who claimed that God did not create evil, or snakes, or anything evil. He created light and the good things alone (Shawkani).

Qurtubi quotes a *hadith* of Muslim at this point. Abu Hurayrah narrates: "The Prophet took me by my hand and said: 'Allah created the dust on Saturday. He created the mountains in it on Sunday. He created the trees in it on Monday. He created the *Makruhat* on Tuesday. He created "*Nur*" (according to another version, "*Nun*": Nawawi) on Wednesday. He created the beasts on Thursday. And He created Adam in the afternoon of Friday, as the last creation, in the last hours of Friday between the late afternoon hours and the nightfall" (Qurtubi).

Modern scientific knowledge comes remarkably close to the above statement. Details are as under.

I. Although no satisfactory theory exists about the origin of our solar system, since every model fails to answer all the questions, as do rigorous mathematical tests, nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence for the

scientists to conclude that the solar system grew out of a cloud of dust.

Of the many postulates, one is known as the nebular hypothesis. It was first proposed by Laplace, but fell into disrepute as it failed some tests. It is being actively reconsidered now. Recently it has received a thorough analysis at the hands of a German astronomer Carl F. von Weizsacker, and reveals some positive aspects. This theory assumes the solar system as a sub eddy of the larger eddy which gave birth to the galaxies. The dust cloud in the solar sub eddy developed in time its own sub eddies of dust which gave birth to the planets with the sun at the center.

To be sure, there are other models. But most assume dust particles colliding and coalescing and, following certain processes, leading up to the formation of the solar system. Indeed, the best bet so far on the galactic systems, although an unresolved mystery up until now, is also on condensation of primordial dust. Thus the postulates come very near to the *hadith* statement that Allah created dust in the first stage of the process of creation. This first phase of creation is named here as Saturday, but, obviously, as the last few words sug-

gest, the allusion is to a long period of time, an era, or a phase.

II. Scientists speculate that the earth began as a waterless mass of rock surrounded by a thick cloud of dust. The interior melted with the heat generated by radioactive materials, leading to a liquid core surrounded by a hard crust. In turn, the crust rests on a soft, plastic layer immediately beneath it called asthenosphere. Various chemical processes created water which in the early period occupied most of the surface area except for a huge island. In time the island split. Plate tectonics took over some 2.5 billion years ago. The crust, geologically referred to as lithosphere, split into 15 plates due to various movements of the earth. Their collision and gradual piling up over each other over millions of years created the mountains. Most of the early mountains have worn out, but the process goes on, albeit much slowly now.

It might also be pointed out that verses 9 and 10 of *Surah Fussilat* (no. 41) appear to be speaking of the creation of mountains in the third phase of creation. But that's not correct, for the verses there are speaking of different kinds of phases involved: not only during the creation of the earth, but also of the heavens.

III. First biological activity began some 3.5 billion years ago. (Although a very recent finding in Australia is pushing the date back by another 350 million years). Initially, the life forms were very primitive, such as, certain strains of bacterium, extinct now. Tiny plants made their appearance for the first time, perhaps in the early Cambrian period, some 600 million years ago. Forests filled with tall trees must have appeared much later, during the Carboniferous era, lasting between 350 300 million years ago. Thus, Allah's creation of the trees on Monday (in the third phase of creation).

IV. With regard to the fourth stage of creation, it is not clear what the Prophet meant by *Makruhat*. Literally, the connotation is that of "the undesirable things." The narrator himself did not seek an explanation. It is possible he knew what was meant. Later *hadith* commentators have said that it is minerals that could have been meant. But, that is only a conjecture. Could it be creepers and reptiles: snakes, scorpions, lizards the unloved of the humans ("the undesirable things")? They could have only appeared in plenty after the establishment of thick forests, at the end of the Carboniferous era, some 300 million years ago.

V. The fifth stage creation has two versions: one version uses the word *Nūr* (light) and the other version *nun* (meaning, fishes, or alternatively in the non Hejazi dialect, whales). Now, if we take it as *Nūr*, it should not lead someone to imagine that the reference is to the creation of the Sun, while it can be said fairly accurately that the Sun is 5 billion years old. The *hadith* does not say Allah created the Sun on Wednesday. Rather, it says that He created light on that day. This statement comes very near to scientific speculations. Very early during the creation of the solar system, while the Sun and the planets were still in their early stage of formation, the earth was being regularly struck by heavy interstellar material which would chip off huge chunks of material as well as kick up millions of tons of dust. In that phase the earth was covered with a cloud of dust which would not allow the sunlight to penetrate. As the dust settled on the surface, the earth also emitted various gases under the pressure of gravitational contraction, and chemical combinations. Those gasses would have again become a barrier between the earth and the sun rays. It is estimated that huge amounts of neon and hydrogen atoms were present in the atmosphere of that period,

along with some molecules of oxygen and inert nitrogen. Subsequently, as some scientists have postulated, the atmospheric gasses reacted with each other to form ammonia, methane and water molecules. In the meanwhile, primitive life forms were developing below on the surface of the earth. Their emissions helped create the present day water, all of which is thought to be initially in the form of dense clouds of vapor engulfing the earth, in place of the original dust. (Some scientists postulate that water came from deep in the Galactic areas delivered with the help of comets entirely made of ice. If that be true then, obviously, the impact would have instantaneously created a cloud of dust and water vapor). It is only when incessant rains fell for pretty long periods that the atmosphere cleared up and the earth's surface could receive a dim sunlight. With that, new life forms developed and their emission of oxygen helped in creating and maintaining the present day atmosphere. This happened, according to some estimates, no more than 600 million years ago. But, it is quite possible, that for the earth the sun would have remained as dim as it is for those at the poles now, or, even dimmer until a much later time. The process of reduction of the density of

atmosphere might have taken several hundred million years to complete before the Sun was finally shining on the earth with all its glory. Thus we arrive very close to the statement that Allah created *Nūr* in the fifth stage of creation.

Alternatively, if it is believed that the word is *nun*, then, we know that small fishes began to appear at the end of Cambrian period itself, some 600 million years ago. The large ones, the kind of fish we are familiar with today, to include whales, could have only appeared during the Permian period, some 250 million years ago.

VI. As we get closer, we can be more certain of the dates. Science has quite a few evidences to prove that although life has been there for billions of years, it was mostly dominated by bacterium. Multicellular bodies appeared only 1.5 billion years ago. Small animals have only been there since the Cambrian period, i.e., about 600 million years behind us. Mammals appeared only some 200 million years ago or less. As for the beasts, they are on the scene since the middle of the Tertiary period. That is, no more than 50 million years. In fact, the kind of beasts that we are familiar with today

appeared even much later, perhaps 30 million years ago. Thus their creation on Thursday.

The above of course, does not confirm the theory of evolution. That the biological organisms appeared gradually on the earth, can be scientifically evidenced, but that they appeared by the evolutionary processes still lacks any concrete evidence.

VII. Finally, the appearance of man. Scientists speculate that the Homini-dae (the precursors of the sub family Hominidae) appeared by the process of evolution, pretty late: no more than perhaps 2 million years ago culminating in the appearance of the modern day man, the *Homo Sapiens*, appearing about 100,000 years ago.

There is no fool proof evidence to the above speculation. It seems to rest on some biological data. But they are flimsy. From the first day of its presentation, the theory of evolution has been unable to resolve certain serious questions, and has, therefore, remained a hypothesis, growing weaker with the latest findings. In fact, there are no less than half a dozen schools among the scientists, each of which differs so widely from the other in tracing the tree as to leave one wondering if anyone

can be trusted. Not only the sudden appearance of man on the face of the earth, in his present form, is still a complete mystery but it seems almost every animal seems to have appeared suddenly from nowhere. In contrast, the Qur`ān tells us that Adam was created as one whole, out of dust, and did not evolve from Primates.

Nevertheless, both the revelation as well as science, agree that whatever the process, man arrived on the scene last. There is no equivalent statement in any other literature apart from scientific, better depicting such a late appearance of man in the program of creation than the words of the *hadith* which declares the first act of Creation on Saturday, and man's creation during the last hours of Friday, separating him from a night that will be followed by a Day which in turn will herald a new epoch, a new realm the Hereafter.

Contrast the precision of *hadith* statement with those of the medieval Jewish scholars who put the date of the Creation to 3760 B.C. The opinion of the Christian Church was that the Creation took place at a definite moment in 4004 B.C. Right up to the eighteenth century many scientists believed in the veracity of

the statement. The Greek Orthodox Church was more cautious. They put back the Creation to 5505 B.C.!

It might also be pointed out that some scholars have doubted the authenticity of the *hadith* on grounds that it speaks of creation in seven days, whereas the Qur`ān states it took place in six days. But, there has been a misunderstanding. This *hadith* is also speaking of the creation of the heaven and earth in six days. It was man who was created on the seventh day.

Furthermore, the Qur`ānic statement "*He created the heavens and the earth in six days*" could be with reference to another process, and other, different, kinds of phases in the creation from the very beginning to the appearance of earth ready to support life.

Finally, religion does not purport to solve scientific riddles. It invites man to do that. It is enough of its authenticity that it should come so close to the most widely accepted postulations (Au.).

5. The verse does not state whom or in what sense do the unbelievers equate their Lord with. It could equally mean they equate the deities with Allah, as well as, others, e.g. nature, in His powers and Attributes.

[2] He it is who created you out of clay⁶ and then decreed a term (for each of you). And there is (a final) decreed term with Him.⁷ Yet, you doubt.

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ ثُمَّ قَضَىٰ أَجَلًا وَأَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى عِنْدَهُ ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ مُّتَمَتِّرُونَ ﴿٢﴾

Alternatively, it could mean they equate others with Him in *hamd*, while all praise truly belongs to Allah (Au.).

6. All life forms originated from clay some 3.5 billion years ago. Man feeds upon these life forms. Therefore, it can be said that although the first man, Adam was made of clay, the later generations, who feed on other life forms are also made of clay. Further, devoid of the soul, the flesh and blood are nothing but a mass of atoms - the basic brick of all matter (Au.).

In further explanation, Qurtubi quotes a couple of *ahadith* and *aathar* to demonstrate that not only man is created from dust, but actually, each individual is created from a specific dust, and returns to that dust at death.

Taking the lead from Qurtubi, we have taken out several reports from several origins. One of them says:

وَقَالَ عَطَاءُ الْحَرَّاسِيُّ: إِذَا وَقَعَتِ النَّطْفَةُ فِي الرَّحِمِ انْطَلَقَ الْمَلَكُ الْمُؤَكَّلُ بِالرَّحِمِ فَأَخَذَ مِنْ تَرَابِ الْمَكَانِ الَّذِي يُدْفَنُ فِيهِ فَيَذُرُّهُ عَلَى النَّطْفَةِ فَيَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ النَّسَمَةَ

مِنَ النَّطْفَةِ وَمِنَ التُّرَابِ، فَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: " مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى - اللّٰهِي المصنوعة (٢٨٥ / ١)

`Ata' al-Khurasani said: When the fertilized egg is deposited in the womb, an angel appointed for this purpose visits. He takes some dust from the place he is to be buried and places it in the fertilized egg. Thus Allah creates the new life with the fertilized egg and dust. This is the explanation of the verse (20: 55): "Out of it [dust] We have created you, to it We shall return you, and out of it We shall bring you out a second time."

Hilal b. Yusaaf is reported to have said:

عن هلال بن يساف قال ما من مولود يولد إلا وفي سرته من تربة الأرض التي يموت فيها

"There is no new born but it has in its navel dust from the earth in which it is to be buried."

The next is a *hadith* from Tabarani:

عن ابن عمر أن حبشياً دفن بالمدينة فقال رسول الله
 دفن بالطينة التي خلق منها

Ibn `Umar reported that a dark African was buried in Madinah. The Prophet remarked: “He is being buried in the dust from which he was created.”

The following is also a *hadith* whose sum and substance is found in Ba-zzaar and Hakim:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ قَالَ: مَرَّ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِجَنَازَةٍ عِنْدَ قَبْرِ فَقَالَ: ” قَبْرٌ مِنْ هَذَا؟ ” فَقَالُوا: قَبْرُ فُلَانِ الْحَبَشِيِّ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: ” لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ , سَبَقَ مِنْ أَرْضِهِ , وَسَمَّاهُ إِلَى تَرْتِبِهِ الَّتِي خُلِقَ مِنْهَا ” — شعب الإيمان (١٢ / ٢٩٧)

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد و لم يخرجاه و أنيس بن أبي يحيى الأسلمي هو عم إبراهيم بن أبي يحيى و أنيس ثقة معتمد و لهذا الحديث شواهد و أكثرها صحيحة

Abu Sa`eed al-Khudri reports that the Prophet passed by a funeral near its grave. He asked, “Whose grave is this?” They replied, “That of an African, Messenger of Allah.” He said, “There is no deity save Allah. He was driven from his land and sky to his dust out of which he was created.”

A similar report as above has a note in *Mustadrak* perhaps coming from Dhahabi: This is a *hadith* with a trustworthy chain of narrators although the *Sheikhayn* did not place it in their collections .. and this *hadith* has several such supporting

ones most of which are trustworthy.

Ibn `Abbas is also reported as saying:

وقال عبد الرزاق في المصنف عن ابن جريج قال أخبرني عمر بن عطاء بن وراذ عن عكرمة عن ابن عباس أنه قال يدفن كل إنسان في التربة التي خلق منها

“Every human is buried in the dust out of which he is created.”

And, Ibn Sirin is reported to have said:

وقال الحكيم في نواته حدثنا الفضل بن محمد حدثنا بكر بن محمد حدثنا أبو عبد الرحمن المقبري عن إبراهيم بن يزيد الخوزي قال سمعت ابن سيرين يقول لو حلفت حلفت صادقا بارا غير شاك ولا مستثنى إن الله تعالى ما خلق نبيه ولا أبا بكر ولا عمر إلا من طينة واحدة ثم ردهم إلى تلك الطينة

“If I could, I would swear and would be true without doubt, and without exception that Allah did not create His Prophet, nor Abu Bakr and `Umar but from one [source of] dust and then returned them to that dust.”

What he meant is that since the three are buried in the same place, they must have been created from that dust alone (Au.).

Verse 1 spoke of the creation of the macro-world, the cosmos. Verse 2 speaks of the creation of the micro-smaller world, man (Shabbir).

7. Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Suddi and

[3] He is Allah in the heavens and in the earth.⁸ He knows your open and your secret; and knows what you earn (of the deeds).

وَهُوَ اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ يَعْلَمُ
سِرِّكُمْ وَجَهْرَكُمْ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٣﴾

[4] Yet, not a sign comes to them of the (many) signs of their Lord but they keep turning away from it.

وَمَا تَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا
كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٤﴾

[5] They have cried lies to the Truth when it came to them, therefore, very soon the news of what they were mocking shall come to them.

فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ فَسَوْفَ
يَأْتِيهِمْ أَنْبَاءُ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿٥﴾

Hasan have said that by the first “term” (*ajl*) the allusion is to this world’s term, and, by the second to that of the Hereafter, that is, the period between the destruction of this world and the Resurrection. Though, other reports coming from the same authorities suggest that the first term is each man’s appointed hour of death (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

in the heaven, will not send a violent wind against you?” The weakness in the argument should be obvious. If Allah is in the heavens, He cannot be in the earth, as the verse in question plainly states. Further, Allah has said in this *Surah* itself, verse 12:

قُلْ لِمَنْ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ قُلْ لِلَّهِ [الأَنْعَام]
[١٢ :

“Ask (them): ‘To whom belongs all that is in the heavens and earth?’ Say: ‘(To) Allah.’”

The two “terms” could also be referring to, as Abu Muslim has said, the terms of those who have passed away, and the terms of those who are yet to appear (Razi).

Now, believing that Allah is in the heaven would mean He owns Himself. To be sure, not a very clever idea. There are other problems too, viz., if Allah were to be in the heaven, he would be limited by the Heaven. But He actually suffers no limitations. Again, if He is in the heaven, then, either He is capable of creating another, eighth heaven above Him, or He is not. If He is not capable, then He is limited in His Powers, which

8. Imām Razi writes: Some people have argued with the help of this verse that Allah is in the heavens. They also quote verse 17 of *Surah al Mulk* (no. 67) which says:

أَمْ أَمِنتُمْ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا
[الملك : ١٧]

“Or do you feel secure that One who is

[6] *Have they not seen how many generations⁹ We have destroyed before them whom We established in the earth in a manner that We have not established you; We made the heavens pour down rains upon them in torrents and set rivers rolling beneath them; nevertheless We destroyed them because of their sins and gave rise to other epochs after them.*

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ
مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَكُمْ
وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِدْرَارًا وَجَعَلْنَا
الْأَنْهَارَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَا هُمْ
بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَنْشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ ﴿٦﴾

is unacceptable. But if He is capable, then He would be contained by what He has created. Finally, Allah's following statements also deny His existence in a particular direction and place. He said (57: 4):

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ [الحديد : ٤]

"He is with you wherever you might be." And, (50: 16):

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ [ق : ١٦]

"We are nearer to Him than his jugular vein."

And, (2: 115):

فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَسَمَّ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ [البقرة : ١١٥]

"So wheresoever you turn, (right) there is Allah's Face."

Subsequent to these words, Razi offers other possible explanations of the verse in question. But, as if to refute the above, or otherwise, Ibn Kathir has the following to offer as his comment of the verse in question. He says: This verse is in the same vein

as that of *Surah Al Zukhruf*, (verse 87) which says:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌ [الزخرف : ٨٤]

"It is He who is the Lord in the heaven and the Lord in the earth," meaning, there are no two or more gods.

This of course is a very complicated issue. We might point out at this stage that the standard opinion of the *Ahl al Sunnah* is to accept the "fawqiyah" of Allah without imagining Him in any particular direction (Au.).

9. *Qarn* of the original has been variously interpreted: from a period lasting 20 years, to anything above but less than 100. Asad writes: '... in the Qur'anic usage, the term *qarn* does not always denote "a generation", but rather more frequently "an epoch", or "people belonging to one particular epoch", as well as "a civili-

[7] Had We sent down unto you (O Muhammad) a book on a parchment which they touched with their own hands, surely, those who have disbelieved would have said, 'This is nothing but plain magic.'¹⁰

وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ كِتَابًا فِي قِرْطَاسٍ فَلَمَسُوهُ
بِأَيْدِيهِمْ لَقَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا
سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧﴾

[8] They said, 'Only if an angel had been sent down unto him.'¹¹ But, had We sent an angel, the matter would be settled and they would not receive a reprieve.¹²

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ
لَفُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ ثُمَّ لَا يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٨﴾

zation” in the historical sense of the word.’

10. Kalbi and others have reported that Nadr b. al Harth, `Abdullah ibn Abi Umayyah (he became a Muslim later: Shafi`) and Nawfal b. Khuwaylid said to the Prophet: “We will not believe in you until a written material came down, along with four angels bearing testimony that you have been appointed a messenger of God.” Allah revealed this verse in response (Alusi).

11. This verse was in response to the Makkan chiefs suggesting to the Prophet that it would have been nice if an angel were sent down to accompany him wherever he went and declare his authenticity (Alusi).

Ibn `Abbas has said that were an angel to come down, the people would not be able to bear his sight because of his radiance (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir); therefore, he would have to be given

a human form, and hence, the doubt would remain (Au.).

Sayyid writes: The demand that an angel be sent down suggests that the pagans did not disbelieve in the existence of Allah, nor did they contend that angels existed. Rather, it was only obduracy on their part that propelled them to make these kind of demands. They were so adamant in their attitude that the Qur`an reported about them (17: 90 93):

وَقَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّى تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ يَنْبُوعًا
(٩٠) أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِنْ نَجِيلٍ وَعَنْبٌ فَتَقْجِرَ
الْأَثْمَارَ خِلَافَهُمَا تَفْجِيرًا (٩١) أَوْ تُسْقِطَ السَّمَاءَ كَمَا
رَعِمْتَ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا أَوْ تَأْتِيَنَا بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ قَبِيلًا
(٩٢) أَوْ يَكُونَ لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِنْ زُرْحُفٍ أَوْ تَرْفَى فِي
السَّمَاءِ وَلَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لِوَعْدِكَ حَتَّى تَنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا كِتَابًا نَقْرُوهُ
قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّي هَلْ كُنْتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَسُولًا [الإسراء
: ٩٠ - ٩٣]

“They said, ‘We shall not believe in you till you make a spring gush forth from the earth for us, or till you posses a garden of palms and

vines and you make rivers roll forth mightily through it, or till you make the heaven fall on us in fragments, as you claim, or you bring down God and the angels as a surety, or till you possess a house of gold, or you go up the heaven, yet, we shall not believe in your going up the heaven until you bring down for us a book which we can read.' Say, 'Glory to Allah. Am I anything except a mortal and a Messenger?'

This kind of demand suggested that it was only obduracy and ignorance of a high order on their part rather than a lack of evidence. Indeed, there was no shortage of evidence. They had been seeing the Prophet since his childhood until he was forty. They trusted him and had faith in his integrity. When he called them forth the first time from the Safa hill, he asked them if they would believe if he said that an army was preparing to attack them from the other side. In one voice they said yes. His honesty was of such level that although they denied him, they left money in his trust even up to the day he left Makkah in secrecy. Thus, it was not his trustworthiness that was in doubt. It was obduracy, plain and simple. Accordingly, the Qur'an said (6: 33):

قَدْ تَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُ لَيَحْزُنُّكَ الَّذِي يَقُولُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا
يُكَذِّبُونَكَ وَلَكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ
[الأنعام : ٣٣]

"We know that what they say hurts you. But it is not you they cry lies to. Rather, it is Allah's signs that these transgressors are disputing."

Moreover, the proofs that they were demanding were abundantly supplied to them in the form of the Qur'an itself. They had no doubts that the high level of eloquence attained by the Qur'an, and the miraculous nature of its verses required that the Divine hand be behind it. As experts of the language they knew very well that no human could produce a masterpiece of this sort. The Arabs knew in the depth of their hearts that the message itself of the Qur'an and the manner of its presentation was something beyond imitation. Thus, it was not lack of proofs, rather, it was intransigence which led them to rejection."

12. As Allah said elsewhere (25: 22):

يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَا بُشْرَىٰ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُجْرِمِينَ
[الفرقان : ٢٢]

"The day they will see the angels, no good news will there be at that time for the criminals" (Ibn Kathir).

[9] Besides, had We sent an angel, assuredly We would have made him a man¹³ and (thus) would have confused them over a matter they confuse themselves.¹⁴

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ مَلَكًا جَعَلْنَاهُ رَجُلًا وَلَلَبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَا يَلْبِسُونَ ﴿٩﴾

[10] Indeed, Messengers have been mocked at before you. But those who scoffed at them, were hemmed in by the very thing they mocked.¹⁵

وَلَقَدْ اسْتَهْزَيْتُمْ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

[11] Say, 'Go about in the land and see what was the end of those who cried lies.'¹⁶

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ انظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ ﴿١١﴾

The appearance to the humans of angels in their own form is to uncover the unseen. That happens only to those whose term has expired (Au.).

13. As Allah said elsewhere (17: 95):

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَلَائِكَةٌ يَّمشُونَ مُطْمَئِنِينَ لَنَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَلَكًا رَسُولًا [الإسراء : ٩٥]

“Say, ‘Were there to be in the earth angels, going about in peace, surely, We would have then sent unto them an angel from the heaven as a Messenger’” (Ibn Kathir).

14. ‘Since it is impossible for man to perceive angels as they really are, the hypothetical angelic message bearer would have to assume the shape of a human being and so their demand for a direct “verification” of the message would have remained unful-

filled, and their self caused confusion unresolved’ (Asad).

15. ‘... the meaning being that a derisive rejection of spiritual truth inexorably rebounds on the scoffers and has not only a disastrous effect on their individual lives after death but also if persisted in by the majority within a community destroys the moral basis of their society and, thus, their earthly happiness and sometimes even their physical existence’ (Asad).

16. The archaeological remains and historical records of the ancient nations testify to how they met their tragic ends for turning away from truth and honesty, and stubbornly persisting in their devotion to falsehood (Mawdudi).

[12] Say, 'To whom belongs what is the heavens and in the earth?' Say, 'To Allah.'¹⁷ He has prescribed unto Himself mercy.¹⁸ He shall gather you all together on the Day of Judgment.¹⁹ There is no doubt about it.²⁰ (Yet) Those who have lost their souls .. they .. they will not believe.

قُلْ لِمَنْ مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ قُلْ
لِلَّهِ كَتَبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ لِيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ
إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا
أَنفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

17. The subtlety of this argument should not go unnoticed. The unbelievers are asked: to whom belongs whatever exists in either the heavens or on the earth. The inquirer then pauses to wait for the answer. Those questioned are themselves convinced that all belongs to God, yet while they dare not respond falsely, they are nevertheless not prepared to give the correct answer. Fearing that their response may be used in argument against their polytheistic beliefs, they keep quiet. At this, the inquirer is told to answer the question himself and to say that all belongs to God (Mawdudi).

18. In a *hadith* of the *Sahihayn*, Abu Hurayrah has reported the Prophet,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَّا فَصَى الْخَلْقَ كَتَبَ عِنْدَهُ فَوْقَ عَرْشِهِ إِنَّ
رَحْمَتِي سَبَقَتْ غَضَبِي

“When Allah had created the creations He declared a law (unto Himself) which is with Him above the *Arsh* (to the effect),

‘My mercy shall outstrip My anger’” (Ibn Kathir).

Muslim has another version by Salman al Farsi which says:

جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الرَّحْمَةَ مِائَةً جُزْءٍ فَأَمْسَكَ عِنْدَهُ تِسْعَةً
وَتِسْعِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ فِي الْأَرْضِ جُزْءًا وَاحِدًا فَمِنْ ذَلِكَ
الْجُزْءِ تَتْرَاحِمُ الْخَلَائِقُ حَتَّى تَرْفَعَ الدَّابَّةُ حَافِرَهَا عَنِ
وَلَدِهَا خَشْيَةً أَنْ تُصِيبَهُ

“Allah has made a hundred parts of mercy. He has retained ninety nine of them with Himself and sent down to the earth a single part. It is by that part that the creations show mercy to each other, so that the mother-beast lifts her hoof off her young out of the fear of trampling it” (Sayyid).

Muslim and Ahmad have another version narrated by Salman al Farsi which reports the Prophet (*saws*) as having said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِائَةَ رَحْمَةٍ
كُلُّ رَحْمَةٍ طِبَاقٌ مَّا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا
فِي الْأَرْضِ رَحْمَةً فَبِهَا تَعَطِفُ الْوَالِدَةُ عَلَى وَلَدِهَا

وَالْوَحْشِ وَالطَّيْرِ بَعْضُهَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ أُكْمَلَهَا بِحَذِهِ الرَّحْمَةِ

“The day Allah created the heavens and the earth, He also created a hundred (parts of) mercy. Every part of this mercy covers the heaven and the earth. Of it He placed a single part on the earth. It is by it that the mother shows mercy to her child, and the beasts and birds show mercy to each other. When it is the Day of Judgment, He will complete it with this mercy” (Shawkani).

After re narrating the above *ahadith* Sayyid adds: “Apart from the above *ahadith*, the Prophet never failed to emphasize Allah’s mercy whenever an occasion arose. When a woman was found searching for her child amongst a group of prisoners, picking up anyone she would come across, pressing it against her breast, the Prophet remarked:

” أَتَرَوْنَ هَذِهِ الْمَرْأَةَ طَارِحَةً وَلَدَهَا فِي النَّارِ“. قُلْنَا
لَا وَاللَّهِ وَهِيَ تَقْدِرُ عَلَى أَنْ لَا تَطْرَحَهُ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ
اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- ” لَللَّهِ أَرْحَمُ بِعِبَادِهِ مِنْ
هَذِهِ بَوْلِدِهَا“.

“Do you think this woman will throw her child into fire?” They said: “No, O Messenger of Allah, if she has the choice not to.” He rejoined: “Allah is kinder toward

His creations than this woman toward her child.”

On another occasion he said, as reported by `Amr b. al As:

الرَّاحِمُونَ يَرْحَمُهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ اِرْحَمُوا مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَرْحَمَكُمُ
مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ

“The merciful are shown mercy by Allah. Show mercy to those on the earth, He who is in the heavens will show mercy to you” (Abu Da’ud, Tirmidhi).

Jarir has reported the Prophet as saying:

إِنَّ مَنْ لَا يَرْحَمُ لَا يُرْحَمُ

“He is not shown mercy who does not show mercy” (The *Sahihayn* and Tirmidhi).

It so happened once that the Prophet was kissing Ali’s son Hasan. Al Aqra` b. Habis happened to be around. He remarked: “I have ten children. Yet, I never kiss them.” The Prophet eyed him for a while and then said: “He who does not show mercy is not shown mercy” (Abu Hurayrah: the *Sahihayn*). Abu Hurayrah has also reported the Prophet in a report preserved by Malik and the *Sheikhayn* that a man was forgiven because he gave some water to a thirsty dog saying: ‘This dog is going through what I was going through of the thirst.’

Allah accepted his good deed.”)The text is as follows: Au):

بَيْنَا رَجُلًا بِطَرِيقِ اشْتَدَّ عَلَيْهِ الْعَطَشُ فَوَجَدَ بِئْرًا فَزَلَّ فِيهَا فَشَرِبَ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ فَإِذَا كَلْبٌ يَلْهَثُ يَأْكُلُ التُّرَى مِنَ الْعَطَشِ فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ لَقَدْ بَلَغَ هَذَا الْكَلْبُ مِنْ الْعَطَشِ مِثْلُ الَّذِي كَانَ بَلَغَ مِنِّي فَزَلَّ الْبَيْرُ فَمَلَأَ حُفَّهُ مَاءً فَسَقَى الْكَلْبَ فَشَكَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ فَعَفَّرَ لَهُ

During a campaign, Sayyid continues, when someone brought down young chicks from a nest and their mother began to encircle over their heads, the Prophet enquired: “Who disturbed the peace of this bird? Return her chicks to her.”

Sayyid concludes: “We could have passed over the above verse lightly. But it is necessary for a Muslim to realize the greatness of kindness and the kindness of the Kindest. Resting in his heart, this truth has deep spiritual ramifications for him. He rests in peace that whatever happens to him, good or bad, is out of mercy of His creator. If he is tested with some hardships, it is for his good, it is not a sign of Allah’s rejection. Allah does not deny His mercy to anyone. It is the people who deny His mercy to themselves by disbelieving in Him.”

Asad adds: “The expression “God has willed upon Himself as a law” (*kataba `ala nafsihi*) occurs in the Qur’an only twice here and in verse

54 of this *Surah* itself and in both instances with reference to His grace and mercy (*rahmah*); none of the other divine attributes has been similarly described. This exceptional quality of God’s grace and mercy is further stressed in 7: 156 “*My grace overspreads everything*” and finds an echo in the authentic Traditions in which, according to the Prophet, God says of Himself, “Verily, My grace and mercy outstrip My wrath”.

19. Because of the use of the preposition “*ila*”, it has been suggested that it could mean: He will assemble you in your graves until the Day of Judgment, when you will be brought out (Qurtubi).

20. What the verse means to say is that even though your own speculations over who possesses the universe leads you to the conclusion that it can only belong to One God, yet, despite that, if you suggest other deities besides Him, then, as a people, you ought to be destroyed. But it is Allah’s mercy which He has prescribed unto Himself as a Law that saves you from immediate extinction. This respite however is to allow you time for re consideration of the issue. It should not be imagined that, acceptance or rejection, destruction or no destruction, the matter will

[13] To Him belongs whatever takes rest in the night and in the day.²¹ He is the All hearing, the All knowing.

وَلَهُ مَا سَكَنَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَهُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾

[14] Say, 'Shall I take for a Protector other than Allah, the Originator²² of the heavens and the earth,²³ who feeds and is not fed?'²⁴ Say, 'I have been ordered to be the first of those who submit, and be not you of the Associates.'

قُلْ أَعْيَرَ اللَّهُ أَخِيذًا وَلِيًّا فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ يُطْعِمُ وَلَا يُطْعَمُ قُلْ إِنِّي
أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ
مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

rest there. Rather, there will be a next life in which you will be questioned and punished for your dishonesty. As to why some people refuse to heed despite the warning delivered by the irrefutable message, the answer is, it is because they have lost their souls to other causes. Consequently, they removed the issue of reconsideration from their minds altogether; and that is so perhaps, because the message tends to question the causes to which they are presently devoted (Au.).

21. The best that has been said about the connection between verse 12 (Say, 'To whom belongs what is the heavens and in the earth?') and verse 13 ('To Him belongs whatever takes rest in the night and in the day') is by Abu Muslim. He said: First Allah spoke of the heavens and the earth (in verse 12) because there is no Space but within these two. Then He spoke

about the night and the day (verse 13) because there is no Time save encompassed by these two. Thus, Allah informed us that to Him belong both Space and Time. Further, with regard to the use of the word *sakana*, there are two opinions. First, it implies that what takes rest is necessarily that which moves. So when it is said "*ma sakana*" both are automatically included and both belong to Him. Second, and the weightier interpretation is that *sakana* is in the sense of taking up residence. In other words, whatever takes up residence within Time and Space belongs to Him. Also, the word *sakana* is all inclusive, for, those that are at rest, are greater in numbers than those that move (Razi).

22. Ibn `Abbas is reported as having said: "I did not know the meaning of "*fatara*" until I came across two bedouins quarrelling over a well. One

of them said: *Ana Fatartuha* [i.e., "I originated it]" (Zamakhshari, Razi, Shawkani).

Razi adds some points that seem to agree with the modern cosmological speculations. He says that the word *fatara* has, as Ibn al Anbari pointed out, the connotation in its root of the beginning of a thing by tearing it apart from another. It leads us to believe that "the act of creation involved in its process a tearing open (or tearing apart) and then subsequent coalescing of some materials with the others." His original words are:

فقلوه فاطر السموات والأرض يريد خالقهما
ومنشئهما بالتركيب الذي سبيله أن يحصل فيه الشق
والتأليف عند ضم الأشياء إلى بعض

Thus he comes close to describing an explosion and then coalescing of elements giving rise to heavenly bodies. He further adds a brilliant point by saying that an act of tearing apart can have two consequences: (i) leading to an improvement, as, e.g., Allah's words (67: 3),

هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ [المالك : ٣]

"Do you see any crack?"

Or (ii) leading to destruction, as in (82: 1):

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ [الإنفطار : ١]

"When the heavens will be torn open."

It might also be of interest to note that all acts of creation involve a tearing open; whether it is a plant out of a seed, a flower out of a bud, a chicken out of an egg, or anything else that we can think of. They all involve a tearing open of some sort or the other. Thus *fatir* has a greater depth of meaning that what might be suspected (Au.).

23. Majid writes: "Frazer, in his voluminous work, gives minute and accurate details of 'sky worship' in Vedic India, Iran, Greece, Rome, Babylonia, Egypt, China, Korea, Western Africa, Congo, Southern Africa and Eastern Africa, and of Earth worship in Vedic India, Greece, Rome, Babylonia, Assyria, China, Modern India, and in various parts of Africa and America."

The present Pope's act of kissing the earth first thing upon landing in a country, suggests, in the least, veneration of the "mother earth" (Au.).

24. Majid comments: "According to the crudities of the polytheistic people, the gods actually consume the food and drink that are offered to them. The Babylonian gods, for in-

[15] Say, 'I fear chastisement of a Great Day if I should disobey my Lord.

قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ

عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٥﴾

[16] Whosoever is averted from it that Day - to him He would have showed mercy. That is the great triumph.²⁵

مَنْ يُصْرَفْ عَنْهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمَهُ وَذَلِكَ

الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٦﴾

stance, 'conceived of in such human wise, knew thirst and hunger as did men, and had to be propitiated by drink and food' (Woolley, Abraham, p. 157)."

As for the Christians, Majid wonders if they are any better than the ancient pagans in celebrating the festival of Eucharist during which they proceed to eat bread and drink wine, in the belief that they are the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. It is openly taught in the approved and authorized Catholic Catechism:

Q. What is the Blessed Eucharist?

A. The sacrament of the body and blood, soul and divinity, of Jesus Christ, under the appearance of bread and wine.

Q. Are both the body and blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and under the appearance of wine?

A. Yes; Christ is whole and en-

tire, true God and true man, under the appearance of each.

Q. Are we to believe that the God of all Glory is under the appearance of our corporeal food?

A. Yes; as we must also believe that the same God of all Glory suffered death under the appearance of a criminal on the cross.

Q. How can the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ?

A. By the goodness and power of God, with whom no work shall be impossible.

25. Hence we have `Umar ibn al Khattab's statement: "Enough for me, if (on the Day of Judgment), there is nothing for me and nothing against me" (Shabbir).

26. Ibn `Abbas has narrated the famous *hadith* in Tirmidhi. He says:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ أَنَّهُ كَانَ كَانَ خَلْفَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ , فَقَالَ لِي وَأَنَا زَدَيْتُ خَلْفَهُ: يَا غُلَامُ

[17] And, were Allah to afflict you with an evil, none can remove it but He.²⁶ And, were He to cause you a blessing, then, He has power over all things.²⁷

وَإِنْ يَمَسِّنَا اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يَمَسِّنَا بِبِحَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٧﴾

إِنِّي مُعَلِّمُكَ كَلِمَاتٍ فَاحْفَظْهُنَّ , احْفَظِ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظَكَ
 احْفَظِ اللَّهَ يَجِدْهُ تُجَاهَكَ , وَإِذَا سَأَلْتَ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ
 , وَإِذَا اسْتَعْنَيْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ , وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الْأُمَّةَ لَوِ
 اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَتَّقُونَكَ لَمْ يَتَّقَوْكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ
 كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَضْرُوكَ لَمْ يَضْرُوكَ
 إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ , جَفَّتِ الْأَقْلَامُ
 وَطُوِيَتِ الصُّحُفُ

“One day I shared a ride with the Prophet on the same beast. He addressed me: ‘My boy. I will teach you a few words, remember them: Be mindful of Allah, He will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, you will find Him before you. When you ask, ask Allah. When you seek help, seek Allah’s help. Remember, if the peoples of the world decide to do you a good, they would not be able to do you good in the least, save for what Allah has decreed for you. And, if they were to be unanimous over doing you a harm, they would not be able to do anything, save for what Allah has decreed for you. The pens have dried, and the scriptures have been folded” (Qurtubi).

Alusi adds: This verse forbids that someone should seek removal of an affliction by anyone other than Allah.

He also writes: As if expounding the above *hadith*, Sheikh `Abdul Qadir Jilani wrote in *Futuh al ghayb* what can be summarized as the following: ‘Whosoever desires peace in this life and in the Hereafter may observe *sabr* and *rida*, give up complaining to others of his kind, presenting his needs to his Lord alone. He should apply himself to His obedience, wait for an opening from Him, and cut himself off from all else save Him. He should understand that His withholding is bestowal, His punishment a reward, tribulations from Him a cure, His promises a kind of trance and His words, acts. All His acts are good, wise and in keeping with the greater needs, except that He has kept the knowledge of the wisdom behind them unto Himself, leaving no recourse for His slaves except to the acts of devotion, staying away from what is forbidden, graceful acceptance of His decree, and avoiding

[18] He is The Subduer,²⁸ supreme over His slaves;²⁹ (yet) He is the All wise, the All aware.

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ

﴿١٨﴾

to ask “why,” “how” and “when.”

Every Muslim then, Alusi concludes, should keep the above quoted *hadith* of Tirmidhi constantly in sight.

27. Hence the Prophet’s famous oft repeated prayer words:

”اللهم لا مانع لما أعطيت، ولا معطي لما منعت،
ولا ينفع ذا الجَدِّ منك الجَدُّ“

“O Allah. There is none to withhold what You bestow, none to bestow what You withhold, and of no profit any one of power and possession against You” (Ibn Kathir).

28. *Qahir* is someone who subdues the rebellious and humiliates the arrogant.

29. The meaning of “*wa huwa al Qahiru fawqa `ibadihi*” is: “Allah is predominant over His slaves.

“He, who humbles them, overpowering them through subjugation, by virtue of His creation of them. Thus He is above them in His irresistible power over them, and they are under Him. And He is the Wise... He is Wise: in His overpowering of His slaves, in His irresistibility over them

by His power and in all His acts. He is the Knower of the benefits of a thing or its harms, from Whom neither the ends are hidden nor their beginning, whose management of affairs carries no blemish nor has He an associate in His commands” (Ibn Jarir).

Kashshaf also agrees that the word “*fawqa `ibadihi*” implies Allah’s predominance over the people and His absolute power over everything that one can imagine as of existence besides Him. Therefore, he adds, it is right to say that He is “a Thing, but unlike anything,” or to say He is, “Known but unlike anything that is known.” But it is not right to say He has “a Body but unlike any other body.”

Imām Razi builds up a long argument against those who take “*fawqa*” in the literal sense of Allah being “above,” and denies that Allah is in any specific direction. One of his arguments is that the universe is spherical in which space is neither filled nor void. He concludes that imagining the Divinity in any specific direction or occupying a particular

position would amount to either declaring Him below some of His creations, or imposing limits on Him.

Alusi reacts to this kind of reasoning. He asserts that the belief of the Muslims, as stated clearly by Tahawi, is that Allah is “*fawqa*,” without the suggestion of a direction. In fact, Alusi adds most brilliantly, that directions have no existence. They are merely convenient points of reference. They are a notion, an idea, and not concrete things. Imām Ahmad has a *hadīth* in which the Prophet said:

الله تبارك وتعالى فوق ذلك فوق العرش

“Allah Most High is above that, (that is), above the *`Arsh*.”

Another *hadīth* of Abu Da`ud says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَوْقَ عَرْشِهِ وَعَرْشُهُ فَوْقَ سَمَوَاتِهِ

“Allah is above His *`Arsh*. His *`Arsh* is above His heavens.” While saying that he made a circle with his finger. Then he added, “And it creaks as a new saddle creaks under the weight of a rider.”

Another *Sahih hadīth* of the Prophet narrated by Umawi in his *Maghazi* tells us that when Sa`d ibn Mu`adh had given his verdict about Banu

Qurayzah, the Prophet remarked:

لقد حكمت فيهم بحكم الله من فوق سبع سماوات

“You have given a verdict that is in line with the verdict of He who is ‘above’ the seven heavens.”

Ibn Majah has another *hadīth* which says:

بَيْنَنَا أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ فِي نَعِيمِهِمْ إِذْ سَطَعَ لَهُمْ نُورٌ فَرَفَعُوا رُؤُوسَهُمْ فَإِذَا الرَّبُّ قَدْ أَشْرَفَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ فَقَالَ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْهِمْ يَا أَهْلَ الْجَنَّةِ قَالَ وَذَلِكَ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِنْ رَبِّ رَحِيمٍ قَالَ فَيَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ وَيَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْهِ فَلَا يَلْتَفِتُونَ إِلَى شَيْءٍ مِنَ النَّعِيمِ مَا دَامُوا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْهِ حَتَّى يَخْتَجِبَ عَنْهُمْ وَيَبْقَى نُورُهُ وَبَرَكَتُهُ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي دِيَارِهِمْ

“While the people of Paradise would be in their pleasures, they would be engulfed by a *Nūr*. They will raise their heads and lo, it will be Allah Most High looking down at them from above them. He will say, ‘People of Paradise, *Al-salamun `Alaykum* O dwellers of Paradise. The Prophet recited the verse (36: 58), ‘*Salam will be the word from a Kind Lord.*’ He will look down upon them and they will look up at Him. So long as He is in sight, they will not look at anything else until He veils Himself from them after which His *Nūr* and *barakah* will remain on them and their dwellings.”

Alusi presents some other arguments to prove the “*fawqiyah*” of Allah, but we drop them for the purpose of brevity.

Rashid Rida interjects that perhaps this verse is not the perfect point to argue about the Divinity in being or not being in a particular direction. The meaning is clear and has been lucidly explained by Ibn Jarir. The position of the *Salaf*, vis a vis the Divinity, is also clear. They liked to pass over the verses discussing the Person of the Divinity with silence. They said that Allah is over the *'Arsh*, over the seven heavens, and above the whole created world. He is “apart” from His creations. He is not limited, nor circumscribed. There is nothing like unto Him. His Attributes are described with the help of words understood by the humans, but He cannot be defined with those words. It would be better, concludes Rashid Rida, if we remained within this method.

Nonetheless, without any comment on what has been stated above, one might warn that this is an extremely difficult and delicate subject. Neither science nor revelation offer us a definitive knowledge of the created world. So far as scientific knowledge is concerned the information

given about the state of the universe is far from clear. Indeed, it is to be understood in terms of mathematical equations alone. To convey in words what those equations mean, is to be trying to give a concrete shape to an abstract idea. It is said that the universe is “edgeless and boundary less,” while space is thought to be probably “curved” and not “flat” and that it is expanding at a feverish pace and accelerating, so that it will keep on expanding for ever and ever. The cosmologists also assert that on the large scale the universe is homogeneous and isotropic. That is, looked at from any angle, it is just the same in appearance and physical properties. But that does not mean the earth is in the center. They give the example of equidistant dots on a balloon in which every dot can be said to have a central position. The balloon example implies that we are at the edge of the universe and that the universe has a center. But, that is not correct, for, it is also asserted that there is no center to the universe. Further, there is no answer to the question, what is the nature of that which lies beyond the edge? One answer is that there is no beyond, and so the question may not be asked. Again, there are a few scientists who speculate that there might be an infinite number of uni-

[19] Say, 'What thing counts most in testimony?'³⁰ Say, 'Allah. He is a witness between me and you. And this Qur'an has been revealed unto me in order that I warn you thereby, as well as whomsoever it may reach.³¹ Will you testify that there are gods besides Allah?' Say, 'I shall not testify (any such absurdity).' Say, 'Indeed, He is one God. And I absolve myself of all that you associate (with Him).'

قُلْ أَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَكْبَرُ شَهَادَةً قُلْ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ
بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَأُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ
لَأُنذِرَكُمْ بِهِ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ أَتَيْنَكُمْ لَتَشْهَدُونَ
أَنَّ مَعَ اللَّهِ آلِهَةً أُخْرَى قُلْ لَأَشْهَدُ قُلْ
إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ وَإِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

verses. They are known as inflatory universes – millions of them. There are good scientific reasons to believe in their existence. None the less, humans might never come into contact with those universes because of dimensional problem. There could be eight, eleven or twenty three dimensions in those universes. Indeed our universe might have more than four dimensions, but others might be tucked away in matter and so invisible to us. What's more, some of those universes might be overlapping ours. But, when not overlapping, what's between these multiple universes? These few random points demonstrate that human knowledge is incomplete and inadequate to work out a satisfactory theory about the physical world itself. It is pointless, therefore, and even audacious to talk of a subject that involves the Divinity. And hence the wise policy of silence adopted by the *Salaf*. We

cannot say any more than that Allah is apart from His creations (Au.).

30. It is said (as reported by Kalbi: Alusi) that (whenever the Quraysh enquired the Jews and Christians about the Prophet, they received the answer that there was nothing in their Scriptures to suggest that he was a Messenger: Alusi), the Quraysh demanded on the Prophet that he produce witnesses to his claim. In response Allah revealed this verse (Qurtubi).

In the use of the word "thing" (in "what thing can be greater in testimony") is the hint that all else are "things" when compared to the only truly Existent Allah. Another connotation is that all "things" testify to the Oneness of Allah (Au.).

31. Hence the Prophet has said:

بَلِّغُوا عَنِّي وَلَوْ آيَةً

"Transmit from me, even if it be

[20] Those to whom We gave the Book recognize him as they recognize their sons.³² Yet, those who have lost their souls, they will not believe.

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا
يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

[21] And who can do greater wrong than him who fastened a lie upon Allah, or cried lies to His signs? Verily, the wrong doers shall not prosper.³³

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا
أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُغْلِقُ الظَّالِمُونَ
﴿٢١﴾

a verse.”

In another *hadith* he said:

نَصَّرَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا سَمِعَ مَقَالَتِي فَحَفِظَهَا وَوَعَاَهَا وَبَلَّغَهَا
مَنْ لَمْ يَسْمَعْهَا فَرُبَّ حَامِلٍ فِيهِ لَا فِيقَهُ لَهُ وَرُبَّ
حَامِلٍ فِيهِ ، إِلَى مَنْ هُوَ أَفْقَهُ مِنْهُ

“May Allah keep the face of him bright and happy who heard something from me, remembered it and then passed it on to others. For, sometimes, the carrier of a point has no understanding himself, while, at other times, the carrier understands better than he to whom he passed on “ (Shafi’).

32. Qatadah and Ibn Jurayj have said that the allusion is to the Prophet. Nevertheless, a second opinion of Qatadah is that the allusion is to Islam (Ibn Jarir).

Also see note 298 under *Surah al Baqarah* of this work.

This is the answer to the Jewish and

Christian claim that they did not have anything in their scriptures to suggest that Muhammad was a Messenger of God. The fact is, those who were vouchsafed the Book earlier, possess such unambiguous criteria that they can spot a Prophet among countless million other mortals just as easily as they can pick out their sons (Au.).

Majid wrote: “There is little doubt, says a Christian biographer of the holy Prophet, that some at least among the Jews assured him that he might be, ‘or even affirmed that he was that Prophet whom the Lord their God should raise up unto them of their brothers’ (Muir, p. 98).”

33. There are several reasons why this verse has been brought here. The pagans for instance said about their idols that they had a share in divinity and that Allah had ordered them to worship them. They claimed that angels

[22] The day We shall gather together³⁴ all of them and ask those who associated (others with Him), 'Where are your associates whom you were alleging?'³⁵

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ نَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَيْنَ شُرَكَائُكُمْ الَّذِينَ كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

[23] There shall then be no argument³⁶ for them but to say, 'By Allah, our Lord, we were not associators.'³⁷

ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُنْ فِتْنَتُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا وَاللَّهِ رَبِّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

were Allah's daughters. There were other lies that they fastened upon Allah. As for the Jews and Christians, they claimed that what was revealed to them was the final word of God and that no prophet was due. Further, they committed several kinds of evils claiming that they were so ordered by Him. The Jews said 'we are the children of God,' and, 'we shall not enter the Fire but for a few days.' All these were lies that were fastened upon Allah, hence the verse (Razi).

34. This verse is a continuation of the previous one. Together they are saying, "The transgressors shall not prosper (neither in this world, nor) on the Day when We shall gather them together ..." (Ibn Jarir).

35. Asad writes: "Whenever the term *shuraka'* (pl. of *sharik*) is used in the Qur'an with reference to beliefs, it invariably denotes real or imaginary beings or forces to whom one ascribes a share in God's divinity: consequently, this concept and its

utter condemnation in Islam relates not merely to the worship of false deities but also to the attribution of semi divine qualities and powers to saints (in the liturgical sense of this word), as well as to abstract notions like wealth, social status, power, nationality, etc., to which men so often ascribe an objective influence on human destinies."

36. The *fitnah* of the original has been interpreted as "answer, reply, argument" etc., by authorities such as Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah and Dahhak. However, it appears that the meaning is, "When they are tried before Allah, there will be nothing for them to bank upon but to say, 'We were not associators,' for *fitnah* also stands for "trial, test," etc. (Ibn Jarir).

Qurtubi quotes a *hadith* from Muslim. It says:

فيلقى العبد فيقول أي فل ألم أكرمك وأسودك وأزوجك وأسخر لك الخيل والإبل وأذكرك رأس وتربع؟ فيقول بلى قال فيقول أظننت أنك ملاقي؟ فيقول

لا فيقول فياني أنساك كما نسيتني ثم يلقى الثاني فيقول أي فل ألم أكرمك وأسودك وأزوجك وأسخر لك الخيل والإبل وأذرك رأساً وتربع؟ فيقول بلى أي رب فيقول أفظننت أنك ملاقي؟ فيقول لا فيقول فياني أنساك كما نسيتني ثم يلقى الثالث فيقول له مثل ذلك فيقول يا رب آمنت بك وبكتابك وبرسلك وصليت وصمت وتصدقت وبثني بخير ما استطاع فيقول ههنا إذا قال ثم يقال له الآن نبعث شاهداً عليك ويتفكر في نفسه من ذا الذي يشهد علي؟ فيختم على فيه ويقال لفخذه ولحمه وعظامه انطقي فتتطق فخذه ولحمه وعظامه بعمله وذلك ليعذر من نفسه وذلك المنافق وذلك الذي يسخط الله عليه

“(On that Day) Allah will speak to one of His slave and say, ‘O so and so. Is it not true that I honored you, made you a leader, gave you a spouse, subdued the cattle for you and made you rich?’ He will say, ‘Sure, you did my Lord.’ He will ask, ‘Did you ever imagine you would meet Me?’ He will reply, ‘No.’ He will say, ‘Today I shall forget you as you forgot Me.’ Then He will address a second one, similar to the first. Then He will speak to a third one. He will reply, ‘My Lord. I believed in You, in Your Book, in Your Messenger. I prayed, fasted and spent in charity.’ He will thus speak well of himself so far as possible. He will be told, ‘Here too?!’ Then it will be said, ‘Anon! We shall pres-

ent witnesses over you.’ He will wonder who would bear witness against him. Then his mouth will be sealed and his thighs, flesh, and bones would be ordered to speak. His thighs, flesh, and bones would bear witness against the man. This, so that the man is left with no excuse. This man, he would be a hypocrite with whom Allah would be angry.”

37. It is reported that a man went to Ibn `Abbas and asked, “What have you to say about these two verses: ‘By Allah, our Lord, we were not associators,’ and, ‘And they shall not be able to conceal anything?’” Ibn `Abbas replied, “As for the unbelievers saying, ‘By Allah, our Lord, we were not associators,’ that will be when they will notice that none but the believers are entering Paradise. They will say to themselves, ‘Let us deny,’ and, consequently, will say, “By Allah, our Lord, we were not associators.’ But, subsequently, Allah will seal their mouths. Their hands and feet will speak out (testifying against them). Then it will be that, “They shall not be able to conceal anything” (Ibn Jarir).

Nevertheless, *tafasir al Bahr al Muhit* and *Mazhari* have said that the people alluded to here are those who had

not committed open *shirk* but had sought help from others besides Allah, such as those who address their prayers to the dead near the graves. It is they who would claim that they were not associators (*Ma`arif*).

Asad adds: "This refers to beliefs which undoubtedly imply *shirk* ("the ascribing divinity or divine qualities to beings or forces other than God") in the objective sense of this concept, but which the person concerned does not subjectively visualize as denying God's oneness (Razi): for instance, the mystical dogma of the "Trinity" which, in the Christian view, does not conflict with the principle of God's oneness inasmuch as it is supposed to express a "three-fold aspect" of the One Deity, or the attribution of divine or semi divine qualities to saints as supposed "mediators" between man and God, and so forth."

Sayyid writes: There are three kinds of 'associations' and all the three were prevalent among the pagan Arabs. They believed in beings who they thought had a say in the affairs of the world: such as angels, jinn and

spirits of the dead. They believed these powers resided in their idols and spoke their mind through the priests. These powers could interfere in the affairs of the people, and, either by their own will, or through intercession with the supreme God, alter the course of events.

A second kind of *shirk* that they committed was by presenting their offerings to the deities, (although the priests bagged those offerings), or devoting themselves to false gods, or addressing their supplications to them. Influenced by the Persians, some of them believed that the stars too had a say in their destiny. This explains the story of Ibrahim that follows in this chapter.

Their third kind of association was to depend for their values, laws, and the way of life in general, on the priestly class. Their priests were their law makers. Like their counter parts of modern times, they believed that what they received from their priests was Divine Law."

38. Asad comments: "I.e., by allowing themselves to think, in their life time, that their beliefs did not of-

[24] Behold! How they lied against themselves³⁸ and lost unto them is all that they were forging.³⁹

انظُرْ كَيْفَ كَذَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَضَلَّ
عَنَّهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

[25] Of them there are some who listen to you. But We have set a barrier against their hearts lest they understand, and in their ears is a deafness.⁴⁰ Even if they see all the signs, they will not believe in them.⁴¹ Insomuch that when they come to you, they dispute with you, the unbelievers remarking, 'Surely, this is nothing but tales of the ancients.'⁴²

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ
قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا
وَإِنْ يَرَوْا كَلِمًا آيَةً لَا يُؤْمِنُوهَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا
جَاءُوكَ يُجَادِلُونَكَ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ
هَذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

fend against the principle of God's oneness (Razi)."

39. Yusuf Ali makes his usual subtle remark: "The lies which they used to tell have now 'wandered' from the channels which they used to occupy, and left the liars in the lurch. In denying the indisputable fact that they took false gods, they admit of their notions and thus are practically convicted out of their own mouths."

40. A variant reading is "*wiqran*" (instead of "*wagran*") in which case the word could be understood as "a plug" (Shawkani).

Shabbir writes: That is the state of those who listened to the Qur'an and the words of the Prophet, not seeking guidance, rather, to work up an argument against it. Running on this track for a lengthy period, and

having given their conscience a long holiday, they lost the use of the faculties of their mind insofar as truth was concerned and became blind of heart. Their own attitude was the cause of their peril, but Allah attributed it to himself since He is the Final Cause of all causes.

41. Note the various faculties that have been spoken of: the hearts and ears, and then the sight (Thanwi, reworded).

42. "*Asatir* signifies lies; or falsehoods; or fictions; or stories having no foundation, or no right tendency or tenor, such as we commonly term as legends or wonderful stories of the ancients" (Majid).

Nadr b. al Harith had widely travelled. He used to narrate tales of Rustum and Suhrab, Isfandyar and oth-

[26] They prevent (others) from him, and themselves stay away from him,⁴³ but they ruin none but themselves, though they perceive not.

وَهُمْ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ وَيَنْأَوْنَ عَنْهُ وَإِنْ يُهْلِكُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

[27] If you were only to see them when they will be detained by the Fire; then (it is that) they will wish, 'Would that we could be sent back (to the world)! We shall not deny the signs of our Lord and shall be of the believers!'

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ وَقِفُوا عَلَى النَّارِ فَعَالُوا يَا لَيْسَنَا ثَرَدٌ وَلَا نَكْذِبُ بآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا وَنَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

ers. When he was asked about what he thought of the Prophet's message, he quipped, 'Tales of the ancients' (Qurtubi, Alusi).

43. Ibn 'Abbas, Qatadah and Suddi have said that it is our prophet Muhammad that the Quraysh prevented the people from seeing, while staying away from him themselves. However, according to Mujahid, which is a second opinion of Qatadah too, it is from the Qur'an that the Quraysh kept others away. There has been a third opinion, but the first is the more plausible one. However, another opinion of Ibn 'Abbas is that, the allusion is to Abu Talib, the Prophet's staunch supporter, who used to prevent the people from harming the Prophet, but distanced himself from Islam. In this light the translation would be: "(Some of them, such

as Abu Talib) prevent others from harming the Prophet, but themselves stay away from him (instead of accepting him as a Messenger)" Ibn Jarir.

Apart from other books, the statement of Ibn 'Abbas is in Ibn Abi Hatim, Tabrani and Hakim, the last named assessing it as a *Sahih* report (Shawkani). And, of course, there were others of the kind among the Quraysh (Au.).

Thanwi adds: The above explanation leads us to the rule that mere natural love (*hubb al taba'i*) of the *awliya'* is not of much significance. It is the rational basis for attachment and love (*hubb al 'aqliyy*) that is required of a lover.

44. The translation is based on Qatadah's understanding. Zamakhshari

[28] Rather, that (of the evil) that they used to conceal earlier became manifest to them,⁴⁴ so that, were they to be returned, they would surely return to what they were forbidden, for they are liars.⁴⁵

بَلْ بَدَا لَهُمْ مَّا كَانُوا يُخْفُونَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَوْ
رُدُّوا لَعَادُوا لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

[29] They say, 'It all amounts to nothing but this earthly life.'⁴⁶ We will not be resurrected.'

وَقَالُوا إِن هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ
بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

says that the allusion could also be to the people of the Book who, although convinced of the authenticity of the Prophet, concealed the truth.

me back, so that I may do good deeds in affairs that I have left behind.' (He will be told) 'Not at all. It is a word that he speaks out (without meaning it)' Au.

45. The implication is that the unbelievers do not consider belief in Allah and His Messenger as something of an intrinsic value: something they should have done as the demand of honesty, love of truth and hatred of anything false, however dear to the carnal self. But they did not. Therefore, in the Hereafter, it is the fear of condemnation to the Fire that will invoke the wish to return. And hence, they would be lying when they will say 'we shall believe.' The Qur'an said about them elsewhere (23: 99 100):

In the words of Asad (who acknowledges Razi for the idea), "... their longing for a 'second chance' is not dictated by love of truth for its own sake but, rather, by their dread of the evil consequences of their doings: and faith is useless unless it is desired for its own sake."

Majid adds: "The *lam* (of the *la kazibun*) used as corroborative is sometimes difficult to express in English except by emphasis on pronunciation."

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ
(٩٩) لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ
هُوَ قَائِلُهَا [المؤمنون : ٩٩ ، ١٠٠]

"Until, when death comes to one of them he cries out, 'My Lord. Send

46. Ibn Zayd has said that this verse is a continuation of the previous verse. That is, if they are sent back to this world, they would say, 'It all amounts to nothing but this earthly life. We are not going to be resurrected' (Ibn Jarir).

[30] But, if you were to see them when they will be detained before their Lord, when He will ask, 'Is this not real?' They will cry out, 'So it is, by our Lord.' He will say, 'Therefore taste the chastisement for⁴⁷ what you were denying.'⁴⁸

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ وَقَفُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ قَالَ أَلَيْسَ هَذَا بِالْحَقِّ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّنَا قَالَ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

[31] Losers indeed are those who cried lies to encounter with Allah; until, when the Hour (of death)⁴⁹ comes suddenly upon them, they cry out, 'Alas for the excesses we committed therein.' They shall be bearing their burdens upon their backs.⁵⁰ Lo! Evil is that which they will bear.

قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ اللَّهِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ السَّاعَةُ بَعْتَهُ قَالُوا يَا حَسْرَتَنَا عَلَىٰ مَا فَرَطْنَا فِيهَا وَهُمْ يَحْمِلُونَ أَوْزَارَهُمْ عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِمْ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَزِرُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

47. Asad explains: "The particle *bi ma* (translated as 'for': Au) expresses here a causal connection between the denial of the truth and the subsequent suffering..."

48. With those words they would be dispatched to the Fire (Thanwi).

49. Since one encounters the first phase of the Day of Judgment with death, it has been metaphorically called "the Hour" here (although, normally, it refers to the Day of Judgment) - Zamakhshari.

Alusi adds: As for the Day of Judgment being referred to as "the Hour" perhaps because it will be an hour compared to the everlasting life that will follow.

50. `Amr b. Qays al Mala'i has said: "As the believer rises from his grave

he will encounter his deeds in the best of forms enshrouded in the best of fragrance. It will ask, 'Do you know me?' He will reply, 'No. Except that you have a beautiful form and emit a wonderful fragrance.' It will say, 'That is how I was in the world. I am your good deeds. I rode upon you there. Today you can ride upon me. Then he recited (19: 85): *The Day when We shall gather together Al Rahman's slaves, in groups.*" As for the unbeliever, someone, most ugly and stinking will welcome him. It will enquire, 'Do you know me?' He will reply, 'No. Except that Allah has given you a terrible face and a stinking smell.' It will say, 'That is how I was in the world. I am your evil deeds. You rode upon me there. Today I'll ride upon you.' Then he

[32] *The life of this world is a sport and a pastime.*⁵¹ *It is the Abode of the Hereafter that is better for the godfearing.*⁵² *Will you not, then, think?*

وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَهْوٌ وَلَلْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

recited, ‘*They shall bear their burdens on their backs. Lo. Evil is that which they bear.*’”

A similar statement has come from Suddi, except that he talks about the unbeliever alone, and the forms that his deeds will take (Ibn Jarir).

Suddi’s statement is in Ibn Abi Hatim also (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

51. Ibn `Abbas has said that this applies primarily to the life of the unbeliever” (Ibn Jarir, Qurtubi).

As for the believer, this life is a field of preparation for the life to come. Otherwise the Prophet has said:

الدُّنْيَا مَلْعُونَةٌ، مَلْعُونٌ مَا فِيهَا إِلَّا عَالِمٌ أَوْ مُتَعَلِّمٌ

“This world is accursed, and accursed is all that is within it, except for Allah’s remembrance, a scholar, or a seeker of knowledge” (Qurtubi).

Tirmidhi declared the above *hadith hasan* (Au.).

Another version says,

الدُّنْيَا مَلْعُونَةٌ، مَلْعُونٌ مَا فِيهَا إِلَّا عَالِمٌ أَوْ مُتَعَلِّمٌ،
وَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ، وَمَا وَالَاهُ

“This world is accursed, and accursed is all that is within it, except for Allah’s remembrance, a scholar, or a seeker of knowledge, and remembrance of Allah and what comes near it.” (This is also a *hasan* report: Au).

And “the remembrance of Allah” of the above *hadith* includes everything which leads to, aids in, or is an accessory to, Allah’s remembrance, such as, a search for sustenance (within the limits of the *Shari`ah*) and other such activities (*Ma`arif*).

52. Razi comments: All that one can think of as the “good things of life” are low of nature. They give pleasure only to the lowly. The wise and the godfearing are never bewitched by them. They realize the transitory nature of this life and the fleeting nature of the physical pleasures, and devote themselves to obtaining those attributes and qualities that raise their esteem in this world as well as in the next. For the former, the pleasures of this life are real. But to the latter they are a sport and pastime. Although, there is no difference in

[33] We are aware indeed that it grieves you the things they say. But, it is not you they cry lies to, rather the transgressors it is the signs of Allah that they deny.⁵³

قَدْ تَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُ لَيَحْزُنُكَ الَّذِي يَقُولُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يُكَذِّبُونَكَ وَلَكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

opinion among the people that the pleasures of this world are not “the good things of life,” yet people’s attitudes do not conform to their beliefs. For, on the one hand they have no difficulty in realizing that if the pleasures of the world could be “the good things of life,” surely, in that event the animals fare better than the humankind. Among the animals there are some who have sex oftener than men, who eat more than men, who are physically more powerful than men, or things of that sort. On the other hand, no one amongst the men claims it as a big achievement that he had so much sex, or he can eat more than anyone else, and so forth. In fact, people are ashamed of these acts, and do not wish to discuss them in public. Consequently, they do not think much of those who indulge in the pleasures of life. On the contrary, they have lot of respect and regard for those who are noble of character, great of knowledge and ascetic of nature. Accordingly, when people criticize each other, it is for possessing the lowly things, habits

and qualities, rather than the noble ones. (They say, for instance, that such a man is a glutton, another greedy, and so on. Or they compare them to animals). This establishes the fact that even in the view of those who are devoted to this world, the pleasures of this world are not the “good things of life.” Yet, somehow, the people fail to realize the specious nature of these things. It is fear alone of the Standing before the Lord that opens the eyes to these realities (Razi, reworded).

53. Hakim has recorded (in his *Mustadrak*: H. bin Ibrahim) the following from `Ali (ibn Abi Talib) declaring it *Sahih* of status: “Abu Jahl said to the Prophet, ‘We do not think you are lying. Rather, we deny what you have brought to us.’” And Ibn Ishaq has recorded in his “*Life of the Prophet*” that once Abu Jahl, Abu Sufyan and Akhnas b. Shurayq concealed themselves in the darkness of the Haram listening to the Prophet’s recitation (in Prayers he used to offer there). When, with the dawn on the horizon, they repaired to their

homes, they bumped into each other. They enquired each other as to what had brought them out so early in the morning. Each confessed, and everyone agreed that they should not repeat the lapse. However, each of them broke the promise twice more. The third time Akhnas b. Shurayq met Abu Jahl and enquired: "What do you think of what Muhammad has brought?" Abu Jahl replied: "Look. We and Banu 'Abd Munaf competed for honor. They fed the pilgrims, we fed the pilgrims. They helped (the distressed), we helped. They gave, we gave - until the two of us were like the two pans of a scale (equally balanced). Now they say, 'We have a prophet who receives revelations from the heavens.' Now, where are we going to get a prophet from? No, by God. We shall never believe in him." A similar statement is reported of Abu Jahl before the decisive battle of Badr (Ibn Kathir).

Another possible meaning is, 'They do not deny you O Muhammad, rather they deny Us,' in the same vein as, when a slave is insulted, his master remarks, 'They did not insult

you man, they insulted me' (Zamakhshari).

Alusi adds: An objection has been raised. How could the Quraysh believe in the trustworthiness of the Prophet and at the same time deny the message he had brought? Then he answers that since, having forty years experience with him, they could not say that he was lying, they believed he was under some kind of spell or had committed an error in attributing to God what he presented as revelations.

Majid adds: "Curiously enough, one finds about exactly the same sentiments regarding the holy Prophet echoed and re-echoed by some of the modern and most finished European scholars. Dr. Roberts, for example, while admiring his many noble qualities, and above all 'his uprightness,' 'his simplicity,' and 'his unselfishness,' finds it difficult to defend him from being labeled 'an impious impostor' because of his 'fictitious revelations.'"

54. "And there is no altering the Words of Allah": I.e., there is no changing the Law of Allah viz., the

[34] Messengers were indeed cried lies to before you, but they endured with patience the denial they met and the persecution they faced, until Our help reached them. There is no altering the Words of Allah.⁵⁴ Already, some account of (previous) Messengers has reached you.

وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوا عَلَىٰ مَا كُذِّبُوا وَأَوْدُوا حَتَّىٰ أَتَاهُمْ نَصْرُنَا وَلَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكَ مِنْ تَبِئِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

[35] Yet, if their spurning bears heavily on you, why if you can seek a tunnel in the earth or a ladder to the heaven and bring them a sign.⁵⁵ Had Allah wished, He would have brought them together upon guidance. Therefore, be not of the ignorant.⁵⁶

وَإِنْ كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكَ إِعْرَاضُهُمْ فَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَبْتَغِيَ نَقْمًا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ سُلَّمًا فِي السَّمَاءِ فَتَأْتِيَهُمْ بِآيَةٍ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

believers shall be helped in this world and in the Hereafter, as He said, elsewhere (37: 171):

وَلَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا الْمُرْسَلِينَ (١٧١) إِيْتَهُمْ هُمْ الْمَنْصُورُونَ (١٧٢) وَإِنَّ جُنَدَنَا لَهُمُ الْعَالِيُونَ [الصفات : ١٧١ - ١٧٣]

"Surely, Our Word has preceded for Our slave-Messengers that it is they who shall triumph and that it is Our forces that will overcome" (Zamakhshari, Qurtubi).

Allah also said (58: 21):

كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْلَيْنَ أَنَا وَرُسُلِي [المجادلة : ٢١]
"Allah has written it (as a law), 'Surely, I and My Messengers shall overcome.' Verily, Allah is

Powerful, Mighty" (Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir).

55. An implied meaning is that the Prophet was so covetous of their belief that if he could dig a tunnel in the earth or build a ladder to the heavens and bring them a sign, he would have done it (Zamakhshari).

56. I.e., Do not grieve over them much, O Prophet, and destroy your health, for these are bent upon their own destruction (Razi, Qurtubi).

57. The translation is based on the explanation of `Ali b. `Isa as in Razi.

58. As a body without soul soon begins to rot, stink and decompose, de-

[36] *Those who listen, respond positively.*⁵⁷ *As for the (spiritually) dead,*⁵⁸ *Allah will resurrect them and then to Him they shall be returned.*

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ وَالْمَوْتَى يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

[37] *They ask, 'Why has no sign been sent down to him from his Lord?' Say, 'Surely, Allah is able to send down a (compelling) sign,*⁵⁹ *but most of them do not know.*⁶⁰

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَادِرٌ عَلَى أَنْ يُنْزِلَ آيَةً وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

serving to be buried as soon as possible, so too a soul without higher feelings begins to stink. The spiritually dead is physically dead too (Razi).

Mawdudi comments: “*Those who hear*’ refers to those whose consciences are alive, who have not atrophied their intellect and reason, and who have not closed their hearts to the truth out of irrational prejudice and mental inflexibility. In contrast to such people are those who are characterized as ‘dead’ who blindly follow the old familiar beaten tracks, and can never deviate from the ways they have inherited, even when these ways are plainly at variance with the Truth.

59. But, if He does not send down a sign, it is out of mercy, since, if, after the appearance of a clear sign, they continue in their denial, they would be destroyed following the words of Allah (17: 59):

وَمَا مَنَعَنَا أَنْ نُرْسِلَ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا أَنْ كَذَّبَ بِهَا الْأُولُونَ

وَأْتَيْنَا ثَمُودَ النَّاقَةَ مُبْصِرَةً فَظَلَمُوا بِهَا وَمَا نُرْسِلُ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا تَخْوِيفًا [الإسراء : ٥٩]

“*And nothing prevented Us from sending the signs save that the people of old rejected them. We gave (the people of) Thamud the she camel (as a sign). But they acted wrongly with her. And We do not send a sign but as a warning (of impending destruction)*” Ibn Kathir.

Majid quotes from the Gospels: “Cf., the NT: ‘A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it but the sign of the prophet Jonas’ (Mt. 16: 4). ‘And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily, I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation. And he left them (Mk. 8: 11)’”.

60. Mawdudi has placed the following note on two verses earlier, but it is equally applicable to this verse: “Had it been required that all peo-

[38] And, there is not an animal in the earth nor a bird that wings its flight,⁶¹ but they are communities like yourselves.⁶² We have omitted nothing from the Book.⁶³ Then, to their Lord they shall be mustered.⁶⁴

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ
بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَّمٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ مَا قَرَّطْنَا فِي
الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ

﴿ ٣٨ ﴾

ple should be driven to the Truth, there would have been no need to send Prophets, ... The result could have been achieved by a single sign of God's creative will. God however did not want things to happen that way. He preferred the Truth to be set before people with its supporting arguments so that by a proper exercise of their rational Judgment, they should recognize it for what it was and thereafter freely choose to embrace it as their faith. By molding their lives in conformity with this Truth such people who believe in it should demonstrate their moral superiority over the devotees of falsehood. They should continually attract men of sound morals by the force of their arguments, by the loftiness of their ideals, by the excellence of their principles and by the purity of their lives. They should thus reach their goal – the establishment of the hegemony of the true faith – by the natural and gradual escalation of strife against falsehood... God has created man as a responsible being,

bestowed upon him a degree of power which he may exercise, granted him the freedom to choose between obedience and disobedience to God, awarded him a certain length of life in order to demonstrate his worth, and determined that at an appointed hour He will judge him for either reward or punishment in the light of his deeds.”

61. The definitive words “*birds that wing their flight*”, instead of the simple (those that wing their flight), exclude the angels as communities (Razi).

Imām Razi also asks about the animals in the sea, as to why they have been excluded and then answers that they can be lumped together with either those on land or in the air, as they either crawl in water (as animals on land) or swim in it as the birds swim in the air.

62. Animals as Communities

Abu Hurayrah has said that the different species you see – beasts, insects, birds or others – are all communities

which will be raised on the Day of Judgment and justice rendered between them. (Hakim has declared the narration *Sahih: Manar*). And Abu Dharr narrates:

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ - رضي الله عنه - قَالَ "رَأَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - شَاتَيْنِ تَتَمَطَّحَانِ فَقَالَ : يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ ، هَلْ تَدْرِي فِيْمَ تَتَمَطَّحَانِ ؟ " قُلْتُ : لَا ، قَالَ : " لَكَرَّ اللَّهُ يَدْرِي ، وَسَيُفْضِي بَيْنَهُمَا "

"The Prophet saw two goats locked in combat. The Prophet asked: 'Do you know what they are quarrelling over?' I said, 'No.' He said, 'But Allah knows and He will render justice between them'" (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Although the chain of narrators of the above *hadith* is weak, there is another *Sahih hadith* which confirms the rendering of justice between animals on the Day of Judgment (Syed Ibrahim).

The above *hadith* is also *Musnad* of Ahmad (Ibn Kathir). Muslim and Tirmidhi have reports of roughly the same meaning (*Manar*).

In another *hadith* the Prophet said:

لَوْلَا أَنَّ الْكِلَابَ أُمَّةٌ مِنَ الْأُمَّمِ أَكْرَهُ أَنْ أُفْنِيَهَا لَأَمَرْتُ بِقَتْلِهَا

"If the dogs had not been one of the communities (*Ummah min*

al umam), I would have ordered them killed."

It is also reported of the Prophet that he said:

مَنْ قَتَلَ عُصْفُورًا عَبَثًا ، عَجَّ إِلَى اللَّهِ ، عَزَّ وَجَلَّ ، يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْهُ يَقُولُ : يَا رَبِّ ، إِنَّ فُلَانًا قَتَلَنِي عَبَثًا ، وَمَا يَنْفَعُنِي لِمَنْفَعَةٍ

"Whoever killed a bird without a good cause would have the bird raising its voice unto Allah on the Day of Judgment, 'My Lord. So and so killed me for no cause, killing me for no benefit'" (Razi).

Rashid Rida adds: The gathering together of the communities of animals is strengthened by the verse which says (81: 5):

وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ [التكوير : ٥]

"When the wild animals will be gathered together."

Communication between Animals

Alusi states the opinion of the *Sufiya* that the animals communicate with each other. (Therefore, they could be sent prophets of their own). Al Sha'rani has put forth several proofs such as the Prophet's words about his camel at the time of his arrival at Madinah: "Leave her alone, for she is under command," or, the talk of the ant that Sulayman overheard, or the

organization of certain animals into communities, which they could not do without being able to communicate with each other.

To the above this writer would like to add the following.

First and foremost, animals are not as dumb as they appear. It is not only the dolphin that we have in mind. Other animals too suggest the presence of intelligence in them. Intuition explains only the daily repertoire. But several behavioral attitudes go unexplained. For instance, once when two men were trying to trap an eagle in a forest, and it managed to escape from the net, it came back, first to pluck off the eyes of one of them, and then a second time to pluck off the eyes of the other. Obviously, if the eagle was not knowledgeable enough to know that humans have a similar organ as its own eyes, and that, without it they would never be able to trap it again in a net, it would not have come straight for the eyes. Or, to give another example, a troupe of monkeys kidnapped a young girl working in a farm in Africa, and gang raped her. They could not have done that without having the ability to judge the sex of well clothed humans. Even if they had seen naked children, how

could they be sure of a girl's sex? An attack of similar nature on a maid by a male monkey was reported in the Gulf. The above well reported cases, demonstrate that the animals know much more than what is presumed about them.

As for communication between them, there are sufficient grounds to believe that the animals communicate between themselves employing fairly well developed means of communications, bordering on the presence of a language. Certain termites for instance build nests up to 4 meter high, 2.5 meter wide 1 meter thick. The design of thousands of rooms, with arched entrances, in the upper, perhaps hundredth floor, matches with the design and location of the rooms in the first floor although the workers in both areas work independently. The whole structure in fact reveals a single mind behind its design. The nest might be dome shaped or conical, some even have chimneys. The interior has longitudinal and horizontal chambers. The outer walls are constructed from hard soil material, whereas the walls of the inner chambers - where the Nurseries are located - are built from softer material. The long axis of the nest is always directed north south and the broad side faces east west. The

orientation perhaps helps in ventilation. The building activity involves tens of thousands of workers, and it is hard to attribute their various, but well synchronized activities to their intuition alone, though it might be playing its part.

Or, to take the example of birds, they migrate in flocks. Some of them fly in a V formation, so that, when one of the birds falls behind, it catches up and joins one of the wings to maintain the symmetrical formation, although the flight takes place at night. Some kind of communication must be involved.

Indeed, it has been envisaged that the birds have different dialects. An article on "Animal Behavior" in the Macgraw Hill *Encyclopedia of Science and Technology* states: "One interesting aspect of birdsong is the occurrence of dialectal differences (regional variations) among population of a single species living in different areas. Several such changes that are known to occur between adjacent population of the South America rufous collared sparrow (*Zonotrichia capensis*) correlate with relatively major habitat changes. Very few dialectal changes occur over an enormous range of the Argentine papas, but in this case the habitat of the species also changes

little. The habitat changes markedly in the Andes Mountains over short distances, however, as elevation rapidly increases, and, concurrently, many more dialectal changes occur there in birds' songs."

Some zoologists have noticed that certain primates sing together. For example, Siamang couples (a gibbon with habitats in the rain forests of Southeast Asia) repeatedly sing loud, long and well coordinated duets. Singing in duets obviously presumes prior communication.

A recent incident reported widely from Cameroon suggests the existence of not only communication but also consultation among the animals. It is reported that a local hunter of a village captured alive a young gorilla. The following night, a pack of 60 gorillas invaded the village looking for the missing infant. Shortly before midnight, the gorillas entered the village in a single file, ignoring gunshots fired by villagers to scare them away. But, unable to locate the baby-gorilla, they retired. The next night they came back, and this time they angrily beat on the doors and windows of the dwellings. Faced with the determination of the gorillas to recover the captive youngster, the village chief ordered the hunter

to release his prey. Immediately, as the report says, "the assailants returned to the forest with shouts of joy, savoring their victory." It should be obvious that this kind of action by a pack of 60 gorillas would not have been possible without a joint plan of action preceded by consultations. The Qur'an has reported Sulayman as saying (27: 16): "*We have been taught the language of the birds.*" It also states that he understood the talk of the ant about which the latest researches record chattering in clear tones.

Finally, recent miniaturized microphone-recordings have been able to record the 'talk' of the ants. See *Surah Naml*, note 25 for details (Au.).

Abu Salman Khattabi has reported Sufyan b. 'Uyaynah as having said: "There is none among the human-kind but someone who has a counterpart among the animals. There is someone among them who attacks like a tiger; another who runs like a wolf; a third barks like a dog; a fourth dances like a peacock. Then there is someone who resembles a swine: place before him the best of dishes and he turns away, but goes after a man's vomit. There are some among them who will hear 50 lines of wisdom but will not retain one of them.

But show him one bad example, and he will remember it and re-enact it in every assembly." After reporting Sufyan, Khattabi advised: "Brother, you should know that around you are animals. Be on your guard then" (Razi, Qurtubi).

63. By the Book, the reference is to the Tablet preserved in *Bayt al Ma'mur* (Au.).

"*We have omitted nothing from the Book*": that is to say, in other words, Allah knows of every creation, whether it is in the land or in water. He arranges for their sustenance and their other needs, and He will gather them together. As He said (11: 6):

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ
مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا كُلٌّ فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ [هود : ٦]

"*And there is not a crawling animal in the land but upon Allah is its sustenance. He knows its permanent or temporary place of habitat. Everything is in the Transparent Book*" (Ibn Kathir and others).

Thanwi adds: It was not necessary to pen down everything since, Allah's knowledge being Eternal, everything was in His knowledge. He did that in order to impress on His creations that everything is well organized and that the system is perfectly designed to the tiniest detail.

64. After reporting that in view of the verse (35: 24): “*And there has been a community but it had a warner,*” and, in view of the *hadith* about the horned goat and the un-horned goat, as well as various other supporting evidences, Alusi mentions that the *Sufiyya* hold the belief that every animal community has had messengers sent to them, and that they are liable to questioning in the Hereafter. Alusi then expresses his own opinion to the effect that he would neither deny such an opinion (as Ibn al Munir has done, who wrongly attributed it to the corrupt skeptics), nor ratify it.

Animal Communities

Whether warners were sent to the community of animals or not, at least some of them do seem to lead a community life. Under the entry “Insects”, the Macgraw Hill *Encyclopedia of Science and Technology* has the following to state about honeybees: “The degree of social organization in a Hymenoptera colony is most evident in the division of labor. In honeybee colonies the division of labor is achieved in an especially interesting manner. Tasks are assigned according to age. The first day after the bee’s emergence as an adult, the first tasks of the female worker are to carry out wastes, to clean the cells,

and to line them with a disinfectant secretion preparatory to deposition of the egg. About three days later, this young bee advances to brood Nursing i.e., she provides the older larvae with honey and pollen. On the sixth day she also Nurses the young larvae with specific larval food from pharyngeal glands. After about ten days more the bee becomes active in building, secreting wax and using it to make the comb. Soon afterward, she makes her first orientation flight outside the hive. About the twentieth day she begins serving as an entrance guard; finally she becomes a collector bee, remaining at this job until her death.”

The colony (or community, if we wish to use that term) is headed by a queen. Her primary function is to lay eggs. She also decides the number of male and female bees her nest will have. All unfertilized eggs result in males. Fertilization occurs during the egg laying process. If the queen relaxes a ring around the sperm duct (where sperms are stored from mating), allowing the duct to open and the sperm to drop down, fertilization occurs. Such fertilized eggs hatch out females. It is the female bees which gather honey and attend to house keeping. They can be categorized

as soldiers, outside workers, inside workers and nest builders. In contrast, the male drone lives a shorter life, just long enough to mate. Mating is his only function.

When the queen gets old and sterile, she is replaced by a younger one. And when the colony becomes too big, a young queen may march off with half of the worker bees. The swarm finds a new nesting place and builds new combs. To make the task easier, all the departing workers are provided with a measure of honey as the parting gift.

To take the termites: the termite society is also a highly organized and integrated unit with division of labor among its members differentiated by structure, function, and behavior into castes. Although at the time of hatching all the eggs are genetically alike, the young ones grow into definite castes. The major castes are the reproductive caste, the soldier and worker castes. The soldier and the worker castes are sterile. The soldier castes work on defence, one of their function is to stick their shell like heads against the entrance of the nests, in turns, in order prevent the entry of any unwanted guest. On the other hand, the worker castes attends to nest building, house keep-

ing, Nursing, etc.

Organization is also easily noticeable in many other animals. For instance the society of baboons is a pretty well organized one. Their troops live and move in an organized manner. When they move, the central position is taken up by the females carrying their infants with the young ones frolicking around. The senior males of the hierarchy also stay there closely guarding the females and controlling the sub adult males who stay at the periphery. Those at the periphery keep a tight look on predators and any impending danger, only snatching bits and pieces of food whenever they can. Spotting a danger, they issue warning calls. When the central hierarchy gets too old, it is replaced from the brash young males of the periphery. Some other functions are performed in turns.

In fact, some animals cross the boundaries of class and species to live in a kind of cosmopolitan society. It has been noticed for instance that huge spaces in the forests are completely devoid of any kind of animal. And then one suddenly comes across several herds or flocks of animals. Mixed flocks of antelopes, zebra, and other wild beasts seem to be living and moving together. The same

[39] Those who cry lies to Our signs are deaf and dumb⁶⁵ in darkneses.⁶⁶ Whomsoever Allah wills, He leads him away, and whomsoever He wills, He sets him on a straight path.⁶⁷

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا صُمٌّ وَبُكْمٌ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ مَن يَشَاءِ اللَّهُ يُضِلِّهُ وَمَن يَشَاءُ يَجْعَلْهُ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

[40] Say, 'Have you considered, if Allah's chastisement comes upon you, or the Hour (of death) comes to you, will you appeal to other than Allah, if you are true?'

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِن آتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَتَتْكُمُ السَّاعَةُ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَدْعُونَ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

has been noticed of several species of birds. When an animal dangerous to all is spotted, a bird or a baboon will issue a warning call, putting everyone, be they on the ground, or up in the trees, on the guard, scurrying to shelters and refuges.

These facts surely are a manifestation of the truth expressed in words: "They ask, 'Why has no sign been sent down to him from his Lord?' Tell (them), 'Surely, Allah is able to send down a (compelling) sign,' but most of them do know. And, (if they are looking for a sign) there is not an animal in the earth nor a bird that wings its flight, but they are communities like yourselves. We have omitted nothing from the Book" (Au.).

65. In view of the fact that whoever is deaf by birth is also dumb, two points may be made note of. First, the Qur'an has always mentioned deafness and dumbness together.

Second, it has always mentioned deafness first and dumbness later. It was not the Prophet who knew that deafness leads to dumbness, but Allah (Au.).

66. The unbelievers are in several kinds of darkneses: disbelief, ignorance, prejudice, blind following of their predecessors, and of course, the real, tangible darkness of the hereafter (Alusi).

67. Explaining why people remain unguided, Mawdudi writes: "We notice that a great many people pass inattentively over the countless signs of God that are scattered all over the world, and ignore even those signs which are manifest in human beings as well as in animals. It is little wonder, then, that they derive no lesson from all these signs. There are many who study zoology, botany, biology, geology, astronomy, physiology, anatomy and other branches of med-

[41] Rather, it is to Him you will appeal, and He will remove if He will that which made you resort to the appeal; and, (at that moment), you forget (those) you associate (with Him).⁶⁸

بَلْ إِلَيْهِ تَدْعُونَ فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ
إِنْ شَاءَ وَتَنْسَوْنَ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

ical science. Others study history, archaeology and sociology. During the course of such studies they come across signs of God which, if they cared to look at them in the correct perspective, might fill their hearts with faith. But since they comment their study with a bias, and are actuated only by the desire to acquire earthly advantages, they fail to discover the signs which could lead them to the Truth.”

68. Mawdudi also writes: “When either some great calamity befalls a man or when death starkly stares him in the face, it is only to God that he turns for refuge. On such occasions even the staunchest polytheists forget their false gods and cry out to the One True God, and even the most rabid atheists stretch their hands in prayer to Him. This phenomenon is mentioned here in order to draw an instructive lesson. It shows that devotion to God and monotheism are ingrained in the human soul. No matter how overlaid this truth might be, some day it shakes off man’s heedlessness and ignorance and manifests

itself fully. It was the observation of this sign which had led `Ikrimah, the son of Abu Jahl, to the true faith. For when Makkah was conquered at the hands of the Prophet (peace be on him), `Ikrimah fled to Jeddah and sailed from there towards Abyssinia. During the voyage the boat ran into severe storm which threatened to capsize it. At first people began calling on their gods and goddesses. Later on, when the storm grew even worse and the passengers were sure that the boat would sink, they began to feel that it was time to call on God alone, for He alone could save them. This opened the eyes of `Ikrimah, whose heart cried out to him that if there was no effective helper for them in that situation, how could there be one elsewhere? He also recalled that this was precisely what the Prophet (peace be on him) had constantly told the people and that it was precisely because of this preaching that they had been engaged in unnecessary violent conflict with him. This was a turning point in `Ikrimah’s life. He instantly made up his mind that

[42] We sent (messengers) before you to other nations. We seized them with misery and adversity,⁶⁹ that haply they might soften.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ
بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَضَرَّعُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

[43] If only they would soften when Our chastisement descended upon them! But, their hearts hardened. And Satan decked out fair to them the things they were doing.

فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِن
قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

[44] However, when they had clean forgotten what they were reminded of, We opened unto them the gates of every thing⁷⁰ until, when they were mighty pleased with what they were given, We seized them suddenly and they slipped into a quiet despair.

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ
أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا
أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْسُوتُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

if he survived the storm he would go straight to the Prophet Muhammad (peace on him) and place his hand in his.”

69. “The *ba’sa*’ of the text has special reference to poverty, while *darra*’ to sickness” (Majid).

Sa`id b. Jubayr has said that oppressive rulers and high inflation are some of the forms that *ba’sa*’ and *darra*’ can take (Shawkani).

70. The sending of ease and comfort after hardships were of the same nature as that of a kind father who both punishes his son as well as softens up at other times, hoping that the son will amend himself (Razi). As Allah said at another place (7: 94, 95):

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّبِيٍّ إِلَّا أَخَذْنَا أَهْلَهَا بِالْبَأْسَاءِ
وَالضَّرَّاءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَضَّرَّعُونَ (٩٤) ثُمَّ بَدَّلْنَا مَكَانَ السَّيِّئَةِ
الْحَسَنَةَ حَتَّىٰ عَفَوْا وَقَالُوا قَدْ مَسَّ آبَاءَنَا الضَّرَّاءُ
وَالسَّرَّاءُ فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ [الأعراف
: ٩٤ ، ٩٥]

“We did not send a Prophet to a town but We seized them with afflictions and adversity in the hope that they will soften up. Then We altered the evil with good, until they multiplied (in wealth and progeny) and said, ‘Surely, our forefathers had also experienced (both) misery and ease (and so there is nothing extraordinary about it).’ Then We seized them suddenly while they were unaware” (Ibn Jarir).

This grant of ease and comfort to an

[45] Uprooted thus were the last remnants of those who transgressed. And (it was said), 'All praise to Allah, the Lord of the worlds'.⁷¹

فَقُطِّعَ دَائِرُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

unbelieving or corrupt people, by way of test, is known as *istidraj* (Au.).

The Prophet has said in a *hadith* of Ahmad:

إِذَا رَأَيْتَ اللَّهَ يُعْطِي الْعَبْدَ مَا يُحِبُّ وَهُوَ مُقِيمٌ عَلَى مَعَاصِيهِ، فَإِنَّمَا ذَلِكَ لَهُ مِنْهُ اسْتِدْرَاجٌ

“When you see one of Allah’s slave being given what he loves, while he continues with his sins, then be sure it is *istidraj*.”

Then he recited this verse,

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ

“When they had clean forgotten what they were reminded of, We opened up for them the doors of every (good) thing until, when they were rejoicing in what they were given, We suddenly seized them and they were left in a quiet despair.”

In another *hadith* of Ahmad and Ibn abi Hatim he said:

إن الله [تبارك وتعالى] إذا أراد الله بقوم بقاء - أو: ناء - رزقهم القصد والعفاف، وإذا أراد الله بقوم اقتطاعاً فتح لهم - أو فتح عليهم - باب خيانة

“When Allah wishes to prolong the term of a people, or grant them progress and prosperity, He bestows upon them (the gifts of) thrift and self satisfaction. But when He intends to uproot a people He opens up for them the door of dishonesty” (Ibn Kathir).

The status of the *hadith* could not be traced (Au.).

وقال الحسن البصري: من وسع الله عليه فلم ير أنه يمكر به، فلا رأي له

And Hasan al-Busri has said. “He unto whom Allah opens up affluence but did not see that he is being duped, is not a man of opinion” (Ibn Kathir).

Thanwi adds: The rule enacted by the above verse is equally applicable to sinning Muslims.

71. All praise to Allah for having cleansed the earth (Alusi).

72. Shah `Abdul Qadir has said: A sinner should not delay his repentance. The sight and the hearing he possesses could be lost and, eventually, he might lose the ability to re-

[46] Say, 'Have you considered, were Allah to seize your hearing and sight and set a seal upon your hearts, what god there is other than Allah who can restore them to you?'⁷² See then, how We turn about Our signs, yet they keep turning away.

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ سَمْعَكُمْ وَأَبْصَارَكُمْ وَخَتَمَ عَلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ مَنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِهِ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ هُمْ يَصْدِفُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

[47] Say, 'Have you considered, were Allah's chastisement to descend on you, unawares or openly, will anyone perish but the transgressing folk?'

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَنَاكُمْ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ بَعْتَهُ أَوْ جَهْرَةً هَلْ يُهْلِكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

[48] And We send not the Messengers except as bearers of glad tidings and as warners. Therefore, whosoever believed and reformed himself - they shall have nothing to fear nor shall they grieve.

وَمَا تُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ فَمَنْ آمَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

[49] As for those who cried lies to Our signs, they shall be touched by the chastisement for the evils they were committing.

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَمَسُّهُمُ الْعَذَابُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

[50] Tell (them), 'I do not say, "I possess the treasures of Allah;" nor do I know the Unseen; nor do I say to you, "I am an angel."⁷³ I only follow what is revealed to me.'⁷⁴ Say, 'Are equal the blind and the seeing?'⁷⁵ Will you not reflect?'⁷⁶

قُلْ لَأَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ إِنْ أَتَّبَعِ إِلَّا مَا يُوْحَىٰ إِلَيَّ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ أَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

pent (Shabbir).

73. Broadly speaking, the pagans made three demands on the Prophet: (i) He ease their lives by bringing them treasures of the world, (ii) He foretell them all that was to happen, in order that they could avoid evil and seek the good, and, (iii) He explain to them how he could, as a

mortal (in need of food and drink), be chosen for messengership instead of an angel? Allah responded with this verse. Further, the verse also makes clear that although the Prophet was given "some" knowledge pertaining to the realm of the Unseen, he did not have the knowledge of "all the Unseen" ('ilm al ghayb). It is only Allah who is All knowledgeable

[51] And warn therewith people who fear that they might be brought forth before their Lord (on a Day when) they will have no friend or intercessor besides Allah haply they will (learn to) be godfearing.⁷⁷

وَأَنْذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْ يُخَشَرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ
لَيْسَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

(Shafi').

In the words of Asad: "The denial on the part of the Prophet of any claim to supernatural powers refers, primarily, to the demand of the unbelievers (mentioned in verse 37) that he should prove his prophetic mission by causing a "miraculous sign" to be bestowed on him. Beyond this specific reference, however, the above passage is meant to prevent any deification of the Prophet and to make it clear that he like all other prophets before him was but a mortal human being, a servant whom God had chosen to convey His message to mankind."

74. It does not mean that Prophets depend on revelation alone for every little detail of the Law. Rather, they exercise their own Judgment as well as employ analogy to work out details (Qurtubi).

75. Asad writes: "Can those who

remain blind and deaf to God's messages find their way through life equally well as those who have achieved a spiritual vision and guidance through God's revelation?"

76. Mawdudi writes: "Feeble minded people have always entertained the foolish misconception that the more godly a man is, the more liberated he should be from the limitations of human nature."

77. According to Zajjaj, all those who believe in the Hereafter have been addressed in this verse. So that, adds Qurtubi, when warned by the Qur'an, a Muslim might reform himself and a non Muslim embrace the truth.

78. Ibn 'Abbas, Sa'id ibn Musayyib, Mujahid, Hasan and Qatadah have said that it is the obligatory Prayers that have been alluded to by the words 'call upon their Lord morning and evening' (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir,

[52] And spurn not away those who call upon their Lord morning and evening⁷⁸ seeking His Countenance. Nothing of their account falls upon you,⁷⁹ nor any of your account falls upon them⁸⁰ that you should spurn them and become of the transgressors.⁸¹

وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

Shawkani).

79. That is, you have to take them, O Muhammad, on their face value, and need not seek to know the motives of their faith, of which, all the outward signs speak of good intentions. And, conversely, that should be the outlook of your followers vis a vis yourself (Thanwi).

80. Was it not enough to say 'nothing of their account falls upon you,' instead of adding 'nor any of your account falls upon them?' The answer is, two sentences have been combined to give the sense of one and that one sentence is: "No soul shall bear the burden of another" (Zamakhshari).

81. In primary terms *zulm* is defined as "placement of a thing in an inappropriate place," or, "in a place not belonging to it." The extended meanings of *zalim*, therefore, are: wrong doer, transgressor, unjust, tyrannous etc. which are adopted as first meaning because of want of equivalent of

the original meaning. Accordingly, and since, (as pointed out by Thanwi), none of these epithets can be true of the Prophet in any given situation, the primary meaning has to be kept in mind while passing over the translation (Au.).

Ibn Jarir reports Khabbab b. al Art as saying: Aqra' b. Habis al Tamimi and `Uyaynah b. Hisn al Fizari came to the Prophet (*saws*) while he was in the company of Bilal, Suhayb, `Ammar, Khabbab and other Muslims of the weaker section of the society. The Qurayshi leaders belittled them and remarked that they did not mind sitting in his company but he was all the time surrounded by these lowly ones. They did not want the visiting Arab dignitaries to spot them in such company. So, was the Prophet ready to dismiss them when they came to him? After they had left he had freedom to choose his company. The Prophet agreed. They wanted that in writing. He agreed to that also and sent for `Ali to write down the

agreement while the humble ones sat apart. But Allah revealed this verse in disapproval. The Prophet threw away the parchment and beckoned them to himself. He brought them so close that his knees were touching theirs. After the revelation of this verse, the Companions report that ‘We sat with him until he left us. But, subsequently, when Allah revealed the verse 28 of *Surah al Kahf*:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ
وَالْعَشِيِّ [الكهف : ٢٨]

“And restrain yourself with those who call upon their Lord morning and evening,” he would not leave us the humble and poor ones, until we knew it was time for him to go and so we left his company. It was then that he rose up and went.’ (This report is in Ibn Majah also: Qurtubi). Similar reports of the Quraysh’s disapproval of the humble Muslims have come from various other narrators, such as Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Qatadah, Kalbi, Mujahid and others, naming others in place of Aqra` and `Uyaynah. `Ikrimah’s report says that it was `Umar who had advised the Prophet to allot some of his time to the pagan chieftains in order to asses what was up in their sleeves (Au.).

Ibn Kathir expresses reservation about the report of Khabbab. (So

does Rashid Rida who says that Aqra` and `Uyaynah were both unimportant men: Au). But similar reports, or bits and pieces of it, are in Ahmad, Ibn Abi Hatim, Abu al Sheikh, Ibn Marduwayh and others that strengthen it. In fact Muslim, Nasa’i, Ibn Majah have Sa`d b. Abi Waqqas as saying that the verse came down concerning six of the humble Companions of the Prophet (Shawkani).

Ibn Jarir also records, as does Ibn Kathir and others, that the Quraysh had sent a delegation to Abu Talib to convey their message to the Prophet to meet them separately, without Bilal, `Ammar and others of their kind around. In fact, it was on that occasion that `Umar (who had full confidence in the humble Muslims in question: Shafi`) had suggested that their request be met in order to know what was up. Moreover, it might be recalled at this point that it was a common practice of the Companions that when a certain verse fitted exactly a certain incident, that might have actually taken place earlier or later, they still cited it as the context of revelation since they knew better than anyone else what the verse was talking about. This particular verse, as well as verse 65 below could

[53] In this manner We have tested some by the others, that they should say, 'Are these the ones amongst us whom Allah has favored?'⁸² Is not Allah well aware of the thankful?⁸³

وَكَذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لِّيَقُولُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِن بَيْنِنَا أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

belong to the same category. As for the doubt that the whole of *Surah al An`am* was revealed at once, firstly, there are opinions that a few verses were revealed at Madinah; secondly, the possibility of a repeat revelation of the verses in question cannot be ruled out (Au.).

Qurtubi adds that the Companions in question were of such status, that once when Suhayb, Salman, Bilal and other were sitting together in Madinah, Abu Sufyan happened to pass by them in the company of Abu Bakr. As a leader of the Quraysh, Abu Sufyan was trying to broker peace. As the two passed by Suhayb and others, one of them remarked, 'Hasn't a sword of Allah taken its share of this man's head?' meaning Abu Sufyan. Abu Bakr was upset. 'Do you say that about a leader of the Quraysh?' he asked furiously. He reported the incident to the Prophet. But the Prophet remarked, 'Maybe, Abu Bakr, you have angered them. If you have, then you have angered Allah.' When he heard that, Abu Bakr went back to them and plead-

ed, 'Brothers, have I angered you?' They replied, 'No brother. May Allah show you mercy.'

Qurtubi also writes: The report is in Muslim and tells us something about the kind of behavior required of a Muslim toward the godfearing, and avoidance of that which might hurt their feelings.

82. That is, Allah (*swt*) made some people rich and some poor. When the poor ones among them embraced the faith, the richer ones asked derisively, 'Are these the one's favored by God?' (Ibn `Abbas: Ibn Jarir).

Asad notes: "As mentioned by Zamakhshari, the expression *min baynina* is here equivalent to *min doonina*, which, in this context, may suitably be rendered as "in preference of us". This would seem to be an allusion to the sarcastic incredulity with which, as a rule, non Muslims receive the claim of the Muslims that the Qur`an is the final formulation of God's message to man. The "trial" referred to above consists in the unwillingness of people of other faiths

[54] Therefore, when those who believe in Our signs come to you, say (to them), 'Peace be upon you.⁸⁴ Your Lord has prescribed mercy for Himself,⁸⁵ that whosoever committed an evil in ignorance,⁸⁶ but thereafter repented and made amends, then, He is All-forgiving, All-kind.'⁸⁷

وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ سُوءًا بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

to accept this claim as valid, and so to renounce the prejudice against Islam to which their cultural and historical environment has made them, consciously or subconsciously, predisposed.”

83. Is not Allah cognizant of the thanksgiving: of their good deeds and pure intentions, and, consequently, deserving to be guided to the right path? Allah said at another place (29: 69):

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا [العنكبوت : ٦٩]

“Those who strive in Us, We shall guide them unto Our ways.” Accordingly, we have a *hadith* (in Muslim) which says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ

“Allah does not look at your faces and wealth. He looks at your hearts and deeds” (Ibn Kathir).

84. Asad writes: “The peace referred to in the above expression which

occurs many times in the Qur'an and has become the standard form of Muslim greeting has a spiritual connotation comprising the concepts of ethical soundness, security from all that is evil and, therefore, freedom from all moral conflict and disquiet.”

85. Ibn 'Abbas has reported the Prophet:

إذا فرغ الله من القضاء بين الخلق، أخرج كتاباً من تحت العرش، أن رحمتي سبقت غضبي، وأنا أرحم الراحمين، فيقبض قبضة أو قبضتين، فيخرج من النار خلقاً لم يعملوا خيراً، مكتوب بين أعينهم عتقاء الله

“When Allah would have finished judging mankind, He would bring out a writing from under the *Arsh* saying, ‘My mercy overtakes My anger, and I am the Most Merciful of the merciful.’ Then He will scoop out with His Hands once or twice to remove from the Fire a (great many) people who had never done a good deed (in their lives). They will have written on their foreheads: ‘Allah’s own freed (people)’” (Ibn

[55] Thus we explain the verses, that the way of the sinners becomes manifest.⁸⁸

وَكَذَلِكَ نَفْصِلُ الْآيَاتِ وَلِتَسْتَبِينَ سَبِيلُ
الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

[56] Say, 'I am forbidden that I worship those you invoke apart from Allah.' Say, 'I follow not your base desires; in that event I would lose the way and would not be of the rightly guided.'

قُلْ إِنِّي مَنعِي أَنْ أَعْبُدَ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ
دُونِ اللَّهِ قُلْ لَأَتَّبِعَ أَهْوَاءَكُمْ قَدْ ضَلَلْتُ
إِذَا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

Kathir).

Abu Khalda has reported: Whenever we entered upon Abu al `Aliyyah, he recited this verse: "And when those who believe in Our signs come to you, say (to them), 'Peace be upon you. Your Lord has prescribed mercy for Himself' (Ibn Jarir).

86. With reference to the word "jahalah" of the text, `Ikrimah has said that (it is not lack of knowledge that is meant, rather), the sin itself, since committing a sin is a (kind or state of) "jahalah" until the man will give up. Thus, he further explained, every sinner is a "jahil" (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Qurtubi adds: It is said that everyone who prefers the life of this world over the next is a "jahil."

Thus, Shafi` adds, a learned man may also commit a sin, and that will be an act of jahalah on his part. Nevertheless, he can always get that forgiven if he will meet with two conditions:

(1) Repent sincerely, which includes a firm resolve not to repeat, and (2) make amends, which includes restoring people's rights if they are involved, or offer qada' of Prayers or fasts etc., if they are Allah's rights.

87. Some reports suggest that some people had committed certain sins in the days of ignorance, and, after accepting Islam, enquired the Prophet about those past deeds. In response these verses were revealed (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Qurtubi and others).

88. Sayyid comments: "Thus, it is not simply the making manifest of the ways of the believers that is the objective of the Qur'an. It exposes the ways of the unbelievers too ... as also of the criminals. This was to present the contrast and to draw a dividing line between the two. A firm belief in truth and goodness demands that one has also the knowledge of the untruth and the evil. This unveiling of the two the good and the evil and of the believers and the crimi-

nals had to be part and parcel of Allah's scheme and His revelation. Any doubt in this regard .. any uncertainty about them .. any qualms, would affect the purity of concepts and the stand that the believers should take. They are two pages facing each other, two paths that part from each other and do not meet again at any point.

“Eventually, any Islamic movement has to define and describe the ways of the unbelievers as it has to define and describe the ways of the believers: right in the world of action and not simply in the world of ideologies. This, in order that the believers can recognize other believers around them while they can mark out the criminals too. The two cannot be fraternized .. cannot be ruled by the same rod.

“At the time of the Prophet the division was well marked: none other than the life style of the Prophet had drawn the line between truth and its ways, and falsehood and its ways. Yet we see that Allah took it upon Himself to demarcate the two. That should lead us to think of the importance.

“Nonetheless, the problem that the Islamic movements face today is that of the distinction and separation of the two. There live right among the

true believers those who are from the loins of their believing fore fathers, living in those places that have remained the Dar al Islam through and through the history of Islam, that have always surrendered to Islam as the way of life, who have followed its Law. But, today, there are people who have abandoned Islam for all practical purposes, although verbally they claim to be Muslims and think they are Muslims. But Islam is to believe in Allah as the sole Creator and Nourisher, and, consequently, for the believers to deal with life the whole of their life as dictated by Him. Whoever did not believe in Allah in this comprehensive sense, did not believe in Him at all: whatever his name or identity. Consequently, in whichever land Allah's *Shari'ah* is not established and His Laws not imposed, it is not the land of Islam.

“This then is the great reality, the great hardship that the Islamic movements face: the lack of distinction of this from that. The anti Islamic forces within the Muslim body politic know this and understand the consequences of it: to their advantage. They prefer the doubt to prevail, the grey area to expand, so that, anyone who speaks a word about the distinction is held by his throat. Their crime? Their crime is that they

[57] Say, 'I am on clear evidence from my Lord, while you have denied it. I do not have that which you wish to be hastened.⁸⁹ The decision is only for Allah. He declares the truth, and He is the best of deciders.'

قُلْ إِنِّي عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّي وَكَذَّبْتُمْ بِهِ مَا عِنْدِي مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِهِ إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ يَفْصِلُ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْفَاصِلِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

[58] Say, 'Had I (in my power) what you ask to be hastened,⁹⁰ the affair between me and you would have been settled;⁹¹ and Allah has better knowledge of the transgressors.'

قُلْ لَوْ أَنِّي عِنْدِي مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ بِهِ لَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

called Muslims apostates by their act of confirming this as black or that as white and not everything as grey when, according to the rulers it should have been left to the masses, those very people of loose concepts, to judge by their own criteria.

“Yet, there is no choice for the movement workers but to demarcate the lines, distinguish between this and that, whatever the price, not fearing anyone in this but Allah, unmindful of the consequences. It has to be made clear as to who is on the path, and who it is that is blocking it.”

89. “This alludes to God’s punishment. The adversaries questioned why it was that they had openly rejected a Prophet sent by God, but had not been struck down by God’s wrath. They said that the fact of his appointment by God meant that anyone who either disbelieved or insulted him would, at once, be either

plunged into the earth or struck by lightning. And yet, they pointed out, the Messenger of God and his followers faced new sufferings and humiliations whereas those who abused and persecuted him enjoyed prosperity” (Mawdudi).

90. The pagans were so sure of the Prophet not being a Messenger that they challenged the god who had sent him to destroy them, as the Qur’an quoted them elsewhere (8: 32):

وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوْ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ [الأَنْفَال : ٣٢]

“When they (the pagans) said, ‘O Lord. If this be the truth from You then rain down upon us stones from above or bring us a painful chastisement” (Au.).

91. That is because, it was intolerable to the Prophet that people should reject his beloved true Lord, Allah

[59] With Him are the keys⁹² to the Unseen.⁹³ No one knows them except He. He knows what is in the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but He knows it, not a grain (is there) in the dark (crevices) of the earth,⁹⁴ nor a fresh thing or withered, but it is (recorded) in a Clear Book.⁹⁵

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِيحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ
وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ
وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظِلْمَاتِ
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ
مُّبِينٍ ﴿٥٩﴾

(Razi).

Ibn Kathir writes: This verse does not contradict the report which says that after the visit to Tayif and rejection by its inhabitants when Jibril asked the Prophet whether he would prefer that he crush them between two large mountains, the Prophet replied that he did not want any such thing, hoping that their offspring would embrace Islam, if not they. This particular verse says that the Prophet would have punished them, if he had power, whereas, when the chance arose he did not utilize it. But, there is no contradiction. This verse is speaking of those who were demanding that a punishment be brought down, whereas the Taiyfiens did not make any such demand.

Further, at Tayif the Prophet was in a conciliatory mood, whereas, when the Makkans made several demands for punishment, at various times during the course of a decade, he could have been in different moods, and

could as well have punished them, if it was in his power (Au.).

92. Some grammarians have said (Shafi`) that if *mafaatih* is treated as the plural of *miftah* then it means “keys,” whereas, if it is understood as plural of *maftah*, then it means “treasures.” Some scholars have, however, read the text as “*mafaateeh*” (as the plural of *miftaah*), then it is definitely “keys” (Zamakhshari). However read, the great majority have understood the word here as “keys,” a meaning that has its support in a *hadith* of Bukhari that follows presently (Au.).

93. A report of Bukhari says that,

مَفَاتِيحُ الْغَيْبِ خَمْسٌ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَا
تَعْيِضُ الْأَرْحَامُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي عَدِي إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَتَى يَأْتِي الْمَطَرُ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَا تَدْرِي
نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَتَى تَقُومُ
السَّاعَةُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

“The keys to the Unseen are five that nobody knows but Allah: No one knows what the wombs

throw out but Allah. No one knows what is going to happen tomorrow but Allah. No one knows when it will rain except Allah. A man does not know in what land he will die but Allah, and, no one knows when the Hour will strike, except Allah.”

‘A’isha has said: “Whoever thought that Muhammad knew what was to happen the next day, slandered against Allah.”

And, Ibn Majah and Abu Hatim in his *Sahih* have a report coming from the Prophet saying:

إِنَّ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَفَاتِيحَ لِلْخَيْرِ مَعَالِيْقَ لِلشَّرِّ وَإِنَّ مِنَ
النَّاسِ مَفَاتِيحَ لِلشَّرِّ مَعَالِيْقَ لِلْخَيْرِ فَطُوبَى لِمَنْ جَعَلَ
اللَّهُ مَفَاتِيحَ الْخَيْرِ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ وَوَيْلٌ لِمَنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ
مَفَاتِيحَ الشَّرِّ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ

“Among the people there are some who are a key to good and a lock to evil. In contrast, there are some who are a key to evil and a lock to good. So, good news to him in whose hands Allah placed the keys to good, and woe unto him in whose hands He placed the keys to evil” (Qurtubi).

Qurtubi also writes: So far as predicting rain from physical, natural signs is concerned, that is permissible. A doctor commits no sin when he predicts that if a pregnant wom-

an’s right breast is a little heavier and somewhat dark, it will be a male fetus, and, conversely, if the left breast is a little heavier and somewhat dark then it will be a female fetus, or if a woman finds the right side of her womb a bit heavier, then the child is female. So also, if a person can determine the date of the sun or moon eclipses and make predictions to that effect, then that is also allowed, since, Allah has said (36: 39): “*And the moon: We have appointed its stations.*” Yet, those who predict eclipses ought to be reigned in because by doing so they expose the people to dangers of faith (since, ignorant of science, they think of those who can predict eclipses as men with special powers: Au). They ought to keep the knowledge to themselves and not make them public. (Thus, predictions of scientific nature are not prohibited, but preferably they should be addressed to those learned in sciences: Au).

It is a prophecy that has been totally disapproved by Islam. The Prophet has said in a *hadith* of Muslim:

مَنْ أَتَى عَرَّافًا فَسَأَلَهُ عَنْ شَيْءٍ لَمْ تُقْبَلْ لَهُ صَلَاةٌ
أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً

“Whoever went to a fortune teller will have his forty days of prayers rejected.”

As for some of their predictions coming true, a *hadith* of Bukhari explains:

إِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَنْزِلُ فِي الْعَنَانِ وَهُوَ السَّحَابُ فَتَذَكُرُ
الْأَمْرَ فُضِي فِي السَّمَاءِ فَتَسْتَرْقُ الشَّيَاطِينُ السَّمْعَ
فَتَسْمَعُهُ فُتُوجِيهِ إِلَى الْكُفَّانِ فَيَكْذِبُونَ مَعَهَا مِائَةً
كَذِبَةٍ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ

“The angels descend down to the clouds. They talk to themselves of the decisions made in the heavens. Satans pick up a few words from them, then, in turn, pass them on to the fortune tellers on earth who mix a hundred lies to one piece of truth (and forecast events).”

Further, Alusi writes, the knowledge of the Unseen is not limited to the five items mentioned in the *hadith*. Rather, there is no end to them. But, perhaps (Rashid Rida), they were specially mentioned because people kept enquiring about them.

Nevertheless, as Rashid Rida has pointed out, the five keys to the Unseen as spoken of in the *hadith* of Bukhari, which is in support of a Qur'anic verse (31: 34) could have symbolic connotations. For example, the first, the knowledge of what will happen tomorrow, is symbolic of the events of the future, the knowledge of what the wombs throw out is that of the beginning of life, the knowl-

edge of the rains is that of the physical laws (of the world of vegetation: Rashid Rida), the knowledge of the hour of death is that of the end of life on this planet and, finally, the knowledge of the Hour is symbolic of the Hereafter. Thus, all that can be designated as “the Unseen” is covered by the *hadith* (Au.).

94. It is said that the eagle's eye is so powerful that it can sight a squirrel from a thousand meters above in the sky. How can anyone then doubt the Power of Sight of Him Who gives sight? (Au.)

95. That is, there is not a thing in existence, or yet to come into existence but it is recorded in the *Lawh al Mah-fuz*, exactly qualified and quantified including the time at which it will come into existence and the time at which it will be destroyed (Ibn Jarir).

The commitment to writing has not been because of the fear that Allah will forget. Rather, it is for the angels (who do the execution). Besides, the statement has been brought in here to impress on the people that if every minor detail that is otherwise considered inconsequential has been written down, then what should mankind think of the deeds being recorded upon which depend reward or punishment (Razi, Qurtubi).

[60] It is He who takes away your souls by the night and knows what you do by the day. Then He raises you up therein⁹⁶ so that a pre determined term may be completed. Then, it is to Him that you shall be returned. And then shall He let you know (the truth of) what you were doing.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُمْ بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

The state of a thing falling down, adds Alusi, (is an unnoticed state). But Allah pays attention to it even in that situation of its existence. How much more not caring He is of it in the state of its rest?

96. That is, Allah draws the souls of the people during the night and then raises them up the following day (Au.).

As for the earlier statement in the *ayah*, viz., “It is He who takes away your souls by the night,” Ibn Kathir explains: The word in the original is “*yetawaffakum*” which is normally employed for taking away a thing, and, in reference to man, taking away of the soul causing it to die. In the present context it has been employed in the sense of sending one to sleep as said Allah (with that as one of the several possible meanings:

Au.), in the following verse (3: 55):

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَىٰ ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ اذْعَبْكَ وَإِلَيَّ آتٍ
عمران : ٥٥

“When Allah said, ‘O `Isa I shall send down sleep upon you and raise you to Myself.’”

Or, as He said (39: 42):

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى [الزمر : ٤٢]

“Allah withdraws the soul at the time of its death, and of that which does not die in its sleep. Then He holds back that whose death has been decreed and sends back the others to an appointed term.”

97. Majid quotes: “*Qahir* as an epithet applied to God means, ‘The Subduer of His creations by His sovereign authority and power, and the Dispenser of them as He pleaseth,

[61] He is the Irresistible,⁹⁷ Supreme over His slaves⁹⁸ and appoints over you (angels as) guardians,⁹⁹ till, when death comes upon one of you, Our messengers¹⁰⁰ take away his soul and they fail not.¹⁰¹

وَهُوَ الْفَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفِظَةً حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمْ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

with and against their will.’ Or the ‘Overcomer, or Subduer of all created beings’ (LL).”

One of the clearest manifestations of Allah’s Irresistible power is man himself. He is composed of a body which is earthly in origin: base, dark and stinking, and a soul which is: noble, subtle, radiant and pure. It is Allah’s irresistibility which forces them to combine and dwell together (Razi).

98. The “*fawqa*” of the text has to be understood in the sense of one above in honor and esteem. It should not be taken in the directional sense (Razi, Qurtubi).

99. Suddi, Qatadah and others have said that “*hafazah*” of the text are the guardian angels who guard man from various natural calamities as well as record all that he does (Ibn Jarir).

A single *hadith* is available on the subject. It is in the *Sahihayn* and other collections. It says:

الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَتَعَابُونَ مَلَائِكَةَ اللَّيْلِ وَمَلَائِكَةَ النَّهَارِ وَيَجْتَمِعُونَ فِي صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَصَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ

إِلَيْهِ الَّذِينَ بَاتُوا فِيكُمْ فَيَسْأَلُهُمْ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ فَيَقُولُ كَيْفَ تَرَكْتُمْ عِبَادِي فَيَقُولُونَ تَرَكْنَاهُمْ يُصَلُّونَ وَأَتَيْنَاهُمْ يُصَلُّونَ

“Angels of the night follow on the heels of the angels of day and meet each other at the *Fajr* and *Asr* Prayer times. Then those who spent the night with you ascend to the heavens. Their Lord inquires, although He knows better than them, ‘In what condition did you leave My slaves?’ They answer, ‘When we went to them they were Praying, and when we left them they were Praying’” (Manar).

Without substantiating his statement, Qurtubi says that the angels are four in number: two for the day, two for the night. One of them writes down the evil deeds and the other virtuous ones. When a man walks, one of them places himself at the front, another at the rear. When seated, they place themselves on the left and right, as Allah said (50: 17): “*Sitting on the right and left.*” Some

have said that they are five. Four as described above, and a fifth one, who never parts company.

Alusi discusses the nature of what the angels write: whether only what is outwardly visible to them of the acts, or, also the state of the heart? He speculates that, perhaps, they jot down everything but have no knowledge of intentions. Reports tell us that on the Day of Judgment Allah will accept some deeds and order the angels to drop the rest. The angels would assert that they wrote nothing but what the man did (and therefore, some of the deeds could not be dropped). Thereat Allah will say that He is aware of what deeds were carried out to please Him and what hypocritically. As for that *hadith* which says, ‘When a man intends a good deed, a good deed is written down (in his records, even if the person does not commit it),’ probably, by “*kutibat*” (i.e., written down), what is meant is “decreed.”

Alusi also states that when a believer commits an evil deed, the angel who records good deeds, restrains the one who records evil deeds saying, “Give him some time (before you record it). Maybe he will repent.”

100. According to Ibn `Abbas, Ibrahim, Qatadah and many others, the

allusion by the “*rusuluna*” of the text is to the angel of death and his aides (Ibn Jarir).

Qurtubi writes: It is said that the angel of death is accompanied by seven angels of mercy and seven angels of chastisement. If the person happens to be a virtuous one, the angel of death withdraws the soul and hands it over to the angels of mercy. But, if he happens to be an evil person, then he hands the soul over to the angels of punishment. The two groups dispose the soul suitably: into *`Illiyyun* or *Sijjin*.

101. The “*la yufarritun*” of the original has been interpreted as “they do not lose” by Ibn `Abbas and Suddi (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir and others). Zamakhshari has said that a literal meaning would imply neither delaying of the proceedings nor committing excesses.

The rendering in the translation sums up the variant meanings and has been adopted by us for the sake of flow (Au.).

Ibn Kathir adds: Angels take good care of the soul, detaining it, after its withdrawal from a person, at a place deserving of it: either in the *`Illiyyun*, if it happens to be a purified one, or in the *Sijjin*, if it happens to be a wicked one.

[62] Then they are restored to Allah, their true Protector. Lo! The Judgment is His¹⁰² and He is the swiftest of reckoners.

ثُمَّ رُدُّوْا۟ اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَوْلَاَهُمُ الْحَقُّ اِلَّا لَهٗ الْحُكْمُ
وَهُوَ اَسْرَعُ الْحٰسِبِيْنَ ﴿٦٢﴾

[63] Say, 'Who delivers you from the dark-nesses of the land and sea?¹⁰³ (when) you in-voke Him humbly and secretly, 'Truly, if You deliver us from this, we shall be of the thank-ful.'

قُلْ مَنْ يَنْجِيْكُمْ مِّنْ ظُلُمٰتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ
تَدْعُوْهُ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً لَّئِنْ اُنْجَاْنَا مِنْ هٰذِهِ
لَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِيْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾

[64] Say, 'Allah delivers you from it and from every distress, yet you assign Him associates.'

قُلِ اللّٰهُ يَنْجِيْكُمْ مِّنْهَا وَمِنْ كُلِّ كَرْبٍ ثُمَّ
اَنْتُمْ تُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾

See ch. 83, notes 7, 8 and 11 of this work for further explanation.

102. Majid writes: "This is specially to combat the Christian doctrine representing Christ as Judge. 'The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father and with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. (Mt. 16: 37). 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; And he shall set the sheep on his right hand but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father.' (25: 31 34) 'That there will be a General Judg-

ment is an article of faith. The Judge will be Christ.' (CD p. 523) 'In the Gospels, while the Father is spoken of as Judge, Christ's influence at the Judgment is also spoken of and more generally He Himself is Judge, and exercises this function on all men.' (ERE. V. p. 35)

103. There can be several kinds of darkneses: the real, such as the darkness of the night, the figurative, such as that of ignorance of the way, or of hardships and dangers (Razi, *Manar*).

104. Besides the commonly understood meaning, Ibn 'Abbas has said that the punishment from 'above' is that of tyrannous rulers and from 'below' (dishonest) employees of a person (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani and others). And Rashid Rida won-

[65] Say, 'He has the power to send upon you a calamity from above you, or from below your feet,¹⁰⁴ or confound¹⁰⁵ you into (hostile) groups and make you taste the violence of one another.'¹⁰⁶ Behold, how We set forth the Signs in diverse forms, haply they will understand.

قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ أَوْ يَلْبَسَكُمْ شِيعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُم بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

[66] Yet your people have cried lies to this while it is the Truth. Tell (them), 'I am not a guard over you.

وَكَذَّبَ بِهِ قَوْمُكَ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ قُلْ لَسْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِوَكِيلٍ ﴿٦٦﴾

ders why bombs from above and land mines from below should not be included?!

105. "Labisa" of the original is for confusion, or a mix up. But Suddi has interpreted it in Tabari as causing division (Au.).

106. Although the verse is Makkan, and the first application is to the Makkan pagans who denied the truth, the last part of the verse is also applicable to the Muslim *Ummah*. Consequently, the commentators have quoted those reports here of the Madinan period with Bukhari's *hadith* as the forerunner.

عن جابر بن عبد الله رضي الله عنهما يقول لما نزل على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم {قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ} قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِوَجْهِكَ {أَوْ مِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ} قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِوَجْهِكَ فَلَمَّا نَزَلَتْ {أَوْ يَلْبَسَكُمْ شِيعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُم بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ} قَالَ هَاتَانِ أَهْوَنُ أَوْ أَيْسَرُ

Jabir b. `Abdullah said: "When the verse: Say, 'He has power to send upon you a calamity from above you,' was revealed, the Prophet remarked, 'I seek protection by Your Face (O Allah).' Then when it said, 'Or from below your feet,' he remarked 'I seek protection by Your Face.' Eventually, when the following passage came down, 'Or divide you up into (hostile) groups and make you taste the violence of one another,' the Prophet (*sams*) said, "This is milder or easier"" (Ibn Jarir, Shawkani).

Ibn Kathir adds: Bukhari has placed this *hadith* under various chapters. On the same subject, Muslim has the following *hadith* narrated by Sa'd ibn abi Waqqas who reports his father:

أَقْبَلْنَا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّىٰ مَرَرْنَا

عَلَى مَسْجِدِ بَنِي مُعَاوِيَةَ فَدَخَلَ فَصَلَّى رَكْعَتَيْنِ وَصَلَّيْنَا
مَعَهُ وَنَاجَى رَبَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ طَوِيلًا قَالَ سَأَلْتُ رَبِّي عَزَّ
وَجَلَّ ثَلَاثًا سَأَلْتُهُ أَنْ لَا يُهْلِكَ أُمَّتِي بِالْعَرَقِ فَأَعْطَانِيهَا
وَسَأَلْتُهُ أَنْ لَا يُهْلِكَ أُمَّتِي بِالسِّنَةِ فَأَعْطَانِيهَا وَسَأَلْتُهُ
أَنْ لَا يَجْعَلَ بَأْسَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ فَمَنْعَنِيهَا

“Once, we went out with the Prophet. When we passed by the mosque of Banu Mu`awiyah, he went in and offered two *rak`ah* of Prayers, with us behind him. After that he supplicated to his Lord for a long hour and then said, ‘I asked my Lord for three things. Two of them He granted, but the third He would not. I asked that my *Ummah* be not destroyed by floods. I was granted. Then I asked that my *Ummah* be not destroyed by famine. That was granted. Then I asked that my *Ummah* be not divided into (hostile) groups (cutting each other down), but that was not granted.”

Musnad Ahmad, Ibn Majah, Nasa’i, Tirmidhi, and many other compilers have *ahadith* to this effect. In fact one of them, in Ahmad, and of a good chain of narrators, adds that once the swords are unsheathed between groups of this *Ummah*, it will not be withdrawn until the Day of Judgment. In some narrations the Prophet added: “I fear none for my

Ummah as much as misguided leaders.”

Yet another report of Ahmad runs as follows:

عَنْ أَبِي بَصْرَةَ الْعِفَارِيِّ ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ ، قَالَ : ” سَأَلْتُ رَبِّي أَرْبَعًا ، فَأَعْطَانِي ثَلَاثًا ،
وَمَنْعَنِي وَاحِدَةً ، سَأَلْتُهُ أَنْ لَا يُجْمَعَ أُمَّتِي عَلَى ضَلَالَةٍ
فَأَعْطَانِيهَا ، وَسَأَلْتُهُ أَنْ لَا يُهْلِكَهُمْ بِالسَّبَبِ كَمَا
أَهْلَكَ الْأُمَمَ قَبْلَهُمْ فَأَعْطَانِيهَا ، وَسَأَلْتُهُ أَنْ لَا يُظْهَرَ
عَلَيْهِمْ عَدُوًّا مِنْ غَيْرِهِمْ فَأَعْطَانِيهَا ، وَسَأَلْتُهُ أَنْ لَا
يَلْبَسَهُمْ شَيْعًا وَلَا يُدْبِقَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ فَمَنْعَنِيهَا
” . (مسند أحمد بن حنبل - ن ٣٩٦ / ٦) - تعليق
شعيب الأرنؤوط : صحيح لغيره وهذا إسناد ضعيف
لإبهام الراوي عن أبي بصرة)

Abu Basrah al-Ghifari reported the Prophet as having said, “I asked my Lord for four. He granted me three and refused me one. I asked Him that my *Ummah* should not agree upon an error. He granted it to me. I asked Him that my *Ummah* should not be destroyed by starvation as He destroyed the nations before me. He granted it to me. I asked Him that an enemy apart from them should not overcome them. He granted it to me. And I asked Him that some of them should not taste the attacks of others, but He refused it to me” (Ibn Kathir).

107. Suddi has said that the “appointed hour” was in reference to the

[67] Every prophecy has an appointed hour,¹⁰⁷ and you shall soon know.'

لِكُلِّ نَبَأٍ مُّسْتَقَرٌّ وَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

[68] And, when you come across those who indulge in Our revelations,¹⁰⁸ shun them until they are engaged in other talk¹⁰⁹ Yet, should Satan make you forget,¹¹⁰ sit not after the recollection with the transgressing people.¹¹¹

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِي آيَاتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ وَإِمَّا يُنسِيَنَّكَ الشَّيْطَانُ فَلَا تَتَعَدَّ بَعْدَ الذِّكْرِى مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

chastisement of the Quraysh which manifested at Badr. But, of course, the term is open and so the appointed hour can appear in this world or, it might appear in the Hereafter (Ibn Jarir).

108. The phrase *yakhuduna fi ayatina* means, 'those who enter into false, or vain discourse or speech, respecting Our sign(s)' - Majid.

109. It is reported of `Umar ibn `Abdul `Aziz that he whipped a fasting man found in the assembly of a people drinking wine. He cited this verse: "Do not sit with them until they are engaged in other talks" (Shawkani).

110. Although, apparently, the verse addresses the believers through the Prophet, the commentators discuss all the same whether forgetfulness was possible on the part of the Prophet. Alusi states the opinion of some that the Prophet could forget, but only in worldly matters, or such

of those things as had no *Shari`ah* implication. Nawawi is among them. The majority, however, believes that he could forget such affairs as involving the message he was required to communicate, but Allah would remind him sooner or later, so that the possibility of him declaring a valid rule as invalid and vice versa was ruled out. In fact, there is consensus of opinion that in *Shar`i* affairs, it was impossible for the Prophet to commit an error out of forgetfulness, or out of error of judgment. That indeed, applied to all Messengers and Prophets, who were specially protected by Allah.

The above discussion is, however, entirely hypothetical. It is common experience that a doctor, who, after all, is just anybody who has completed a course of study, does not prescribe, either due to forgetfulness, or out of error, cough syrup for pain in joints, or an aspirin for skin infection. How

[69] Upon those who are godfearing, there is no accountability of others;¹¹² but a reminder (is essential). Haply they will fear.

وَمَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَلَكِنْ ذِكْرِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

then is it expected that a Prophet, even if not protected from on High, would prescribe wrong *Shari`ah* rules for whatever fanciful reason that sounds good for an academic discussion? (Au.)

111. Abu Bakr Ibn al `Arabi (not Muhiyyuddin ibn al-Arabi) has said that this verse makes the company of the major sinners (*ahl al kaba'ir*) impermissible. Khuwayzmandad has said that the implication is that the company of those who dispute with the Qur`an, whether believers or non believers, should be avoided. Others have included the innovators (*ahl al bid`ah*) in the list of those whose company should be shunned. Indeed, it is said that once an innovator sought the attention of Abu `Imran al Nakha`i saying, 'Listen just one word.' Abu `Imran replied, 'Not even half a word.' Fudayl b.

`Iyad has said: 'Whoever approved of an innovator will have his other good deeds declared null and void. The light of Islam will depart from his heart. Whoever married off his daughter to an innovator, severed his ties with her. Whoever sat in the company of an innovator in religion will be denied wisdom' (Qurtubi).

112. That is, if the pagans continue to indulge in Allah's signs or make fun of His revelation, then, the god-fearing have no sin upon them on their account (Suddi: Ibn Jarir).

113. Qatadah has said that this order was abrogated by the verses of *jihad* (Ibn Jarir).

114. The phrase "*ittakhadhu ... lahwan*" can be understood in either of two ways: (1) "they have made their religion [an object of] play and fun", or (2) "they have made play and

[70] Leave alone¹¹³ those who treat their religion as a sport and pastime,¹¹⁴ and whom the life of this world has deluded.¹¹⁵ Yet, admonish (them) with this (message) lest a soul be held up¹¹⁶ on account of what it has earned, with no one besides Allah as its protector or intercessor. Were it (then) to ransom all that can be ransomed, it would not be accepted of it. Those are the ones to be held up for what they earned. For them is a draught of boiling water¹¹⁷ and a painful chastisement, because they were consistently denying.

وَدَّرَ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَعِبًا وَهَوًّا وَعَرَّتَهُمْ
الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَذَكَّرَ بِهِ أَنْ تُبَسَّلَ نَفْسٌ بِمَا
كَسَبَتْ لَيْسَ لَهَا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا
شَفِيعٌ وَإِنْ تَعْدِلْ كُلُّ عَدْلٍ لَأَيُّؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا
أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ أُبْسِلُوا بِمَا كَسَبُوا هُمْ شَرَابٌ
مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ وَعَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ
﴿٧٠﴾

fun [or “passing delights”] their religion” i.e., the main goal of their lives. To my mind, the latter reading is definitely preferable inasmuch as it brings out the fact that many of those who are “beguiled by the life of this world” devote themselves to the pursuit of what the Qur’an describes as “passing delights” including the pleasures which money and power can provide with something akin to religious fervor: an attitude of mind which causes them to lose sight of all spiritual and moral values” (Asad).

115. Yusuf Ali comments: “(In ch.) vi, (verse) 32, ... we are told that the life of this world is mere play and amusement, and Religion and the Hereafter are the serious things that require our attention. Worldly people reverse this, because they are deceived by the allurements of this

life.”

116. The word “*ubsilu*” has different connotations, such as, to be held up, arrested, humiliated, rewarded, be forbidden, or consigned to perdition (Au.).

117. Asad writes: “Among the various meanings attributed to the word *hamim* are the concepts of intense heat as well as of painful cold (Qamus, *Taj al 'Arus*).”

118. Rashid Rida points out that the phrase in the text *Nuraddu 'ala a'qabina*, is always used by the Arabs for a situation in which one has to take a step backwards in retreat, indicating a failure of undertaking. In view of that connotation it would imply here retreating from a better position to a lower one: from monotheism to idol worship.

[71] Say, 'Shall we call on others besides Allah that which can neither benefit us nor harm us, and be turned back on our heels after Allah has guided us aright?¹¹⁸ like him whom the Satans lured to wandering in the earth in bewilderment? (Though) He has companions calling him to guidance: "Come to us."' Say, 'Verily, Allah's guidance is the guidance. We have been ordered to submit ourselves to the Lord of the worlds.'

قُلْ أَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا وَتُرْثُ عَلَيَّ أَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ كَالَّذِي اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ فِي الْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ لَهُ أَصْحَابٌ يَدْعُونَهُ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ ائْتِنَا قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ وَأْمُرْنَا لِنُسَلِّمَ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

[72] And that, 'Establish the Prayer, and fear Him (alone).' It is to Him that you shall be mustered.

وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَهُوَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

[73] It is He who created the heavens and the earth in truth.¹¹⁹ The Day He says (to the Hour), 'Be,' lo, it will be. His Word is the True (word).¹²⁰ His (alone) shall be the dominion¹²¹ the day the Trumpet is blown:¹²² Knower of the invisible and the visible.¹²³ And He is the Wise, the Well acquainted.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ كُن فَيَكُونُ قَوْلُهُ الْحَقُّ وَلَهُ الْمُلْكُ يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴿٧٣﴾

119. Mawdudi comments: "It has been asserted again and again in the Qur'an that God created the heaven and earth 'in truth.' This covers a wide range of meanings:

"First, that the heaven and the earth have not been created just for the fun of it. This existence is not a theatrical play. This world is not a child's toy with which to amuse oneself as long as one wishes before crushing it to bits and throwing it away. Creation is rather an act of great seriousness.

A great objectivity motivates it, and a wise purpose underlies it...

"Second, it means that God has created this entire system of the universe on solid foundations of truth. The whole of the universe is based on justice, wisdom and truth. Hence, there is no scope in the system for falsehood to take root and prosper. The phenomenon of the prosperity of falsehood which we observe, is to be ascribed to the will of God, Who grants the followers of falsehood

the opportunity, if they so wish, to expend their efforts in promoting unrighteousness, injustice and untruth. In the end, however, the earth will throw up all the seeds of untruth that have been sown, and in the final reckoning every follower of falsehood will see that the efforts he devoted to cultivating and watering this pernicious tree have all gone to waste (Abridged).

120. Majid has a beautiful point: "i.e., whatever He utters must and shall be accomplished in fact. *Al Huqq* here is not 'the truth.' It expresses the idea of the overpowering efficacy of His word."

121. This does not mean that the present dominion is not His. The purpose of this statement is rather to stress that when the veil which conceals certain truths in this phase of existence will be removed and Truth becomes fully manifest, it will be then quite clear that all those who seemed or were considered to possess power and authority were utterly powerless, and that the true dominion belongs to the One True God who brought the universe into existence (Au.).

122. The allusion here is to the second of the two mighty blows of the Sur (Razi). The first will destroy all life and the present world order.

The second will herald a new phase, a new order, and when every being that ever lived will come to life again. Mankind will be assembled on earth which will be rendered flat, reckoning will be conducted and judgment pronounced (Au.).

The Prophet said:

إن إسرأفیل قد التقم الصور، وحنى جبهته ينتظر متى يؤمر فينفخ

"Israfil has the *Sur* to his mouth and with his head bent forward awaits the order to blow" (Ibn Jarir).

The Prophet has given us some other details. In a *hadith* (preserved by Bukhari) he said:

مَا بَيْنَ النَّفْحَتَيْنِ أَرْبَعُونَ قَالَ أَرْبَعُونَ يَوْمًا قَالَ أَيْبُتُ قَالَ أَرْبَعُونَ شَهْرًا قَالَ أَيْبُتُ قَالَ أَرْبَعُونَ سَنَةً قَالَ أَيْبُتُ قَالَ ثُمَّ يُنَزِّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَيَنْبُتُونَ كَمَا يَنْبُتُ الْبَقْلُ لَيْسَ مِنَ الْإِنْسَانِ شَيْءٌ إِلَّا يَبْلَى إِلَّا عَظْمًا وَاجِدًا وَهُوَ عَجَبُ الدُّنْيِ وَمِنْهُ يَرْكَبُ الْخَلْقُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

"Between the two blows (of the *Sur*) there will be a gap of forty." They (the narrator Abu Hurayrah), "Will it be forty days?" He replied, "I do not say that." They asked, "Forty months?" He said, "I do not say that." They asked, "Forty years?" He replied, "I do not say that either." Then

he said, "Allah will then send down water from the heavens and they will start sprouting out like plants. There is nothing from the body of a man that remains (uneaten by the earth) but a single bone. It is the tail bone. It is from this that mankind will be resurrected."

At this point Ibn Kathir presents a long *hadith* which, as he points out, is made up of several *ahadith* by a not so well trusted narrator. However, and although not every part of it could be checked for authenticity, we present its somewhat abridged translation because of the importance of the subject.

He writes: Hafiz Abul Qasim Tabarani has recorded the following *hadith* in his collection called "*Al-tiwalaat*."

Said the Prophet while amongst a few of his Companions, as reported by Abu Hurayrah: "When Allah was finished with the creation of the heavens and the earth, He created the *Sur* and handed it over to Israfil. He placed it on his mouth, and is looking up at the *'Arsh*, waiting for the command." I (the narrator) asked, "Messenger of Allah, what is this *Sūr*?" He replied, "A trumpet." I asked, "What is it like?" He answered, "Huge. By Him who sent

me with the Truth, its circumference is like the width of the heavens and the earth. He will blow into it three times. The first blast will be the Blast of Dread, the second that of Swoon and the third the Blast which will be the Standing Forth before the Lord of the worlds.

(At some time) Allah will order Israfil to make the first blast. The blast will drive dread into every one of the heavens and earth, except he who Allah wills. He will order him to keep blowing for a long while, without break. This is referred to in the Qur'an (38: 15),

{ وَمَا يَنْظُرُ هَؤُلَاءِ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً مَّا لَهَا مِنْ فَوَاقٍ
[ص: ١٥] }

"These are not waiting but for a single cry, which will brook no delay."

With that Allah will make the mountains move. They will move like clouds, as if a mirage. Then the earth will shake with all its inhabitants to resemble a boat tossed into the sea, hit by stormy waves. It will swing with its inhabitants like a lamp hung by the roof; the winds rocking it. It is about this that it was said (79: 6-8),

{ يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ (٦) تَتْبَعُهَا الرَّادِفَةُ (٧) قُلُوبٌ
يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاجِفَةٌ } [النازعات: ٦ - ٨]

"The day a rattling with rattle

(the world) violently, followed by a second thunderous blast, the day when the hearts will throb (with fear)."

The people will be swinging on its back, the breast-feeders will forget their young ones, the pregnant will abort pregnancy, children will go gray, the devils will fly from fear to the shores until angels appear who will strike on their faces and push them back (to the seas), the people will turn on their heels, none to save them from Allah's command, some of them calling others – that is the Day about which Allah said (40: 32),

{ يَوْمَ النَّادِ { [غافر: ٣٢]

"The Day of calling."

They would be in that state when the earth will split up from end to end. They would be witnessing an affair never witnessed before. That will drive the people into a state of fear the extent of which only Allah knows. As they look up at the heaven, it would be like boiled oil. Then it will split (gain), the stars will fall and its moon and sun will lose their shine. The Prophet added, "The dead will not know about these happenings."

Abu Hurayrah asked, "Who exactly are meant by the exception in the verse (27: 87),

{ فَفَرَعَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ { [النمل: ٨٧]

"In dread will be whoever is in the heavens and in the earth, except whom He wills."

He answered, "Martyrs are the exceptions. It is the living who will be in dread, while the martyrs are alive with Allah, being fed, Allah will save them from the dread of that Day, and accord them peace in its wake. That will be the torment that Allah will send upon the worst of His creatures. He has said (22: 1, 2),

{ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ (١) يَوْمَ تَرُوتُهَا نَدْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَارَىٰ وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكَارَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ { [الحج: ٢٠، ١]

'People, fear your Lord. Surely, the shaking of the Hour will be a great thing. The Day you witness it, every breast-feeding female will forget about its young, and every pregnant will abort what it carries. And you will see the people drunk; but they will not be drunk, rather Allah's torment will be great.'

They will remain in the torment as long as Allah wills, except that it will be long.

Then Allah will order Israfil to blow the Swoon-blow. When he dose that, everyone will pass out except

he whom Allah wills. When all and everyone lies unconscious, and they have gone cold, the angel of death will go to Allah the Overcomer, and plead, 'My Lord. Everyone in the heaven and earth is dead, except he whom You willed.' He will ask, although He knows, 'So who is left?' He will answer, 'Those left are: Yourself, the Living who will never die, the carriers of `Arsh, Jibril, Mika'il and myself.' He will say, 'Let Jibril and Mika'il die.' At that the `Arsh will speak out to say, 'Our Lord! Should Jibril and Mika'il die?' He will answer, 'Quiet. I have written it upon everyone below my `Arsh.' So the two will die. Then the angel of death will go to Allah, the Overcomer and say, 'My Lord! Jibril and Mika'il are dead.' He will ask, 'Who is left?' He will answer, those left are Yourself, the Living who will never die, and the carriers of `Arsh, and myself.' He will say, 'Let the carriers of My `Arsh die.' So they will die. Then Allah will order the `Arsh to take the Trumpet away from Israfil. Then the angel of death will come to Him and say, 'My Lord, the carriers of Your `Arsh are dead.' Allah will ask, although He knows, "So, who is left?" He will answer, 'Left are Yourself - the Living who will never die; and I am left.' He will say, 'You are a

creation from among My creations. I created you for the function that you have witnessed. So, 'Die off.' He will die off. Then none will be left except Allah, the One, the Unique, the Overcomer, who did not give birth to any and was not born, He will be the Last, like He was the First, He will fold the heavens and the earth in the manner of folding the scrolls, hold them in his palms, He will turn them around three times and say, 'I am the King, I am the Overcomer, I am the Overcomer, I am the Overcomer - three times. Then He will speak out in a high note, 'Whose is the Kingdom today?' - three times. No one will answer Him. Then He will say to Himself (40: 16),

{لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ} [غافر: ١٦]

"It is for Allah, the Overcomer."

Allah had said (14: 48),

{يَوْمَ تَبْدُلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ} [إبراهيم: ٤٨]

"The Day the earth will be changed for another earth, the heavens as well."

Then He will spread them, flatten them, and stretch them like the stretching of an `Ukazi skin, so that (20: 107),

{لَا تَرَى فِيهَا عِوَجًا وَلَا أَمْتًا} [طه: ١٠٧]

"You will not see therein any de-

pression or elevation."

Then Allah will shake the creation, a good shaking and there they would be, on the altered earth like they were there before – he who was on the face of the earth will be on the face of the earth while he who was below the surface will be below the surface. After that He will send down water on them from the bottom of the 'Arsh. Thereafter He will order the heavens to rain down water. It will rain for 40 days, until the water will be 12 yards high over them. Then Allah will order the bodies to grow. They will grow like vegetable plants, until when their bodies have completed to become what they were, Allah will say, 'Let the carriers of the 'Arsh come alive.' They will come alive. Thereafter He will order Israfil to take on the Trumpet and put it against his mouth. Then He will order Jibril and Mika'il to come alive. They will come alive. Then Allah will order the spirits to be brought forth. They will be brought out. The spirits of the believers would be shining bright, while the spirits of the unbelievers would be dark. He will take hold of all of them and cast them into the Trumpet. Then He will order Israfil to blow the blow of Resurrection. The spirits will burst forth like they were bees filling the heav-

ens and the earth. Allah will say, 'By my power and glory, let every soul return to its body.' With that the spirits in the earth will enter into the bodies. It will enter through their nostrils flowing through their bodies like poison runs through a bitten man. Then, the Prophet added, 'the earth will be split for you; and I'll be the first for whom the earth will split You will come out hastening to your Lord' (54: 8),

{ مُهْطِعِينَ إِلَى الدَّاعِ يَقُولُ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا يَوْمٌ عَسِيرٌ }
[القمر: ٨]

"Necks outstretched toward the Caller, the unbelievers saying, 'This is a hard day.'

They will be barefoot, naked, uncircumcised and made to stand, a standing that will last 70 years; neither looked at you nor any judgment made between you. You'll cry until the tears exhaust, then you will shed tears of blood and sweat until you are in sweat up to your nostrils or your earlobes, you saying, 'Who will intercede with our Lord for us to start the judgment between us?' You will say, 'Who can be more deserving than your father Adam? Allah created him with His own Hand, blew spirit into Him, and spoke to him directly?'

They will go to Adam and request

him that. But he will refuse and say, 'I am not your man.' So they will go oyer prophets one after another. Every time they go to a prophet, he refuses. The Prophet added, 'Until they come to me.'

I will go up to the front of the *'Arsh* and fall into prostration. I will remain in prostration until an angel will come to me and holding me by my shoulder will lift me up. Allah will say, 'O Muhammad!' I will answer, 'Yes my Lord.' He will ask, although He knows, 'What's with you?' I will answer, 'My Lord! You promised to allow me to intercede with You on behalf of Your creation; so, do start judging between Your creation.' He will reply, 'I accept your intercession. I shall come to judge between you.'

The Prophet said, "So, I will return to my place and while standing among the people, we will hear a huge consternation putting us into great fear; and lo, the inhabitants of the heaven closest to the earth will come down, twice in numbers than the men and Jinn assembled there. When they come closer to the earth, it will be filled with their Light. As they take their position, it will be asked, 'Is your Lord within you?' They will reply, 'Not yet. He is coming.'

Then will come down from the

next heaven angels twice the numbers that came down from the first heaven and twice the earth's men and Jinn. When they come closer to the earth, it will be filled with their Light. As they take their position, it will be asked, 'Is your Lord within you?' They will reply, 'Not yet. He is coming.'

Then will come down, twice as before (from the rest of the heavens, one after another) followed by Allah the great Subduer, the Mighty, the Honored in the shades of clouds; angels bearing His *'Arsh*; they will be eight angels. Their feet will be at the bottom of the last of the earths. The heaven and earth on their sides, the *'Arsh* on their shoulders, and there being heavy (echoing) sound in their hymning, as they say,

سبحان ذي العرش والجبروت، سبحان ذي الملك
والملكوت، سبحان الحي الذي لا يموت، سبحان
الذي يميت الخلائق ولا يموت، سُبُوح قدوس قدوس
قدوس، سبحان ربنا الأعلى، رب الملائكة والروح،
سبحان ربنا الأعلى، الذي يميت الخلائق ولا يموت،

'Glory to the Lord of the *'Arsh*, and to the Predominant, Glory to the Sovereign, the Monarch, Glory to the Living who will never die, Glorious, the All-Pure, the All-pure, the All-pure. Glorious is our Lord the All-high, Lord of the angels and the Spirit, Glori-

ous is our Lord the All-high, He who deals death to the creations, and does not die.

Thereafter Allah will place His Kur-siyy on His earth where He will, and speak out saying, 'O Men and Jinn, I've remained silent from the day I created you until this day; listening to your words, and watching your deeds. Now you pay attention to Me. It is your deeds and your scriptures that will be read upon you. So, whoever finds good, let him thank Allah, but whosoever finds other than that may blame none but himself.'

Following that Allah will order Hell to be brought forth. (When it arrives) a shining neck will emerge from it. It will say (36; 60-64),

{ أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ لِلنَّاسِ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ (٦٠) وَأَنْ اعْبُدُونِي هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ (٦١) وَلَقَدْ أَضَلَّ مِنْكُمْ جِبِلًّا كَثِيرًا أَفَلَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْقِلُونَ (٦٢) هَذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ (٦٣) اصْلَوْهَا الْيَوْمَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ (٦٤) }
[يس: ٦٠ - ٦٥]

Had I not enjoined upon you, O children of Adam, that you should not worship Shaytan, (that) surely he is your open enemy? And that you worship Me (alone)? This is the straight path. He did lead astray a great multitude of you (in the past). Were you not able to think? This is the Jahannum (then), that you were promised.

Roast therein today, for that you were rejecting.'

Allah will divide and separate the people, and the nations will go down on their knees (45: 28):

{ وَتَرَى كُلَّ أُمَّةٍ جَاثِيَةً كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ تُدْعَى إِلَى كِتَابِهَا الْيَوْمَ تُحْزَنُونَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ } [الجاثية: ٢٨]

You will see every nation on its knees. Every nation will be called forth for its account. Today you shall be rewarded for what you were doing.

Allah will begin to judge ignoring men and Jinn and starting with the animals – until He would have rendered justice between a horned and un-horned goat (as to why the earlier horned the latter) – until none will remain with any grudge for another. When that's achieved, He will say, 'Be dust.' It is then that unbeliever will say (78: 40):

{ يَا لَيْسِي كُنْتُ تُرَابًا } [النبأ: ٤٠]

'Oh my, only if I was dust.'

Then it is that Allah will begin to judge between men and jinn, first calling for justice for he who was killed for no just cause, followed by other kinds of wrongs done by one against another." (Shortened)

Ibn Kathir ends the texts by saying that although as a single report it is not of good strength, but as pieces

[74] (Recall) when Ibrahim¹²⁴ said to his father Azar,¹²⁵ 'Do you take idols for gods?¹²⁶ I see you and your folks in a manifest error.'¹²⁷

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ آزَرَ أَتَتَّخِذُ أَصْنَامًا
 آلِهَةً إِنِّي أَرَاكَ وَقَوْمَكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٤﴾

put together, each piece seems to have support in *Sahih* narrations.

123. Asad remarks: "The term *al shahadah* (lit., "that which is [or "can be"] witnessed") is used in this and similar contexts as the exact antithesis of *al ghayb* ("that which is beyond the reach of a created being's perception"). Thus, it circumscribes those aspects of reality which can be sensuously or conceptually grasped by a created being."

124. Ibrahim (*asws*) is often mentioned in this Holy Book because he was equally acceptable to the Jews, Christians, and pagans. All the three communities prided in him (Razi).

Majid writes under p.I, n. 559: "(In the sense of a leader of mankind, Ibrahim) continues to be till this day, being the accepted head of the three great peoples of the world the Muslims, the Christians and the Jews. 'He is not, in the first instance, the progenitor of the people, but the founder and leader of a religious movement. Like Mohammad, some 2,000 years later, he stood at the head of a great movement among

the Semitic peoples and tribes' (EBr. I, p.60)."

125. Majid comments: "'Terah' of the Bible; variously spelt as Zarah and Therach in the Talmud and Athar by Eusebius, 'The chief officer of King Nimrod and a great favorite with his royal master; (Polano, op. cit., p.30). 'The apocryphal books of the Old Testament such as the Book of Jashir, represent Terah to have been a great soldier and commander of the armies of the King of Babylon.' (Marston, *The Bible is True*, p. 180)

Asad adds: "In the Bible, the name of Abraham's father is given not as Azar but as Terah (the Tarah or Tarkh of the early Muslim genealogists). However, he seems to have been known by other names (or designations) as well, all of them obscure as to origin and meaning. Thus, in various Talmudic stories he is called Zarah, while Eusebius Pamphili (the ecclesiastical historian who lived towards the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century of the Christian era) gives his name as Athar. Although neither the Talmud nor Eusebius can be regarded as au-

thorities for the purposes of Qur'an commentary, it is not impossible that the designation Azar (which occurs in the Qur'an only once) is the pre-Islamic, Arabicized form of Athar or Zarah."

126. Majid quotes: 'Idolatry and image worship form a very striking feature of the Babylonian religious system, and already meet us in its advanced stage of development in the earliest cultural period of which material remains have been preserved.' (ERE, VII, p.117) 'Even Therech, who still remained chief officer to the king, became a worshipper of idols. In his house he had twelve large images of wood and stone, a separate god for each month of the year, and to these he prayed and made obeisance (Polano).'

Among the Arabs, writes Alusi somewhere else, idol worship was introduced by 'Amr b. Luhayy.

127. Majid comments: "The Babylonian religion was an admixture of animism, image cult, and nature worship. 'The religion of Babylonia in the earliest form known to us may be defined as a combination of local

cults with animistic conceptions of the power of nature, with which man was either brought into immediate contact, or which affected his aims and his welfare. Each centre had its special patron deity in most cases conceived as masculine who was brought into association with some natural phenomenon. The two powers most commonly chosen were the sun and the moon, and by the side of these we find streams and stones personified as god' (DB. V. p.536)."

128. The textual word is "*malakut*." Imām Razi says that the spirits of the humans do not miss to see the Light of Allah but because of barriers. What are these barriers? They are everything that one engages himself with apart from Allah. Obviously, the greatest of such barriers are the idols. When Ibrahim removed this barrier by devoting himself entirely to Allah and denying the significance of anything else besides Him, he was able to achieve theophany (*Tajalli*). Such Divine manifestation, however, adds Razi, was not with the physical eyes, rather, with the inner vision. It was, in fact, this inner vision, that helped

[75] That is how We showed Ibrahim the kingdom¹²⁸ of the heavens and the earth so that he might be of those who believe firmly.¹²⁹

وَكَذَلِكَ نُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُوقِنِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

Ibrahim to construct the argument that he presented to his people, as recounted in the following verses.

Commenting on the use of the word 'Nuriy,' Razi quotes Imām al Haramayn as commenting: Allah's knowledge is limitless. Indeed, His knowledge of every branch of knowledge has no end. For every substance of His creations can take endless forms. Therefore, the knowledge of His kingdom has no end. Its acquisition, therefore, by any of His creation in one go is out of the question. It has to be obtained in a gradual manner. Accordingly, Allah did not say 'araynahu,' which would mean 'We showed him,' (in the past, and implying an instantaneous showing), rather, He said, 'Nuriy,' (comprising present and future tenses) which has the sense of the act in continuance and, hence, gradualism accompanying it.

129. *Yaqin* is the word in the text. It is that state of certitude of the heart which is obtained when all doubts have been removed with the help of evidences (Razi).

'Abdul Rahman b. 'Ayyash reports:

صلى بنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ذات غداة، فقال له قائل: ما رأيتك أسفر وجهًا منك الغداة! قال: ومالي، وقد تبدى لي ربي في أحسن صورة، فقال: فيم يختصم الملأ الأعلى، يا محمد؟ قلت: أنت أعلم [يا رب]! فوضع يده بين كتفي فوجدت بردًاها بين ثديي، فعلمت ما في السماوات والأرض. ثم تلا هذه الآية: "وكذلك نري إبراهيم ملكوت السماوات والأرض وليكون من الموقنين"

"One day the Prophet did his morning Prayer with us. Someone remarked, 'I have never seen your face as bright as this morning.' He replied, 'Why not! My Lord came to me in the best of forms. He said, "Muhammad! What do you think the angels are arguing among themselves about?' I said, 'You know better.' So He placed His Hands over my shoulders, and I knew all that is in the heavens and the earth.' Then the Prophet recited this verse: "That is how We showed Ibrahim the kingdom of the heavens and the earth so that he might be of those who firmly believe" (Ibn Jarir).

Ibn Kathir reports another version of this report known as *hadith al Ma-*

[76] When night covered him (with darkness) he beheld a star.¹³⁰ He said, 'This is my Lord.' (But) when it set he remarked, 'I do not like those that set?'

فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا قَالَ
هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْآفِلِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

[77] Then, when he saw the moon coming up,¹³¹ he said, 'This is my Lord.'¹³² (But) when it disappeared he said, 'Unless my Lord guides me, I shall surely be of a people unguided.'

فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ بَازِعًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا
أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ
الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

nam as found in Ahmad and Tirmidhi (who rates it *Sahih*). It is narrated by Mu'adh ibn Jabal. This version has the words 'and I felt the coldness of His hands descending down to my breast' added after 'So He placed His Hands over my shoulders.'

130. The Qur'an has used the word *kawkab*, which is applicable both to planets as well as stars. We have translated the word as star following the generally understood meaning of the ancients who did not differentiate between stars and planets, calling the former as fixed stars and the latter as moving stars. But the allusion could be to a planet, either, as Majid has written, "... Jupiter (*Marduk*), the chief god," or, "Venus (*Ishtar*) the chief goddess, of Babylonia." Modern archaeological researches, Majid adds in his Urdu commentary, confirms the opinion of our earliest scholars that of the celestial objects

it were Jupiter and Venus that were worshipped in the ancient times (Au.).

131. Majid quotes: "Temples to the moon god are found in all the large cities of Babylonia and Assyria. (EBr. XX, p. 703). Ur, the Chaldean capital, 'was an ancient seat of lunar worship.' (JE. XII, p. 380). 'The great temple of the Third Dynasty at Ur was dedicated to the Moon Goddess. The temple was the abode of the patron city, and the deity was its appendage: the chief priest as the representative of the deity was the ruler of the city and state' (Gregory, op. cit., p. 13).

132. It is not necessary that the sighting of the star and the moon should have happened on the same night, with the sun sighted on the following morning. Rather, as Alusi has pointed out, the episode could have well run through several nights

[78] Then, as he saw the sun rising he said, 'This is my Lord. This is the largest.'¹³³ (But) when it went down, he cried out, 'My people! I am quit of what you associate (with Allah).'¹³⁴

فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي هَذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

(Thanwi).

133. "In ancient Babylonia the sun was worshipped from innumerical antiquity. The ideogram of the sun, like that of the moon, in the Babylonian language is always preceded by a determinative which implies divinity ... There was no deity of the pantheon whose worship enjoyed an equally continued popularity from the earliest to the latest time both in Babylonia and Assyria" (FWN. I, pp. 529 530) - Majid.

134. Note the words: "I am quit of what 'you' associate, implying that Ibrahim himself never committed that sin (Majidi).

Mawdudi presents the summary of conclusions which Sir Leonard Wooley arrived at as a result of the researches embodied in his work, *Abraham* (London, 1935).

"It is estimated that around 2100 B.C., which is now generally accepted by scholars as the time of the advent of Abraham, the population of the city of Ur was ... maybe five hun-

dred thousand. The city was a large industrial and commercial metropolis. Merchandise was brought to Ur from places as far away as Palmer and Nilgiri in one direction, and in the other it had developed trade relations with Anatolia. The state, of which this city was the capital, extended a little beyond the boundaries of modern Iraq in the north, and exceeded its present borders further to the west. The great majority of the population were traders and craftsmen.... Interest was rampant among them and their devotion to money making seemed all absorbing...

"In the inscription of Ur there are references to about five thousand deities. Each city had its own deity. Each city had a chief deity which it considered its chief protector and, therefore, that deity was considered worthy of greater reverence than all the others. The chief deity of Ur was Nannar (the moon god)... , and it is for this reason that the city later became known as Kamarina (*Qamar* is the Arabic word for moon: Z.I. Ansari). The other major city

was Larsa, which replaced Ur as the capital of the kingdom. Its chief deity was Shamash (the sun-god). Under these deities there were a myriad of minor deities which had generally been chosen from among the heavenly bodies stars and planets. People considered them responsible for granting their innumerable minor prayers. Idols had been carved in the image of these celestial and terrestrial gods and goddesses and were made objects of ritual worship.

“The idol of Nannar had been placed in a magnificent building on the top of the highest hill. Close to it was the temple of Nin Gal, the wife of Nannar. The temple of Nannar resembled a royal palace. Every night a female worshipper went to its bedroom, adorned as a bride. A great number of women had been consecrated in the name of this deity and their position was virtually that of religious prostitutes. The woman who would sacrifice her virginity for the sake of her ‘god’ was held in great esteem. For a woman to give herself to some unrelated person ‘for the sake of god’ was considered as a means to salvation. Needless to say, it was generally the priests who made most use of the institution.

“Nannar was not merely a deity,

but the biggest landlord, the biggest trader, the biggest industrialist and the most powerful ruler. Many orchards, buildings and huge estates had been consecrated to his temple. In addition to this, cereals, milk, gold, cloth, etc., were brought as offerings to the temple by peasants, landlords and merchants, and there was a large staff in the temple to receive the offerings. Many a factory had been established on behalf of the temple. Large scale trading was also carried out on its behalf. All these activities were conducted by the priests in the name of the deity. Moreover, the country’s main court was also located in the temple. The priests functioned as judges and their Judgments were equated with those of God. The authority of the royal family was derived from Nannar. The concept was that Nannar was the true sovereign and that the ruler of the country governed merely on his behalf. Because of this relationship, the king himself was raised to the rank of a deity and was worshipped...”

To the above account, although a bit ingenious, Mawdudi adds his own comments:

“If the conclusions of these archaeological researches are correct, it becomes quite evident that polythe-

[79] I set my face, in pure faith, toward Him *إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ*
 who originated the heavens and the earth. And *وَالْأَرْضِ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ*
 I am not of the associators.¹³⁵ ﴿٧٩﴾

ism did not consist merely of a set of religious beliefs and polytheistic rites, it rather provided the foundation on which the entire order of economic, cultural, political and social life rested. Likewise, the monotheistic mission which was undertaken by Abraham was not merely directed against the practice of idol worship. It had far wider implications, so much so that it affected the position of the royal family both as rulers and deities. It also affected the social, economic and political status and interests of the priestly class, the aristocracy in general, and in fact the entire fabric of the social life of the kingdom. To accept the teachings of Abraham meant that the entire edifice of the existing society be pulled down and raised anew on the basis of belief in One God. Hence, as soon as Abraham launched his mission, ordinary people, as well as the privileged classes, ordinary devotees, as well as Nimrod, rose at once to oppose and suppress it.”

135. The episode tells us that there is no contradiction between a man

entirely devoted to the Hereafter and yet engaging himself in debates and polemics, so long as he does not commit excesses devoting himself entirely to this affair (Thanwi).

Differences in opinion seem to have surfaced early over the nature of the episode enunciated here, whether, it was some loud thinking on the part of Ibrahim trying to figure out who his Lord was, or, was it an inductive method devised to convince the pagans of their folly. Ibn Jarir, following the opinion of Ibn `Abbas, believes that it was some loud thinking. (Rashid Rida is surprised at Ibn Jarir's preference here). But the great majority of commentators have believed, in the words of Yusuf Ali, that “his statements maybe seen as premises of his arguments against Polytheism rather than as stages in his enlightenment.” Ibn Kathir also thinks that it was a novel method in polemics and not an inductive mental exercise to arrive at a logical conclusion. (Abu Hayyan was of the same opinion: Sabuni; and so was Zajaj; Shawkani). Imām Razi pres-

ents some twelve arguments to demonstrate that Ibrahim (*asws*) adopted this method for the sake of argument alone. Of the several possible interpretations, one stated by Razi is that the words, “*this is my Lord*” were derisive. Another possibility is that when he spoke those words he meant to say, “(So) this (according to your opinion) is my Lord (let us see whether it proves to be so).” (It is in the same vein as Allah’s words on the Day of Judgment (16: 27): “*Where are My partners [today]?*”: Majid from *Bahar*). Ibrahim had to take this indirect route because his people were in no mood to listen to any direct criticism. Alusi and Qurtubi are also of the same opinion and agree with the notion generally prevalent among the scholars that the Prophets have never been devotees to false gods at anytime in their lives. What strengthens the opinion that it was only a method contrived to send home the point that natural objects could not be gods, is that when his people began to dispute with him, after he had demonstrated their fallacy, Ibrahim asked them, ‘Do you dispute with me concerning Allah, while He has guided me?’

This means arguments about the nature of the Deity had already taken place earlier to the episode. Further, the section ends with, “That is Our Argument that We bestowed upon Ibrahim against his people. We raise in ranks whom We will. Verily, your Lord is All wise, All knowing.” The conclusion is, Ibrahim was already a Messenger when he presented the argument in a most telling manner. He was not probing into the dark and reflecting over a few celestial objects to figure out if they could be gods (Au.).

136. This was Ibrahim’s response to their threats that if he did not stop disparaging their deities, he would be chastised by those very deities (Ibn Jarir).

137. The word in the text is *zulm*. It was natural that it should alarm the Companions who were always very concerned about the state of their hearts. They went to the Prophet and asked (as in Bukhari’s following report):

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ لَمَّا تَرَكْتَ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ
 {الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ} شَقَّ ذَلِكَ
 عَلَى أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَقَالُوا أَيُّنَا
 لَمْ يَظْلِمِ نَفْسَهُ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

[80] His people disputed with him. He said, 'Do you dispute with me concerning Allah, while He has guided me? I fear not those you associate with Him, unless Allah wills something (evil for me).¹³⁶ My Lord has encompassed everything with His knowledge. Will you not then be admonished?

وَحَاجَّهُ قَوْمُهُ قَالَ أَتُحَاجُّونِي فِي اللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَانِ وَلَا أَخَافُ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ بِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ رَبِّي شَيْئًا وَسِعَ رَبِّي كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

[81] How shall I fear those you associate (with Allah) seeing that you fear not to associate with Allah that for which no evidence has been sent down to you? Therefore, which of the two parties is more deserving of peace? (Answer me that) if you have knowledge?

وَكَيْفَ أَخَافُ مَا أَشْرَكْتُمْ وَلَا تَخَافُونَ أَنَّكُمْ أَشْرَكْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنزلْ بِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا فَأَيُّ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ أَحَقُّ بِالْأَمْنِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

[82] Those who believed and then did not adulterate their belief with transgression,¹³⁷ such, for them is peace. They are the (rightly) guided.¹³⁸

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

لَيْسَ كَمَا تَتَّبُونَ إِنَّمَا هُوَ كَمَا قَالَ لِقَمَانٍ لِأَبْنِهِ { يَا بُيَّيْ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ }

“Which of us does not transgress?” He replied: “It is the sin of association (*shirk*) that is alluded to. Have you not read Allah’s words as spoken by Luqman to his son, ‘Surely, association (*shirk*) is a great transgression?’” (Ibn Jarir). Slightly differently worded, the *hadith* is in Bukhari also (Ibn Kathir).

138. Jarir b. ‘Abdullah reports in a *hadith* preserved by Ahmad:

خَرَجْنَا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَلَمَّا

بَرَزْنَا مِنَ الْمَدِينَةِ إِذَا رَاكِبٌ يُوضِعُ نَحْوَنَا فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَأَنَّ هَذَا الرَّاَكِبَ إِذَا كُنْتُمْ تُرِيدُونَ قَالَ فَأَتَيْتُهُ الرَّجُلُ الْبَيْتَا فَسَلَّمَ فَرَدَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالَ لَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْ أَيِّنَ أَقْبَلْتَ قَالَ مِنْ أَهْلِي وَوَالِدِي وَعَشِيرَتِي قَالَ فَأَيِّنَ تُرِيدُ قَالَ أُرِيدُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ فَقَدْ أَصَبْتَهُ قَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ عَلِمَنِي مَا الْإِيمَانُ قَالَ تَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَتُقِيمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَتُؤْتِي الزَّكَاةَ وَتَصُومُ رَمَضَانَ وَتُحُجُّ الْبَيْتَ قَالَ قَدْ أَقْرَبْتُ قَالَ ثُمَّ إِنَّ بَعِيرَهُ دَخَلَتْ يَدُهُ فِي شَبَكَةِ جُرْذَانَ فَهَوَى بَعِيرَهُ وَهَوَى الرَّجُلُ فَوَقَعَ عَلَى هَامَتِهِ فَمَاتَ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَيَّ بِالرَّجُلِ قَالَ فَوَتِبَ إِلَيْهِ عَمَّارُ بْنُ يَاسِرٍ وَخَدَبْتُهُ فَأَقْعَدَاهُ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قُبِضَ الرَّجُلُ قَالَ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهُمَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَسَلَّمَ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَكُمَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَمَا رَأَيْتُمَا إِعْرَاضِي عَنِ الرَّجُلَيْنِ فَإِنِّي رَأَيْتُ مَلَكَيْنِ

يُدْسَانِ فِي فِيهِ مِنْ ثَمَارِ الْجَنَّةِ فَعَلِمْتُ أَنَّهُ مَاتَ جَائِعًا
 ثُمَّ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ هَذَا وَاللَّهِ
 مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ {الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا
 إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْأَمَنُونَ}

“We left Madinah with the Prophet heading for a campaign. We were not far out of town when we observed someone approaching us. The Prophet said: ‘The rider seems to be intending us.’ When the man came nearer he greeted us. The Prophet asked him: ‘Where are you coming from?’ He replied, ‘I am coming from my family, children and the tribe.’ The Prophet asked him, ‘Where are you going?’ He replied, ‘I am looking for the Prophet.’ The Prophet said, ‘You have found him.’ He asked, ‘Messenger of Allah. What is faith?’ The Prophet replied, ‘It is to believe that there is no deity save Allah, that Muhammad is His Messenger, to establish the Prayer, pay the *zakah*, fast during Ramadan and make pilgrimage to the House.’ He said, ‘I accept that.’ After that it should happen that his camel stepped into a desert rodent hole. In its struggle the beast threw him down and then itself fell upon him. The Prophet

ordered, ‘Get the man out.’ Ammar b. Yasir and Hudhayfah b. al Yaman pulled the man out (from under the camel). They cried out, ‘He is dead, Messenger of Allah.’ The Prophet turned away. After a pause he said, ‘Did you notice that I turned away? That was because I saw angels feeding him with fruits of Paradise. I guessed he died hungry. He is one of those about whom Allah said, “*Those who believed and then did not adulterate their faith with transgression, such, for them is peace*” - Ibn Kathir.

139. The implication is that the raising of ranks was the result of the arguments, or evidences, that Ibrahim was given (Razi).

Asad adds: “The description of Abraham’s reasoning as God’s own argument implies that it was divinely inspired, and is therefore valid for the followers of the Qur’an as well.”

140. Since Lut was not of the seed of Ibrahim, the pronoun in verse 84 can only refer to Nuh (*asws*). That is, Lut was a seed of Nuh Ibn Jarir.

Nonetheless, some scholars believe the allusion by “his seed” is to Ibrahim. Ibn Abi Hatim has reported that once Hajjaj b. Yusuf sent for

[83] That was Our Argument that We bestowed upon Ibrahim against his people. We raise in ranks whom We will.¹³⁹ Verily, your Lord is All wise, All knowing.

وَتِلْكَ حُجَّتُنَا آتَيْنَاهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ
تَرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مِّنْ نَّشَاءٍ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿٨٣﴾

[84] (Consequently) We bestowed on him Ishaq and Ya`qub: each (of them) We guided; as We had earlier guided Nuh; and, out of his seed,¹⁴⁰ Da'ud, Sulayman, Ayyub, Yusuf, Musa and Harun. That is how We reward those who excel.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا
وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَا مِن قَبْلُ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُدَ
وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ
وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

[85] And Zakariyyah, Yahya, `Isa and Ilyas:¹⁴¹ all (of them) of the righteous.

وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَإِلْيَاسَ كُلٌّ مِّن
الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

Yahya b. Ya`mar. He told him: "I have heard your claim that Hasan and Husayn are the Prophet's seed. It seems you say that the proof is in the Book of Allah. Now, I have read it from end to end but could not find anything to confirm that." Yahya b. Ya`mar read out this verse and said: "The verse says `Isa is the seed of Ibrahim. But `Isa had no father. So, he was Ibrahim's seed from the mother's side" (Ibn Kathir). A similar report is in Bayhaqi (Shawkani).

Further, the Prophet himself once held Hasan by the hand and said: "This my son is a Sayyid (a true leader)" - Ibn Kathir, Qurtubi.

141. Ibn Mas`ud held that Ilyas is another name of Idris. But, we know that Nuh himself was a seed of Idris.

Therefore, the opinion of the genealogists sounds weightier who say that Ilyas was the son of Yasi, the son of Finhas, in the line of Musa - Ibn Jarir.

142. Although one hundred and twenty-four thousand Prophets and three hundred and thirteen Messengers have been raised on this earth, the Qur'an named a total of eighteen here at this point. Six more have been named elsewhere. Starting with Adam we list them here in order of their probable advent on the earth. Their probable Biblical names with approximate dates are given in brackets.

(1) Adam, the first man and Prophet on earth.

(2) Idris, an ancient Prophet. It is

[86] And Isma`il, Al Yasa`, Yunus and Lut: all (of them) We favored above the rest of the world.¹⁴²

وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَيُونُسَ وَلُوطًا وَكُلًّا
فَضَّلْنَا عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

[87] And, of their fathers, offspring, and brothers: We chose them (also) and guided them to a straight path.

وَمِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَاجْتَبَيْنَاهُمْ
وَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٨٧﴾

not certain if he was raised before or after Nuh.

(12) Shu`ayb [period not established, but he is not the Shu`ayb of Musa].

(3) Nuh [Noah, an ancient prophet, ancestor of Ibrahim, period unknown].

(13) Musa [Moses, 1520 1400 B.C.: Majid].

(4) Ibrahim [Abraham, about 2100 B.C.].

(14) Harun [Aaron, Musa's brother].

(5) Lut [Lot, a nephew of Ibrahim, about 2100 B.C.]

(15) Ayyub [Job, about 1300/1500 B.C.: Hifzur Rahman. But Syed Sulayman Nadwi has placed him between 700 and 1000 B.C.]

(6) Isma`il [Ishmael, a son of Ibrahim].

(16) Da`ud [David, d. 962 B.C.: Majid].

(7) Is haq, [Isaac, son of Ibrahim, 2060 1880 B.C.: Majid].

(17) Sulayman, [Solomon, son of Da`ud, d. 932 B.C.: Majid].

(8) Ya`qub, also known as Israel, [Jacob, son of Ishaq, 2000 1850 B.C.: Majid].

(18) Ilyas, same as Ilyasin of the Qur'an, [Elijah, 9th century B.C.: The New American Desk Encyclopedia].

(9) Hud [about 2000 B.C.: Syed Sulayman, Hifzur Rahman].

(19) Al Yasa` [Elisha, a successor of Elijah: Hifzur Rahman].

(10) Yusuf, [Joseph, son of Ya`qub, 1910 1800 B.C.: Majid].

(20) Yunus [Jonah, about 600 B.C.: Hifzur Rahman].

(11) Salih [about 1600 B.C.: Syed Sulayman].

(21) Zakariyyah [Zacharias, the caretaker of Maryam, around 30 years

B.C.: Hifzur Rahman]. He is different from Zechariah of the OT who appeared in the sixth century B.C.

(22) Yahya [John the Baptist, a contemporary of `Isa, but d. 30 C.E.].

(23) `Isa [Jesus, son of Mary, 4 B.C.: an error occurred in dating him], and

(24) Muhammad, [born about 569 years After Christ].

The Qur'an also speaks of a Prophet in verse 246 of *Surah Al Baqarah*. But it does not name him. It is widely believed that his name was Shamwil. Da`ud succeeded him as a Prophet.

The *hadith* literature adds another name: that of Shith who appeared immediately after Adam. A report of Abu Dhar in Ibn Hibban says he was given 50 scriptural Books.

The above would make the list of Prophets and Messengers named either in the Qur'an or in the *hadith* as 26.

In addition to the above, two other names occur in the Qur'an, with strong probability that they were Prophets: (1) Dhu al Kifl and (2) `Uzayr [Ezra of the Bible, 5th century before Christ, a contemporary of Nebuchadnezzar].

Finally, some others have been hinted at as Prophets by the Qur'an, such as (1) Yusha` b. al Nun [Joshua, the successor of Musa. He is probably the young companion of Musa mentioned in *Surah al Kahaf*: Hifzur Rahman]. Some historians think he too was a Prophet. (2) Hizqil, [Ezekiel, probably the one involved in the episode stated in verse 243 of *Surah Al Baqarah*. See note no. 514, and (3) Maryam, the mother of Jesus, who is considered a Prophetess by some scholars (Au.).

143. Coming as it does from a Sufi commentator, these words acquire special significance: In this verse is the refutation of those ignorant people who believe that some men are dearer to Allah than others simply because they are what they are, such as, for instance, Muhammad, and a few *Awliya' Allah* whom they name. An implication drawn from this belief is that those men were, so to say, beyond the Law. Whereas, the verse makes it clear that none, not even Prophets and Messengers, were dear to Allah for their own sake. If they were dear to Him, it was because of their qualities, such as, to name one, a firm commitment to *Tawhid*: "Had they associated (others with Allah),

[88] That is Allah's guidance. He guides therewith whom He will of His slaves. But, had they declared associates (to Allah), all they did would have come to naught.¹⁴³

ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَلَوْ أَشْرَكُوا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

[89] Those were men whom We vouchsafed the Book, (sound) Judgment¹⁴⁴ and Prophethood. Yet, if these (people) reject them,¹⁴⁵ then, already We have entrusted it to a people who reject them not.¹⁴⁶

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنَّبُوءَةَ فَإِنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهَا هَؤُلَاءِ فَقَدْ وَكَلْنَا بِهَا قَوْمًا لَيَسُوْا بِهَا بِكَافِرِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

all (the good things) they did would have come to naught” (Thanwi).

144. Taking cue from Mujahid, Ibn Jarir interprets the *hukm* of the text as the power of intellect that is acquired through a study of revelation.

145. Qatadah has said that by the word “them” the allusion is to the eighteen prophets named earlier; in other words, belief in them and in their message (Ibn Jarir).

146. Ibn Jarir reports that Ibn `Abbas, Dahhak, Qatadah and others were of the opinion that those who were entrusted the message after the Quraysh rejected it, were the *Ansar*. (And the *Muhajirun*: Ibn Kathir). Nonetheless, Ibn Jarir himself believes it is the prophets and messengers who were entrusted with the message.

After stating his own opinion that it is the *Muhajirun* and *Ansar* who

have been alluded to, Rashid Rida writes an account of a dream he experienced: “I found myself in my hometown Tarabulus in Syria in the company of a few people of the town, well dressed in their caps and *`imamah* (head gear). A person well known there for his courage and nobility happened to step in. He was introduced to us. We greeted him and the others who were accompanying him. These new comers surprised us with a news item. They said that the time had come for the fulfillment of the prophecy contained in the verse: ‘Yet, if these (people) reject these, then, already We have entrusted it to a people who reject them not.’ They asked us: ‘Do you know the latest news?’ We said: ‘No.’ They said: ‘Well! This is very important. Europe is talking about it. Their papers carry the news.’ I can vaguely remember that they were carrying some newspapers with them. Then

they named one of the Ministers of the Ottoman government, who was taking personal interest in the affair and had travelled (somewhere) in that connection. I began to wonder about the affair. Why was the minister travelling? Was he going to Europe? Had Allah subdued the hearts of those other than its present patrons? These and other questions arose in my mind and I wanted to ask some of those in whose company I had found myself. But then I woke up. It was *fajr* time.”

Rashid Rida does not write the year he saw the dream. But a fair guess is that it was somewhere around 1910. Nothing much happened during his own life time by way of an interpretation of the dream. However, since the beginning of the last quarter of this century, and more markedly since late 80's, a change in the atmosphere can easily be discerned. On the one hand, contradictory currents seem to be sweeping through the Islamic body politic: both of the rejection of Islam, as well as of a return to it. If there is re awakening in a part of the Islamic world, there is every sign of its rejection in another part. In fact, this trend can be noticed in every cross section of the Muslim society however small, and whichever the country or region examined. On

the other hand, despite a massive drive, since over three hundred years, by the Orientalists, Western scholars, and now the media, to present a distorted figure of Islam, Islam seems to be more and more acceptable to the people of their countries now than it was ever before. Tens of thousands of people are entering Islam every year in Europe and North America. Starting from a zero representation of the local population a few decades earlier, by now about one to two percent of the population has embraced Islam in those countries. It looks as though for every person rejecting Islam in the Islamic world, there is someone in the West accepting it: Islam is neither Eastern nor Western, yet, it is a sorry affair indeed in the East, the seat of Islam. Is it possible that some decisions have been made in the Heavens (Au.)?

147. That is, the Prophet was to follow them in the principles of religion and moral precepts which have remained unchanged throughout the ages (Zamakhshari).

Ibn `Abbas has said that following the instruction to follow the previous prophets, our Prophet used to prostrate himself at verse 24 of *Surah Sad*, which reports Da`ud as having prostrated himself. The report is in

[90] Those were a people whom Allah guided; therefore, follow their guidance.¹⁴⁷ (As for these) Say, 'I do not ask you wages for it. It is nothing but a reminder to the worlds.'

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهِدَاهُمْ أَقْبَدَهُ
قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرًا
لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

Bukhari (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

Qurtubi writes: The verse is a proof that, as the great majority of legists have declared, the Law of the previous prophets so long as not annulled by Islam is the Law for this *Ummah*. Apart from this verse, another verse also substantiates this principle. It is verse 45 of *Surah Al Ma'idah*:

وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ
وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ
قِصَاصًا [المائدة : ٤٥]

"And We decreed therein (i.e., in the *Tawrah*) for them: a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth and for wounds a (suitable) retaliation."

Apart from this, there is no other verse in the Qur'an that speaks of *Qisas* (the law of Just Retribution). Since the Prophet's own institution of retaliation was following this

verse (which was originally a *Tawrah* prescription), it can be deduced that the *Shar'* of the past prophets is the *Shar'* of this *Ummah*, so long as nothing new has been revealed and so long as there is no contradiction whatsoever.

148. That is, they did not assign to Allah the Greatness that is due to Him when they said that He did not reveal to any mortal (Ibn Jarir).

149. They were either some Jews (Malik b. Sayf, Finhas and others), or the Quraysh who denied that Allah revealed anything to anyone (Ibn Jarir).

It is reported that once Malik b. Sayf and some other Jews went up to see the Prophet. He chided Malik: "I adjure you by the One who revealed the *Tawrah* if it is not stated therein that God hates every fat Rabbi. Now, you are a fat Rabbi who fattened him-

[91] They estimated not Allah in a manner He deserves to be estimated¹⁴⁸ when they said, 'Allah never revealed anything to a mortal.'¹⁴⁹ Ask them, 'Who revealed the Book that Musa brought: a Light and a guidance for mankind that you make parchments of which you reveal, but, concealing a great part?¹⁵⁰ You were taught (therewith) that which neither you nor your forefathers knew (before the revelation).' Say, '(It was) Allah (who revealed).' Then let them alone plunged in their playful discourses.¹⁵¹

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا مَا
 أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَى بَشَرٍ مِّن شَيْءٍ قُلْ مَنْ
 أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي جَاء بِهِ مُوسَى نُورًا
 وَهُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ بَجَعَلُونَهُ قَرَاطِيسَ تُبْدُونَهَا
 وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا وَعُلِّمْتُمْ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنْتُمْ
 وَلَا آبَاؤُكُمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِي حَوْضِهِمْ
 يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

self on the money the Jews donated you.” Malik’s companions laughed at this. He turned to `Umar and said in his anger: “Allah never revealed anything to any mortal.” (According to some reports, one of the Jews (turned to him in surprise and) questioned him if God had not revealed even to Moses. He replied, “To no one whatsoever”). Once amongst themselves, the Jews reproached him (for denying revelation to Moses). He tried to explain that he had only said that in anger. But, displeased with his reply, the Jews relieved him of his leadership role and conferred it on Ka`b b. al Ashraf (*Kashshaf* and others).

150. Qurtubi remarks: Basing their opinion on this verse, the scholars disapprove of bringing out in a book form, selected parts of the Qur’anic text.

The reproach is directed either against the collection of the holy writ in “parchments” or against “collection” itself. If the allusion is to the former, then, as Qurtubi has pointed out, it was criticized because collection in “parchments” (i.e., several parchments, rather than a single volume) helped the Jews to present to the public whatever they thought fit, concealing the rest.

Nevertheless, if, by the words, “you put them in parchments” the criticism is directed against the “act” of committing the scriptures to writing, then, two explanations are possible. First, the Jews were required to commit the revelation to memory and not “simply” put them into parchments. With several people in possession of master copies, viz., the memorized word, interpolation would have been

difficult. Second, the Jews put them in several parchments, rather than making one whole book of it. Had they done that, once again interpolations, (and not only concealment, as Qurtubi has pointed out) although remaining a possibility would have certainly become more difficult (Au.).

Asad adds: "This passage is obviously addressed to those followers of the Bible who pay lip service to its sacred character as a revealed scripture but, in reality, treat it as "mere leaves of paper" that is, as something that is of little consequence to their own conduct: for, although they pretend to admire the moral truth which it confirms, they conceal from themselves the fact that their own lives have remained empty of those truths."

Yusuf Ali comments: "The message to Moses had unity: it was one Book. The present Old Testament is a collection of odd books ("sheets") of various kinds... In this way you can make a show, but there is no unity, and much of the spirit of the original is lost or concealed or overlaid. The same applies to the New Testament."

151. The seriousness with which the learned Orientalists, the Arabists and Islamists, Jews and Christians, rab-

bis, priests and other holy men as well as the unblest, apply themselves to Islamic disciplines with colored visions, a penetrating eye but on the ludicrous, a search in depth, but for the odd opinion, connecting the unrelated with specious logic, unearthing what the Muslims have long discarded as non sensical, to produce works bathed in erudition, displaying a depth of unmatched perception, but steeped in such dishonesty, that any decent man would place them aside in revulsion after three paragraphs of reading, has perhaps never been described as succinctly as in words, "*plunged in playful discourses*" (Au.).

152. "I, (Muhammad b. `Umar al Razi the writer of these lines), say: I have done a lot of work on various disciplines of knowledge. But, I must admit that I did not receive blessings in consequence of them, in any measure as I received for working on this project (i.e., the commentary of the Qur`ān)" - *Al Kabir*.

Alusi adds: By Allah's grace we have received multiple rewards in this world itself for being in the service of the Qur`ān, and hope not to be denied them in the Hereafter too.

153. Ibn `Abbas has said that by *Umm al Qura*, the allusion is to Makkah and by the words, "those

[92] This is a Book We have sent: blessed,¹⁵² confirming that which was before it, so that you might (O Muhammad) warn the inhabitants of the Mother of the Cities and those who are around it.¹⁵³ Those who have faith in the Hereafter,¹⁵⁴ believe in this (Qur'an), and perform their Prayers (regularly and spirit-edly).¹⁵⁵

وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ مُصَدِّقٌ الَّذِي
بَيَّنَّ يَدِيهِ وَلِتُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَى وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا
وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَهُمْ
عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

around it," it is to the rest of the world. Qatadah has added that Makkah has been called *Umm al Qura* because the earth was stretched out from this point (Ibn Jarir).

Early reports tell us that the earth was originally covered with water. When the waters began to recede, it was Makkah which appeared first (Shabbir).

An additional reason could be that it is, in the words of Lane (Majid), the greatest of towns in dignity.

Rashid Rida adds: Contending with this verse some of the ancient Jews and others argued that the Prophet was sent only for the Arabs. But there are several verses of the Qur'an that refute this notion. In this chapter itself Allah said in verse 19:

وَأَوْجِي إِلَيَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ لِأُنذِرَكُمْ بِهِ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ [الأنعام
[١٩ :

"And this Qur'an has been re-vealed unto me in order that I

might warn you and whosoever it reaches."

And He said (25: 1):

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ
نَذِيرًا [الفرقان : ١]

"Blessed is He Who sent down the Criterion unto His slave so that he might be a Warner unto the worlds (of men and Jinn)."

And (34: 28):

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا [سبأ :
[٢٨

"And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) but unto whole of the mankind: an evangelist and a warner."

The Orientalists have also tried to argue that the Prophet was sent to the Arabs alone. But, firstly, one wonders why these knowledgeable people should not first announce their conviction that he was truly a Prophet, even if only for the Arabs? Secondly, why should they be so generous to

the Arabs of the Middle East when, if they are to adhere to this text alone, the Prophet could not have been a Prophet for anyone beyond Makkah and a few villages around it, excluding even Tayif to which the Prophet seems to have vainly travelled (Au.)?

Sayyid Qutb adds: "The Orientalists sever this verse of the Qur'an from the rest of it to argue that the Prophet aimed only at Makkah and its surroundings at the beginning of his mission. Subsequently, as his influence spread, he aspired to add the whole of the Arab Peninsula to his dominion. Finally, after his migration, his successes at establishing an Islamic state in Madinah led him to further expand upon the previous modest area of control. "But," adds Sayyid, "they have lied. For a Makkan revelation said in the earlier phase of his mission (21: 107) about the Prophet: *"We have not sent you but a mercy unto the worlds."* And, at another place the Qur'an said He said (34: 28): *"We have not sent you but to the entire mankind, an evangelist and a warner."* These verses were revealed when the Prophet's mission was still in the valleys of Makkah."

154. Faith in the Hereafter is the central point of religion. Someone who does not fear standing before his Lord for the Reckoning, can never

be religious (based on Zamakhshari).

Sayyid Qutb writes: "Those who feel that there has to be a Hereafter where man should be punished or rewarded for his deeds, also believe in Allah and in the fact that there have to be Messengers from Him warning the people of that event. Accordingly, (when he appears) they have no difficulty in believing in him. Thereafter, they attend to their Prayers regularly because that is one thing that connects them with their Creator. Further, this act is symbolic of their acceptance of all that the revelation of Allah directs them to do."

155. That is, belief in this Book as a revelation of Allah is not simply an opinion or an abstract idea on the part of those who believe in it. They are so serious about it that they follow its commands, so that, e.g., they perform the Prayers regularly (Au.).

156. Although several persons, e.g., Ibn Abi Sa'd b. Sarh, Musaylimah the liar, and Ansi, have been named to refute whom these verses were revealed, it is apparent that they are open in application to whoever uttered these kind of blasphemies (Ibn Jarir). Especially, in view of the fact, adds Rashid Rida, that this chapter is Makkan whereas the above false prophets did not make their

[93] *And who can do greater wrong than he who fastened a lie upon Allah, or said, 'It has been revealed to me,' while nothing has been revealed to him?¹⁵⁶ Or who said, 'I can reveal the like of what Allah has revealed?'¹⁵⁷ If you could but see the wrong doers in the agonies of death, angels stretching their hands (saying), 'Yield up your souls. Today you shall be delivered a chastisement of humiliation because of the untruth you were fastening upon Allah and waxing proud against His signs.'*

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ قَالَ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ وَلَمْ يُوحَ إِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ وَمَنْ قَالَ سَأُنزِلُ مِثْلَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُوا أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرَجُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنتُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

claim but after they had learnt of the Prophet's sickness just before his death.

Alusi and Thanwi have pointed out that included in the reproach are those of the quacks who, camouflaged as godly men, claim that they are inspired, or experience visions, or see true dreams, and so forth, although, nothing of that sort happens to them.

157. It is widely reported that `Abdullah ibn abi Sa`d b. Sarh was one of those who was entrusted to write the Qur`anic revelations. Now, when the Prophet dictated, "the All hearing, the All Knowing" he would write down "the All knowing, the All wise." Once, when the verses concerning the creation of man (23: 24) were revealed and the Prophet

(saws) recited them out, `Abdullah added, "Blessed is Allah, the best of Creators." The Prophet said: "Write that down, since those are the words revealed to me." At this, `Abdullah told himself that if Muhammad was truthful in his claim to prophethood, then he could also reveal what had been revealed to him. So he turned a renegade and joined the pagans at Makkah; although, subsequently he again became a Muslim. However, it is believed that he was the cause of revelation of these verses (Ibn Jarir, Zamakhshari, and others).

Qurtubi adds: Other reports tell us that `Abdullah b. Sa`d did not become a Muslim by himself. In fact, he was one of those four whom the Prophet had ordered killed at the fall of Makkah, even if found holding the drapes of Ka`ba. But `Abdullah hid

himself with `Uthman ibn `Affan to whom he was related. `Uthman brought him out only after things had cooled off a bit after the fall of Makkah. When he presented him to the Prophet and sought his acquittal, the Prophet stayed quiet for a while. Finally, he said he was pardoning him. Later, (after `Uthman had left: Ibn Sa`d) he remarked to his Companions: "If I was slow in saying yes, it was in the hope that one of you would kill him." They asked: "Why did you not signal with your eye?" He replied: "A Prophet does not signal with his eye." None the less, subsequently `Abdullah became a good Muslim. Nothing reproachable was ever noticed of him afterward. Subsequently, at the time of his own caliphate, `Uthman appointed him a governor of Egypt. (Earlier, `Umar had also appointed him a governor: Ibn Hisham). `Abdullah waged *ji-had* and subdued Ifriqiyyah in 27 A.H. He also brought Nubiya under Muslim control by 31 A.H. Later, he fought against the Romans in the famous battle of the Suwariyy in 34 A.H. But, when he returned to Egypt, political upheavals had begun, culminating in the murder of `Uthman. One report says he chose to stay put in Ramallah (Palestine), refusing to side with either `Ali or

Mu`awiyah. He prayed to Allah that he might die while doing his Prayers. Accordingly, one day he began his *fajr* Prayer. He turned right and said his *taslim*. Then he turned left to say his *taslim*, but could not. He fell dead.

Rashid Rida however disagrees that `Abdullah ibn abi Sarh was the cause of the revelation of this verse. He says the words "the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing" do not occur in the Makkan chapters nor do the words "the All-Knowing, the All-Wise" or the words "the All-Mighty, the All-Wise," except in *Surah Luq-man* which was revealed after this *Surah*, i.e., *Surah al An`am*. So far as the narration goes about `Abdullah ibn abi Sarh rejoining with words: "Blessed is Allah, the best of creators," Rashid Rida adds, that he did not find this report narrated in any of the Ma`thur *tafsir* books (i.e., those works that rely only on report). However, we know that sometimes `Umar correctly anticipated certain revelations. So did Mu`adh (ibn Jabal). It is possible that Sa`d b. abi Sarh was led to doubt by their utterances, made a statement of similar nature (i.e., I can reveal what Allah has revealed) and turned renegade. But, during the time he was writing the revelation, none of those

[94] Today, you have all come to Us alone, as We created you at first.¹⁵⁸ You left behind your backs the bounties that We bestowed on you.¹⁵⁹ We do not see with you the intercessors that you assumed were your associates (in Me). The ties have severed between you, and lost are all those (ideas) that you fancied.¹⁶⁰

وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فِرَادَى كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَتَرَكْتُمْ مَا خَوَّلْنَاكُمْ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ وَمَا نَرَى مَعَكُمْ شُفَعَاءَكُمُ الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّهُمْ فِيكُمْ شُرَكَاءَ لَقَدْ تَقَطَّعَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْكُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

words that have been attributed to him were revealed. Rashid Rida also states that 'Abdullah ibn Abi Sarh had re-embraced Islam before the fall of Makkah. (See narration about him in *Surah al-Anfāl*, under verse 72: Au).

158. It is said that Nadr b. al Harth used to say that Al Lat and Al 'Uzza (pre Islamic deities) would intercede for him. Allah revealed this in refutation (Ibn Jarir, Alusi and others). The report is in Ibn Abi Hatim and others (Shawkani).

159. A *Sahih* report (in Muslim: H. Ibrahim) says:

يَقُولُ ابْنُ آدَمَ مَالِي مَالِي وَهَلْ لَكَ مِنْ مَالِكَ إِلَّا مَا أَكَلْتَ فَأَنْتَبِتْ أَوْ لَبَسْتَ فَأَبْلَيْتْ أَوْ تَصَدَّقْتَ فَأَمْضَيْتْ وَمَا سِوَى ذَلِكَ فَهُوَ ذَاهِبٌ وَتَارِكُهُ لِلنَّاسِ

“Son of Adam says, ‘My wealth. My wealth.’ But, do you own anything of your wealth except that which you ate and finished off, or dressed yourself and wore it out, or gave in charity and saved it?

As for the rest, you will be going away and leaving it to the people” (Ibn Kathir).

160. All pagan religions are built on two cardinal principles: sacrifice and intercession (Rashid Rida).

161. Although Suddi, Qatadah and Ibn Zayd have said that the splitting refers to opening up of the grain and the date palm stone to throw out the root and the stalk, Mujahid, Dahhak and Abu Malik have said that it refers to the division of the grain and the date stone into two halves by a line running through them. Ibn 'Abbas however has said that *faliq* is equivalent of *khaliq*. But the later part of the verse, which speaks of the bringing forth of the living from the dead and the dead from the living leads us to believe that *falaq* refers to the act of splitting the seed for its sprouting (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Animal life depends entirely on plants. Human life on the other

[95] Verily, Allah is the Splitter of the grains and the date stone;¹⁶¹ He brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living.¹⁶² That is your God. Where then, are you being driven?

إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَالِقُ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوَى يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ ذَلِكُمْ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّى تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

hand depends both on plant as well as animal life. Thus both, the animal as well as the human lives, depend on plant life. In turn, plant life depends on the splitting of two kinds of seeds: grains and seeds. The words therefore, “Allah is the Splitter of the grain and the date stone,” embody a great amount of meaning. Apart from that there are several signs of Allah in the splitting of the seed. Firstly, the shoot that emerges is extremely tender. A child can pluck it off. Yet, it splits the ground although placed at a foot’s depth in hard soil. Were a man to try piercing the ground with his finger a foot deep, he would fail to do that in as many days as the shoot does it. Secondly, the seed has two ends. From one end grows what will become its root. Its biological function is different from the shoot that sprouts from the other end which becomes the stem of the plant on the surface of the earth. Now, not only the two ends know their respective functions: the lower sucking up water and minerals, the upper engaging itself in photosyn-

thesis, but also both seem to “know” their places in the system: one below, into the ground and the other above into the air. If the seed is placed upside down, the lower end that throws out the shoot takes a 180 degree turn to arrive at the surface. The other one too takes a U-turn to go into the earth instead of ending up on the surface. Deep there inside the earth, what tells the seed that it has been placed upside down in the ground and that its two ends must proceed in the opposite directions? Experiments show that in many instances a root begins to re-orient within 10 to 30 minutes of being turned upside down. In some instances a seed placed sideways knows within 12 seconds that it has been re-oriented.

“The scientists have discovered that there is a tiny instrument at the tip of the seed to determine the gravitational pull of the earth. But the “brain” seems to be somewhere else. For, a decapped root, although initially unable to re orient itself, re produces the tip within 14 to 22 hours, to help it regain its power of

re-orientation. In fact, in some laboratory experiments involving mutant plants, even the absence of the instrument that responds to gravity the amyloplasts did not make a difference. The plant still oriented itself in the right direction: as if there was, in addition to the amyloplasts, an alternative gravity sensing mechanism.

“Starting with Darwin who perhaps first wrote on the subject, the scientists have progressively “discovered” the instrument and the mechanism that guides the root to the deeper earth, and how the plants respond to presence or absence (as in space experiments) of gravitational pull, but cannot explain how the mechanism came to be there in the first place. (See *Scientific American*, Dec. '86, “How Roots Respond to Gravity” by Michael L. Evans, Randy Moore and Karl Heinz Hasentein) Au.

162. Ibn 'Abbas has said that it refers to the creation of the dead sperm in man, and to a living body emerging from that dead sperm (Ibn Jarir). There have been several interpretations of similar nature coming from the *Salaf* (Ibn Kathir).

A good example is a virus. It is no more than a speck of dust with nucleic acid (RNA) at the core with

a protein core. They are in billions all around, but dead. However, let them into a living cell, and they come alive. But more amazingly, there are dust particles everywhere around us that are bits and pieces of RNA without even a protein coat. Known as viroids, they too come alive in biological cells. And, viroids are not amazing enough, we have below them what are known as prions. If somebody thought that RNA is the life-source, prions put him into puzzle. They are a bit of protein and no nucleic acid, and nothing else. And, as if for humans to learn Allah's Will and Power, these prions can lie in certain human cells, dead, inactive for up to a decade, and then suddenly on a deadly day come alive; causing what is known as 'the Mad Cow disease (CJD),' death is the fate of its host (Au.).

163. The words “*Splitter of the dawn,*” carry several connotations. Allah Most High is the Splitter and Separator of the morning of the existent from the (darknesses of the) non existent. He is the Splitter of the morning of life; intelligence and discernment from the darknesses of the state of (lifeless) solid materials; Splitter of the morning of intellect from the darknesses of ignorance; Splitter of the morning

[96] The Splitter of the dawn,¹⁶³ He has appointed the night for rest¹⁶⁴ and the sun and the moon for reckoning.¹⁶⁵ That is the ordaining of the All powerful, the All knowing.¹⁶⁶

فَالِقِ الْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا
وَالشَّمْسِ وَالْقَمَرِ حُسْبَانًا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ
الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ﴿٩٦﴾

[97] He it is who has set up the stars for you so that you might be guided by them in the darkneses of the land and sea. (That is how) We have expounded the signs for a people who know.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا بِهَا
فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ
لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

of cosmic spiritual awareness, from the darkneses of the human earthly existence; Splitter of the morning of radiance of thought and induction from the darkneses of the necessities of the world of possibilities (Razi).

sion by the word “*husbana*” is to fire, as in verse (18: 40):

وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ [الكهف : ٤٠]

“And He will send upon it (the town) a fire from the sky.”

164. Ibn Abi Hatim has narrated that when Suhayb Rumi’s wife chided him for spending most of his night in prayers, Rumi replied: “Allah has made the night a means of rest except for Suhayb. When Suhayb thinks of Paradise his desires stretch, and when he thinks of the Fire his sleep flies away” (Ibn Kathir).

A *hadith* in Muwatta’, Nasa’i and Tirmidhi says the Prophet (*saws*) sometimes supplicated in these words:

اللَّهُمَّ فَالِقِ الْإِصْبَاحِ وَجَاعِلِ اللَّيْلِ سَكَنًا وَالشَّمْسِ
وَالْقَمَرِ حُسْبَانًا افْضِ عَنِّي الدَّيْنَ وَأَعِنِّي مِنَ الْفَقْرِ
وَأَمْتِعِي بِسَمْعِي وَبَصَرِي وَقَوِّي فِي سَبِيلِكَ

“O Allah, the Splitter of the dawn, the Maker of the night a means of rest, of the Sun and the Moon as the means of reckoning; relieve me from my debt, relieve me from poverty, let me enjoy (until the end of life) my hearing and sight, and my (other) powers” (Qurtubi).

165. The textual word *husbana* has several connotations. An alterative meaning could be: “He made them run to their appointed courses” (Au.). Another interpretation is that Allah (*swt*) made the Sun and the Moon run on a timed schedule. A third interpretation is that the allu-

The above *hadith* from Muwatta’ is

[98] He it is who produced you from a single soul: then there is a permanent abode (for you) and a temporary one.¹⁶⁷ We have expounded the signs for a people who understand.¹⁶⁸

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٌ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾

slightly different from that quoted by Qurtubi (Au.).

166. It might be noted that in verse 95 Allah spoke of three earthly signs while in verse 96 of three heavenly signs (*Manar*).

167. Linguistically the term *mustaqarr* refers to a permanent place of storage and *mustawda`* to a temporary one. There have been several interpretations. Ibn Mas`ud has said that they allude respectively to the womb and the grave. Ibn `Abbas, Sa`id b. Jubayr, `Ata`, Mujahid and Ibrahim have said that the allusion is to the mother's womb after conception, and the father's repository of sperm. In fact, once Ibn `Abbas asked Sa`id ibn Jubayr if he had married and when he said no, he remarked: "Allah will surely bring out whatever is stored in the *mustawda`* of your back" (the repository of sperm). Another opinion of Ibn `Abbas is that the allusion is to the life on this earth and the father's repository of sperm respectively. Nevertheless, Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas and Sa`id ibn Jubayr themselves have also said that

the former refers to the everlasting abode with the Lord and the latter to the short life in this world (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

168. Referring to the textual word is *yafqahun* Imām Raghīb has said that, linguistically, the term *fiqh* stands for the process of arriving at the knowledge of the unknown with the help of the known. It can also be defined as delving into the depth of things. Accordingly, the word *fiqh* in Islam applied to a fuller understanding of Islamic principles. It is one level above what is generally known as *ilm* (*Manar*).

It might be pointed out here that what is known as the "scientific method," consists of the following steps: (i) identification of a problem, (ii) gathering of the related data, which includes generation of the data, (iii) formation of a hypothesis, (iv) conducting tests and experiments, and, finally, (v) arriving at a theory that might or might not prove to be true, much later (Au.).

169. Asad remarks: "I.e., all are so

[99] He it is who sent down from the heaven water. Then We brought forth therewith the shoot of everything. Then We sprout forth out of it green blade, from which grow closely compounded grains. And of the palms (come forth), from their sheath, clusters (hanging) low. And orchards of vines, olive, pomegranate: similar (in appearance) but dissimilar (in taste).¹⁶⁹ Behold (then) its fruit when it fructifies and (look at) its ripening.¹⁷⁰ Surely in that are signs for a people who would believe.¹⁷¹

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ ثَبَاتٍ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ خَضِرًا نُخْرَجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا كَثِيرًا وَمِمَّنْ النَّخْلُ مِنْ أَغْنَابٍ طَلْعُهَا قَنَاطِيرُ ذَاتِئْتٍ وَجَنَّاتٍ مِنْ أَغْنَابٍ وَالزُّيُونُ وَالرُّمَّانُ مُشْتَبِهًا وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ انظُرُوا إِلَى ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

alike in the basic principles of their life and growth, and yet so different in physiology, appearance and taste.”

170. From the first appearance of the fruit bud (a little after pollination) until its ripening, the fruit acquires different traits and characteristics: from the bitter thing in the beginning to the sweet in the end; the usually green in color, to the beautiful red, crimson, violet etc., in the final stages; from the one hot for the body to the one cool for it, or *vice versa*; from the once poisonous to human consumption to the delicious food for them in all these are signs that manifest themselves in stages (based on Razi).

171. Yusuf Ali comments: “Another beautiful nature passage, referring to Allah’s wonderful artistry in His Creation. In how few and how

simple words, the whole pageant of Creation is placed before us. Beginning from our humble animal needs and dependence on the vegetable world, we are asked to contemplate the interaction of the living and the dead. Here is a teaching, referring not only to physical life but to the higher life above the physical plane, not only to individual life but to the collective life of nations. Then we take a peep into the daily miracle of morning, noon, and night, and pass on to the stars that guide the distant mariner. We rise still higher to the mystery of the countless individuals from the one human soul their sojourn and their destiny. So we get back to the heavens: the description of the luscious fruits which the “gentle rain from heaven” produces, leaves us to contemplate the spiritual fruits which faith will provide for us,

[100] Yet they ascribe to Allah as associates the Jinn,¹⁷² though He created them; and they impute to Him sons and daughters without knowledge.¹⁷³ Glorified He is and Exalted far above that which they ascribe.¹⁷⁴

وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ وَخَرَفُوا لَهُ بَنِينَ وَبَنَاتٍ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ سُبْحَانَہُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

with the aid of the showers of Allah's mercy.”

172. 'According to Arab philologists, the term jinn signifies, primarily, "beings that are concealed from [man's] senses' (Qamus, Lisan al 'Arab, Raghīb)' Asad.

Majid explains: "Jinns are a definite order of conscious beings, intelligent, corporeal and usually invisible, made of smokeless flame, as men are of clay, created before Adam. They eat and drink, and propagate their species, and are subject to death, much in the same way as human beings are. Though as a rule they are invisible to the human eye, they manifest themselves to men at will, mostly under animal form."

If it is asked how it could be said that the people worshipped the Jinn when we know that they worshipped idols and not the Jinn directly? The answer is, they worshipped them but obeying them the way Allah is to be obeyed, as Allah said elsewhere (4: 117 120):

إِنْ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا إِنَاتًا وَإِنْ يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَرِيدًا (١١٧) لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَ لَأَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا (١١٨) وَلَا ضِلَّتْهُمْ وَلَا مَنِيَّتْهُمْ وَلَا مَرَّتْهُمْ فَلْيُعْزِرْنِي خَلْقَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَايًّا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُبِينًا (١١٩) يَعِدُهُمْ وَيُمْنِيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا [النساء: ١١٧ - ١٢٠]

"Indeed, they invoke not besides Him, but female (deities). (But) in truth, they invoke none other than a rebellious Shaytan, (whom) Allah has cursed, and who vowed that, 'Assuredly I will take (unto myself) of Your slaves an appointed portion.' (He also vowed) 'Verily, I shall lead them astray, and surely, I will arouse in them false hopes, and assuredly, I shall command them so that they shall slit the ears of the cattle and indeed, I shall order them so that they shall deface the creation of Allah.' But whoever took Shaytan for a patron, instead of Allah, surely suffered a manifest loss. He will promise them and lend them hopes. But Shaytan does not promise them save delusions" (Ibn Kathir).

Shabbir points out that Ibrahim

(*asws*) had also said to his father reproaching him on for idol worship: (19: 44):

يَا أَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ [مریم : ٤٤]

"O my father. Worship not the Devil."

Hence Allah will say to whom on the Day of Judgment (36: 60):

أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ
[يس : ٦٠]

"Did I not take a compact from you, O Children of Adam, that you will not worship the Devil?"

Qatadah and Suddi have said however that the allusion is to the declaration by the Arab pagans of the angels as Allah's daughters. It could also be to the Zanadiqah whose belief was that God and *Shaytan* are brothers: the former created men and animals, while the latter created the snakes, wild animals, scorpions, etc. This faith is very close to the belief of the Zoroastrians who thought that God (Yezdan: R. Rida) is the creator of Good, and Devil (Ahraman: R. Rida) the creator of evil (Qurtubi).

Fi Zilal has the following foot note: "Kalbi has said in his *Kitab al Asnam*" that among the Arabs the Banu Mudlaj of the Khuza`ah tribe used to worship the Jinn."

173. That is, if the one you attri-

bute to Him as his son (because he did not have a father: Au), be truly His son, then, the rest of the created world the cosmos should be His sons too. But you yourself do not accept this corollary (*Manar*).

174. Asad's rendering of *subhanahu wa ta'ala`amma yasifun* is: 'Limitless is He in His glory, and sublimely exalted above anything that men may devise by way of definition.' To this he adds the following: "I.e., utterly remote from all the imperfections and from the incompleteness which is implied in the concept of having progeny. The very concept of "definition" implies the possibility of a comparison or correlation of an object with other objects; God, however, is unique, there being "*nothing like unto Him*" (42: 11) and, therefore, "*nothing that could be compared with Him*" (112: 4) with the result that any attempt at defining Him or His "attributes" is a logical impossibility and, from the ethical point of view, a sin. The fact that He is indefinable makes it clear that the "attributes" (*sifat*) of God mentioned in the Qur`an do not circumscribe His reality but, rather, the perceptible effect of His activity on and within the universe created by Him."

175. The textual word "*Badi`*" is to

[101] Originator¹⁷⁵ of the heavens and the earth: how should He have a child when He has not a female companion,¹⁷⁶ when He created all things and is Aware of all things?¹⁷⁷

بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَتَىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةٌ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾

[102] That is your God, your Lord. There is no god save He; Creator of all things,¹⁷⁸ therefore, worship Him. He is the Care taker of all things.

ذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوهُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾

produce something without an earlier example; hence the word “*bid'ah*” which is to introduce a new practice in religion (Ibn Kathir).

176. Majid writes: “This refutes the polytheism of several peoples like the Hindus, the Babylonians, and the Egyptians, which maintained that each god had a female companion or consort. Indian polytheism went further. ‘Even God’, according to the Upanishads ‘had a desire for progeny and wished a wife for propagation’ (Indira, Status of Women in Ancient India, pp.129 130).”

177. That is, since Allah is the Creator, He has knowledge of all things. Now, if He had children He would have known them better than the creations who attribute sons and daughters to Him (*Manar*).

178. Sayyid Qutb quotes Frank Allen as saying in one of his works: Quite often it is said that this ma-

terial world does not need a creator. But if we admit that this world is in existence then we run into the difficulty of explaining it. There can be four possible explanations. Either (i) this world is only a dream and a vision, (but that seems to contradict many evidences we have of it being real, although Sir James Jeans also held the view that this is a world of illusions which has no reality beyond our minds), or, (ii) it came to existence by itself by its own force (which no man in his right mind would accept), or, (iii) it has been there since eternity (but, that leaves greater room for the acceptance of a “living” eternal power as its creator rather than a “lifeless” matter in existence since eternity), or, (vi) it should have a creator, which seems to be the most plausible alternative.

In an earlier passage he quotes John Cleveland C. as saying in his work “God Appears in the Age of Knowl-

edge”: Chemistry tells us that the elements are in a state of decay: some slow some fast. This means that matter will not last for ever, which also means that it has not been there since eternity. We also have evidence that the creation of matter was not a gradual affair. Rather it sprang up suddenly. Science can even tell us when that happened. It also tells us that from the beginning of the affair the physical world has been following a set of laws. These are strong proofs that it has a creator.

Further, if the material world could not be its own creator, then the non material world, (the living) is all the more impossible of self creation. There is sufficient evidence to prove that the force that brought this world into existence is endowed with the powers of intellect and wisdom. He also seems to have a will. Obviously, these facts point to a creator.”

That this world has to have a creator is a matter of common sense. But the scientists who take up this discussion, in their effort to demonstrate that it need not, are running into huge difficulties. To take just one aspect, they are discovering that fine-tuning of the universe, the laws governing it, the origin of life and its continuance, all point to a design-

ing agent. Dr. Michael Behe writes: “A planet in the right region of the solar system, in the right region of a galaxy, in a universe with the right kinds of laws to produce chemicals with the right kinds of properties – this is all necessary for life, but still very far from sufficient. The planet itself has to be not too big and not too small, with enough but not too much water, the right kind of minerals in the right places, a core active enough to power plate tectonics but not so active as to blow everything apart, and much, much more. Some of these factors considered in isolation may be less improbable, others more improbable, but all are critical. If one of them were missing, intelligent life would be precluded.” (*The Edge of Evolution*, p. 212, The Free Press, 2007). And, “The laws and constants of the universe are finely tuned to allow life. So, too, are the physical and chemical properties of elements such as carbon and simple compounds such as water. So, too, is earth’s location in the galaxy and solar system. So, too, are details of the earth’s size, composition, and history .. The physical and chemical properties of DNA, proteins, lipids, and other substances are superbly fit for the roles they play in the cell. No other kinds of molecules are known

[103] Visions cannot grasp Him,¹⁷⁹ while He grasps the visions. He is the All subtle, the All aware.¹⁸⁰

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ
وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴿١٠٣﴾

that could plausibly fill those roles.. one would be hard pressed to find a category of biomolecule or basic feature of life that isn't finely tuned." (Ibid, p. 214).

179. The word in the original is *yudrikuhu*. Most commentators have understood it in the way we have translated it here. Alternatively, it could be rendered as "encompass Him." That is, a vision of Allah (*swt*) is not denied, but a vision that can fully encompass Him, comprehend Him, or grasp Him in full, has been denied. This is how 'A'isha (*ra*) understood it. When Masruq asked her (in a report in Ibn Abi Hatim: Ibn Kathir), whether Muhammad saw his Lord, she replied: "Glory to Allah. My hair stands on ends for what you say." Then she recited this verse: "Visions cannot grasp Him. But He can grasp visions. He is the All subtle, the All aware."

The Beatific Vision, however, will not be denied to the dwellers in Paradise. It will be denied to those who deny His vision anywhere: in this world or the next. This is proven by several *ahadith*. One of them says:

إِنَّكُمْ سَتَرُونَ رَبَّكُمْ كَمَا تَرُونَ هَذَا الْقَمَرَ لَا تَضَامُونَ فِي رُؤْيَيْهِ

"You shall see your Lord in the Hereafter just as you can see the full moon now, without doubting your sight."

(A report in Muslim narrated by Suhayb says:

إِذَا دَخَلَ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ الْجَنَّةَ، وَأَهْلُ النَّارِ النَّارَ، نَادَى مُنَادٌ: يَا أَهْلَ الْجَنَّةِ، إِنَّ لَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَوْعِدًا يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَنْجِزَكُمْوهُ، فَيَقُولُونَ: وَمَا هُوَ؟ أَلَمْ يَتَّقِلْ مَوَازِينَنَا، وَيُبَيِّضُ وُجُوهَنَا، وَأَدْخَلَنَا الْجَنَّةَ، وَأَخْرَجَنَا مِنَ النَّارِ، قَالَ: فَيَكْشِفُ الْحِجَابَ، فَيَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْهِ، فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ مَا أَعْطَاهُمْ شَيْئًا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّظَرِ إِلَيْهِ

"When the people of Paradise would have entered Paradise, and the people of Fire, the Fire, a caller will call: "O people of Paradise. Allah has made a promise to you which He wishes to fulfill." They will enquire: 'What is it? Did He not effect increase in the weight of our balance, brightened our faces, admitted us into Paradise and released us from the Fire?' At that the veil will be removed and they will see Him. And, He would not have given them anything dearer than to be

seeing Him.”

Therefore, the interpretation of the present verse is: Visions cannot sight Him in this world. In the Hereafter, the true believers will see Him, but they will not be able to encompass Him fully. Some scholars have stressed that humans with these five senses can never see Him. Therefore they will be granted a new sensual faculty by which they will be able to see Him (Ibn Jarir). `Amr b. al Kufiyy was also of this opinion (Razi). Further, Razi adds a few lines later, the posterity might note the point that two major Companions of the Prophet held different opinions about the Prophet having seen or not seen his Lord in his nocturnal journey (`A'isha being of the opinion that he did not see his Lord, but Ibn `Abbas maintaining that he did). But that did not lead them to calling each other misguided, or innovators (bida`i).

Razi also writes: Allah has spoken of His vision being granted to the believers in several other parts of the Qur`an. In one place (10: 26) He said:

لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ [يونس : ٢٦]

“For those who do good, there will be good, and more,” where “more” has been explained as the Beatific Vi-

sion; and (18: 110),

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ [الكهف : ١١٠]

“Therefore, whoever desires meeting His Lord,” which promises the Vision; and (83: 15),

كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَحْجُورُونَ [المطففين : ١٥]

“Nay. That Day they shall be veiled from their Lord.”

And, Qurtubi adds another example (75: 23):

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاصِرَةٌ (٢٢) إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ [القيامة : ٢٢ ، ٢٣]

“Faces that Day will be bright. Looking at their Lord.”

Ibn Kathir writes: Thus it turns out that it is in the sense of comprehending a reality that the word *idrak* has been used in this verse. That is, something the believers would never attain even when they are granted the Beatific Vision, just as one sees the moon, without comprehending its reality in full. When `Ikrimah was asked about this verse (in a report in Ibn Abi Hatim) he responded in the following manner: ‘Do you see the sky?’ The questioner replied: ‘Of course.’ `Ikrimah asked: ‘Do you see the whole of it?!’ Hence, Qatadah has said: ‘Allah is greater than that anyone should ever comprehend

Him.'

As for the question, can anyone see Allah with these physical eyes, it is well known that Ibn 'Abbas held an opinion different from 'A'isha. Treating a report as of the same standard as those of the *Sahihayn*, although they did not narrate it, Hakim has recorded 'Ikrimah as saying: "I heard Ibn 'Abbas say that Muhammad saw His Lord. I asked him, 'Has not Allah said, "Visions cannot grasp Him"?' He replied, 'May you lose your mother. The allusion there is to the *Nur* (Light). If He appears in His *Nur*, none can grasp Him.'" According to another version he said, "Nothing can withstand Him." Of course, Ibn Kathir adds, there is a tradition of the Prophet too which conforms the latter part of what Ibn 'Abbas said. One in the *Sahihayn* narrates Abu Musa al Ash'ariyy as saying that the Prophet said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنَامُ وَلَا يَتَّبَعِي لَهُ أَنْ يَنَامَ يَرْفَعُ الْقِسْطَ
وَيَخْفِضُهُ وَيَرْفَعُ إِلَيْهِ عَمَلُ النَّهَارِ بِاللَّيْلِ وَعَمَلُ اللَّيْلِ
بِالنَّهَارِ حِجَابُهُ النُّورُ لَوْ كَشَفَهُ لَأَحْرَقَتْ سُبْحَاتُ
وَجْهِهِ مَا انْتَهَى إِلَيْهِ بَصَرُهُ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ

"Allah does not sleep and it behooves Him not to sleep. He raises and lowers the Scale. The deeds of the day are raised up to Him by the night, and the deeds of the night by the day. His veil

is *Nur*. If He were to remove the veil, the Glory of His Face will burn down His creations to the extent of His vision."

Quote from Ibn Kathir ends here.

180. Allah is too subtle for visions to grasp Him. Yet He is All aware, so He can grasp all visions, no matter how subtle they be (Razi, Alusi, *Manar*).

Asad comments: "The term *latif* denotes something that is extremely subtle in quality, and therefore intangible and unfathomable. Whenever this term occurs in the Qur'an with reference to God in conjunction with the adjective *khafir* ("All Aware"), it is invariably used to express the idea of His inaccessibility to human perception, imagination or comprehension, as contrasted with His Own all awareness (see apart from the above verse, also 22: 63, 31: 16, 33: 34). In the two instances where the combination of *latif* and *khafir* carries the definite article al (6: 103 and 67: 14), the expression *huwa 'l latif* has the meaning of "He alone is unfathomable" implying that this quality of His is unique and absolute."

181. Razi writes: Just as idrak is to comprehend fully with one's physical eye, *basirah* (pl. *basair*) is to comprehend a thing fully with one's internal

[104] Surely, clear proofs¹⁸¹ have come to you from your Lord. Whoso sees, does it for himself. Whoso remains blind, does it to his own loss.¹⁸² (Tell them), 'I am not a keeper over you.'¹⁸³

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَصَائِرٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلَيْهَا وَمَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِحَفِيظٍ ﴿١٠٤﴾

[105] Thus We propound the revelation variously¹⁸⁴ so that they may say, 'You have taken lessons;'¹⁸⁵ and so that We may make it plain to a people who know.

وَكَذَلِكَ نُنزِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولَئِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

eye. Allah said (75: 14):

بَلِ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ [القيامة : ١٤]
 "Rather, man is well aware of himself"

The textual word herewith is *basa'ir*, plural of *basirah*, which means light of the heart (Shawkani).

182. Qadi has pointed out that this refutes any misgiving about the concept of fatalism in Islam. Further, the verse demonstrates by implication that someone who refuses to think, rationalize things, or follow the course of reason, does it to his own loss. He closes the doors of bestowal both from his self as well as his Lord (based on Razi).

183. That is, 'I am not a keeper of the record of your deeds so that I may punish or reward you. I am only a warner' (Razi).

184. Another possible rendering could be, in the words of Asad: "And thus do

We give many facets to Our messages."

185. The word *darasta* of the text has been variously read, allowing for other meanings such as: "you have studied (the older Scriptures)," "you have learnt (from others)," "you have read (books)," "you have been taught," etc. And the purport of the verse ("Thus We make distinct the signs so that they may say, 'You have taken lessons;' and so that We may make it plain to a people who know") is: That is how We present the Qur'anic text in a variety of styles so that you might not conclude (O unbelievers) that Muhammad learnt it from others; and We do that because We have taken it upon Ourselves to make the message clear to those who have knowledge (Ibn Jarir). A report in Hakim however, declared *Sahih* of narrators although Bukhari and Muslim did not include in their compilation, has Ubayy b. Ka'b saying: "The Prophet taught me to read

[106] Follow that which has been revealed unto you by your Lord; there is no god save He; and turn aside from the associators.

اتَّبِعْ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ
وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

[107] Had Allah willed, they would not have associated.¹⁸⁶ We have not appointed you a guardian¹⁸⁷ over them nor are you a keeper¹⁸⁸ over them.

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكُوا وَمَا جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ
حَفِظًا وَمَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيلٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾

it as “*darasta*” (Ibn Kathir).

186. Asad explains: “I.e., no mortal has it in his power to cause another person to believe unless God graces that person with His guidance.”

187. *Hafiz*: i.e., someone who makes note of their words and deeds (Ibn Kathir).

188. *Wakil*: i.e., someone who is made in charge of their sustenance and their behavior (Ibn Kathir). Penrice defines the word as: “One who takes care of anything for another, guardian of one’s interests, a patron, administrator, disposer of affairs,

witness over a bargain.”

189. According to a report in Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Mar-duwayh, when the Prophet belittled pagan deities, the Makkans threatened that if he would not desist they would in retaliation condemn his Lord. This verse was revealed in response (Shawkani). It has also been reported that some Muslims used to revile pagan gods for which Allah expressed His disapproval through this verse. Further, the rule is general. That is, when there is fear that a good deed will become the cause of an evil, it better be avoided. For

[108] And revile not (O Muslims) those whom they invoke besides Allah or they will, in their ignorance, spitefully revile Allah.¹⁸⁹ That is how We have decked out fair to every people their deeds.¹⁹⁰ Then, unto their Lord is their return and He shall declare unto them what they were doing.

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَلِكَ زَيَّنَّا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

example, it is good to forbid the vice. But, when it is strongly felt that preventing it will lead to greater evil, then forbidding it is a sin and not a virtue (Zamakhshari, Razi).

It is reported of Abu Mansur that he asked: “How come Allah forbid us to revile something that deserves to be reviled, (although so displeasing to Him) that He asked us to wage a war against them?!” Then he answered himself that reviling false gods is not an obligation while fighting in the cause of Islam is an obligation. That is, if reactions of a severe nature result from a non obligatory action, then that action becomes unlawful (Alusi, *Manar*).

The Prophet once said:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو بْنِ الْعَاصِ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قَالَ: مِنَ الْكِبَائِرِ شَتْمُ الرَّجُلِ وَالِدَيْهِ. فَقَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَلْ يَشْتِمُ الرَّجُلُ وَالِدَيْهِ؟ فَقَالَ: «تَعَمَّ يَسُبُّ أَبَا الرَّجُلِ فَيَسُبُّ أَبَاهُ وَيَسُبُّ أُمَّهُ فَيَسُبُّ أُمَّهُ»

“It is major sin for a man to revile

his parents.” They asked: “Messenger of Allah. Can someone revile his parents?” He replied: “Yes. He reviles another’s father, and he revile his parents” (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani). The *hadith* is in Muslim and Tirmidhi (S. Ibrahim).

Zamakhshari adds: It is said that both Hasan al-Busri and Ibn Sirin came to attend a funeral. They found some women also attending the event. When Ibn Sirin saw them he turned back and left. But Hasan did not, saying, “If we give up an obligation because of an accompanying evil, then we will have to do without many obligations.”

Hence, Shafi` adds, if it is known that admonishing a man will invoke him out of spite to greater evils, then he should not be admonished.

Asad adds: “This prohibition of reviling anything that other people hold sacred even in contravention

of the principle of God's oneness is expressed in the plural and is, therefore, addressed to all believers. Thus, while Muslims are expected to argue against the false beliefs of others, they are not allowed to abuse the objects of those beliefs and to hurt thereby the feelings of their erring fellow men."

Rashid Rida writes that by implication the word *Kafir* ought not be used for the unbelievers in general. That is because originally the word *Kafir* stood for concealing or hiding something, in which sense the Qur'an used the word for a farmer (48: 29). In earlier times it was used for those unbelievers who concealed the truth in their hearts of Allah's Oneness. But, with the passage of time, the word has acquired the connotations of insult and humiliation. Now, since insulting or humiliating the people is not allowed in Islam, the unbelievers may not be called *Kafirs* now. The Hanafiyyah, for instance, state (in *Mu'in al Hukkam*) that if a Muslim insults a *Dhimmi*, he deserves retribution. They have also ruled that if a Muslim said to a *Dhimmi* "O *Kafir*" and he felt humiliated, (he has to be compensated). Sayyid Qutb adds: "The previous verse instructed the Prophet to "turn

aside from the associators." This one instructs the believers how they should do it. It should be done with grace and not in the cheap manner of calling their deities names or disparaging them in some manner. This is the kind of attitude that is becoming of the believers: those who have confidence in their faith, whose hearts and minds rest assured in the correctness of the opinions held by them."

190. Asad writes: "(This implies) that it is in the nature of man to regard the beliefs which have been implanted in him from childhood, and which he now shares with his social environment, as the only true and possible ones with the result that a polemic against those beliefs often tends to provoke a hostile psychological reaction."

As for Allah decking out fair their evil deeds to the unbelievers, Mawdudi offers the following explanation: "Here we should understand .. that God declares those things which take place as a result of the operation of the laws of nature to be His own act, for it is He Who has made those laws. Whatever results from the operation of those laws, therefore, results from His command. Whenever God states that a certain act was

[109] They swore by God the most earnest oath that if a sign came to them they will believe in it. Say, 'Signs are only with Allah.'¹⁹¹ And what will make you realize (O Muslims) that when it comes they will not believe.¹⁹²

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِن جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ لَّيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ أَنَّهَا إِذَا جَاءَتْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

﴿١٠٩﴾

His, the same might be described by humans as occurring in the natural course of things.”

Rashid Rida puts it in another way: The “becoming fair” of the evil deeds is because of the actions which preceded those deeds and which were themselves a matter of choice. The unbelievers chose to disbelieve in the message, and clung to their old ways. When they re confirmed their attitudes to the old ways, they began to approve of them and love them. That love (of what is in one’s practice), is the law of nature, a making of Allah. Yet they are fully responsible for it since they are in the situation of approving the reprehensible by their choice. Allah only created a liking for one’s own practices. He did not impose the likings and those practices. Belief and disbelief are not planted in the hearts. They are a matter of choice.

191. “Here is one of the most important teachings of Islam: Miracles, signs, wonders, portents, or what-

ever they might be called, in no case occur by any action of the messenger of God, but by the power of God Himself. No miracle, however clear its evidentiary value, is ever an act of a mortal. The prophet or apostle has no hand in its causation: he only uses it by the command of God, as an evidence of the veracity of his claims. A miracle is nothing but an invasion of the order of nature, as known to us in common experience, by the command of the Creator of nature, to exhibit the veracity of the claims of His messenger” (Majid).

192. It is reported that once the Prophet invited the Quraysh to Islam. They said: Muhammad, you tell us that Musa had a rod with which he struck a rock and it sprouted 12 springs. You say `Isa quickened the dead. You say Thamud were given a (miraculous) camel. Bring us a sign too. The Prophet asked them what sort of a sign would satisfy them. They said, “Let Mount Safa be converted to gold.” He asked them if

[110] We shall turn away their hearts and eyes because they did not believe in it in the first instance,¹⁹³ and leave them in their insolvency stumbling blindly.

وَتَقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

they would believe if that was done. They assured him that they would. The Prophet got up to supplicate. Jibril appeared and told him that if they would not believe after the sign they would be destroyed, but, if left alone, some of them would surely turn to their Lord in repentance. The Prophet agreed to the proposal and this verse was revealed (Ibn Jarir, Razi, Qurtubi).

Further, in the words of Rashid Rida, if they denied the Qur'an, which throws out so many challenges and is an irrefutable Sign by itself, then denying anything else would be much easier. They could easily say to a physical sign that it was magic, a sleight of hand, a deception of the eye, and so forth.

193. That is, even if Allah were to send a fresh sign, He would turn away the hearts of the unbelievers from believing in it because they refused to believe at the first instance the message became clear to them as something from their Lord (Au.).

Asad writes: "... so long as they re-

main blind to the truth in consequence of their unwillingness to acknowledge it and this in accordance with the law of cause and effect which God has imposed on His creation."

That is the *Sunnah* of Allah, writes Rashid Rida. The "causes" belong to the creations and are their making. But Allah attributes the "effects" of those "causes" to Himself, since, after all, nothing comes to being but by His leave. Yet many are misguided by this kind of statements because they refuse to think.

Sayyid adds: "It is not the lack of evidences or proofs that leads the hearts to disbelief. It is the sickness of the heart, the despoiling of its true nature, the abstruseness of the self. On the other hand, guidance is something that does not come to those who do not go for it, who do not strive for it."

194. The word *qubulan* as appearing in the text can be understood variously. One possible meaning is "species after species." That is, "Were We

[111] *Even if We were to send down angels to them, the dead were to speak to them, and were We to gather together for them every (dead) thing (alive): face to face,¹⁹⁴ they would not believe,¹⁹⁵ unless Allah willed.¹⁹⁶ But most of them are ignorant.¹⁹⁷*

وَلَوْ أَنَّا تَرَيْنَا إِلَىٰ إِيَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَكَلَّمَهُم
 الْمَوْتَىٰ وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قُبُلًا
 مَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَكِنَّ
 أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَجْهَلُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

to gather together every (dead) thing: species after species, or groups after groups,” they would still not believe. This is the opinion of Qatadah. Another possibility is “tribe after tribe” which is the opinion of `Abdullah b. Yezid and Mujahid (Ibn Jarir). The translation follows the interpretation of Ibn `Abbas as in Ibn Jarir too (Au.).

195. This is in response to their claim in the earlier verse that, “*if a sign came to them they would believe*” (Ibn Jarir).

196. “The people under discussion are so perverse that they do not prefer to embrace the Truth in preference to falsehood by rightly exercising their choice and volition. The only way that is left for them to become lovers of the Truth is, therefore, that by His overpowering will God should render them truth loving not by their choice and volition, but by metamorphasizing their very nature. Such a course, however, goes against the wisdom which underlies

the creation of man” (Mawdudi).

197. Sayyid comments: “There are a few points that must find a proper perspective in the minds of the readers for a full realization of the meaning involved in this verse and others of similar nature. Firstly, faith and unfaith, guidance and misguidance are not directly related to proofs and evidences. The truth contains the proof in itself. It has its own grip over the heart, making it incline to itself and cling to it. But there are deterrents that fall in between the heart and the truth. Allah said about the attitude of the unbelievers:

وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ أَنَّهَا إِذَا جَاءَتْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (١٠٩)
 وَتَقَلِّبُ آفِئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوَّلَ
 مَرَّةٍ وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ [الأنعام : ١٠٩
 ، ١١٠]

“And what will make you (O Muslims) realize that when it (the sign) comes they will not believe. We turn away their hearts and eyes because they did not believe in it in the first instance, and leave them in their insolence stumbling

blindly.”

So, whatever happened to them earlier, is most likely to happen again even after the signs are revealed to prevent them from believing. The inspiration to believe is already there within the hearts. It is external impediments that come in the way. And it is the external impediments that must be attended to.

Secondly, it is Allah’s will to which ultimately all affairs return and depend upon, whether it be the affairs concerned with guidance or error. Nevertheless, Allah’s will has determined that man be initially given the freedom to choose. In this lies his test. Whoever is inclined to guidance and is prepared at his heart to receive it, will have Allah’s Will lead him to it notwithstanding in what situation he happens to be. In contrast, if someone shows disinclination to the divine guidance, ignoring the evidences that are apparent to him, then Allah’s Will also works to lead him to error and throw him off the track, wandering blindly in darkneses. Allah’s Will of course fully circumscribes men and, in the final resort, decisions concerning all affairs return to Him alone. Hence Allah’s words: *“We turn away their hearts and eyes because they did not be-*

lieve in it in the first instance (that the truth became apparent to them), and leave them in their insolence stumbling blindly.”

Thirdly, whether they be obedient or habitual sinners, they are all equally in the power of Allah under His command and rule. None of them can bring into existence anything save by Allah’s decree and determination in consonance with the *Sunan* of Allah that He has set concerning the affairs of His creations. But, in so far as the believers are concerned, they work to harmonize within the limited freedom of choice that they enjoy what is imposed upon them by Allah’s irresistible Will, that works on their bodies, on every cell, and in every recess of the mind .. they try to harmonize this .. along with their own submission, adopted by choice, and following their acceptance of the guidance. In consequence of this, they are in peace with themselves. They realize that what is imposed on them from on High, and what they adopt by choice, both follow the same rules and are controlled by the same Power. As for others, they too have no choice over what is enforced by Allah’s Will. But, in so far as those areas are concerned, where they have the freedom to choose, they opt to

[112] Thus We have assigned for every Prophet¹⁹⁸ enemies from among the Satans of the Jinn and mankind¹⁹⁹ who inspire one another with ornamental deceptive words.²⁰⁰ Had your Lord willed, they would not have done it,²⁰¹ so leave them alone, and that which they forge.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ
الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ
زُخْرَفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا
فَعَلُوهُ فَذَرُهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

[113] So that the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter, might incline to it, so that they might delight in it, and so that they might earn what they are earning.

وَلِتَصْغَى إِلَيْهِ أَفْئِدَةُ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِالْآخِرَةِ وَلِيَرْضَوْهُ وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوا مَا هُمْ مُّقْتَرِفُونَ
﴿١١٣﴾

rebel against Allah, His Plans and His Will. They end up wretched because of the split that their personalities undergo.

198. Thus it is nothing exceptional with you, O Prophet, that you should be tried (Ibn Jarir). As Waraqah b. Nawfal had said to the Prophet, adds Ibn Kathir, "No one ever came with the message you have brought, but he had enemies."

199. It is reported that once when Abu Dharr entered the mosque the Prophet asked him if he had offered (the two *rak'ah* of) Prayers. When he said no, he instructed him to do so. When he was through the Prophet asked him if he had sought Allah's refuge from the evil of the *Shayatin* of men and Jinn? Abu Dharr asked: "Are there *Shayatin* of men?" The Prophet replied: "Yes" (Ibn Jarir). The *hadith* is weak. But it comes to

us through several ways gathering strength (Ibn Kathir).

Zamakhshari quotes Malik b. Dinar as saying that to him the devils of men are more fearful than the Devil himself, for the latter can be chased away with the words of Allah but the former cannot be got rid of as easily.

200. The translation follows the understanding of `Ikrimah, Suddi, Mujahid and Ibn `Abbas as in Ibn Jarir (Au.).

Mawdudi writes: "The Prophet (peace be upon him) is told that he should not be unnerved even if the evil ones among both mankind and the jinn stood united against him and opposed him with all their might. For this was not the first time that such a thing had happened. Whenever a Prophet came and tried to lead people to the Truth, all the satanic forces joined hands to defeat

his purposes.”

201. Mawdudi comments: “... according to the Qur'an there is a tremendous difference between 'God's will' and 'God's good pleasure.' The failure to differentiate between the two often gives rise to serious misconceptions. If a certain thing takes place in accordance with the universal will of God, and thus by His sanction, that does not necessarily mean that God is pleased with it. Nothing at all takes place in the world unless God permits it to take place, unless He makes it a part of His scheme, and unless He makes it possible for that event to take place by creating its necessary conditions. The act of stealing on the part of a thief, the act of homicide on the part of a murderer, the wrong and corruption of the wrong doer and corrupt, the unbelief of the unbeliever and the polytheism of the polytheist none of these are possible without the will of God. Likewise, the faith of the believer and the piety of the pious are inconceivable without the will of God. In short, both these require the will of God. But whereas the things in the first category do not please Him, those in the second do.

“Even though the will of God is oriented to ultimate good, the course of

the realization of that good is paved with conflict between the forces of light and darkness, of good and evil, or what is firm and pure on the one hand and what is corrupt and defiled on the other. With larger interests in view, God has endowed man with the disposition of obedience as well as of disobedience. He has created in man Abrahamic and Mosaic as well as Nimrodic and Pharaonic potentialities. Both the pure, unadulterated human nature and satanic urges are ingrained in man's nature and have been provided with opportunity to work themselves out by coming into conflict with each other. He has granted those species of His creatures who are possessed of authority (viz. man and jinn) the freedom to choose between good and evil. Who-soever chooses to act righteously has been given the power to do so, and the same is the case with him who chooses to be evil. People of both categories are in a position to use material resources within the framework of the broader considerations underlying God's governance of His universe. God will be pleased, however, only with those who are working for good. God likes His creatures to exercise their freedom of choice properly and commit themselves to good out of their own volition.”

[114] (Ask them), 'Should I search for a judge other than Allah, while He it is who sent down the Book to you²⁰² explaining in detail?' Those whom We have vouchsafed the Book know it that it has been sent down by Your Lord with truth. Therefore, be not of the doubters.²⁰³

أَفَعَبِّرَ اللَّهُ أَبْغِي حَكْمًا وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ
إِلَيْكُمْ الْكِتَابَ مُفَصَّلًا وَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ
الْكِتَابَ يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ مُنَزَّلٌ مِنْ رَبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ
فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

[115] Perfected is the Word of your Lord in truth and justice.²⁰⁴ There is no altering His Words. He is the All hearing, the All knowing.

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا لَا مُبَدِّلَ
لِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١١٥﴾

[116] But if you obeyed the majority of those on the earth, they will lead you away from the path of Allah. They follow not but conjecture, and they indulge in nothing but guess work.²⁰⁵

وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا
يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

202: Majid writes: “anzala ilaykum” is not quite the same as “anzala `alaykum.” Hence the rendering of the former phrase as ‘sent down toward you.’

203. Although the first recipient was the Prophet, it seems more likely that the *Ummah* has been addressed through him (Au.).

204. That is, perfect it is in truth when the Word is a statement of fact, or is a past report, and in justice when it is a commandment or a prohibition: Qatadah (Ibn Kathir).

205. Asad explains: “(That is), regarding the true nature of human life and its ultimate destiny, the problem of revelation, the relationship between God and man, the meaning of

good and evil, etc. Apart from leading man astray from spiritual truths, such guesswork gives rise to the arbitrary rules of conduct and self imposed inhibitions to which the Qur'an alludes, by way of example, in verses 118 and 119.”

206. The choice of words may be noted. Allah said, “Your Lord is well aware of those who swerve away..” Here, the last few words indicate that it is by his own choice that a person swerves away,” while in the following words, “He is well aware of the rightly guided,” (and not “those who chose guidance”) the implication hidden is that being on the right guidance is to a great degree because of the original implantation of *Tawhid* in the human soul (Alusi).

[117] Your Lord is well aware of those who swerve away from His path as He is well aware of the rightly guided.²⁰⁶

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ مَنْ يَضِلُّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ
وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١١٧﴾

[118] Eat then of that over which Allah's Name has been pronounced if you believe in His revelations.²⁰⁷

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
بِآيَاتِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

207. That is, what has been declared unlawful in verse 3 of *Al Ma'idah* which says:

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالِدَمُّ وَالْحَنْزِيرُ وَمَا أُهْلِيَ
لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْحَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْفُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ
وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ
وَأَنْ تَسْتَفْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَامِ ذَلِكُمْ فِسْقٌ الْيَوْمَ يَبْسُ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَحْشَوْهُمْ وَاحْشَوْنَ الْيَوْمَ
أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ
لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرِ
مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِيْمٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ [المائدة : ٣]

"Forbidden unto you are carrion, blood, swine's flesh, what has been consecrated to other than Allah, the (beast) strangled (to death), or (the one that died) by a violent blow, or by a fall from a height, or one gored with the horns (to death by another animal), and (the one killed and) devoured by the wild beasts unless you have sacrificed

them duly and what is slaughtered on the altars ..." (up to) ... "whoever is forced in (extreme) hunger (to eat of the unlawful) without any inclination (in the heart) for a sin, surely (for such) Allah is Forgiving, Kind" (Ibn Jarir).

208. This excludes however that animal over which Allah's Name was not pronounced due to forgetfulness, the slaughterer being either a Muslim or one of the People of the Book. On the other hand, if anyone does not spell the Name intentionally, then the slaughtered animal is unlawful to Muslims (Ibn Jarir). This happens to be the opinion of the Hanafiyyah, Imām Malik, Ahmad b. Hanbal, and according to one report, that of Imām Shafe'i too, although other opinions have also been attributed

[119] *And what ails you that you should not eat of that over which Allah's Name has been pronounced seeing that He has explained to you in detail what He has made unlawful to you, unless you are compelled by dire necessity?*²⁰⁸ *Surely, most people mislead following their caprices without any knowledge; surely, Allah is well aware of the transgressors.*

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ
وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُمْ مَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا
اضْطُررْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا لِّيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَائِهِمْ
بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

[120] *Forsake sin:*²⁰⁹ *the open of it and the secret of it.*²¹⁰ *Verily those who earn sins shall soon be requited for what they were earning.*

وَذَرُوا ظَاهِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
يَكْسِبُونَ الْإِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَقْتَرِفُونَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

[121] *But do not eat of that over which Allah's Name has not been pronounced.*²¹¹ *Surely, it is impiety. Verily, the devils whisper unto their friends*²¹² *so that they may dispute with you.*²¹³ *But, if you obey them, surely, you will turn associators.*²¹⁴

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ
وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ وَإِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ لَيُوحُونَ إِلَى
أَوْلِيَائِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ
لَمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

to him (Ibn Kathir).

209. According to a report in Muslim, Nuwas b. Sam'an asked the Prophet about what constitutes sin. He replied:

الإثمُ ما حاك في نفسك وكرهت أن يطَّلعَ عليه النَّاسُ

“Sin is that which pricks you in the heart and which you would not like the people to know about” (Ibn Kathir).

210. The verse tells us that of sins there are two kinds: those committed with the body organs and those committed with the heart (Alusi, Thanwi).

211. “The purpose of this and the following verse is not, as might appear in the first glance, a repetition of already pronounced food laws but, rather, a reminder that the observance of such laws should not be made an end in itself and an object of ritual: and this is the reason why these two verses have been placed in the midst of a discourse on God's transcendental unity and the ways of men's faith. The “errand views” spoken of in verse 119 are such as that lay stress on artificial rituals and taboos than on spiritual values” (Asad).

212. A man called Al Mukhtar b. Abu 'Ubayd nicknamed Abu Is-haq

used to claim that he received revelations. Ibn Zumayyil says, “I was sitting in the assembly of Ibn `Abbas (during the pilgrimage season: Ibn Kathir) when a man came in and asked: “O Ibn `Abbas. Abu Is-haq claims that he received *wahiy* (revelations) last night. What’s your opinion?” Ibn `Abbas replied: “The man spoke the truth.” Ibn Zumayyil says I protested. Ibn `Abbas said: “There are two types of revelations: the one which Allah sends to His Messengers, and the other which the devil sends to his friends.” Then he recited this verse (Ibn Jarir).

213. `Abdullah ibn Kathir (not the famous commentator Ibn Kathir: Au.) has said that the devils used to whisper into the hearts of the pagans thoughts such as: ‘What after all is the difference between the animal that died by itself and the one that was slaughtered? Were they not both the same? So why should one be lawful and the other unlawful?’ Ibn `Abbas has said that the pagans used to say, in effect: ‘The animal that dies a natural death is the slaughtered of Allah. How come then, that the revelation declares the slaughtered of men lawful but the slaughtered of Allah unlawful?’ Allah revealed this verse in response. Some other reports

suggest that the Jews had also circulated similar doubts (Ibn Jarir).

Reports about Jews raising such doubts are in Tirmidhi, Abu Da`ud, Bazzar and others, with the last mentioned declaring them of *hassan* status. But Hakim has declared one version *Sahih* (Shawkani).

214. Declaring the lawful of Allah as unlawful or the other way round, is to commit *shirk* as the Prophet told `Adiyy b. Hatim who denied that the Christians ever took Lords besides Allah. The Prophet asked him:

”أَلَيْسَ يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ فَتُحَرِّمُونَهُ وَيُحِلُّونَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ، فَتَسْتَحِلُّونَهُ؟“ قُلْتُ: بَلَى، قَالَ: ”فَتِلْكَ عِبَادَتُهُمْ“

“Did it not happen that the rabbis and priests declared the lawful of Allah as unlawful or the unlawful of Allah as lawful?” When `Adiyy said yes, the Prophet said: “That was taking them Lords besides Allah” (Ibn Kathir).

Tirmidhi has a slightly different version of the *hadith*, which he declared of *Hassan* status.

215. Thus, the rightly guided is likened to the living, and the “path” itself to light (based on Thanwi).

216. Mawdudi comments: “The law of God with regard to those to whom

[122] What? Can one who was dead, then We gave him life and appointed a Light whereby he strides among the people,²¹⁵ be like he who is in darkneses out of which he cannot emerge? That is how decked out fair to the unbelievers is what they do.²¹⁶

أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا
يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَثَلُهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ
لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

[123] And that is how We have appointed in every town high ranking criminals so that they might scheme therein.²¹⁷ Yet they scheme not but against themselves; but they realize not.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ أَكْبَارًا مُجْرِمِيهَا
لِيَمْكُرُوا فِيهَا وَمَا يَمْكُرُونَ إِلَّا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ
وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

light is presented but who willfully refuse to act according to it, preferring to follow their crooked path even after they have been invited to follow the Straight Way, is that in the course of time such people begin to cherish darkness, and to enjoy groping their way into dark, stumbling and falling as they proceed.”

217. The allusion is to the scheming and plotting against Islam and its message. Allah said at another place (34: 31 33):

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ مَوْقُوفُونَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يَرْجِعُ
بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ الْقَوْلَ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا
لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا لَوْلَا أَنشَأَ لَكُمْنَا مُؤْمِنِينَ (٣١) قَالَ
الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا أَنَحْنُ صَدَدْنَاكُمْ
عَنِ الْهُدَىٰ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَكُمْ بَلْ كُنْتُمْ مُجْرِمِينَ (٣٢)
وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا بَلْ مَكْرُ اللَّيْلِ
وَالنَّهَارِ إِذْ تَأْتُونَنَا أَن نَّكْفُرَ بِاللَّهِ وَنَجْعَلَ لَهُ أَنْدَادًا
[سبأ : ٣١ ، ٣٣]

“If you were to see the transgres-

sors held before their Lord, some of them replying to others; the weaker ones saying to the arrogant ones, ‘If not for you, we would have been believers.’ Those who had been arrogant replying to the weak ones, ‘Was it we who prevented you from guidance after it had come to you? Rather, you were yourself criminals.’ The weaker ones would say to the arrogant ones, ‘Rather, it was your scheming day in and day out wherewith you provoked us to disbelieve in Allah and declare His equals’” (Ibn Kathir).

Asad writes: “Because the consciousness of their importance makes them more or less impervious to criticism, the “great ones” (Asad’s rendering of “akabira mujrimih”) are, as a rule, rather less inclined than other people to question the moral aspect of their own behavior; and the resulting self righteousness only too often causes

[124] When a sign came to them they said, 'We shall not believe until we are given the like of what the Messengers of Allah were given.' Allah knows best where to place His Message.²¹⁸ Abasement in the sight of Allah will be the share of those who committed crimes,²¹⁹ and a terrible chastisement for what they were plotting.

وَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ قَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ حَتَّى نُؤْتَىٰ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ رُسُلُ اللَّهِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا صَغَارٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَعَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

them to commit grave misdeeds.”

218. The Quraysh were of the opinion that the Prophet was not the right choice for Messengership. They said that one of their men should have been chosen for it, as the Qur'an said (43: 31):

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا تَرَلَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقُرَيْشِيِّينَ
عَظِيمٍ [الزخرف : ٣١]

“They say, ‘Only if this Qur'an had been sent down unto a man of one of the two great towns (i.e., Makkah and Tayif).’ But Allah knew who was most suitable for the mission. The Prophet said in a *hadith* of Muslim:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ اصْطَفَىٰ مِنْ وَلَدِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِسْمَاعِيلَ
وَاصْطَفَىٰ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْمَاعِيلَ كِنَانَةَ وَاصْطَفَىٰ مِنْ
بَنِي كِنَانَةَ قُرَيْشًا وَاصْطَفَىٰ مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ بَنِي هَاشِمٍ
وَاصْطَفَانِي مِنْ بَنِي هَاشِمٍ

“Allah chose Isma'il from the sons of Ibrahim. He chose Kinanah from the sons of Isma'il. From Banu Kinanah He chose the Quraysh. From the Quraysh

He chose Banu Hashim. And from Banu Hashim He chose me.” And Ibn Mas'ud has been reported as saying in Musnad Ahmad: “Allah surveyed the hearts of the people and found the heart of Muhammad the best. So He chose him for Messengership. Then He surveyed the hearts of the people and found the hearts of his Companions better than the rest of the people. So He made them supporters of His Messenger. They fight for his religion. So what the Muslims see as good is good in the sight of Allah and what the Muslims see as evil is evil in the sight of Allah.” (By Muslims he meant perhaps the Companions: Au.). It is also said that someone spotted Ibn 'Abbas entering the mosque. He was much impressed by his personality. He enquired: “Who is this man?” They said: “Ibn 'Abbas.” (A cousin of the

[125] Whomsoever Allah intends to guide, He opens his heart for Islam.²²⁰ And whomsoever He intends to lead astray, He makes his heart, narrow, constricted,²²¹ as if he were engaged in sheer ascent²²² into the heaven.²²³ That is how Allah lays abomination²²⁴ on those who do not believe.

فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ
لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ
ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ
كَذَلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرِّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

[126] This is the path of your Lord: straight. Surely, We have expounded the verses in detail for a people who will receive admonition.

وَهَذَا صِرَاطٌ رَبِّكَ مُسْتَقِيمًا قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا
الآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

[127] Theirs is the abode of peace with their Lord; He is their Patron for what they were doing.

لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلَامِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمْ بِمَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

Prophet). The man remarked:
“Allah knows best where to place
His Message” (Ibn Kathir).

(Another direct implication of the
choice of the words is): “Allah knows
best in what place should He place
His revelation” (Zamakhshari).

219. Hence a *hadith* of Muslim says:

إِنَّ الْغَادِرَ يَنْصَبُ لَهُ لُؤَاءَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَيَعْمَلُ هَدِيَةً
عَدْرَةً فَلَا يَنْ

“A flag post will be pitched near
the buttocks of every dishonest
person. It will be said, “This is the
dishonesty of so and so”” (Ibn
Kathir).

220. It is reported by several narra-
tors that the Prophet (*saws*) was once
asked about how the hearts open up

for Islam. He answered:

إن النور إذا دخل الصدر انفسح فقليل : يا رسول
الله هل لذلك من علم يعرف ؟ قال : نعم التجاني
عن دار الغرور و الإنابة إلى دار الخلود و الاستعداد
للموت قبل نزوله

“It is a light which is placed in
his heart so that the heart relaxes
and opens up.” He was asked if
there was an external sign. He
replied: “Inclination toward the
everlasting abode, disinclination
toward the deceptive world, and
preparations for death before the
appointed hour” (Ibn Jarir).

Various versions of this *hadith* have
been reported by `Abdul Razzaq,
Firyabi, Ibn Abi Shaybah, `Abd b.
Humayd, Ibn al Mundhir, Mardu-

wayh and Bayhaqi (Shawkani). Ibn Kathir adds: some of the chain of narrations are complete while some are discontinuous.

What Ibn Kathir means perhaps is that although, because of some weakness or the other, none of the *ahadith* can be declared *Sahih*, as a whole they acquire the status of *hasan* because of multiple narrations (Au.).

221. The textual word is “*haraj*” (pl.: *harjah*) which is used for a tree within a grove so thickly surrounded with other trees that no one, (neither beast nor man), can reach it. This is how a bedouin explained the word to `Umar ibn al Khattab when he asked him. In response `Umar said: “That is the example of the heart of a hypocrite. No good will ever enter into it.” The word however has a general connotation of “constriction” as Allah said (22: 78):

وَمَا جَعَلْ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ [الحج : ٧٨]
 “He did not place on you any con-
 striction in the religion.”

Sa`id ibn Jubayr has pointed out another connotation when he said “*haraj*” is that state in which a man finds no way out but upward (Ibn Jarir).

222. The Qur`an did not say “*yas`adu*” which would mean he climbs up;

rather, it used a stronger form to say “*yassa`adu*” which means “he struggles to ascend.” That is because the act of ascension causes constriction to the heart: a feeling of the heart being left behind as one climbs up, say in an aircraft. One could get the same feeling while climbing a mountain, but the ascent there is so gradual one would fail to notice it. Further, the Qur`an did not say, “as if he is climbing a mountain.” It used the word “heaven” in conjunction with the word “*yassa`adu*” which put together with “*harajan*” express the sensation of one whose heart has to overcome the gravitational pull of the earth as his body speedily rises up. One may ask himself. If the Prophet was the author of this Book, how was he able to describe so accurately a sensation that mankind had to wait fourteen hundred years for the invention of air crafts to experience? (Au.).

223. This feeling of constriction manifests itself when the man hears about God, His Oneness, His Attributes, etc. The man feels very uncomfortable. In contrast, when someone other than God is mentioned in his presence, his breast opens up with cheer (Au.).

224. The opinion of Ibn `Abbas is that by the textual word “*rijs*” the allusion is to *Shaytan* who is bound to a man when he decides to disbelieve.

[128] *The Day He will muster them all together, 'O community of Jinns! Surely much (toll) did you take of men.'* Their friends among mankind will say, 'Our Lord! Surely, some of us drew advantages of others²²⁵ and have arrived at the term You had determined for us.' He will say, 'The Fire is your abode, abiding therein forever, except as Allah will.'²²⁶ Surely your Lord is All wise, All knowing.

وَيَوْمَ يُحْشِرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنَّ قَدِ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ وَقَالَ أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ رَبَّنَا اسْتَمْتَعَ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَبَلَّغْنَا أَجَلَنَا الَّذِي أَجَلْتَ لَنَا قَالَ النَّارُ مَثْوَاكُمْ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

The word is also used for dirt and filth (Ibn Jarir).

225. It is reported that in pre Islamic times when an Arab camped in a valley he would say: "I seek refuge with the lord of this valley," meaning the Jinn. That is, men's acknowledgement of the power of the Jinn lies in the former placing them in an advantageous position. This is what is alluded to by one taking advantage of the other (Zamakhshari). Other scholars have said that the fact that the Jinn enjoy the obedience of mankind is the advantage that one draws of the other (Au.).

Yusuf Ali adds: "It is common experience that the forces of evil make an alliance with each other, and seem thus to make a profit by their mutual log rolling. But this is only in this material world. When the limited term expires, their unholy alli-

ance will be exposed, and there will be nothing but regrets."

226. Ibn `Abbas has said that in the light of this verse, it is not right for anyone to speak on behalf of Allah, admitting some to Paradise and assigning others to Hell fire (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, Shawkani). This statement of Ibn `Abbas is in Ibn al Mundhir, Ibn Abi Hatim and Abu al Sheikh (Shawkani).

227. Sayyid Qutb writes: "A universal rule of great consequence has been enunciated here. It concerns the nature of friendship between the Satans of men and Jinn. The evil doers, that is, those who commit the sin of association, in some form or the other, gather their forces together on one front in order to thwart the truth and guidance. They assist each other in confronting the Prophets and believers in them. These, just as

[129] *That is how We let some of the transgressors befriend others,²²⁷ for what they were earning.²²⁸*

وَكَذَلِكَ نُؤَيِّ بِغُضِّ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضًا بِمَا
كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

they are men of the same nature, no matter how different their outward appearances, also share a common interest, viz., to force their lordship on the people, as well as follow their carnal desires unrestrained by the divine commandments.

“We discover them as one block in every epoch, some supporting the others, despite deep differences among themselves over other issues. But, when the confrontation is with the religion of Allah and His beloved ones, they are one body. Thus, it is the sharing of the objectives that makes them friends of each other. Therefore, in keeping with what they strive for in this world, they would be kept together in the Hereafter.

“We have been seeing these forces – for the past several centuries – a huge force commanding the participation of the Satanic men of the crusaders, the zionists, the pagans and the communists, who have been, despite differences among themselves, one against Islam, and against the destruction of every Islamic movement.

“It is of course an awesome gang. It

commands centuries of experience against Islam, armed with the most dreadful tools of destruction, to be employed in the implementation of its Satanic strategies. This ganging up is an interpretation of the words of Allah: “*That is how We let some of the transgressors befriend each other.*”

“But the Prophet and those who would follow him in his ways, are told not to be concerned too much about them. They are consoled in words: ‘*Had your Lord willed, they would not have done it. Therefore leave them alone, and that which they forge.*’”

228. The translation adopted here follows Qatadah’s explanation, who said, “Allah lets some of the transgressor befriend others because of their deeds. Accordingly, a believer is the friend (*waliyy*) of another believer, wheresoever the two might be: close at hand or afar. And an unbeliever is the friend of an unbeliever, wheresoever the two might be. Faith is not the name of good wishes or of dreams (Ibn Jarir).

There has been another interpreta-

tion. It also originates from Qatadah. In Mawdudi's words it is: "Just as the wrong doers had been accomplices in sin and evil during their earthly life, they would remain companions in the After life as well as share in punishment."

The attribution to Allah of letting some befriend others, adds Rashid Rida, is following the general rule that, in the final resort, it is Allah who sanctions all deeds. It is not that things were destined that way, as the Qadariyyah said, nor was there a denial of choice, as the Jabariyyah alleged. Rather, it was similarities in outlook and purposes with full agreement over transgression that some of the men came to befriend others. 'By Allah,' adds Rashid Rida, 'if you were to be obedient to Allah but did not know others who are similarly in acts of obedience, it will not hurt you. So too, if you were to be sinning, but kept the company of the most righteous, it would do you no profit. Merely the company of this or that group would do you no good, if you do not come up with

the right kind of deeds.'

Rashid Rida also quotes from Abu Sheikh that Mansur b. abi al Aswad said, "I asked A'mash about this verse as to what have you heard from your elders (senior Followers the *tabe' iyyun*) in explanation?" He replied, "I heard them say that when the people are corrupt they come to have the most evil of them as their leader." This is how the senior *tabe' iyyun* understood the verse, although the *hadith* that is often quoted in this connection, viz., "You will have rulers over you who are the like of you," is extremely weak.

229. The scholars are divided over messengers to the Jinn, whether they were raised from among themselves or those of the mankind addressed them too. Dahhak has said that messengers were sent to them from among them, but Ibn Jurayj feels differently, and a statement of Ibn 'Abbas implies that the messengers to them were from mankind. As for the words here "*from among you*", the explanation is that they are in the same vein as the verse speaking

[130] 'O assembly of Jinn and mankind! Did not Messengers come to you from amongst you,²²⁹ narrating to you Our revelations and warning you of the encounter of this your Day?' They will say, 'We testify against ourselves.'²³⁰ It was the life of this world which deluded them so that they testified against themselves that they were unbelievers.

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ
مِّنكُمْ يُفَصِّحُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ
لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا قَالُوا شَهِدْنَا عَلَى
أَنْفُسِنَا وَعَرَّتْهُمْ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَشَهِدُوا عَلَى
أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

of both river and sea waters: “pearls and corals come out of them,” (55: 22) although what is meant is from one of them (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

Rashid Rida however rejects the argument and points out that the verse quoted to prove the point does not hold its ground because ancient Arabs did not know that even rivers can produce pearls and precious stones as remarked by Sale, the famous translator of the Qur'an, in his notes on Baydawi. All the same, the verse:

إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ [الأحقاف :
٣٠]

“We have heard a Book sent down after Musa” (46: 30) tell us that at least Musa (*asws*) was sent unto them too.

Nonetheless, Kalbi has stated that the messengers unto the Jinn were from among themselves until the commissioning of our Prophet who was the messenger unto both men and Jinn (Zamakhshari).

Imām Razi feels that in the absence of clear evidence, one might accept the face value of the words of the verse in question: “O assembly of Jinn and mankind! Did not Messengers come to you from among you?”

Qadi Thanā'ullah Panipati has also stated in his *Tafsir Maz-hari* that since the Jinn were there before men on earth, messengers from among themselves should have been sent to them (*Ma'arif*).

230. Here it is stated that the unbelievers will admit that they were on the wrong. But elsewhere in the Qur'an, it is stated that they will refuse to admit that they were associators. E.g.,

وَاللَّهُ رَبَّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِينَ [الأنعام : ٢٣]

“By God, O our Lord, we were not of the associators (6: 23)”. How do we reconcile the two? The answer is, the Day of Judgment will be a long affair, with people passing through various stages. At one stage they might deny,

[131] That is because your Lord was not such as to destroy the cities unjustly,²³¹ while its inhabitants were unaware.

ذَلِكَ أَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرَىٰ بِظُلْمٍ
وَأَهْلِهَا غَافِلُونَ ﴿١٣١﴾

[132] And, for all are ranks according to what they practiced.²³² Your Lord is not unaware²³³ of what they did.

وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَاتٍ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِعَافِلٍ
عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

[133] Your Lord is Self sufficient, full of mercy.²³⁴ If He will, He could put you away and bring in as your successors after you, whom He will, just as He brought you out of the seeds of another people.²³⁵

وَرَبُّكَ الْعَنِيُّ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ إِنْ يَشَاءُ يُدْهِبْكُمْ
وَيَسْتَخْلِفْ مِنْ بَعْدِكُمْ مَا يَشَاءُ كَمَا
أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّةِ قَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

but at another, they would admit (Razi).

231. Another interpretation has been to understand “*zulm*” here as “the sin of association.” The meaning then would be, “That is because your Lord was not such as to destroy the towns for their sin of association, while its people were unaware (of the message and the messengers).” Ibn Jarir, Zamakhshari. Or, in the words of Majid: “This is because thy Lord is not one to destroy a town for its wrong doing while its people are unaware.”

232. The verse implies, says Qurtubi, that the righteous of the Jinn will be with mankind in Paradise, while the sinners will share the Fire with them.

233. The word *ghafil* of the original is used when someone is unable to

pay attention to something because of his pre occupation with another affair (Qurtubi).

234. The addition of “full of mercy” to the earlier Attribute, “the Self sufficient”, is to emphasize that although Allah is in no need of anyone’s service, and that the attitudes of His slaves do not matter to Him at all, yet, despite being “Self sufficient” in the absolute sense, He is not blind to the needs of His slaves, as some people, although Islamically educated, seem to believe (Thanwi).

In contrast, adds Shafi`, Allah has not made any of His creation self sufficient in any sense. For, instead of co operating with others of his kind, when a man sees himself self sufficient, he begins to act tyrannically towards others. The Qur’an has said:

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّاظِرٌ ﴿٦﴾ أَنْ رَأَاهُ اسْتَعْجَلْنِي [العلق]
[٧ ، ٦ :

"Man rebels if he perceives himself self sufficient." (96: 6, 7)

235. Yusuf Ali comments: "Allah is not dependent on our prayer or service. It is out of His Mercy that He desires our own good. Any race or people to whom He gives chances should understand that and that its failure does not affect Allah. He could create others in their place, as He did in times past, and is doing in our own day, if only we had the wit to see it."

Mawdudi elaborates: "The Qur'anic statement: 'Your Lord is Self sufficient' signifies that God is in need of nothing from anyone, that none of His interests will be jeopardized by disobedience to Him, and that no benefit will accrue to Him from obedience. Even if all human beings became disobedient, God's dominion will not shrink, nor will His dominion expand, if everybody were to become obedient and serve and worship Him as they ought to. God is dependent neither upon their show of veneration nor upon their offerings. He lavishes His limitless treasure on human beings and seeks nothing in return.

"The other statement, namely that 'Your Lord is full of compassion', has been made here to emphasize two things. First, that when God urges human beings to follow the Right Way, and asks them not to do anything in conflict with the Ultimate Reality, He does not do so because their good behavior benefits Him or their misconduct harms Him. He does so because good conduct is beneficial to man himself, as evil conduct is harmful to him. Hence it is out of sheer benevolence that God urges man to develop righteous conduct, for it will raise him to great heights, and He urges him to avoid evil conduct because it will lead to his own degradation. Second, that God is not unduly stern in judging man. He gets no pleasure from punishing people. He is not on the look out for slight lapses for which to convict and punish and persecute people. God is highly compassionate towards all His creatures and governs with utmost mercy and benevolence, and the same characterizes His dealings with human beings as well. Hence, He constantly forgives the sins of the people. Many disobey, indulge in sins, commit crimes, disregard God's commands, even though they are nourished by the sustenance He provides. God, nevertheless, con-

[134] Surely, that which you are being promised will come to pass. You shall not be able to frustrate (Allah).

إِنَّ مَا تُوعَدُونَ لَآتٍ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

[135] Say, 'O my people! Do (as you wish) in your sphere (of activity),²³⁶ I am doing (my part). Soon you shall know for whom will be the end of the Abode. Surely, the transgressors will not prosper.'

قُلْ يَا قَوْمِ اعْمَلُوا عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنِّي عَامِلٌ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ تَكُونُ لَهُ عَاقِبَةُ الدَّارِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

tinuously treats them with forbearance and forgives them. Again and again, He grants them respite in order that they may take heed, understand things properly and reform themselves. Had He been excessively stern, He could have obliterated them instantly and raised up another people. He could have put an end to humanity and brought into being an altogether different species of creation."

236. Some have understood "makanatikum" as "tamakkunikum", i.e., "within your range of possibility" (Ibn Jarir and others). The whole sentence then would be: "O my peo-

ple! Do whatever is in your range of possibility," or, as Asad has worded it, "Do all that may be within your power."

237. In this is the censure of the innovations of our times – some approved by the *Shuyukh* – that in fact are a lot similar to what is depicted here as the innovations of the pre Islamic times.

238. Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Qatadah and Suddi have said that the allusion is to a practice of the pagan Arabs. At the time of the harvest of grain or fruits, they assigned a share to Allah and a share to their idols and deities. Now, if the wind blew a part of

[136] They assign a share to Allah out of what He brought forth of the crops and cattle, saying entirely out of their fancy, 'This is for Allah and this is for our associate(gods).'²³⁷ Then, what is for their associate(gods), does not reach Allah. Whereas, what is assigned to Allah, reaches their associate(gods).²³⁸ Evil is the way they judge.²³⁹

وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ مِمَّا ذَرَأَ مِنَ الْحَرْثِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ
نَصِيبًا فَقَالُوا هَذَا لِلَّهِ بِرِعْمِهِمْ وَهَذَا
لِشُرَكَائِنَا فَمَا كَانَ لِشُرَكَائِهِمْ فَلَا يَصِلُ إِلَى
اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ فَهُوَ يَصِلُ إِلَى شُرَكَائِهِمْ
سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

the share of the deities into that assigned to Allah, they would bring it back. (According to one report, saying, "This, [i.e., the deity], is after all poor"). But if the share assigned to Allah got mixed up with that of the idols, they would not bother about it, and hence the verse (Ibn Jarir).

239. "Evil is the way they judge:" Evil for more than one reason. First, transgression upon the laws of Allah. Second, commitment of the sin of association in the worship of Allah since, no one should be given any share in an act with which Allah's nearness is sought. Third, preferential treatment of those associated with Allah. And fourth, doing something that has no basis in reason and logic (*Manar*).

Mawdudi writes: "In order to grasp what lay at the root of these superstitions, it is essential to know that the portion which these ignorant people earmarked for God was devoted to

helping the indigent, the poor, travellers and so on. On the other hand, the portion earmarked for offerings to the 'partners' actually went directly to the coffers of the priestly class or was offered at the shrines and thus ultimately reached the priests and caretakers of those shrines. Over the course of centuries these selfish religious leaders had impressed upon those simple minded people that there was no harm in God's share being reduced, but that of God's dear ones, far from being diminished, should be increased."

Mufti Shafi` has another perceptive: Much the same is the attitude of most practicing Muslims today. Out of their total time of the day, they assign a share to Allah (for the purposes of worship, acts of devotion, etc.), and a share to worldly activities. But, if their worldly activities demand excess time, they take it out of what is assigned to Allah. In contrast, they

[137] That is how their associate(gods) have decked out fair to many associators the killing of their offspring²⁴⁰ in order to destroy them and to confound them in their religion.²⁴¹ Had Allah willed, they would not have done it.²⁴² So leave them alone and that which they forge.

وَكَذَلِكَ زَيَّنَ لِكَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ قَتْلَ
أَوْلَادِهِمْ شُرَكَائِهِمْ لِيُرْدُوهُمْ وَيَلْبِسُوا
عَلَيْهِمْ دِينَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا فَعَلُوهُ
فَذَرِهِمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

never let the time allotted for this worldly activities to be encroached by the time assigned for next worldly activities. Evil is the way they judge.

240. Majid comments: "This may possibly refer to the ancient Semitic practice of child sacrifice, which had been very general, (vide ERE. I, pp. 390 91). Infanticide with a religious motive has also been wide spread. In India, for example, 'children were thrown into the sacred river Ganges, and adoration paid to the alligators who fed on them.' (EBr. XIV, p. 516, 11th ed.). The allusion may also be to the modern craze for 'contraception' a subtle form of infanticide."

241. In the like manner, to some Muslims various acts amounting to *shirk*, such as, visiting the graves, making offerings there, seeking the intercession of the buried, slaughtering animals in their name, etc., are decked out fair. Although, such of those as do these things, do not term them as acts of worship, but, for all purposes they are no less than that

(Manar).

242. "Had Allah willed, they would not have done it": The verse obviously does not mean that the deeds of the sinners are imposed upon them by way of pre destination: something over which they have no control as the Jabariyyah have alleged. Rather, it was Allah's will that He equip the humans with reason and intellect, make them susceptible to influences, good and bad, and give them the power to choose between good and evil. He could have, of course, if He willed, forced everyone to right conduct, but He did not do that for the purposes of trial. Hence the latter verse adds that they did that out of ignorance and foolishness. Were they to exchange their ignorance with knowledge, they would not commit such vile things (Manar).

243. Such cattle were named as Sa'ibah, Wasilah and Bahirah (Ibn Jarir).

244. Yusuf Ali writes: "A taboo of certain foods is sometimes a de-

[138] They also say, 'Such and such cattle²⁴³ and crops are sacrosanct that none should eat of them' so they assert 'except those whom we wish.'²⁴⁴ Further, there are cattle whose backs are forbidden²⁴⁵ and cattle over which they do not pronounce Allah's Name,²⁴⁶ forging a lie upon Him.²⁴⁷ He shall surely requite them for what they were forging.

وَقَالُوا هَذِهِ أَنْعَامٌ وَحَرِّثٌ حَجْرٌ لَّا يَطْعَمُهَا
إِلَّا مَن تَشَاءُ بِرِعْمِهِمْ وَأَنْعَامٌ حُرِّمَتْ
ظُهُورُهَا وَأَنْعَامٌ لَّا يَذْكُرُونَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا
افْتِرَاءً عَلَيْهِ سَيَجْزِيهِمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

vice of the priesthood to get special things for itself. It has to be imposed by pretending that the prohibitions for others is by the will of Allah."

245. There were cattle that they forbid their backs unto themselves, that is, they neither rode them (not even for Hajj: Abu Wa'il) nor used them for yoke (Ibn Jarir).

246. Mujahid has said that they marked out certain camels over which they would not spell Allah's Name under any circumstance, neither when they rode on them, or loaded on them, nor when they milked them (Ibn Jarir).

247. They related these practices to Allah's commands, forging lies against Him (Ibn Jarir).

Asad writes: "The pre Islamic Arabs falsely claimed that the taboos were ordained by God, as is made clear

in the last part of this verse. One of these supposed, arbitrary "ordinances" laid down that only the priests of the particular idol and some men belonging to the tribe could eat the flesh of such dedicated animals, while women were not allowed to do so (Zamakhshari)."

248. Ibn 'Abbas and Qatadah have said that the allusion by the words "*ma fi butunihā*," is to their milk which their men drank but not their women. But Mujahid has said that the reference is to what the wombs carried. Both could be correct (Ibn Jarir).

249. This piece would apply to those cattle whose womb contents the pagans forbid unto their women (Au.).

250. The reference is to the pagan practices (more prevalent in the tribes of Rabi'ah and Mudar) of

[139] They also say, 'What is in the wombs of such and such cattle is exclusively for our males and forbidden unto our spouses.'²⁴⁸ But, if it happens to be a still born, then they all share it.²⁴⁹ He shall surely requite them for their attribution (to Allah). Surely, He is the All wise, the All knowing.

وَقَالُوا مَا فِي بُطُونِ هَذِهِ الْأَنْعَامِ خَالِصَةٌ
لِّذُكُورِنَا وَمُحْرَمٍ عَلَىٰ أَرْوَاجِنَا وَإِن يَكُن مِّثْقَالٌ
فَتُهُم فِيهِ شُرَكَاءُ سَيَجْزِيهِمْ وَصَفَّهُمْ إِنَّهُ
حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٣٩﴾

[140] Surely, losers were those who slaughtered their infants in folly and without knowledge,²⁵⁰ and (those who) forbid what Allah provided them, forging a lie against Allah. They fell into folly and were never rightly guided.

قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا أَوْلَادَهُمْ سَفَهًا بِغَيْرِ
عِلْمٍ وَحَرَّمُوا مَا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ افْتِرَاءً عَلَىٰ اللَّهِ
قَدْ ضَلُّوا وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

burying alive female infants either out of fear of poverty ('Ikrimah), or out of shame in giving her away to a male when she grew up (Au). Some of them killed them and fed them to the dogs (Ibn Jarir and others). The allusion could also be to the vows that some of the pagans made that if they received so many males, they would sacrifice one of them, such as the vow of `Abdul Muttalib (Zamakhshari, Razi).

Qurtubi writes: It is reported that one of the Companions used to appear in a grievous mood. Once, the Prophet asked him the reason. He replied, "Messenger of Allah. I've committed a sin that I wonder if Allah will forgive despite my Islam." The Prophet asked him to explain what it was. The man said: "I was one of

those who used to bury their female infants. Once my wife gave birth to a girl and pleaded that I let her live. I agreed. She grew into a most beautiful girl. Proposals began coming in. But a shallow sense of honor took over me. I did not want her to be married off, and I did not want to keep her unmarried. One day I told my wife that I was proposing to visit such and such a tribe and wished to take the daughter along. She was pleased, got her ready with some bright clothes, jewelry, and all that stuff, and then took promise from me that I would safeguard her. On the way we stopped at a well. I peeped in. The daughter's sixth sense told her that I wished to push her in. She clung to me with tears in her eyes and pleaded, 'Father! What do you want to do this with me?' I felt kind

[141] It is He who brings forth the orchards, the trellised and the untrellised ones, the date palm, and produce of diverse taste, olives and pomegranates, similar and dissimilar. Eat of its fruit when it fructifies²⁵¹ and give out the due thereof²⁵² on the day of its harvest.²⁵³ Yet, do not over indulge.²⁵⁴ Indeed, He does not approve of the over indulgent.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَ جَنَّاتٍ مَّعْرُوشَاتٍ وَغَيْرِ
مَّعْرُوشَاتٍ وَالنَّحْلَ وَالزَّرْعَ مُخْتَلِفًا أُكْلُهُ
وَالرَّيْحُونَ والرُّمَانَ مُتَشَابِهًا وَغَيْرِ مُتَشَابِهٍ
كُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَآتُوا حَقَّهُ يَوْمَ
حَصَادِهِ وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

at her. But then I looked at the well and my false sense of honor got better of me. She again clung to me and pleaded for mercy. I felt kind towards her. But, as I looked at the well, and at her in turns, my false sense of honor took charge of me and I pushed her down, head first. She cried from the well, 'Father! You killed me.' I hung along until she ceased calling. Then I left the place." The Prophet and his Companions wept and he said: "If I were to punish someone for a deed of the pre Islamic times, I would punish this man."

251. The verse tells us by implication that all that is in the earth is lawful to man, unless there is a commandment to the contrary (Razi).

252. The opinions are divided over whether the "due" is *zakah* or *sadaqah*? Ibn Jarir believes that until the institution of *zakah*, it was *sadaqah* that was meant. But, later, with the laying down of *zakah* rules,

it is the obligatory *zakah* that is meant.

253. This verse is the basis of Imām Abu Hanifa's opinion that so far as farm products go, there is no minimum limit, rather, one should give out as *zakah* one tenth of whatever is harvested, whether that be little or more (Razi). Such is also the opinion of Imām Hanbal (*Ma'arif*).

Fiqh Points

The following are from Mufti Shafi`
The minimum of wealth, trade goods, or cattle that is liable for *zakah* has been delineated by the Prophet himself. But *ahadith* that speak of *zakah* on farm products do not say anything about the minimum. Hence, *zakah* must be offered on whatever is produced, less or more. The minimum for various items is as follows:

- (i) On any treasure found accidentally, or, gold, silver and such precious metals, one in 5.

(ii) On any farm product that is irrigated with natural water, one in 10.

(iii) On any farm product that is artificially irrigated (by means of canals, wells, etc.), one in 20.

(iv) Savings, (whether in cash or gold), trade goods, etc., one in 40.

It should be apparent from above that the *zakah* imposed seems to depend on ease or difficulty of procurement of wealth. If it is easily obtained, such as a treasure, then it is one fifth that has to be given away as *zakah*. Over farm produce, that are irrigated by natural means, such as rain water, one is required to pay off one half of what one would pay over easily found wealth. But if the farm is irrigated by artificial means, that is, requiring greater human effort, then it is reduced to one half of what one would pay over a farm irrigated by natural means. Finally, over the wealth one earns by trade and merchandize, which involves lots of efforts, the amount is one half of the farms irrigated by artificial means.

Quote from Shafi' ends here.

According to the Hanafiyyah, *zakah* must be paid for every land produce except timber, grass, canes, plants grown for seeds, and plants of medicinal value. Some fruits and

vegetables (not all) are also exempt (*Alamgiriyyah*). But the rules and exemptions are different with other *fuqaha'* (Au.).

254. The "over indulgence" (*israf*) is applicable both to giving less as well as to giving out more than necessary, as reported of Thabit b. Qays b. Shimas who, when he went up to pluck his dates, vowed, "no one shall come to me but I shall give him some dates." By the evening he was left with nothing (Ibn Jarir). Mujahid however has said that if you were to spend gold amounting to what Ibn Qubays had, seeking Allah's pleasure, you would not be committing *israf*. But if you spent a little while displeasing Him, then, that would be *israf* (Shawkani).

Accordingly, following the harvest, some Companions of the Prophet hung bunches of dates in the mosque. The hungry used a stick to bring down what they needed (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir). In fact, according to a report in Abu Da'ud and Ahmad of good strength the Prophet had ordered that whoever harvested more than 11 *wasafs* of dates, should hang a bunch in the mosque for the poor (Shawkani).

255. Ibn Mas'ud, Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid and Hasan have said that

[142] And (of Our sings are) cattle for burden, as well as (those) not for burden.²⁵⁵ Eat of what Allah has provided you and follow not the footsteps of Satan. Surely, he is your avowed enemy.

وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ حَمُولَةً وَفَرْشًا كُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٤٢﴾

[143] (There are) eight (among the cattle that make) couples²⁵⁶: of the sheep²⁵⁷ a pair, of the goats a pair. Say, 'Has He forbidden the two males or the two females? Or what the wombs of the two females carry? Tell me by knowledge, if you are true.'

ثَمَانِيَةَ أَزْوَاجٍ مِنَ الضَّأْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْمَعْزِ اثْنَيْنِ قُلْ آلذَّكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ أَمِ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ أَمَّا اشْتَمَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ تَبْؤُونِي بِعِلْمٍ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

"*hamulah*" of the original alludes to those camels that are used for burden while "*farsh*" to those of them that are not used for burden because of their youth. But some others, such as Hasan, Qatadah, Suddi, Dahhak, and, according to one report Ibn 'Abbas too, have said that "*farsh*" (so named because of its closeness to the earth), is applicable to any animal that is not used for carrying loads such as the little ones of the camel as well as bovines viz., goats, sheep, etc. (Ibn Jarir). The interpretation of Zayd b. Aslam is that "*farsh*" alludes to the use of the hide and wool for sleeping on or for covering against cold in winter (Ibn Kathir).

256. *Eight that make pairs*: that is, sheep, goat, camel, and cow: two of each make a pair, totallin eight. Al-

though there were other domesticated animals, the pagans played their nefarious game of declaring this lawful or that unlawful on these eight (Au.).

"The term *zawj* denotes a pair of things as well as each of the two constituents of the pair" (Asad).

257. Whatever of the bovine cattle yields wool is *Za'n* in Arabic (Razi).

258. "Question as to whether the male offspring is lawful and the female is unlawful are presented in some detail to show how unreasonable their superstitions are" (Mawdu-di).

259. Suddi, Ibn Zayd and others have said that the pagan Arabs whimsically prohibited this or that of the cattle, or a part of its body, to

[144] Similarly, of the camels is a pair, and of the oxen a pair. Say, 'Has He forbidden the two males or the two females? Or what the wombs of the two females carry?'²⁵⁸ Or, were you witnesses when Allah charged you with this? Who then can do greater wrong than he who fastens a lie upon Allah, to lead the people astray without knowledge?²⁵⁹ Verily, Allah does not guide a wrong doing people.'

[145] Say, 'I do not find in what has been revealed to me²⁶⁰ anything forbidden²⁶¹ to be eaten by one who wishes to eat thereof, save that it be carrion,²⁶² or blood poured forth,²⁶³ or swine's flesh which is unclean or what is profane having been consecrated to other than Allah. Yet if one is forced by necessity, without disobeying, or transgressing the due limits, then, surely, your Lord is Very Forgiving, Very Kind.'²⁶⁴

وَمِنَ الْإِبِلِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ قُلْ
الذَّكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ أَمِ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ أَمَّا اشْتَمَلَتْ
عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ
وَصَّكُمُ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى
عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا لِيُضِلَّ النَّاسَ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

قُلْ لَّا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحْرَمًا عَلَى
طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ
دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنْزِيرٍ فَإِنَّهُ رِجْسٌ
أَوْ فِسْقًا أُهْلًا لِّغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ
غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ
﴿١٤٥﴾

themselves or to their women. When asked why, they would refer its illegality to God. Allah refuted them in this verse declaring once again that these cattle are lawful unto everyone (Au.). And the first of those who introduced these practices was `Amr b. Luhayy (Zamakhshari).

260. As context of revelation, Ta'us has reported his father as saying that the pagan Arabs declared things lawful and unlawful whimsically (such as the beast lawful for their men but unlawful for their women: Au). Allah revealed this verse to outline

what exactly was lawful and what unlawful (Ibn Jarir).

Imām Shafe`i's explanation is that the Prophet was enquired about the unlawfulness of certain items. He was instructed by this verse to tell them that at that moment (in Makkah) he did not find anything in what was revealed to him unlawful save a few things as described in the verse. Hence the choice of words: "Say, I do not find in that revealed to me anything prohibited .." (Qurtubi). This of course left the door open for further prohibitions in Madinah.

Alusi expresses more or less the same opinion.

261. A question arises. Is the list of the unlawful stated herewith all inclusive or have there been additions, such as, for instance, *Jallalah* (a domestic animal that eats refuse of other animals)? One would assume that `A'isha believed that the list herewith is comprehensive. It is reported (Ibn Jarir) that she did not consider flesh of the forest beasts as prohibited. So was the opinion of Ibn `Abbas. (Ibn Kathir classifies `A'isha's statement as *Sahih gharib*). Ibn Kathir also reports from Bukhari, Abu Da'ud and Hakim that someone asked Jabir b. `Abdullah if it was true that the Prophet had declared meat of the domestic donkey as unlawful at the time of the Khayber campaign? He replied that the *Habr* (i.e., Ibn `Abbas) did not accept the report. (When asked) he would recite this verse: "Say, 'I do not find in that which has been revealed to me anything forbidden to be eaten by one who wishes to eat it, save that ..'" to the end. Nonetheless, a report in Abu Da'ud and *Musnad of Ahmad* says that when someone asked Ibn `Umar about hedgehog and he recited this verse in reply. When someone else interjected that the Prophet had said about hedgehog that it was

one of the abominations. Ibn `Umar said: "If the Prophet has said that, then, let it be as he said" (Ibn Kathir, Shawkani).

Notwithstanding the above reports, Ibn Kathir is inclined to feel that this verse overrules all that has been added on to the list of the prohibited by the founders of the *madhabib* such as, meat of the domestic donkey, of beasts of forest, and of every bird that picks up things with its talons. He also states that according to some scholars this verse has been abrogated by the verses in *Surah al Ma'idah* on this topic as well as statements in the *hadith* literature that talk of a few other things apart from what has been stated in the verse in question.

Shawkani thinks that since reports coming from the Prophet about the unlawfulness of other things apart from those mentioned in this verse are trustworthy, there is no escape from them.

Accordingly, to Imām Malik, Shafe`i and Abu Hanifah, every beast of the forest that tears its prey apart is prohibited (Qurtubi).

262. The prohibition however applies only to its consumption. The skin for instance could be made use of. According to a *hadith* in Bukhari, Nasa'i, and Ahmad narrated by

Ibn `Abbas, Sawda b. Zam`ah enquired the Prophet about a goat that had died. He allowed her to get it skinned and use it after tanning it (Ibn Kathir). But the prohibition stays for fat, since skin is not eaten but fat is.

263. For explanation see *Surah al Ma'idah*, note 24.

Shanqiti disagrees with Ibn Kathir's opinion and believes that the list of the unlawful was enlarged by the *Sunnah* after the revelation of this verse. He devotes scores of pages towards the discussion concerning the lawful and the unlawful of the animals. Hereunder is a summary. If the name of an Imām does not appear in the parenthesis, it means either that animal is lawful according to him or merely undesirable (*makruh*) but lawful.

The Lawful

Rabbit, the big desert lizard, locusts. (By consensus).

The Unlawful:

Wild beasts in general: those that tear apart their prey (the four Imāms). This is based on the *hadith* of Abu Hurayrah in *Sahih* Muslim: "Every wild animal with claws is forbidden." There is a *hadith* by Abu Tha`labah too, to this effect, both in Bukhari

and Muslim.

Wild birds: those that hold their prey with their talons (Abu Hanifah, Shafe`i, Ibn Hanbal). Ibn `Abbas has reported in *Sahih* Muslim that: "The Prophet prohibited every wild animal with claws and every bird with talons."

Domestic donkey: (The four Imāms): There are innumerable *ahadith* to this effect in Bukhari, Muslim and others.

Horse: considered an abomination by Malik and Abu Hanifah.

Dog, monkey, elephant, cat: (the four Imāms).

Fox: (Ibn Hanbal, Abu Hanifah and Shafe`i).

All creepers, crawlers, such as rats, snakes, scorpions, frogs, bats, chameleons, cockroaches, spiders, worms, etc.: (the four Imāms). Allah has said (7: 157): "*And it (the Qur`an) forbids the unclean.*"

Insects: (the four Imāms).

Jallalah: opinions vary. (It is that animal which has fed itself on other animals' faeces). Most scholars restrict the consumption of its flesh, milk or egg, to only after it has been fed on natural feed for a certain number of days or weeks.

[146] As for those who Judaized themselves, We forbade every cloven hoofed (animal).²⁶⁵ And, of the cows and sheep, We forbade them their fat except for what clings to the backs or the entrails or that which adheres to the bones.²⁶⁶ That is how We recompensed them for their rebellion.²⁶⁷ Surely, We are True.

وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا كُلَّ ذِي ظُفْرٍ
وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ وَالْغَنَمِ حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ شُحُومَهُمَا
إِلَّا مَا حَمَلَتْ ظُهُورُهُمَا أَوْ الْحَوَايَا أَوْ مَا
اخْتَلَطَ بِعَظْمٍ ذَلِكَ جَزَيْنَاهُمْ بِبَعْضِهِمْ وَإِنَّا
لَصَادِقُونَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

[147] Yet, if they cry lies to you, say, 'Your Lord possesses all embracing mercy but His wrath cannot be turned back from a transgressing people.'

فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ رَبُّكُمْ ذُو رَحْمَةٍ وَاسِعَةٍ وَلَا
يُرَدُّ بَأْسُهُ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

Cannibalism: Prohibited by consensus.

264. Since what remains within the flesh and bones is not running blood, it is not considered unlawful Qatadah (Ibn Jarir).

265. Ibn 'Abbas has said that the allusion is to camels and ostriches. But Sa'id b. Jubayr has said that by implication chicken, ducks and birds resembling them are also included. Although, Mujahid has added that the Jews eat chicken, ducks, and birds (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir).

266. Jabir b. 'Abdullah has reported: "I heard the Prophet say at the time Makkah fell,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ حَرَّمَ بَيْعَ الْحَمْرِ وَالْمَيْمَةِ وَالْحَنْزِيرِ
وَالْأَصْنَامِ «. فَقِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَرَأَيْتَ شُحُومَ
الْمَيْمَةِ فَإِنَّهَا تُطْلَى بِهَا السُّفُنُ وَيُدَّهَنُ بِهَا الْجُلُودُ

وَيَسْتَصْبِغُ بِهَا النَّاسُ فَقَالَ: « لَا هُوَ حَرَامٌ ». ثُمَّ
قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم-: « قَاتَلَ اللَّهُ
الْيَهُودَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْهِمْ شُحُومَهَا جَمَلُوهَا ثُمَّ
بَاعُوهَا وَأَكَلُوهَا تَمَنَّهُ »

'Allah and His Messenger have prohibited the sale of wine, carrion, swine and idols.' It was said, 'Messenger of Allah. What would you say about fat? We use it for oiling the hide, to fill up gaps and crevices in boats, and the people use it as fuel for their lamps.' He said, 'No it is unlawful,' and then added, 'May Allah destroy the Jews. They were prohibited fat, but they liquefied it, sold it, and devoured its price (Ibn Kathir).

The *hadith* is in the six canonical collections (Hussain b. Ibrahim).

According to other versions, the

[148] Anon will those who associated (with Allah) say, 'Had Allah willed neither we nor our forefathers would have declared partners (unto Him), nor would we have treated anything as unlawful.'²⁶⁸ Thus is how those who were before them cried lies until they tasted Our wrath.²⁶⁹ Say, 'Have you any knowledge that you can put forth before us? You follow not but conjectures and are attempting nothing but guess work.'

سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا
 أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَمْنَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ
 كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ حَتَّى دَافُوا
 بِأَسْنَانِهِمْ هَلْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوهُ
 لَنَا إِنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا
 تَخْرُصُونَ ﴿١٤٨﴾

Prophet (saws) added:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا حَرَّمَ عَلَى قَوْمٍ أَكْلَ شَيْءٍ حَرَّمَ عَلَيْهِمْ ثَمَنَهُ

“When Allah prohibits the consumption of a thing He also prohibited its value” (Ibn Kathir).

267. This shows that Allah’s disobedience leads to the loss of worldly blessings also (Thanwi).

268. The pagans presumed to say that the very fact that for centuries they had remained worshipping idols and treating certain kinds of animals (and practices) as forbidden, was proof in itself that at one point or the other Allah had ordered those things, or, was not displeased with them. Had He been displeased, He could have forced them to abandon their ways. This explains the last part of the verse which asks them to produce a Scripture confirming their claim: ‘Have you any knowledge

that you can put forth before us? You follow not but conjectures and are attempting nothing but guess work.’

And since they could not bring up any written proof, it demonstrated that they were arguing falsely. Accordingly, the Prophet was asked to say to them, ‘Allah’s is the argument that reaches home.’ That is, your arguments do not. As for their statement that had Allah willed He could have forcibly led them aright, the answer is, yes, ‘Had Allah willed, He would have guided you all,’ but that is not the way in which He deals with the people: forcing His guidance upon them (based partly on Ibn Jarir: Au).

Majid writes: “The pagans used the word ‘willed’ in the sense of ‘pleased’ or ‘approved’ they confused the former with the latter and therein lay the fallacy.. Thus they confused the

[149] Say, 'Allah's is the argument that reaches home. Had Allah willed, He would have guided you all aright.'²⁷⁰

قُلْ فَلِلَّهِ الْحُجَّةُ الْبَالِغَةُ فَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

power and ability by God on everyone to do whatever He chose with His approval of every course of action.”

Zamakhshari has another point: If the pagans are true in their claim that they have been forced by the Divine Decree to adopt the ways they have adopted, then they should not have enmity with the Muslims who, by their own logic, are bound by the same Divine Decree in believing in Allah as One and Muhammad as His Messenger.

269. The purport of the verse is, it were wrong ideas of this sort (viz., Allah's will and man's helplessness: Au.) that led many people astray in the past. Had that been the case, Allah would not have sent them Messengers punishing those who rejected them (Ibn Kathir).

270. Asad comments: “In other words, the real relationship between God's knowledge of the future (and, therefore, the ineluctability of what is to happen in the future) on the one hand, and man's free will, on the

other two propositions which, on the face of it, seem to contradict one another is beyond man's comprehension; but since both are postulated by God, both must be true. The very concept of “God” presupposes His omniscience; and the very concept of morality and moral responsibility presupposes free will on man's part. Had God so willed, every human being would have been forced to live righteously; but this would have amounted to depriving man of his free will, and morality of all its meaning.”

271. A statement of Suddi in Tabari could imply that the Arabs were asked to produce witnesses from the non Arabs, since they themselves were a party to the dispute.

272. Words in the parenthesis are from Ibn Jarir.

273. The *Sahihayn* have Abu Dharr reporting that the Prophet said:

ذَٰكَ جَبْرِيلُ عَرَضَ لِي فِي جَانِبِ الْحَرَّةِ فَقَالَ بَشِّرْ أُمَّتَكَ أَنَّهُ مَن مَاتَ لَا يُشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ. فَقُلْتُ يَا جَبْرِيلُ وَإِنْ سَرَقَ وَإِنْ زَنَى قَالَ تَعْم. قَالَ قُلْتُ وَإِنْ سَرَقَ وَإِنْ سَرَقَ وَإِنْ زَنَى قَالَ تَعْم. قَالَ قُلْتُ وَإِنْ

[150] Say, 'Bring forward your witnesses who will testify that Allah forbid such and such things.'²⁷¹ However, if they testify, do not testify with them. And follow not the whimsical fancies of a people who give the lie to Our signs: those who do not believe in the Hereafter, and those who suggest equals to their Lord.

قُلْ هَلْ مَشَاهِدٌ لِّدِينِ الَّذِينَ يَشْهَدُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ هَذَا فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَلَا تَشْهَدُ مَعَهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَهُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

[151] Say, 'Come. Let me recite to you what your Lord has forbidden unto you:²⁷² that you should associate aught not with Him;²⁷³ (that you should) be good to your parents;²⁷⁴ kill not your children from fear of poverty²⁷⁵ We feed you and them;²⁷⁶ go not near the indecent²⁷⁷ the open of it or the hidden;²⁷⁸ and take not the life that Allah has declared sacred, except by right.²⁷⁹ This He has charged you with, haply you will ponder.

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِمَّنْ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ وَلَا تَفْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَمُوصَاةٌ بِهٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾

سَرَقَ وَإِنْ زَنَى قَالَ تَعَمَّ وَإِنْ شَرِبَ الْخَمْرَ

“That was Jibril who presented himself at the Harra (mountainous region of Madinah) saying, ‘Give glad tidings to your *Ummah* that whoever died having not associated anyone with Allah, will enter Paradise.’ I asked him: “O Jibril, even if he committed adultery and theft?” He said: “Yes.” I said, ““Even if he committed adultery and theft?” He said, ‘Yes.’ I asked: “Even if he committed adultery and theft?” He replied: “Even if he committed adultery and theft, and even if he

drank wine” (Ibn Kathir).

274. Parents’ rights are so great that whenever Allah spoke of His own rights, He followed up with the rights of parents (Ibn Kathir). That is because, Alusi writes, after Allah it is parents who are the cause of a child’s birth as it is they whose tireless efforts make it possible for him to reach manhood.

In fact, the rights hold, even if the parents are idol worshippers. We have a *hadith* in the *Sahihayn* which reports someone asking the Prophet about:

عَنْ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَجُلًا سَأَلَ النَّبِيَّ

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَيُّ الْأَعْمَالِ أَفْضَلُ قَالَ الصَّلَاةُ
لِوَقْتِهَا وَبِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ ثُمَّ الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

“What deed was the most virtuous in Islam. He replied that it was to offer Prayers on time, to be dutiful toward the parents and *Jihad* in the cause of Allah (Ibn Kathir).

The above version is from Bukhari (Au).

Then there is the famous story of Asma's mother visiting her daughter Asma' at Madinah during the armistice between the Prophet and Makkans. Asma' enquired the Prophet whether she could receive her pagan mother and treat her well. He answered, “Yes. Treat her well” (Au).

275. Mufti Shafi` says that not to (Islamically) educate and train one's children is tantamount to slaughtering them, since that leads them to an un-Islamic life. He substantiates his opinion with a verse (6: 122) which says about the believer:

أَوْمَرُ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأُحْيِيْنَاهُ [الأنعام : ١٢٢]

“Is he then, who was dead, then We gave him life.” In this verse Allah spoke of the unbeliever as dead.

Majid adds: “The prohibition may well be extended to the modern

craze for ‘birth control’ or the use of contraceptives to limit the number of offspring or to prevent pregnancy altogether. Now the whole neo Malthusianism as is called this application of the theory of restricting the population is based on the assumption that the reproduction power of man exceeds his power of increasing his food supply. But experience has demonstrated absolute untenability of this assumption, and means of subsistence, not only in one country but in the world at large, have, since the time of Malthus, the first modern promulgator of the doctrine, more than kept pace with the growth of population.”

276. Majid comments: “It is in consonance with this Divine guarantee that, contrary to what Malthus and his disciples calculated, population has not outrun the means of subsistence, and the truth of the old economic adage has been completely vindicated that ‘while every addition to the population means another mouth to feed, it also implies another pair of hands.’”

Asad too agrees. He remarks: “This may possibly refer to abortions dictated by economic reasons.”

The *Sahihayn* also have the report that someone asked about the great-

est sin. The Prophet replied,

أَنْ تَدْعُوَ لِلَّهِ نِدًّا وَهُوَ خَلَقَكَ قَالَ تُمْ أَيُّ قَالَ تُمْ أَنْ
تَقْتُلَ وَلَدَكَ حَشِيَّةً أَنْ يَطْعَمَ مَعَكَ قَالَ تُمْ أَيُّ قَالَ تُمْ
أَنْ تَرْتَابِي بِحَلِيلَةِ جَارِكَ

“That you should declare someone equal to Allah while He created you.” He asked, “And then which one?” The Prophet replied, “That you should kill your child out of fear that he would share your food.” He enquired, “And then which one?” The Prophet replied, “That you should commit adultery with your neighbor’s wife” (Ibn Kathir).

277. The words “do not go near” imply that one ought to avoid even those acts that provoke the desire and lead to indecent deeds (Shabbir).

278. According to Ibn `Abbas and Dahhak, the allusion could be to the pagan idea that adultery in secret was not a sin, only the one committed in open was (Ibn Jarir).

The *Sahihayn* have the following report of `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud. The Prophet said:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ لَا أَحَدٌ أَغْيَرُ مِنَ اللَّهِ
وَلِذَلِكَ حَرَّمَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ

“There is none with greater sense of honor than Allah. Hence He has forbidden all kinds of inde-

cencies, be they open or secret.”

The two also have a report which says that once Sa`d b. `Ubadah said:

قَالَ سَعْدُ بْنُ عُبَادَةَ لَوْ رَأَيْتُ رَجُلًا مَعَ امْرَأَتِي لَضَرَبْتُهُ
بِالسَّيْفِ غَيْرَ مُصْنَعٍ فَبَلَغَ ذَلِكَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ أَتَعْجَبُونَ مِنْ عَيْرَةِ سَعْدٍ وَاللَّهِ
لَأَنَا أَغْيَرُ مِنْهُ وَاللَّهِ أَغْيَرُ مِنِّي وَمِنْ أَجْلِ عَيْرَةِ اللَّهِ حَرَّمَ
الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ

“Were I to see my wife with another man, I would kill him spontaneously.” When the Prophet heard about it he remarked: “Does Sa`d’s sense of honor surprise you? By Allah, I have a greater sense of honor than Sa`d and Allah has a greater sense of honor than me. Accordingly, He prohibited all that is indecent, be they open or secret” (Ibn Kathir).

279. The *Sahihayn* have preserved a report coming through Ibn Mas`ud which reports the Prophet (*saws*) as having said:

لَا يَحِلُّ دَمُ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ يَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا بِأَحَدٍ ثَلَاثٍ النَّفْسُ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالتَّيْبُ
الرَّائِي وَالْمَارِقُ مِنَ الدِّينِ التَّارِكُ لِلْجَمَاعَةِ

“A Muslim’s blood who asserts that there is no deity worthy of worship save Allah, and that I am His Messenger, is not lawful save in case of the following three: life for life, a married adulterer, an apostate who abandons the com-

[152] And go not near the orphan's wealth save in a goodly manner²⁸⁰ until he attains his (full) strength;²⁸¹ and give full measure and weight with equity. We do not impose upon a soul save what it can bear.²⁸² And when you speak out, be just, even if they be your kin. And fulfill Allah's covenant.²⁸³ That He has charged you with,²⁸⁴ haply you will remember.

وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ
حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ
بِالْقِسْطِ لَا تُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا وَإِذَا
قُلْتُمْ فَأَعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ وَبِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ
أَوْفُوا ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

munity” (Ibn Kathir).

280. According to Ibn Zayd, the words “save in a goodly manner” are explained by verse 6 of *Al Nisa'* which says:

وَمَنْ كَانَ عَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ [النساء : ٦]

“He who is well-off might desist. However, he who is poor may take in a goodly manner” (Ibn Jarir).

281. Opinions have varied about when a person attains full strength of body and mind: from when puberty is achieved - to the age of 30 (Ibn Jarir). See note 24 of *Surah Al Nisa'* for a detailed discussion.

282. “The meaning is that God does not expect man to behave with ‘mathematical’ equity which, in view of the many intangible factors involved, is rarely attainable in human dealings but expects him to do his best towards achieving this goal” (Asad).

283. It is part of Allah’s covenant that He should be obeyed and His Messenger be acknowledged (Ibn Jarir).

284. That is, these are the commandments that Allah sent you through His Messengers, (such as Ibrahim and his progeny), and not worship of the idols, killing of the infant or burying alive of the female children which you do (based partly on Ibn Jarir).

285. That is, the path of innovations, whims and fancies, base desires, and so forth (Au.).

Majid writes: “This entirely reproves and repudiates the specious and complacent doctrine held by the Romans, and in fact by many polytheistic nations, that ‘different paths adopted to different notions and grades of knowledge converge to the same Divinity, and that the most erroneous religion is good if it forms good

[153] And that this is My path, the straight one. Therefore, follow it, and follow not the (other) paths,²⁸⁵ lest they scatter you from His path.²⁸⁶ This He has charged you with, haply you will be godfearing.²⁸⁷

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

dispositions and inspires virtuous actions' (Lecky)."

'Abdullah (ibn Mas'ud) has reported:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ خَطَّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خَطًّا يَبْدُوهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ هَذَا سَبِيلُ اللَّهِ مُسْتَقِيمًا قَالَ ثُمَّ خَطَّ عَنْ يَمِينِهِ وَشِمَالِهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ هَذِهِ السُّبُلُ وَلَيْسَ مِنْهَا سَبِيلٌ إِلَّا عَلَيْهِ شَيْطَانٌ يَدْعُو إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ قَرَأَ { وَإِنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ }

"Once the Prophet drew a line on the ground and said, 'This is the path of Allah.' Then he drew other lines (diverging from it) on the left and the right side, and said, 'These are the paths at the head of every one of them sits a *Shaytan* inviting thereto.' Then he recited this verse: "And that this is My path, the straight one. Therefore, follow it, and follow not the (other) paths"" (Ibn Jarir).

The report is in Nasa'i, Ibn Mar-duwayh and Hakim with the latter declaring it as *Sahih* of status (Shawkani).

286. Qurtubi has the following. Ir-bad b. Sariyyah narrated the follow-

ing in Ibn Majah:

وَعَظَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَوْعِظَةً ذَرَفَتْ مِنْهُ الْأَعْيُنُ، وَوَجَلَتْ مِنْهُ الْقُلُوبُ، قُلْنَا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، هَذِهِ مَوْعِظَةٌ مُودِعٌ، فَمَا تَعْهَدُ إِلَيْنَا؟ قَالَ: "لَقَدْ تَرَكْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْبَيْضَاءِ لِيَلْهَى كُنْهَارَهَا، لَا يَرِيغُ عَنْهَا بَعْدِي إِلَّا هَالِكٌ، وَمَنْ يَعِشْ مِنْكُمْ فَسِيرِي اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا، فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا عَرَفْتُمْ مِنْ سُنَّتِي، وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ، وَعَلَيْكُمْ بِالطَّاعَةِ، وَإِنْ عَبْدًا حَبَشِيًّا، عَضُوا عَلَيْهَا بِاللَّوْاجِدِ، فَإِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُ كَالْجَمَلِ الْأَيْفِ حَيْثُمَا قِيدَ اتَّمَادُ"

"Once the Prophet admonished us so powerfully that our eyes were filled with tears, and our hearts softened. We said, 'Messenger of Allah! This is an eye filling admonition. Would you like to enjoin us something?' He said, 'I have left you on a white (patch) whose night is like its day (in brightness). So, none will slip but he who will destroy himself. Whoever lives after me will witness many differences. Upon you then would be those of my *Sunnah* you have known, and the *Sunnah* of the rightly guided caliphs. And upon you is obedience, even if it were to be a flat nosed Ab-

yssinian (your ruler). Hold on to this them by your teeth. A believer is like a tamed camel. He goes wheresoever he is led.” This *Sabih hadith* is also in Tirmidhi in near about the same words.

Sahal b. Tustari has said: “May you follow the *Sunnah* and the ways of the pious predecessors. I fear that a time will come when a man would hate to hear that he should follow the Prophet in every detail. The people would shun the company of anyone who will preach that, and humiliate him.”

It is reported that once Abu Musa al Ash`ari saw a new practice in the mosque (perhaps in Kufa). He spoke to `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud about it telling him that he was between its acceptance and rejection, and wanted Ibn Mas`ud to see it himself. When they went to the next Prayer, they found people sitting in groups of tens and twenties. Every group had a leader. He would say, “Say *Allahu Akbar* a hundred times” and they would say *Allahu Akbar* a hundred times. Then he would say, “Say *Subhana Allah* a hundred times,” and they would say it a hundred times. It went on until the congregational Prayers began. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud was very upset about

it. They said they were not doing it but to obtain rewards. He remarked: “How many people do not intend to obtain rewards but miss it!”

Hussain Saleem Asad remarked that the chain of narration of this report is sound. And `Amr b. Salamah reported that he saw most of those that were present in that *dhikr halqah* among the Khawarij taunting us on the day of Nahrawan (the place `Ali fought the Khawarij). And the lesson is, one ought to stay close to the *Sunnah*, and introduce not any innovation [Au.].

And Sufyan Thawri has said: “An innovation is dearer to *Shaytan* than a sin because a man committing the latter seeks forgiveness but the former does not.”

Quotations from Qurtubi end here.

287. It is widely reported of Ibn `Abbas that he considered verses 151-153 as those “*Muhkamat*” about which Allah spoke in verse 7 of *Surah Al `Imran*.

Mawdudi comments: “It is an essential corollary of the natural covenant mentioned above that man should follow the way prescribed by his Lord; and deflection from the orders of God, or serving anyone other than Him, constitutes a primary breach of

[154] Further,²⁸⁸ We gave Musa the Book, completing (Our favors) unto one who excelled.²⁸⁹ (a Book) explaining everything, a guidance and mercy, in the hope that they would believe in the meeting with their Lord.

ثُمَّ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ تَمَامًا عَلَى الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

[155] And, this is a Book that We have (now) sent down, a blessing. Therefore, follow it, and be godfearing, haply you will be shown mercy.

وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

[156] Lest you should say, 'Verily, the Book was sent down upon the two groups before us,²⁸⁹ and we were unaware of their studies.'

أَنْ تَقُولُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ عَلَى طَائِفَتَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا وَإِنْ كُنَّا عَنْ دِرَاسَتِهِمْ لَغَافِلِينَ ﴿١٥٦﴾

[157] Or you should say, 'Had the Book been sent down unto us, we would have been better guided than they.' Now, a clear sign has come to you from your Lord, a guidance and a mercy. Who then can do greater wrong than he who cried lies to the signs of Allah and turned away from them. Soon We shall recompense those who turned away from Our signs with a dreadful chastisement for their turning away.

أَوْ تَقُولُوا لَوْ أَنَّا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْكِتَابُ لَكُنَّا أَهْدَى مِنْهُمْ فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَذَبَ بآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَصَدَفَ عَنْهَا سَنَجْزِي الَّذِينَ يَصْدِفُونَ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْدِفُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

that covenant. Once this breach has been committed, every single article of the covenant is likely to be violated one after the other. Moreover, it should also be remembered that man cannot acquit himself of the highly delicate, extensive and complex set of responsibilities entailed by this covenant unless he accepts the guidance of God and tries to follow the way prescribed by Him.”

288. The words in parenthesis are from Ibn Jarir.

289. *Ihsan* is to do something in the most spirited fashion while remaining within the rules of the *Shari'ah*. The allusion by the words “unto one who excelled” could both be to Musa who excelled (in his mission) as well as the true believers of his time who excelled (in all they were asked to do) Ibn Jarir.

290. Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, 'Ikrimah, Qatadah and others have said that the allusion by the words, “two groups before us” is to Jews and Christians (Ibn Kathir).

[158] Are they waiting that the angels should come to them²⁹⁰ or should their Lord Himself come, or should some of Your Lord's signs appear?²⁹¹ The day some of the signs of your Lord should appear, of no profit will then be the belief of him who did not believe earlier,²⁹² or did not earn good through his belief.²⁹³ Say, 'You may wait. We are also waiting.'

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ
يَأْتِي رَبُّكَ أَوْ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَ
يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا
إِيمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ
فِي إِيمَانِهَا حَيْرًا فَلِإِنَّا نَنْتَظِرُونَ إِنَّا مُنْتَظَرُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

291. Imām Razi does not spare the occasion to deny the movement of Allah. Qurtubi says that Allah's "coming and going" does not involve movement. Yet He does come and go but we do not know the "how" of it.

292. It is widely reported that it is the Sun rising from the West that is alluded to by the sign. A *hadith* narrated by Abu Hurayrah says that:

لَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ حَتَّى تَطْلُعَ الشَّمْسُ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا فَيَأْتِي
رَأَاهَا النَّاسُ آمِنٌ مَنْ عَلِمَهَا فَذَلِكَ حِينَ لَا يَنْفَعُ
نَفْسًا إِيمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ {

"The Hour will not strike until the Sun rises from the West. With that happening, everyone would believe in Allah, but that would be the time about which Allah said: "The day some of His signs appear, of no profit will then be the belief of him who did not believe earlier, or did not earn good (deeds) through his faith." (The *hadith* is in Bukhari and almost all other *Masanid*: Ibn

Kathir).

Another *hadith* narrated by Safwan b. 'Assal says the Prophet (*saws*) said:

إِنَّ بِالْمَغْرِبِ بَابًا مَفْتُوحًا لِلتَّوْبَةِ مَسِيرَتُهُ سَبْعُونَ سَنَةً
لَا يَغْلُقُ حَتَّى تَطْلُعَ الشَّمْسُ مِنْ مَخْرَجِهَا

"In the West there is a repentance door, of width seventy years. It will remain open until the Sun appears from that side."

A report coming from Abu Dharr is as follows:

عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِأَبِي ذَرٍّ حِينَ غَرَبَتِ الشَّمْسُ أَتَدْرِي أَيْنَ
تَذْهَبُ قُلْتُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا تَذْهَبُ حَتَّى
تَسْجُدَ تَحْتَ الْعَرْشِ فَتَسْتَأْذِنُ فَيُؤْذَنُ لَهَا وَيُؤَشِّكُ أَنْ
تَسْجُدَ فَلَا يَقْبَلُ مِنْهَا وَتَسْتَأْذِنُ فَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهَا يُقَالُ
لَهَا اِرْجِعِي مِنْ حَيْثُ جِئْتِ فَتَطْلُعُ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا فَذَلِكَ
قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى { وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ
الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ }

"The Prophet asked him at sunset time, 'Do you know where the Sun goes when it sets?' He replied, 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' He said, 'It keeps go-

ing until it prostrates itself below the *'Arsh*. Then it seeks permission (to rise) and it is allowed. But a time will come when it will prostrate itself but it will not be accepted and asks permission (to rise) but it will not be allowed. It will be to, 'Return to where you came from and so it will rise from the West. That is the interpretation of the statement of Allah (36: 38): "*And the Sun moves in its appointed course. That is the decree of the All Mighty, the All knowing*" (Ibn Jarir).

But we have taken the *hadith* from Bukhari (Au.).

One might be led to believe that the *hadith* about the Sun prostrating itself below the *'Arsh* confirms the idea that the earth is stationary and the sun revolves around it. Such an opinion is incorrect. We shall explain it in detail when we take up the verse quoted viz., 36: 38 (Au.).

There are other reports from the Prophet which speak of three signs: the rising of the Sun from the West, (the appearance of) Dajjal, and a Beast rising from the earth (which will speak to the people). [A *hadith* to this effect is in Tirmidhi: Ibn Kathir]. Another *hadith* narrated by Hasan (al Busri) says:

بَادِرُوا بِالْأَعْمَالِ سِتًّا: الدَّجَالُ، والدُّخَانُ، وَدَابَّةُ
الْأَرْضِ، وَطُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا، وَأَمْرَ الْعَامَّةِ،
وَلِحُورِصَّةِ أَحَدِكُمْ

"Hurry up with good deeds before the six things: Dajjal, the Smoke, a Beast from the earth, rising of the Sun from the West, rule by the masses and especially, your affair (Ibn Jarir). A few other signs have been added to the above six in a report of Muslim: Yajuj and Majuj, 'Isa's descent, three caving in of the lands: one in the East, another in the West and a third in the Arabian Peninsula, and a fire that will appear from the Yemen to drive people to the Field of Reckoning, resting with them when they would stop in the night or for their siesta (Ibn Kathir).

293. The allusion is to the deeds in the light of faith, conforming with Islamic principles (Au.). According to Suddi and Dahhak, those who regularly performed good deeds prior to the Signs of the Doomsday, would have them accepted even after the Signs. But those who led a life of impiety, even if they were believers, but began acting good only after the appearance of the Signs, will not have their deeds accepted (Ibn Jarir).

294. The verse is equally applicable

[159] Verily, those who created schism in their religion²⁹⁴ and broke into sects, you have nothing to do with them. Their affair is with Allah. He shall inform them of what they were doing.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا لَسَتْ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

[160] Whosoever brought (a) good (deed) shall have (rewards) ten times the like thereof; but whosoever brought an evil shall not be recompensed but with its like.²⁹⁵ And they shall not be wronged.

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ مِثَالِهَا وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

[161] Say, 'Surely, my Lord has guided me to a Straight Path: a religion of right, the religion of Ibrahim²⁹⁶ who was not of the associators.'

قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَانِي رَبِّي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيَمًا مِثْلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾

to Jews and Christians as well as to the innovators in Islam (Ibn Jarir).

295. The textual words "created schism in their religion" imply that it is a fundamental principles and it is the mainstay of the religion that is alluded to. Differences in details cannot be avoided, and cannot be termed as creating schism in religion (based on Shabbir and he from Shah `Abdul `Aziz).

296. The *Salaf* are unanimous over the opinion that by "the good" the allusion is to the words "La ilaha illa Allah" pronounced with sincerity, and by "the evil" it is to Association (Ibn Jarir).

The verse however is applicable to deeds also. We have a *hadith* in Nasa'i, Ibn Majah and Ahmad

which says:

مَنْ صَامَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ مِنْ كُلِّ شَهْرٍ فَقَدْ صَامَ الدَّهْرَ كُلَّهُ

"Whoever fasted three days of every month is as if one who fasted the whole year round." Tirmidhi has the following words added: "And then he recited: 'Whoever brought (a) good (deed) shall have (rewards) ten times its like. Nevertheless, whoever brought (an) evil (deed), he shall not be recompensed but with its like.'"

This *hadith* Qudsi of Bukhari, Muslim and Nasa'i, (is in the same vein which) says:

مَنْ هَمَّ بِحَسَنَةٍ فَلَمْ يَعْمَلْهَا كَتَبَ لَهُ عَشْرَ أَضْعَافٍ إِلَى سَبْعِ مِائَةٍ ضِعْفٍ إِلَى أَضْعَافٍ كَثِيرَةٍ , وَمَنْ هَمَّ بِسَيِّئَةٍ , فَلَمْ يَعْمَلْهَا كُتِبَتْ لَهُ حَسَنَةٌ , فَإِنْ عَمِلَهَا

كُتِبَتْ عَلَيْهِ سَيِّئَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ أَوْ مَحَاهَا , وَلَا يَهْلِكُ عَلَى
اللَّهِ إِلَّا هَالِكٌ

“Whoever intended a good deed but could not do it will have a good deed written into his account. If he does it then anything between ten to seven hundred or more is written down in his account. However, if someone intended an evil deed but did not do it, a good deed is written down in his account. But if he commits it, only one is written down - unless Allah, the Honored, the Exalted, erases it. So none will be destroyed by Allah save one who will destroy himself” (Ibn Kathir).

After narrating the *hadith* Ibn Kathir explains that there are three kinds of people who intend to do an evil but do not: First, someone who abandoned it for the sake of Allah. He shall have a good deed written in his account. Second, he who forgot about it. There is nothing against

him and nothing for him. Third, he who tried but failed, for some reason or the other, to perform the evil deed he had intended. He is like him who did it. This follows the principle laid down in another *hadith* which says:

إِذَا التَّقَى الْمُسْلِمَانِ بِسَيْفَيْهِمَا فَالْقَاتِلُ وَالْمَقْتُولُ
فِي النَّارِ فُقِلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَذَا الْقَاتِلُ فَمَا بَالُ
الْمَقْتُولِ قَالَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَرِيصًا عَلَى قَتْلِ صَاحِبِهِ

“When two Muslims cross swords then the killer and the killed are in the Fire.” They asked: “The killer yes, but what about the killed one?” He replied: “He was quite ready to kill his companion.”

297. What do the words “*millah of Ibrahim*” imply? Ibn Kathir helps with a *hadith*. Ahmad has a report coming from Ibn `Abbas that the Prophet (*saws*) was asked: “What religion is the most approved of by Allah?” He replied:

أَحَبُّ الدِّينِ إِلَى اللَّهِ الْحَنِيفِيَّةُ السَّمْحَةُ

“The religion most approved by Allah is the *al Hanifiyyah al samba*

[162] Say, 'My Prayers, my sacrifice,²⁹⁷ my living and my death, are all for Allah alone, the Lord of the worlds.

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

[163] He has no partners. This I have been ordered, and I am the first of those who have surrendered.'

لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

[164] Say, 'Should I seek a Lord other than Allah when He is the Lord of all things? And no soul will earn anything but it shall be upon it. And no bearer of burden shall bear another's burden. Then, to Him is your return. He shall tell you the truth concerning that over which you were differing.

قُلْ أَغْيَرَ اللَّهُ آبَعِي رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْهَا وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

(i.e., the upright, the easy)."

The text is from Bukhari (Au.).

Ibn Kathir then explains that it is the religion of the middle path, the one that avoids extremes is the most approved of by Allah. Accordingly, we have `A'isha telling us that once when some acrobatic men were putting up a show, the Prophet let her watch until she had had enough. On that occasion the Prophet said:

لتعلم يهود أن في ديننا فسحة، إني أرسلت بحنيفية
سمة

“So that the Jews might know

that there is lot of flexibility in our religion. I have been sent with *Haniffiyah Samba* (i.e., the upright, the easy)."

This *hadith* is in the *Sahihayn*.

298. A great many of the *Salaf* have said that by the textual term “*nusuk*” the allusion here is to sacrifice (Ibn Jarir).

299. Suddi has said that Allah made us succeed the disbelieving generations of the past times (Ibn Jarir, Alusi).

After mentioning Suddi's interpre-

[165] It is He who made you successors²⁹⁸ of the earth and raised some of you over others in ranks,²⁹⁹ in order that he may try you in what He gave you. Verily, your Lord is quick of punishment; yet He is the Forgiving, the Kind.³⁰⁰

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ الْأَرْضِ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٦٥﴾

tation, Zamakhshari adds another possible meaning as: Men as Allah's *Khalifah* in His earth, enjoying its contents and utilizing it the way it pleases them.

Apart from mentioning Suddi's interpretation as well as agreeing with the possibility of Zamakhshari's opinion, Alusi adds Hasan's opinion: "Generation after generation Allah replaces one people after another. This is the meaning of being *khalifah* in the land."

300. According to Suddi the ranks referred to in the verse are related to wealth and provisions (Ibn Jarir).

301. Imām Ahmad has preserved the following narration of Abu Hurayrah. The Prophet said:

لَوْ يَعْلَمُ الْمُؤْمِنُ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنَ الْعُقُوبَةِ مَا طَمِعَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ أَحَدٌ وَلَوْ يَعْلَمُ الْكَافِرُ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ مَا قَتَطَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ أَحَدٌ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ رَحْمَةٍ فَوَضَعَ رَحْمَةً وَاحِدَةً بَيْنَ خَلْقِهِ يَتَرَاخَمُونَ بِهَا وَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ تِسْعَةٌ وَتِسْعُونَ رَحْمَةً

"If the believer knew what punishment is in store with Allah, no one would ever covet Paradise. And if the unbeliever knew what mercy is with Allah, no one would despair of Paradise. Allah created a hundred parts of mercy. One part He distributed among His creations by which they show mercy to each other. And with Allah are ninety nine (parts of it)" Ibn Kathir.

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