



CHAPTER 3

Āl 'Imrān: The Family of Amran

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 20 sections; 200 verses)

The name of this chapter is taken from the mention of *'Imrān* in v. 33. *'Imrān* is the same as Amran, the father of Moses and Aaron. It is an appropriate title as the chapter deals with the departure of prophethood from the Mosaic dispensation.

The chapter opens with a statement relating to the Divine origin of the Holy Qur'ān as well as the Torah and the Gospel. It then gives a rule of interpretation, neglect of which has led to numerous errors in religious beliefs. This rule of interpretation, which must be borne in mind in interpreting all Divine books, is that every allegorical statement must be interpreted in such a manner that it may not contradict any of the clear principles laid down by Divine revelation. As the Christian religion is based really on the wrong interpretation of certain allegorical statements, the rule is appropriately laid down as a preliminary to a discussion of the Christian religion.

The preliminary remarks of the first section are followed in the second by an assertion of the Unity of Allāh, which is laid down as the clear basis of all religions, and its ultimate triumph is predicted. The third section refers to the departure from the house of Israel of the spiritual kingdom which was now being granted to another people; and the last chosen members of the Israelite race are mentioned in the fourth. Among these is Jesus, various misconceptions regarding whom necessitate rather a lengthy discussion in the two sections that follow. The seventh section continues the controversy with the Jews and the Christians, while the eighth deals with their machinations to discredit Islām. The ninth speaks of the testimony of previous Books and prophets to the truth of Islām, while the tenth mentions the overwhelming testimony afforded by the Ka'bah, the new spiritual centre of the world. This is followed by an exhortation in the following section to the Muslims to remain united if they would achieve triumph, and in view of the coming conflicts they are told in the next to have guarded relations with the Jews, who, while outwardly friendly, were inwardly hostile to the Muslims. The incidents of the battle of Uḥud, the causes of the misfortune experienced in it, and how triumph can be obtained are the points discussed from section thirteen to the eighteenth. The nineteenth speaks of the carpings of the People of the Book, while the twentieth deals with the ultimate triumph of the faithful.

The importance of the connection of this with the preceding chapter may be judged from the fact that, taken together, they are termed *zahrāwān* (meaning *the two bright and shining ones*). The two, in fact, may be treated as a single chapter, as each supplements and explains the other. The 2nd chapter opens with a controversy with the Jews, and deals at length with their contentions, referring only briefly to the Christians. The 3rd chapter opens with a controversy with the Christians, and deals at length with their

contentions, referring only briefly to the Jews. Again, the second chapter deals particularly with the necessity of fighting against an enemy who was bent upon the extirpation of Islām, while the third deals with the events of one of the battles which the enemy waged with a view to wipe out Islām by destroying its stronghold in Madinah.

The whole of this chapter was revealed at Madinah and it is generally supposed to be the second or the third in order in the Madinah revelation (Itq). The latter portion, from sec. 13 almost to the end, distinctly relates the incidents of the battle of Uḥud, and therefore the third year of the Hijrah may be fixed as the date of its revelation. The first portion, especially that dealing with the birth and ministry of Jesus, is said by some to have been revealed on the occasion of the visit of a deputation of the Najrān Christians which took place in the tenth year of the Hijrah, but there is no evidence for it. The whole chapter belongs to the third year of the Hijrah, with the possible exception of v. 61 which speaks of *Mubāhalah*, and may have been revealed on the occasion of the visit of the Najrān deputation.

SECTION 1: Rule of Interpretation

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1 I, Allāh, am the best Knower,^a

أَلَمَّ

2 Allāh, (there is) no god but He, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting, by Whom all subsist.^a

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

3 He has revealed to thee the Book with truth,^a verifying that which is before it, and He revealed the Torah and the Gospel^b

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ

1a. For explanation, see 2:1a.

2a. In consonance with its character as controverting Christian doctrines, this controversy being carried on to the 84th verse, the chapter fitly opens with two attributes of the Divine Being, the Ever-living and the Self-subsisting, which deal a death-blow to the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ. The statement that there is *no god but He* contains an ideal expression of the religion of Islām in four words.

3a. For the sake of simplicity I render *haqq* as meaning *truth*, but *haqq* primarily signifies *suitableness to the requirements of wisdom, justice, right, truth, or fact; or to the exigencies of the case* (R, LL). Hence the true sense of the phrase is that the Qur'ān was revealed suitably to the requirements of wisdom and justice, and to the exigencies of the case; in other words, it was revealed at a time when revelation was sorely needed by humanity. This argument of its truth is one which even the most hostile critic is unable to refute. To say nothing of earlier religions, Christianity, which was then the latest phase of monotheism, was corrupt to the core. "The Christianity of the seventh century," says Muir, "was itself decrepit and corrupt. It was disabled by contending schisms, and had substituted the puerilities of superstition for the pure expansive faith of early ages" ("Life of Mohamet," intr., p. lxxxiii).

The commentators explain *bi-l-haqq* as signifying the *pointing out of the right way in the differences which existed before it, or as giving a correct account of the past histories of the prophets, or as being true with respect to the promises and threats relating to the future, and thus making believers stick to the right path* (Rz). Some commentators explain it as meaning *with arguments and proof* (AH).

3b. In the whole of the previous chapter the *Taurāt* and the *Injil* are not mentioned by name, though frequently referred to, specially the former, as *that which is with you*. *Taurāt* is the name given to the books of Moses, or the Pentateuch, and hence its correct rendering is the Hebrew word *Torah*. The *Taurāt* does not signify the Old Testament, because the latter is the name of the whole collection of the books of the Israelite prophets. *Torah* in Hebrew literature signifies *the revealed will of God*. The word *Kitāb*, Book, conveys, however, a wider significance and means sometimes the Old Testament and sometimes the Bible.

The word *Injil* does not signify, as supposed by Muir and others, the New Testament. According to the Holy Qur'ān no prophet, to whom any book was revealed, appeared after Jesus Christ, who, being the last of the Israelite Prophets, was granted a revelation

4 Aforetime, a guidance for the people,^a and He sent the Discrimination.^b Those who disbelieve in the messages of Allāh — for them is a severe chastisement. And Allāh is Mighty, the Lord of retribution.^c

5 Surely nothing in the earth or in the heaven is hidden from Allāh.

6 He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases. There is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise.

7 He it is Who has revealed the Book to thee; some of its verses are decisive — they are the basis of the Book — and others are allegorical.^a

مَنْ قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَنْزَلَ الْقُرْآنَ
لِأَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
شَدِيدٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ①

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ②

هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ
يَشَاءُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ③

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ
آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ
مُنْتَشِهَاتٌ ط مَا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ رِيعٌ

called the *Injil*, which stands for the Evangel or the Gospel, and signifies literally *good tidings*. The reason why Jesus's revelation was called *Gospel* or *good tidings* is that it gave the glad news of the advent of the Last of the Prophets, which is variously described in Jesus's metaphorical language as the advent of the kingdom of God (Mark. 1:15), the coming of the Lord (Matt. 21:40), the appearance of the Comforter (John 14:16), or the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17), etc. Not only are the Acts, the Epistles, and the Book of Revelation not recognized by the Qur'ān as parts of the *Injil*, or the Gospel, but it does not even recognize the Gospels according to Matthew, etc., as the *Injil* which was revealed to Jesus Christ, though the current Gospels might contain fragments of the original teaching. This view of the Gospel as taken by the Qur'ān is now admitted to be the correct one, as all criticism points to some original of the synoptics which is now entirely lost. The Qur'ān nowhere suggests that the original *Injil*, the revelation to Jesus Christ, existed at the time of the Holy Prophet.

4a. The Torah and the Gospel were undoubtedly a guidance before the Qur'ān; but even as they now exist, they afford guidance in many respects with a mixture of error, and contain numerous prophecies fulfilled in the advent of Prophet Muḥammad.

4b. For an explanation of the word *Furqān*, see 2:53a. The Holy Qur'ān is here mentioned by the name *Furqān*, or that which distinguishes between truth and falsehood, in reference to the fact that the Qur'ān was sent to separate the truth which was to be met with in previous revelation from the falsehood which had found its way into it. As the *Furqān* or the Discrimination in the case of the Holy Prophet was also afforded by the battle of Badr, this event is referred to in verse 13 as a prelude to the actual controversy.

4c. *Intiqām* is derived from *niqmah*, which means *the retribution of one who is guilty* (R, T). It conveys the idea of *avenging* but not of *revenge*; *intaqamtu minhu* signifies *I inflicted penal retribution on him for that which he had done*, or *I punished him* (LL). *Dhu-ntiqām*, as an attribute of the Divine Being, means *the Inflicter of retribution* or *the Lord of retribution*.

7a, see next page.

Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead, and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation.^b And none knows its interpretation save Allāh, and those firmly rooted in knowledge. They say: We believe in it, it is all from our Lord.^c And none mind except men of understanding.

فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا كَتَبْنَا بِهِ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ
وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا
اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا
بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ
إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ٥

7a. The verses of the Holy Book are here stated to be partly *muḥkam* (decisive) and partly *mutashābih* (allegorical). In 11:1 the whole Qur'ān is spoken of as a *Book whose verses are made plain*, and in 39:23 it is called *kitāb-an mutashābih-an*, a *book, consistent in its injunctions*. A little consideration will show that there is no discrepancy in the three statements; they actually explain each other. Literally, *muḥkam* (from *ḥakama*, meaning *he prevented*, whence *aḥkama*, i.e., *he made a thing firm or stable*) is that of which the meaning is secured from change and alteration. *Mutashābih* (from *shābih*, meaning *likeness or resemblance*) is that which is consimilar or conformable in its various parts, and *mutashābihāt* are therefore *things like or resembling one another*, hence *susceptible to different interpretations* (LL). Therefore when it is stated that the whole of the Book is *muḥkam*, the meaning is that all its verses are decisive, and when the Qur'ān is called *mutashābih* (39:23), the meaning is that the whole of it is *conformable in its various parts*. In the verse under discussion is laid down the important principle how verses susceptible of different interpretations may be interpreted so that a decisive significance may be attached to them. The Qur'ān, we are here told, establishes certain principles in clear words which are to be taken as the basis, while there are statements made in allegorical words or susceptible to different meanings, the interpretation of which must be in consonance with the other parts and the spirit of the Book. In fact, this is true of every writing. When a certain law is laid down in a book in unmistakable words, any statement carrying a doubtful significance or one which is apparently opposed to the law so laid down must be interpreted subject to the principle enunciated. The subject is very appropriately dealt with here as a prelude to a controversy with the Christians, who attribute divinity to Jesus and uphold the doctrine of atonement by blood on the basis of certain ambiguous words or allegorical statements, without heeding the fundamental principles established by the earlier prophets.

7b. The *fitnah* is the *misleading of the people* (T, LL), or *the sowing of dissension*, or *difference of opinion* (Q, LL), by giving to one part an interpretation which is falsified by another. *Ta'wil* (from *awl*, to return) is the *final sequel or the end of a thing*, or *the interpretation of what is ambiguous or allegorical*, such as the interpretation of dreams, etc. Kf explains *ta'wila-hū* here as meaning *the interpretation which they desire*, and this, according to AH, is the significance; hence the addition in the translation of the words *their own* within brackets. They do not care to seek the real interpretation, which can only be found by referring to the principles laid down elsewhere. But the words may also signify their giving an interpretation to an ambiguous verse *alone*, i.e. without considering it in conjunction with other consimilar verses or the principles laid down elsewhere.

7c. These words afford a clue to the right mode of interpretation. The words *it is all from our Lord* signify that there is no disagreement between the various portions of

8 Our Lord, make not our hearts to deviate after Thou hast guided us and grant us mercy from Thee; surely Thou art the most liberal Giver.

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا
وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ
أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ④

9 Our Lord, surely Thou art the Gatherer of men on a day about which there is no doubt. Surely Allāh will not fail in (His) promise.^a

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ
فِيهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْوَعْدَ ④

SECTION 2: Unity the Basis of all Religions

10 Those who disbelieve, neither their wealth nor their children will avail them aught against Allāh. And they will be fuel for fire^a—

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ نُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ أَهْوَالَهُمْ
وَلَا أَوْلَادَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَأُولَئِكَ
هُمْ وَقُودُ النَّارِ ①

11 As was the case of the people of Pharaoh, and those before them! They rejected Our messages, so Allāh destroyed them on account of their sins.^a And Allāh is Severe in requiting (evil).

كَذَّابٍ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ لَا الَّذِينَ مِنْ
قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَآخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ
بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ⑩ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ⑩

the Holy Book. Hence the rule of interpretation which they follow is that they refer passages which are susceptible to various interpretations to those whose meaning is obvious or to consimilar passages, and subject particular statements to general principles. Thus reading various passages in the light of each other, they discover the true significance of ambiguous passages. Hence such people are spoken of as *knowing* the true interpretation of allegorical verses (B. 65: iii, 2).

9a. There seems to be a reference here to the gathering of the hostile forces in the battles and to Allāh's promise to grant victory to the faithful. The verses that follow leave no doubt; see particularly v. 12.

10a. Vv. 10–12 contain a clear prophecy of the vanquishment of the opponents of the Prophet. Though the Quraish had suffered a crushing defeat in the battle of Badr, they could yet muster heavy forces against the Muslims, who were few in numbers. The Muslims were still too weak and in danger of being annihilated by their opponents. They were actually attacked twice again, once in the battle of Uḥud and again in the battle of the Allies, with heavy forces which would have crushed the Muslims if they had not received Divine help.

11a. *Dhanb* is originally *the taking the tail of a thing, and it is applied to every act of which the consequence is disagreeable or unwholesome* (R). According to LL, *dhanb* means *a sin, a crime, a fault, a transgression, or an act of disobedience*. It is said to differ from *ithm* in being either intentional or committed through inadvertence, whereas *ithm* is particularly intentional (LL). It will thus be seen that *dhanb* is a word which carries a wide significance, and is applicable to *all shortcomings resulting from inattention,*

12 Say to those who disbelieve: You shall be vanquished, and driven together to hell; and evil is the resting-place.^a

قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَعْتٌ بَعِيدَةٌ وَنَجَّاتٌ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ ۗ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Indeed there was a sign for you in the two hosts (which) met together in encounter — one party fighting in the way of Allāh and the other disbelieving, whom they saw twice as many as themselves with the sight of the eye.^a And Allāh strengthens with His aid whom He pleases. There is a lesson in this for those who have eyes.

قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ فِي فِئَتَيْنِ الَّذِينَ تَنَافَسَا
فِي الْمَعْرَكِ فَأَمَّا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَآخَرَىٰ
كَافِرَةٌ يَرَوْنَهُمْ مِّثْلَيْهِمْ رَأَىٰ الْعَيْنُ
وَاللَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصْرِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ إِنَّ
فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ ﴿١٣﴾

incapacity, or perversity, and even to defects or imperfections of which the result may be disagreeable. It covers all shades of shortcomings, from the grossest transgressions of the wicked to those defects and imperfections of which even the righteous cannot be free.

12a. This is one of the passages in which the punishment of this life, which is *vanquishment*, is spoken of in the same breath with the punishment of the Hereafter, which is *hell*.

13a. The reference here is to the battle of Badr. The meaning is that the Muslims saw the disbelievers to be twice as many as themselves. The statement does not contradict that made in 8:44: "And when He showed them to you, when you met, as few in your eyes, and He made you to appear few in their eyes". The actual strength of the two parties was: Quraish about 1,000, Muslims 313. The statement made in this verse is that the Muslims saw the disbelievers to be twice as many as themselves. Therefore they were still fewer in the eyes of the Muslims as compared with their actual strength, and this is what is stated in 8:44. As to why they were shown to the Muslims to be twice as many as themselves, 8:66 helps us to understand: "so if there be of you a hundred steadfast, they shall overcome two hundred; and if there be of you a thousand, they shall overcome two thousand". The part of the enemy not seen by the Muslims was behind a hillock.

The battle of Badr is here stated to be a sign of the truth of the Prophet, not only because of the prophecies of victory contained in the Qur'ān, but also because of the clear prophecy in Isaiah, where, after speaking of a future scene in the land of Arabia (Isa. 21:13), the prophet goes on to say: "The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled. For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war. For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail. And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished" (Isa. 21:14–17). Kedar was the son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13), and the word is used freely in the Bible for the Arab tribe that sprang from him (Ps. 120:5; Isa. 42:11; 60:7, etc.). There is only one person in history whose flight has become a memorable fact as the beginning of an Era. It was Muhammad (on whom be peace) who, attended by one faithful companion, fled from the drawn swords of the guard that surrounded his house, and it was after one year from his Flight that the glory of Kedar departed in the battle of Badr which took place in the second year of the Flight. The battle of Badr was thus a sign for the Jews and the Christians as well because of the fulfilment of prophecies in the Bible. The second year after the Flight had not yet come to a close when the power of Kedar was broken at Badr.

14 Fair-seeming to men is made the love of desires, of women and sons and hoarded treasures of gold and silver and well-bred horses and cattle and tilth. This is the provision of the life of this world. And Allāh — with Him is the good goal (of life).^a

15 Say: Shall I tell you of what is better than these? For those who guard against evil are Gardens with their Lord, in which rivers flow, to abide in them, and pure companions and Allāh's goodly pleasure.^a And Allāh is Seer of the servants.

16 Those who say: Our Lord, we believe, so forgive our sins and save us from the chastisement of the fire.

17 The patient and the truthful, and the obedient, and those who spend and those who ask Divine protection in the morning times.^a

18 Allāh bears witness that there is no god but He, and (so do) the angels and those possessed of knowledge,^a

سُرِّينَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبَّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ
وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ
الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ
وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ذَلِكَ مَتَاعُ
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَبَادِ

قُلْ أَوْبَيْتُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ ذَلِكُمْ لِلَّذِينَ
اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَ
رِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

الَّذِينَ يَفْعَلُونَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّتَا أَعْلَمُ
لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَنَنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَ
الْمُسْتَعْفِرِينَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ
وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا

14a. This verse contrasts the yearnings of the men of the world with those of the faithful. We are here told that, though the enjoyments of this life have their attractions, yet the desire to be with Allāh is the goal which the true believer sets before himself. It is by "hoarded treasures of gold and silver" that the Christian nations have been led away from God.

15a. For the companions in paradise see 2:25d. Of the blessings of paradise is Allāh's goodly pleasure, which is elsewhere said to be the greatest of all the blessings of paradise (9:72). The addition of this word here shows that the blessings of paradise are spiritual.

17a. For the meaning of *istighfār*, see 2:286a. As shown there *istighfār* is really a prayer to attain to sinlessness. That this is the real significance is shown by its use here. The righteous servants of God are here spoken of as possessing the great qualifications of steadfastness, truthfulness, obedience to God, spending in Allāh's way, and finally as *mustaghfirin* or resorting to *istighfār*, which shows that it is one of the highest stages to which the spiritual pilgrim aspires.

18a. Allāh bears witness to His Unity through nature, which is His handiwork, and also by His word made known through revelation. The angels bear witness by their working within man, whose nature bears testimony to Divine Unity. Those who have a true knowledge of the holy scriptures of any religion also bear testimony to the great truth of

maintaining justice.^b There is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise.

هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

19 Surely the (true) religion with Allāh is Islām.^a And those who were given the Book differed only after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the messages of Allāh — Allāh indeed is Quick at reckoning.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ۗ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعْضًا مِنْ بَعْضٍ ۗ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ۝

20 But if they dispute with thee say: I submit myself entirely to Allāh and (so does) he who follows me. And say to those who have been given the Book and the Unlearned (people): Do you submit yourselves?^a If they submit, then indeed they follow the right way; and if they turn back, thy duty is only to deliver the message. And Allāh is Seer of the servants.

فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ مِنَ الشَّعْبِ ۗ وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ ءَأَسْلَمْتُمْ ۗ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا ۗ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاءُ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ۝

the Unity of Allāh. The Unity of Allāh is, in fact, the common principle which is recognized by all religions. Thus the whole creation, the nature of man, and the broad and common principles of all religions are all at one in declaring the Divine Unity, whereas the Trinity of the Christian faith is but a solitary doctrine which does not find any support either in physical nature or in the nature of man or in the religion of humanity.

18b. The words *maintaining justice* may qualify Allāh as being the true Maintainer of justice. But considering what is said in the next verse as to the injustice of those to whom knowledge was given, it is more likely that the words qualify *those possessed of knowledge*, the meaning being that every possessor of knowledge, to whatever religion he may belong, bears witness to the grand truth of Divine Unity if he maintains justice in bearing witness.

19a. An explanation of what Islām is has already been given in 2:112a. According to the Holy Qur'ān, *Islām* was the religion of all the prophets. It is particularly mentioned as the religion of Abraham several times, and on one occasion the Israelite prophets who followed Moses are spoken of as *the prophets who submitted themselves (to Allah)*, *alladhīna aslamū* (5:44). Not only is Islām the religion of every prophet, but, according to the Holy Qur'ān, it is also the natural religion of man, as in 30:30 it is described as being “the nature made by Allāh in which He has created men”. This is corroborated by a saying of the Prophet: “Every child is born in Islām: it is his parents who make him a Jew or a Christian” (B. 23:179).

The word *Islām* does not only signify *submission*, it also signifies *entering into peace*, from *aslama*, meaning *he entered into peace*. In fact, the idea of *peace* is the dominant idea in Islām, and the goal to which Islām leads is called *the abode of peace* (10:25).

20a. By the *Unlearned people* are meant *the Arabs*; see 2:78a.

SECTION 3: The Kingdom is Granted to Another People

21 Those who disbelieve in the messages of Allāh and would slay the prophets unjustly and slay those among men who enjoin justice, announce to them a painful chastisement.^a

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ
النَّبِيَِّينَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ لَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَيُهْلِكَنَّ
بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ مِنَ النَّاسِ لَقَدْ فَتَنَّاهُمْ
بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ٢١

22 Those are they whose works will be of no avail in this world and the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers.^a

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَالْآخِرَةِ وَوَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ٢٢

23 Hast thou not seen those who are given a portion of the Book?^a They are invited to the Book of Allāh that it may decide between them, then a party of them turn back and they withdraw.^b

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ
يَتَوَلَّوْا فَرِيقًا مِمَّنْهُمْ وَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ٢٣

24 This is because they say: The Fire shall not touch us but for a few days; and that which they forge deceives them regarding their religion.

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَنْ نَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا
أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ وَعَزَّهُمْ فِي دِينِهِمْ
مَا كَانُوا يَفْقَهُونَ ٢٤

25 Then how will it be when We gather them together on a day about

كَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَاهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ

21a. For *bashshir* see 4:138a. The Jews are specially mentioned as a people who were guilty of trying to kill prophets (2:61), but this reference seems to point to their plans for killing the Holy Prophet, which were, however, all frustrated.

22a. The meaning is that all their attempts against the Prophet will be fruitless, and they themselves will be reduced to a condition of helplessness.

23a. The Jews are spoken of as being given only a portion of the Book, because much of it had already been lost. Moreover, the Torah was not a complete law.

23b. Some commentators think that this decision was given in a case of adultery; but there is nothing in the Qur'an warranting such a limitation. It is, of course, remarkable, as Sale has noticed, that while the law of Moses as now preserved in Lev. 20:10 mentions simply *putting to death*, as the punishment for adultery, John 8:5 gives us to understand that *stoning to death* was the real punishment, and the Prophet is also said to have stated stoning to be the punishment prescribed for adultery by the Jewish law, though the rabbis refused to accept the judgement of their own law. It seems to be a clear instance of alteration.

The reference here, however, is to the broad principles of religion regarding which the Jews, or the Jews and the Christians, differed. The *Book of Allāh* is the Holy Qur'an which gave a decision in the differences between the Jews and the Christians.

which there is no doubt. And every soul shall be fully paid what it has earned, and they shall not be wronged?

26 Say: O Allāh, Owner of the Kingdom, Thou givest the kingdom to whom Thou pleasest, and takest away the kingdom from whom Thou pleasest, and Thou exaltest whom Thou pleasest and abasest whom Thou pleasest. In Thine hand is the good. Surely, Thou art Possessor of power over all things.

27 Thou makest the night to pass into the day and Thou makest the day to pass into the night; and Thou bringest forth the living from the dead and Thou bringest forth the dead from the living; and Thou givest sustenance to whom Thou pleasest without measure.^a

28 Let not the believers take the disbelievers for friends rather than believers.^a And whoever does this has no connection with Allāh — except that you guard yourselves against

وَوَقَّيْتِ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ
لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ
مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ
مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِإِيدِكَ
الْخَيْرُ طَرَاكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

تُؤَلِّجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَتُؤَلِّجُ النَّهَارَ فِي
الَّيْلِ وَتُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَتُخْرِجُ
الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَتَرْسُدُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ
بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢٨﴾

لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكُفْرَانَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ
دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَلَيْسَ
مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ

27a. Vv. 26, 27 apparently refer to the fact that kingdom and honour shall be given now to another nation, whose night shall be made to pass into a day of triumph. It is on account of having failed to grasp their real significance that Rodwell thinks that these verses are misplaced here, “interrupting as they do the connection of the preceding and subsequent verses”. The connection is clear. The Jews had already been warned by Jesus that “the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof” (Matt. 21:43). A living nation of Muslims was brought forth from among the dead Arabs, and the living nation of Israelites was represented now by a people who were spiritually dead. Compare 4:54: “But indeed We have given to Abraham’s children the Book and the Wisdom, and We have given them a grand kingdom”.

28a. The Muslims, being in a state of war with the disbelievers, were forbidden to look to their enemies to guard their interests or for help of any kind. The clear statement made in 60:8, 9 settles the point beyond all doubt: “Allāh forbids you not respecting those who fight you not for religion, nor drive you forth from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal with them justly. . . Allāh forbids you only respecting those who fight you for religion and drive you forth from your homes and help (others) in your expulsion, that you make friends with them”. *Auliya'*, which I translate as *friends* here, is the plural of *wali*, which is derived from a root meaning *he held command* or *had*

them,^b guarding carefully. And Allāh cautions you against His retribution.^c And to Allāh is the eventual coming.

تَقْتَضِيهِ وَيُحَدِّثُكُمْ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ ط
إِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ ۝

29 Say: Whether you hide what is in your hearts or manifest it, Allāh knows it. And He knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

قُلْ إِنْ تَحْفُوا مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ أَوْ تُبْدُوهُ
يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا
فِي الْأَرْضِ ط وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

30 On the day when every soul will find present that which it has done of good; and that which it has done of evil — it will wish that between it and that (evil) there were a long distance. And Allāh cautions you against His retribution. And Allāh is Compassionate to the servants.

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ
مُحْضَرًا ۖ وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَتُوَدُّهُ
أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا ط وَيَعْلَمُ
اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ ط وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعٌ بِالْجَوَادِ ۝

SECTION 4: Last Members of a Chosen Race

31 Say: If you love Allāh, follow me: Allāh will love you,^a and grant

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي
يُحِبِّكُمْ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

charge of or superintended a thing, and it accordingly means the manager of a thing or of the affairs of another, and the guardian or maintainer of an orphan, and the guardian of a woman who gives her away in marriage. It also means the executor or heir of a deceased person (LL). According to R, it indicates nearness in respect of place, relation, and religion, and in respect of friendship and help and belief, etc. The word therefore includes all relations or nearness. A man may also be said to be wali-Allāh, as meaning one near to Allāh or a friend of Allāh.

28b. This is a new sentence. It is as if it were said: *Do not look to them for guarding your interests, rather guard yourselves against them.*

28c. T explains *nafs* here as meaning *uqūbah*, i.e. *retribution*. In fact, retribution of evil is a requirement of Divine nature. Or, the meaning is that Allāh warns you against disobedience to Himself.

31a. The love of Allāh is the great goal of life to which Islām leads. Compare John 14:15,16: "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"; and John 15:10: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love". This Comforter appeared in the person of the Holy Prophet. Elsewhere the Jews and the Christians are mentioned as calling themselves "the sons of Allāh and His beloved ones" (5:18). They are told that they could become the beloved ones of Allāh by following the Prophet.

you protection from your sins. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Say: Obey Allāh and the Messenger; but if they turn back, Allāh surely loves not the disbelievers.

قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 Truly Allāh chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of Amran above the nations,^a

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَآلَ عِمْرٰنَ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Offspring, one of the other. And Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.^a

ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 When a woman of Amran^a said: My Lord, I vow to Thee what is in my womb, to be devoted (to Thy service), so accept (it) from me; surely Thou, only Thou, art the Hearing, the Knowing.

إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرٰنَ رَبِّ لِئِنِّي وَدَدْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّيْ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٥﴾

33a. With this section begins the story of Jesus Christ, the central figure of the Christian religion, and as a preliminary we are told that if Jesus was chosen by God so were his great ancestors, Adam and Noah. The descendants of Abraham and Amran are then spoken of as having been chosen above the nations. For the choice of the descendants of Abraham, see 2:124a. They are divided into two branches, the Israelites and the Ishmaelites. The former are here spoken of as the descendants of 'Imrān. 'Imrān of the Holy Qur'ān is the same as Amran of the Bible. The descendants of Amran are Moses and Aaron. Moses became the founder of the Israelite law and Aaron the head of the Israelite priesthood. The last of this race were John and Jesus. Their parents are first spoken of here, viz. Zacharias and Mary.

34a. Noah was a descendant of Adam, Abraham a descendant of Noah, and Amran and his descendants were the offspring of Abraham, not a separate race. The reason for mentioning them separately is twofold: (1) the immediate descendants of Amran became the founders of a great law in Israel, and the Israelite nation had, in fact, received a new birth with them, and (2) it was with the descendants of Amran that the Mosaic dispensation came to an end.

35a. *Imra'at* means a woman and also a wife. I take *imra'at* 'Imrān as meaning a woman of the family of Amran, because the name of a great ancestor is frequently used to indicate the nation which has sprung from him. Thus Kedar stands for the Ishmaelites and Israel for the Israelites. This interpretation is in perfect accord with what is said in the previous verse as to the election of the descendants of Amran. The general statement is followed by a particular instance. The second instance also relates to one of the descendants of Amran, viz. John the Baptist, who was also of "priestly descent through both parents" (Bib. Dic., Cambridge University Press). Though we know very little regarding the parentage of Mary, yet the fact that she was, according to the only tradition that we have about her, devoted to the Temple from three to twelve years of age, shows clearly that she belonged to the priestly class. She is elsewhere called the sister of Aaron (19:28) and not a sister of Moses, for priesthood was an exclusive prerogative of

36 So when she brought it forth, she said: My Lord, I have brought it forth a female — and Allāh knew best what she brought forth^a — and the male is not like the female, and I have named it Mary, and I commend her and her offspring into Thy protection from the accursed devil.^b

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ اِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا
اُنْثٰى وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلٰكِنَّ
الدَّكْرَ كَالْاُنْثٰى وَرَاٰى سَيِّئَتَا مَرْيَمَ
وَإِنِّي اُعِيْدُهُمَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُمَا مِنْ
الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ ۝

37 So her Lord accepted her with a goodly acceptance and made her grow up a goodly growing, and gave her into the charge of Zacharias. Whenever Zacharias entered the sanctuary to (see) her, he found food with her. He said: O Mary, whence comes this to thee? She said: It is from Allāh. Surely Allāh gives to whom He pleases without measure.^a

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُوْلٍ حَسَنٍ وَّاَنْبَتَهَا
نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَّاَوْكَلَهَا ذِكْرًا طَيِّبًا كَلِمًا مَّحْكَمًا
عَلَيْهَا ذِكْرًا طَيِّبًا الْيَحْرَابَ وَّوَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا
قَالَ يَمْرُؤُْمَ اِنِّي لَكَ هٰذَا طَيِّبًا هُوَ
مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَزْرَعُ مَنْ
يَّشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ۝

the descendants of Aaron. In the Semitic languages the words *ab* (father), *umm* (mother), *akh* (brother), and *ukht* (sister) are used in a broad sense, and do not necessarily imply the very close relations of real father, mother, brother, and sister. Thus we have a saying of the Prophet in which he speaks of himself as *the prayer of my father Abraham*. Jesus was also addressed as “son of David”. According to tradition, however, ‘Imrān was the name of Mary’s father, and therefore the words *imra’t ‘Imrān* may mean *the wife of ‘Imrān*.

36a. The words *and Allāh knew best what she brought forth* are parenthetical. She had vowed the child to be devoted to the service of the Temple, but a female could not do the priestly work.

36b. *Rajim* is derived from the root *rajm*, meaning the *throwing or casting of stones*, and also *reviling, cursing, driving away, expelling, cutting off from friendly intercourse* (LL). It therefore signifies *accursed or driven away from the Divine presence*. This is what is implied here, and this is apparent from 38:78, where Satan is thus accosted: “And surely My curse is on thee to the day of Judgment”. The other significance of *rajim*, i.e., *one pelted with stones*, is not applicable here. It is noteworthy that Mary’s mother while praying for Mary prays also for her *offspring*, which shows that when she dedicated her daughter to the Temple she had never an idea that she would remain a *virgin* all her life. On the other hand, she entertained the hope that Mary would become a wife and mother.

37a. There is nothing extraordinary in Mary’s reply to Zacharias’ question. The reply that she got sustenance *from Allāh* is the reply of every devout person who believes that Allāh is the sustainer of all, and that therefore all provision or sustenance comes from Him. As elsewhere: “And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, and We send it not down but in a known measure” (15:21). Mary being attached to the Temple, the worshippers would naturally bring gifts to her, and as it was through Divine grace that she received these gifts, she said that it was Allāh Who gave her these things.

38 There did Zacharias pray to his Lord. He said: My Lord, grant me from Thee goodly offspring; surely Thou art the Hearer of prayer.^a

هَذَا لَكَ دَعَا ذَكَرَ تَابًا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 So the angels called to him as he stood praying in the sanctuary: Allāh gives thee the good news of John,^a verifying a word from Allāh,^b and honourable and chaste and a prophet from among the good ones.

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 He said: My Lord, how can I have a son when old age has already come upon me, and my wife is barren? He said: Even thus does Allāh do what He pleases.^a

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 He said: My Lord, appoint a sign for me. Said He: Thy sign is that thou speak not to men for three days

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً قَالَ آتَيْنَاكَ آيَةً نَحْنُ نَكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْرًا وَادُّرُّوهُ

38a. The devoutness of Mary raised in Zacharias a yearning for such virtuous offspring. Elsewhere he is described as praying for a son who should inherit the great qualities of Jacob, and in whom God might be well-pleased (19:6).

39a. The Arabic word is *Yahyā* (being from the root *hayāt*, i.e. *life*), meaning *he shall live*. The Qur'ān elsewhere states that Zacharias prayed to God, saying, *I fear my kinsfolk after me*, (19:5) the fear being no doubt due to their leading unrighteous lives. Hence the significance underlying the name *Yahyā* was that *he would not die in sin* like his other relations. R gives the same explanation: *He gave him this name (Yahyā) because sin was not to bring about his death*.

39b. The promise given to Zacharias was a word from Allāh, and John was the verifier of that word, because his birth brought about the fulfilment of the prophecy. A word from Allāh, therefore, stands for a *Divine prophecy*; see also 6:34; 10:64. Somewhat similar to this explanation is the one given by Abū 'Ubaidah who interprets *kalimat-in min-Allāh* as meaning a *book from Allāh* (Rz). In 66:12, speaking of Mary, it is said: "And she accepted the truth (*ṣaddaqa*) of the words of her Lord and His Books, and she was of the obedient ones". Just as John is the verifier (*muṣaddiq*) of a word from Allāh, Mary is the verifier of the words of her Lord, meaning clearly the prophetic words of her Lord.

One other significance of the word *kalimah* as used in the Holy Qur'ān is the creation of God. Thus in 18:109 we have: "If the sea were ink for the words of my Lord, the sea would surely be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted, though We brought the like of it to add thereto". A similar statement is made in 31:27, and in both places it is clear that the words of the Lord signify His creation.

40a. There is no disbelief on the part of Zacharias. It is simply an expression of wonder as to how a son can be born to him, for he had already reached a very old age.

except by signs.^a And remember thy Lord much and glorify (Him) in the evening and early morning.

رَبَّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ ۝

SECTION 5: Birth of Jesus and His Ministry

42 And when the angels said: O Mary, surely Allāh has chosen thee and purified thee and chosen thee above the women of the world.

وَأَذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَمْرُؤِمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

43 O Mary, be obedient to thy Lord and humble thyself and bow down with those who bow.^a

يَمْرُؤِمُ ائْتِنِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ۝

44 This is of the tidings of things unseen which We reveal to thee. And thou wast not with them when they cast their pens (to decide) which of them should have Mary in his charge, and thou wast not with them when they contended one with another.^a

ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَامَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ۝

41a. The Qur'ān does not say that Zacharias became dumb. He was only commanded not to talk to men for three days, remembering Allāh much during the time.

43a. After speaking of Mary's birth (v. 36) and her growing up in righteousness in the temple under the care of Zacharias (v. 37), the Holy Qur'ān now speaks of her election just as the righteous before her were elected. Evidently this refers to a time when she had grown up to the age of puberty and left the temple.

44a. The commentators think that the reference is to v. 37 when Mary as a child was dedicated to the temple and that lots were then cast as a result of which Mary was given into the charge of Zacharias. But this is quite out of place. The Holy Qur'ān has described her history in the natural order. Her mother conceives her (v. 35); she is born and named (v. 36); she is dedicated to and resides in the temple under the charge of Zacharias (v. 37). Here follows the narration of Zacharias praying for a righteous son when he sees the devoutness of Mary and vv. 38–41 are, as it were, parenthetical. The story of Mary is again taken up in v. 42 where her election is spoken of, which is undoubtedly the time when she attained to the age of discretion (vv. 42, 43). V. 44 cannot therefore refer back to her history as a child in the temple. In the natural order it refers to a much later period. It will be noted that when Mary's mother prayed for her at her birth (v. 36), she also prayed for her offspring and therefore she had evidently in mind the time when Mary would be married and become a mother. V. 45 clearly gives Mary news of the birth of a child and therefore the particular incident referred to in v. 44 is the incident of her espousal. The casting of lots and the contention as to who should have her in his charge could not mean anything but her charge as a wife. Luke 1:26, 27 makes it clear that Mary received the news of the birth of Jesus after her espousal with Joseph. In view of all these

45 When the angels said: O Mary, surely Allāh gives thee good news with a word from Him^a (of one) whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary,^b worthy of regard in this

أَذَقَاتِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ يُرْسِمُ رَبُّكَ إِلَهُ
يُبَشِّرُكَ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ فَاسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ
عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا

considerations, v. 44 cannot be taken but as referring to the espousal of Mary. Lots were evidently cast because as a child she had been dedicated to the temple, and it was now by a lot only that she could be given away in marriage. Mary's history as narrated in the Gospels casts no light on these circumstances and hence the verse starts with the statement that this was an announcement relating to the unseen. In fact, the whole history of Mary and Jesus was enveloped in darkness until the Holy Qur'ān announced their right position as two righteous servants of God and rejected both extreme views, the Jewish view that Jesus was conceived in sin and was illegitimate and the Christian view that he was God or Son of God Who had entered Mary's womb. He was only what the Prophet described him to be in his controversy with the Najrān deputation when he said to them: "Do you not know that Jesus was conceived by a woman in the manner in which all women conceive? Then she was delivered of him as women are delivered of their children? Then he was fed as children are fed. Then he ate food and drank water and answered the call of nature (as all mortals do)?" The deputation replied to all these questions in the affirmative, on which the Prophet said: "Then how can your claim (that he was God or Son of God) be true?" (IJ). The Prophet's clear argument which even the Christian deputation could not question settles the matter that Jesus was conceived in the ordinary manner and that Mary became a wife and mother in the ordinary way.

45a. The words *bi-kalimat-in min-hu* mean either *with a word from Him* or *of a word from Him*, but as *kalimah* means *word* or *prophecy*, and as the personal pronoun in *ismu-hū* stands for the masculine gender, while *kalimah* is in the feminine gender and requires the personal pronoun *hā*, the first meaning is adopted. The good news was given *by means* of a prophetic word from the Divine Being. Compare 15:54, 55, where Abraham's question is answered thus: "They said, We give thee good news with truth," where the object is understood, as in the words under discussion, the significance being *we give thee good news* (of a son) *with truth*. For further explanation of what is meant by *kalimah*, see 39b and 66:12a.

Commenting on v. 39, Rz observes: "The announcement (of Jesus' advent) had been made in the books of the prophets before him, so when he came it was said, *This is that prophetic word*, and so he was called *a word*". In support of this he cites instances of such phrases as *jā'a qauli* and *jā'a kalāmī*, i.e. "my word came" or "my speech came", when an event foretold by a person happens, the real significance of the phrases being *that which I said* or *that of which I spoke has come about*. This explanation shows that *kalimah* really applies to the prophecy.

One of the explanations given by R is that Jesus is here called a *kalimah* in the same sense as the Prophet is called *dhikr* (lit., a Reminder) in 65:10.

45b. Three names are given for the child — *Al-Masīh*, *'Isā*, and *Ibn Maryam*. The first of these is more a title than a name, being preceded by *al*. The literal significance of *Masīh* is either *one who travels much* or *one wiped over with some such thing as oil* (LL). It is the same word as the Aramaic *Messiah*, which is said to mean the *anointed*. Jesus Christ is said to have been so called because *he used to travel much* (Rz, R), or because *he was anointed with a pure blessed ointment with which the prophets are anointed* (Rz). It is, however, the first significance, viz., that *Masīh* means *one who travels much* that finds the foremost acceptance with the commentators as well as the lexicologists, and this lends support to the evidence recently discovered which shows that Jesus travelled in the East

world and the Hereafter, and of those who are drawn nigh (to Allāh),^c

46 And he will speak to the people when in the cradle and when of old age, and (he will be) one of the good ones.^a

47 She said: My Lord, how can I have a son and man has not yet touched me?^a He said: Even so; Allāh creates what He pleases. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, Be, and it is.

48 And He will teach him the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel:

وَالْآخِرَةَ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا
وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَكَدًّا وَلَمْ
يَمَسَّ سِنِيَّ بِشَرِّ طَالٍ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ
مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا أَتَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ
لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ
وَالْإِنْجِيلَ ﴿٤٩﴾

after his unfortunate experience at the hands of the Syrian Jews, and preached to the lost ten tribes of the Israelites who had settled in the East, in Afghanistan and Kashmir.

Isā is the Arabic form of the Hebrew *Yoshua*, Jesus being the Greek form of the same name; and *Ibn Maryam*, or son of Mary, is a surname. It is remarkable that the Qurʾān makes no mention at all of Mary's husband, and in this respect, these circumstances bear a strong resemblance to those connected with Moses' birth, for there, too, no mention at all is made of Moses' father. The mere fact, therefore, that there is no mention of Jesus' father is not sufficient to show that Jesus had no father. Moreover, of his two parents Joseph and Mary, Mary was undoubtedly much more well-known than Joseph.

45c. Those drawn nigh to Allāh are not necessarily the angels, as some have thought. Compare 56:7–11, where men are divided into three classes, one of these being *those drawn nigh*, the same word *muqarrabin* being used in both cases. Hence Jesus is here placed only in the foremost line of the righteous servants of God.

46a. Jesus throughout the Holy Qurʾān is spoken of as "one of those drawn nigh," "one of the righteous," thus showing that he is regarded only as one of the prophets. As to speaking in the cradle and when of old age, neither of them can be considered a miracle. Every healthy child which is not dumb begins to talk when in the cradle, and *speaking when of old age* also shows that this speaking is the ordinary experience of every human being who is healthy, and lives to an old age. The good news consists in the fact that the child announced will be a healthy child and shall not die in childhood. According to Rz, the reason for mentioning Jesus speaking in childhood and old age is to show the change of condition of Jesus from childhood to old age, while change in the Divine Being is impossible.

Kahl is, according to R, *he in whose hair hoariness or greyness has become intermixed*. LL has, on the authority of Mṣb, T, and Mgh, that a man is *kahl* after he has attained the limit of being a *shābb*, which is variously fixed at 32, 40 and 51 years. The same authority gives the meaning of *kahl* as of *middle age*, or *between that age and the period when his hair has become intermixed with hoariness*. It would thus appear that, according to the Holy Qurʾān, Jesus did not die at thirty-three years of age, but lived to a sufficiently old age.

47a. Only her espousal had yet been decided, and perhaps she had not been informed of this when she was given the good news of a son being born to her. Hence

49 And (make him) a messenger to the Children of Israel (saying): I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I determine for you out of dust the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with Allāh's permission,^a and I heal the

وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ
جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن سَرِّكُمْ ۗ إِنِّي أَخْلُقُ
لَكُمْ مِّن الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنفُخُ فِيهِ
فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ

she says that man had not touched her yet. And she was told in reply, "Even so"; i.e., the child will be born by God bringing about the circumstances which result in the birth of a child. The words do not show that she would conceive out of the ordinary course of nature, for there is no doubt that Mary had other children, which no one supposes to have been conceived out of the ordinary course of nature. Nor do the words that follow prove anything beyond the simple fact that Mary must give birth to a son in accordance with the prophecy. The whole of creation is brought about, we are told again and again, by the Divine word *Kun* ('Be'), yet no one supposes that creation is not brought about according to the laws of nature.

49a. To understand the significance of this passage it is necessary to bear in mind that the chief characteristic of Jesus' speeches is that he spoke in parables and preferred to clothe his ideas in allegorical language. If this is kept in mind, there is no difficulty in interpreting this passage. The first of the statements in this passage speaks of the making of birds and breathing into them. It is perfectly intelligible if taken as a parable, but quite incomprehensible as a statement of fact. If on the one hand a prophet's dignity is much above such actions as the making of toy birds, on the other the act of creation is not attributable to any but the Divine Being. To understand this parable, however, the several words used may be explained first. In the passage under discussion four words require to be explained: *khalq*, *ṭin*, *nafkh*, and *ṭair*. The primary significance of *khalq* is *measuring, proportioning*, synonym *taqdīr* (LL); hence *khalq* comes to signify the mere act of the *determining of a thing*. The word was used in this sense in pre-Islāmic poetry. The act of *khalq* in the sense of creation cannot be attributed to any being except Allāh. The Qur'ān has laid the greatest stress upon this point. It again and again speaks of the Divine Being as *the Creator of everything*, so that there is nothing of which anyone else may be said to be a creator. And of those who are taken as gods by any people, it says in particular that *they do not create anything, while they are themselves created* (16:20; 25:3).

Then there are the two words *ṭin* and *nafkh*. Man is spoken of as being created from *ṭin* or *dust*, which stands for his humble origin, but the *nafkh* or *breathing* into him makes him deserving of respect by the angels. This, while hinted at on various occasions, is clearly stated in 38:71, 72: "When thy Lord said to the angels: Surely I am going to create a mortal from dust. So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down submitting to him". Thus it is by the breathing of the Divine Spirit into man that he is made perfect.

The word *ṭair* or *ṭā'ir* means *a bird*, but just as the word *asad* (lit., *a lion*) is metaphorically used for *a brave man*, in a parable it is quite unobjectionable to take the word *ṭair* as signifying *one who soars into the higher spiritual regions and is not bent low upon earth or earthly things*. In 6:38 it is said: "And there is no animal in the earth, nor a bird that flies on its two wings, but (they are) communities like yourselves", the meaning apparently being that among men there are those who only walk upon the earth and do not rise above their earthly concerns, while others soar into the higher spiritual regions. Elsewhere (7:179; 25:44), those who having hearts do not understand, and having ears do not hear, are likened to cattle. So what is meant here is that Jesus, by breathing a spirit into mortals, will make them rise above those who are bent low upon

blind^b and the leprous, and bring the dead to life^c with Allāh's permission; and I inform you of what you should eat and what you should store in your houses.^d Surely there is a sign in this for you, if you are believers.

وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُمِّي السُّمُونِي بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَ
 أَنْبِئْكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي
 بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُمْ إِنْ
 كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

the earth, and the apostles of Jesus, who were all men of humble origin (which is referred to in the word *dust* in the parable), whose thoughts had never risen higher than their own humble cares, left everything for the master's sake and went into the world by the command of the master preaching the truth. Here was, no doubt, mere dust having the form of a bird, which the messenger of God converted into high-soaring birds by breathing truth into them. The fact that a story of Jesus making birds is related in a Gospel of Infancy is in no way a bar to this explanation, for it is very likely that a parable was misunderstood by the writer of that Gospel, and the Qur'an has only referred to it to cast light upon the truth.

49b. The miracle of Jesus healing the sick has been rationally explained in the *Enc. Bib.* by the Rev. T.K. Cheyne, who has shown that all the stories of healing of the sick have arisen from the spiritual healing of the sick, as in Matt. 9:12: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"; and as in Jesus' message to John the Baptist: "The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:5). The concluding words clearly show that the sick and the lame and the blind belong to the same category as the poor to whom the Gospel is preached, being the poor in heart. Compare also Matt. 13:15: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Here the *healing* cannot refer but to healing of the spiritual diseases. The Holy Qur'an gives a similar explanation of the healing of the sick when, speaking of itself, it says that it is "a healing for what is in the breasts" (10:57), i.e. for the spiritual diseases. The prophet's healing is spiritual, not healing of the physical diseases. The Qur'an speaks of the blind and the deaf frequently, but it never means those who have lost the senses of seeing and hearing.

49c. Last come those who are dead. The Qur'an says plainly that those who die are not sent back to this world: "Allāh takes (men's) souls at the time of their death, and those that die not, during their sleep. Then He withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death and sends the others back till an appointed term" (39:42). And again speaking of the dead: "And before them is a barrier, until the day they are raised" (23:100). But the use of the word *mautā*, i.e. *the dead*, and of their *being raised to life*, is frequent in the Holy Qur'an in a spiritual sense: "Is he who was dead, then We raised him to life ... like him whose likeness is that of one in darkness" (6:122). And again: "O you who believe, respond to Allāh and His Messenger, when He calls you to that which gives you life" (8:24). Similarly we have: "Neither are the living and the dead alike. Surely Allāh makes whom He pleases hear, and thou canst not make those hear who are in the graves" (35:22). The prophets are raised only for quickening to life those who are spiritually dead, and it is to this quickening through Jesus Christ that the Holy Qur'an refers here.

It should be noted that three classes of men are spoken of as being regenerated, viz.: (1) those who were found in the natural state of dust, and who, like dust, humbly submitted themselves to the prophets' handling, and who were made to soar high into the spiritual

49d, see next page.

50 And (I am) a verifier of that which is before me of the Torah, and I allow you part of that which was forbidden to you;^a and I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, so keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ
وَلَا حِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ سَرِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا ⑤

51 Surely Allāh is my Lord and your Lord, so serve Him. This is the right path.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرُّيَ وَرَبُّكُمْ فَأَعْبُدُواهُ هَدًى
صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ⑥

52 But when Jesus perceived disbelief on their part, he said: Who will be my helpers in Allāh's way? The disciples^a said: We are Allāh's helpers: we believe in Allāh, and bear thou witness that we are submitting ones.

فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمْ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ
مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ
نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَأَشْهَدُ
بِآثَانَا مُسْلِمُونَ ⑦

53 Our Lord, we believe in that which Thou hast revealed and we follow the messenger, so write us down with those who bear witness.

رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ
فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ⑧

54 And (the Jews) planned and Allāh (also) planned.^a And Allāh is the best of planners.^b

وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكْرِينِ ⑨

regions, not caring for their worldly concerns, (2) those who were spiritually diseased, and they were healed and made whole, and (3) those who were quite dead and were spiritually quickened. Hence the three different descriptions.

49d. Jesus' preaching laid special stress upon not having any care "for the morrow", and his advice to rich men when they came to him was to sell all that they had. He would have them lay up treasures in heaven. It is to this aspect of his teaching that the verse refers. They were not to devote their lives to the amassing of riches.

50a. The law given by Moses was upheld by all the Israelite prophets, but its deficiencies were removed and other changes introduced from time to time to make it suit the needs of new times. These changes are particularly marked out in Jesus' teaching, as anyone who reads any of the Gospels, and especially the Sermon on the Mount, can easily see.

52a. The Arabic word *ḥawāriyyūn* is plural of *ḥawārī*, which is thus explained by LL: "One who whitens clothes by washing and beating them. Hence its plural, *ḥawāriyyūn*, is applied to the companions of Jesus, because their trade was to do washing (M, Mṣb)." Some commentators, however, suggest that they may have been called so because of the purity of their hearts.

54a. *Makr* is explained by R as the turning of another with ingenuity or skill from that which he aims at, and he considers *makr* as of two sorts, a good one and an evil one.

54b, see next page.

SECTION 6: Jesus Cleared of False Charges

55 When Allāh said: O Jesus, I will cause thee to die^a and exalt thee in My presence^b and clear thee of those who disbelieve^c and make those who follow thee above those who dis-

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يُعِيسِي إِيَّيْ مُتَوَقِّعِكَ وَ
رَافِعِكَ إِلَيَّ وَ مَطْهَرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَ جَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ

Therefore the best interpretation of the word *makara* (including both sorts) is that adopted by T, viz. *he exercised craft, cunning, art, or skill in the management or ordering of affairs with excellent consideration or deliberation, and ability to manage according to his own free will* (LL). The idea of the plan being contrived for an evil purpose or clandestinely, which is included in the significance of the word, has led many to take that idea as its exclusive significance, which is not the case. *Makara-llāhu* may also signify that *Allāh recompensed or requited them for their makr* (T-LL). According to some, *its original significance is the gathering of an affair and its strengthening* (Rz). All these explanations show that it is the equivalent of the word *plan*, the good or evil nature of the plan being dependent on the object or doer's intention. Allāh is called here *Khair al-mākirin* or the *Best of planners*, the qualifying word *khair* being inapplicable to an evil object.

54b. The Jews planned to put Jesus to death by crucifixion, and Allāh made a plan to frustrate their plans; and Allāh's plan was successful, i.e. he was saved from death on the cross, for which see 55a and 4:157a.

55a. I'Ab says that the significance of *mutawaffi-ka* is *mumitu-ka*, i.e. *I will cause thee to die* (B. 65: v, 12). According to LA, "You say *tawaffā-hu-llāhu* when you mean *Allāh took his soul* or *caused him to die*". And according to LL, it signifies "God took his soul (S, Q) (either at death or in sleep, see the Qur'an, 6:60); or *caused him to die* (Mšb)". No other significance can be attached to the words when thus used. Some commentators say that Jesus remained dead for three hours; others say for seven hours, and so on (Rz). But the word is used here really to show that the Jewish plans to cause Jesus' death on the cross would be frustrated and that he would afterwards die a natural death; see 4:157a. Pickthall's translation is, O Jesus, *I am gathering thee*, and this is the Biblical idiom for causing to die. Yūsuf 'Alī, in his first edition, translated the words as meaning *I will cause thee to die*, but in the second edition he changed it to *I will take thee*.

55b. *Raf'* signifies *raising* or *elevating*, and also *exalting* or *making honourable* (T, LL). But where the *raf'* of a man to Allāh is spoken of in the Holy Qur'an, or in the religious literature of Islām, it is always in the latter sense, for raising a man in his body to Himself implies that the Divine Being is limited to a place. This is made plain by the prayer which every Muslim repeats several times daily in his prayers in the sitting position between the two prostrations: *wa-rfa'-ni*, meaning *and exalt me*. Of course no one supposes this prayer to be for the raising of the body to the heavens. Hence even those commentators who are predisposed, having, no doubt, been misled by Christian tradition, to accept Jesus Christ as having been raised alive to heaven, have been compelled to admit that the word *raf'* is here used not for raising aloft but for *exalting and honouring*. And commenting on the words which follow this statement, Rz says: *This shows that raf' here is the exalting in degree and in praise, not in place and direction*. The *exaltation* of Jesus is mentioned here as a reply to the Jews, whose object was to make him die an accursed and ignominious death on the cross.

55c. *Clear thee of those who disbelieve* signifies clearing Jesus of the false charges relating to the alleged illegitimacy of his birth, and so on, charges of which Jesus was cleared by the Holy Qur'an; see 4:156a.

believe to the day of Resurrection.^d Then to Me is your return, so I shall decide between you concerning that wherein you differ.^e

56 Then as to those who disbelieve, I shall chastise them with severe chastisement in this world and the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers.^a

57 And as to those who believe and do good deeds, He will pay them fully their rewards. And Allāh loves not the unjust.^a

58 This We recite to thee of the messages and the Reminder full of wisdom.

59 The likeness of Jesus with Allāh is truly as the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, Be, and he was.^a

كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ
فَأَحْكُم بَيْنَكُمْ فِيهَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأَعَذَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمُ عَذَابًا
شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ
مِن نَّاصِرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
فَيُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرَهُمُ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَجِبُ
الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

ذَلِكَ نَسْنأُهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ
الْحَكِيمِ ﴿٥٩﴾

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ
خَلَقَهُ مِنْ طَرَابِ شَمْرٍ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ
فَيَكُونُ ﴿٦٠﴾

55d. This verse contains four promises relating to Jesus' triumph over his enemies as against their plans, three of which have already been noticed, viz.: (1) his being saved from death on the cross and being made to die a natural death; (2) his being made honourable in the Divine presence, whereas the object of the Jews was to show that he was an accursed person; (3) his being cleared of all false charges. And the fourth promise is that those who follow Jesus shall be made dominant over his rejectors till the day of Judgment. The truth of this fourth prophecy is witnessed to this day in the dominance of the Christians over the Jews.

55e. Differences of belief are dealt with in the life after death while transgressions in deeds when they are on a very large scale are punished even in this life.

56a. The whole Jewish history, especially after the seventh century, is a standing testimony to the truth of these words.

57a. By the *unjust* are meant the Christians because they have exceeded the limits of justice and deified Jesus.

59a. Adam stands for man generally, because *all men are created from dust*. Thus in 18:37 the believer says to his non-believing companion: "Disbelievest thou in Him Who created thee of dust?" And in 22:5 and 30:20, and elsewhere, all men are spoken of as having been created from dust. All that is meant, therefore, is that Jesus is no more than a mortal, and that it is an error to take him for God, as the Christians do. The words *kun fa-yakūnu* lend support to this meaning, for in these words is spoken of throughout the Holy Qur'ān the general and recurring law of creation.