

32 For this reason We prescribed for the Children of Israel that whoever kills a person, unless it be for manslaughter or for mischief in the land, it is as though he had killed all men. And whoever saves a life, it is as though he had saved the lives of all men.^a And certainly Our messengers came to them with clear arguments, but even after that many of them commit excesses in the land.

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ
أَنَّكَ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ
فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا
وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ
جَمِيعًا ۗ وَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ
ثُمَّ رَأَوْا كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْرِفُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

33 The only punishment of those who wage war against Allāh and His Messenger and strive to make mischief in the land^a is that they should

إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَ
رَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا

32a. The reference is generally understood to be to the gravity of the crime of murder, requiring the execution of the criminal. But by *the killing of a person* may as well be meant the killing of the Prophet, who had come to establish righteousness. The killing of that great teacher of righteousness was indeed equivalent to the killing of all men and the saving of the life of that great Saviour of humanity was equivalent to saving humanity itself. The reference is to the Jewish plots against the life of the Holy Prophet, and that is the reason for mentioning here the Israelites in particular.

33a. The words used here imply originally all those opponents of Islām who waged war on the Muslims and made mischief in the land by causing loss to the life and property of innocent Muslims who fell into their hands. But it has generally been accepted as including all dacoits and murderers who cause disorder in a settled state of society. In fact, when war came to an end in Arabia and the kingdom of Islām was established over the whole peninsula, the enemies of Islām, being unable to oppose its authority openly, resorted to dacoity and murder to disturb the peace which was now established in the land. Hence, though it is such enemies that are primarily spoken of here, the words are general and include all cases of murder and dacoity.

The punishment described is of four kinds, which clearly shows that the punishment to be inflicted in any particular case would depend upon the circumstances of the case, as well as the time and place where the crime was committed. For instance, if murder has been committed in the course of dacoity, the punishment would include the execution of the culprit, which may take the form of crucifixion if the offence is so heinous or the culprit has caused such terror in the land that the leaving of his body on the cross is necessary as a deterrent. In other cases, the punishment may be imprisonment, where the severer punishment of cutting off of hands is deemed unnecessary. The judge would take all the circumstances into consideration and inflict such punishment as he thought necessary. A particular case dealt with under this verse was that of a tribe called 'Urainah. Some men of this tribe came to the Prophet, and accepted Islām. They fell ill and were sent by the Prophet to a place at a little distance from Madinah for change of climate and recovery of health. But when they regained health, they killed the very people who had served them and went off with their camels. Then they committed dacoities and violated the chastity of women, and they were severely punished (B. 4:66, and the comments on it in 'Aini). Many other cases of this nature are recorded by IJ.

be murdered, or crucified, or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides, or they should be imprisoned.^b This shall be a disgrace for them in this world, and in the Hereafter they shall have a grievous chastisement.

34 Except those who repent before you overpower them;^a so know that Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

أَنْ يُقْتَلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ
وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَرُوا مِنْ
الْأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَ
لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْدِرُوا
عَلَيْهِمْ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

SECTION 6: Punishment of Offenders

35 O you who believe, keep your duty to Allāh, and seek means of nearness to Him, and strive hard in His way that you may be successful.

36 Those who disbelieve, even if they had all that is in the earth, and the like of it with it, to ransom themselves therewith from the chastisement of the day of Resurrection, it would not be accepted from them; and theirs is a painful chastisement.

37 They would desire to come forth from the Fire, and they will not come forth from it, and theirs is a lasting chastisement.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ
الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَلَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لِيَفْتَدُوا بِهِ مِنْ
عَذَابِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا تُقْبَلُ مِنْهُمْ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُخْرَجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا
هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنْهَا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

33b. *Yunfau min-al-ard* literally means *they should be banished from the earth*, but according to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah the meaning here is *imprisonment (al-habs)*, and most lexicologists accept this (Rz). LA also accepts the interpretation that *they should be kept in the prison*. The reason is apparent. No one can be banished from the whole of the earth unless he is kept in prison. Deportation is included if we take *al-ard* as meaning a particular country.

34a. This verse speaks of people the course of whose life has been changed before they are caught — *those who repent before you overpower them*. Repentance, of course, here means a changed course of life which is apparent to all. It clearly refers only to cases in which an enemy, who is guilty of crimes against life and property, becomes a Muslim before he falls into the hands of the Muslims. He should not be tried and punished for what he did when he was in the hostile camp.

38 And (as for) the man and the woman addicted to theft, cut off their hands as a punishment for what they have earned, an exemplary punishment from Allāh. And Allāh is Mighty, Wise.^a

وَالسَّارِقِ وَالسَّارِقَةِ فَاتُطْعَمُوا أَيِّدِيهِمَا
 جَزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ
 عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

38a. The *cutting off of hands* may be taken metaphorically or literally. You say *qaṭa'a lisāna-hū*, lit., *he cut off his tongue*, when you mean *he silenced him* (LA). If therefore *qaṭ' yad* is taken metaphorically, it would simply mean *restraining* the thief by imprisonment or otherwise. If taken literally, the hand may not be cut off for every theft, and this is a fact recognized by all jurists. What however I would particularly stress is the fact that the cutting off of the hand is the maximum punishment. As stated above in 33a, in the case of dacoity the maximum punishment is death and the minimum punishment is imprisonment. Now theft is not as serious a crime as dacoity, and hence the minimum punishment for theft could not be severer than the minimum punishment for dacoity. In the case of dacoity, going upward in point of severity, the punishment is imprisonment, then cutting off of hands and feet, then death. Therefore what the Holy Qur'ān states here is only the maximum punishment for theft, the minimum punishment remaining the same, i.e. imprisonment.

It is moreover clear from v. 33 that the infliction of the severer or the milder punishment depends upon the circumstances of the case and the opinion of the judge. The crime of dacoity becomes severer or milder according to the loss of life or property that the victims of dacoity suffer. In theft, the loss is only caused to property and not to life and therefore death as a punishment in this case is eliminated, while the next grade of punishment, the cutting off of the hand, is retained as the maximum punishment, and maximum punishment would depend only on the exigency of the case. It may be the seriousness of the crime or the seriousness of the offender's addiction to the crime of theft that may call for the maximum punishment. Therefore generally the maximum punishment may be inflicted only in cases of habitual theft. The considerations which entitle us to make this distinction are as follows: (a) The punishment is called exemplary, and exemplary punishment could only be inflicted where the crime is very serious or the offender is a habitual criminal. (b) The punishment is not to be inflicted if the offender repents and turns from his evil course. The next verse shows that the punishment of cutting off the hand is only for a criminal *who does not reform*, i.e. *for the habitual offender*. Moreover, what is required is *repentance and reform*. To give a man a chance to reform it is necessary that he should be given freedom of action before the more serious punishment is inflicted. (c) The punishment of the cutting off of hands has been mentioned in connection with the more serious crimes spoken of in v. 33, while even those serious crimes may be punished with imprisonment only, and therefore mere stealing, which is by no means as serious an offence as dacoity, need not be punished always with the severer punishment of the cutting off of the hand.

It is true that the cutting off of the hand even for a first crime is reported in the Ḥadīth, but this may be due to the particular circumstances of the society at the time. It is for the judge to decide when to inflict the maximum punishment and when not. According to some ḥadīth, the hand was cut off when the amount stolen was one-quarter of a dinār; according to others when it was one dinār or more (AD. 37:12; Ns. 46:7). According to one ḥadīth the hand was not to be cut off when a theft was committed in the course of a journey (AD. 37:19). There are ḥadīth showing that the hand was not to be cut off for stealing fruit on a tree (AD. 37:13). The cutting off of the hand is also prohibited in the case of criminal misappropriation (AD. 37:14). Marwān had a person flogged for stealing young palm trees (AD. 37:13). Another ḥadīth states that when a

39 But whoever repents after his wrongdoing and reforms, Allāh will turn to him (mercifully). Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

40 Knowest thou not that Allāh is He to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth? He chastises whom He pleases, and forgives whom He pleases. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

41 O Messenger, let not those grieve thee who hasten to disbelief, from among those who say with their mouths, We believe, and their hearts believe not, and from among those who are Jews — they are listeners for the sake of a lie, listeners for another people who have not come to thee.^a They alter the words after they are put in their (proper) places, saying: If you are given this, take it, and if you are not given this, be cautious. And he for whom Allāh intends temptation, thou controllest naught for him against Allāh. Those are they whose hearts Allāh intends not to purify. For them is disgrace in this world, and for them a grievous chastisement in the Hereafter.

42 Listeners for the sake of a lie, devourers of forbidden things, so if

فَمَنْ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِ وَأَمْسَكَ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُؤْتِيهِ لِرَأْسِ اللَّهِ عَفْوَرًا رَجِيمًا ③

أَلَمْ تَعْلَم أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ط يَضْرِبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ④

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنْكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنُ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمَّعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ سَمَّعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُواكَ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ يَفْقَهُونَ إِنَّ أُوتِيْنِيْمُ هَذَا فَخَدُوهُ وَإِن لَمْ تُؤْتُوهُ فَاخْذُرُوا وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَكُن مَمْلُوكًا لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُطَهِّرْ قُلُوبَهُمْ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ عَظِيمٌ ⑤
وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ⑥

سَمَّعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَلُونَ لِلسُّحْتِ ط

certain person stole another's mantle valued at 30 dirhams from underneath his head, the owner of the mantle offered to sell the same to the person who had stolen it, and the Holy Prophet approved of this arrangement (AD. 37: 15). In conclusion, I may add that I translate the word *al-sāriq* as meaning *one addicted to theft*, not only for the reasons given above but also because an explanatory reading of this word is *al-sarriq*, which is an *ism mubālaghah*, i.e., a noun of intensiveness, from the same root.

41a. The meaning is that they listen, but their object is only to invent lies and to give false reports to people who have not come to the Prophet. The words can also bear the interpretation that they listen only to the lies uttered by their rabbis, who have not come to thee. In fact, they were acting only as spies.

they come to thee, judge between them or turn away from them. And if thou turn away from them, they cannot harm thee at all. And if thou judge, judge between them with equity. Surely Allāh loves the equitable.^a

43 And how do they make thee a judge and they have the Torah wherein is Allāh's judgment? Yet they turn away after that! And these are not believers.^a

فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا ۚ وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

وَكَيْفَ يُحْكِمُونَكَ وَعِنْدَهُمُ التَّوْرَةُ فِيهَا حُكْمُ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَمَا أُولَٰئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

SECTION 7: The Qur'ān and Previous Scriptures

44 Surely We revealed the Torah, having guidance and light.^a By it did the prophets who submitted themselves (to Allāh) judge for the Jews, and the rabbis and the doctors of law, because they were required to guard

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبُّبِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَابُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ ۚ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ

42a. By the agreement drawn up between the various nationalities of Madinah on the advent of the Holy Prophet there (see 2:84a), all disputes were to be referred to the Holy Prophet, but the Jews had by this time become so inimical to the Prophet that he is allowed to refuse to judge between them. In case he judged between them, he is still told to judge with equity. To be equitable notwithstanding the severest enmity of the Jews and notwithstanding the knowledge that they were always plotting with the enemies of Islām for its extirpation, shows that the Prophet had reached the highest point of moral rectitude to which man can attain.

43a. The Divine judgment in the Torah referred to here may either imply the Divine injunctions in the Torah, which the Jews refused to follow, or the prophecies of the advent of the Holy Prophet, which they refused to accept.

44a. Verses 44–47 are supposed by Christian critics to be evidence of the purity of the text of the Torah and the Gospel. This is not true. That the Torah was a Divine revelation containing light and guidance has never been denied. What is denied is that that light and guidance were kept intact throughout the ages. It is further denied that these two books were meant for the whole world and for all ages. They certainly contained light and guidance, but only for one people — the Israelites, and for a limited time. Notwithstanding the light and guidance contained in the Torah, the Gospel was sent down for the Israelite people, which shows clearly that the light and guidance contained in the Torah were not considered sufficient even for the Israelites for all ages, to say nothing of other nations.

the Book of Allāh,^b and they were witnesses thereof. So fear not the people and fear Me, and take not a small price for My messages. And whoever judges not by what Allāh has revealed, those are the disbelievers.^c

45 And We prescribed to them in it that life is for life, and eye for eye, and nose for nose, and ear for ear, and tooth for tooth, and for wounds retaliation.^a But whoso forgoes it, it shall be an expiation for him.^b And whoever judges not by what Allāh has revealed, those are the wrongdoers.

46 And We sent after them in their footsteps Jesus, son of Mary, verifying that which was before him of the Torah; and We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light, and verifying that which was before it of the Torah, and a guidance and an admonition for the dutiful.^a

وَاحْشَوْنِ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي شَيْئًا
قَلِيلًا ۗ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ
اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ
وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ
وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ ۗ
وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ ۖ فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ
فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَّهُ ۗ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا
أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ
مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ
التَّوْرَةِ ۗ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْهِ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ
هُدًى وَنُورًا ۗ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ ۗ وَهُدًى وَ
مَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

44b. The statement made here is that the masters of Divine knowledge and the doctors “were required to guard the Book of Allāh”, i.e. the Torah. The Qur’ān does not say that they were actually successful in doing so. On the other hand, alteration of those books is clearly spoken of in 2:75 and 2:79. As against this, the guarding of the Holy Qur’ān is spoken of as the work of God Himself; see 15:9: “Surely We have revealed the Reminder, and surely We are its Guardian.”

44c. It should be borne in mind that by judging is not meant only the judging of civil or criminal cases, but judging in all matters of religion, so that those who did not judge the revelation of the Holy Prophet by what was revealed in the Torah were disbelievers. And note that the adoption of the words *what Allāh has revealed* instead of the *Torah* is not without significance. It shows that the whole of the Torah as existing then was not looked upon by the Holy Qur’ān as being the Divine revelation.

45a. Compare Exod. 21:23–25, Lev. 24:19–21.

45b. If a man forgoes his right to an act of reprisal against his brother, this shall be an expiation for any wrong he may have done.

46a. The description of the Gospel as containing light and guidance conveys the same significance as the similar statement regarding the Torah, for which see 44a. In addition it is stated that the Gospel verified the Torah notwithstanding the fact that it introduces many new doctrines in place of those given in the Mosaic law, as in the case of divorce, the law of reprisal, etc. This description of the Gospel clearly shows that by

47 And let the People of the Gospel judge by that which Allāh has revealed in it. And whoever judges not by what Allāh has revealed, those are the transgressors.

وَيُحْكَمُ أَهْلُ الْإِنجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ ۖ وَمَنْ لَمْ يُحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And We have revealed to thee the Book with the truth, verifying that which is before it of the Book and a guardian over it,^a so judge between them by what Allāh has revealed, and follow not their low desires, (turning away) from the truth that has come to thee. For everyone of you We appointed a law and a way.^b And if Allāh had pleased He would have made you a single people, but that He might try you in what He gave you.^c So vie one with another in virtuous deeds. To Allāh you will all return, so He will inform you of that wherein you differed;

وَ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۗ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمَنْهَاجًا ۗ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً ۗ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَأَسْبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۗ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا ۖ فَبِئْسَ لَكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

verification is meant only corroboration of the general principles and broad doctrines of the faith, such as the unity of God and equitable dealing with men, or the declaration by one prophet of the truth of a previous prophet, as the declaration of the truth of Moses by Jesus and of both by the Holy Prophet. It is in this sense that the Qur'ān is spoken of as verifying the Torah and the Gospel.

48a. The Qur'ān is called *muhaimin* or a *guardian* over all previous revelation, thus showing that whatever was of permanent value in the previous scriptures has been preserved in the Qur'ān. The previous books contained a light and guidance for the people for whom they were meant, and they were commanded to judge by those books, but the Qur'ān is now the Book which judges all truth, wherever it may have been, and therefore is the only Book which should be followed.

48b. The appointment of a law and a way for everyone refers to the giving of different laws to different nations in accordance with their requirements before the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān, which fulfilled the requirements of all nations and all ages. Thus the Qur'ān here recognizes the principle to which it refers frequently, that prophets were raised among every people, for which see particularly 10:47, 13:7, and 35:24.

48c. This is one significance. Man is placed above the whole of creation in that he has been granted discretionary powers so that he can choose to follow one path or another, as against the rest of creation, which must necessarily follow the laws to which it is subject. Hence, led by that discretion, men follow different ways, adopting different sects, whereas if man's very nature had been so made as to make him unable to use his discretionary powers, all men would have been a single people, but then man's better qualities, which give him preference over the rest of creation, would not have been

49 And that thou shouldst judge between them by what Allāh has revealed, and follow not their low desires, and be cautious of them lest they seduce thee from part of what Allāh has revealed to thee. Then if they turn away, know that Allāh desires to afflict them for some of their sins. And surely many of the people are transgressors.

وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 Is it then the judgment of ignorance that they desire? And who is better than Allāh to judge for a people who are sure?

أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

SECTION 8: Relations of Muslims with Enemies

51 O you who believe, take not the Jews and the Christians for friends. They are friends of each other. And whoever amongst you takes them for friends he is indeed one of them. Surely Allāh guides not the unjust people.^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى أَوْلِيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

52 But thou seest those in whose hearts is a disease, hastening towards them, saying: We fear lest a calamity should befall us.^a Maybe Allāh will

فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يُسَارِعُونَ فِيهِمْ يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَى أَنْ تُصِيبَنَا دَائِرَةٌ فَعَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ

manifested. The words may, however, also mean, *if Allāh pleases He will make you a single people*. This would be a reference to the ultimate destiny of the human race. In fact all people are now growing to the consciousness that they are all but one nation.

51a. All non-believers, whatever their own differences, had made common cause against Islām; this is what is meant by their being *friends of each other*. The Muslims are warned that they should not expect help or friendship from any party of them, whether Jews, Christians, or idolaters. It would have been weakness of faith in the ultimate triumph of Islām if, from fear of a powerful enemy, they had sought help and friendship here and there among a hostile people, as the next verse shows. When two nations are at war, an individual of one nation having friendly relations with the enemy nation is treated as an enemy; that is exactly what the Qur'ān says here.

52a. By *hastening towards them* is meant hastening to make friendship with them or seeking their help. The hypocrites did this, fearing a Muslim reverse.

bring the victory or a commandment from Himself, so they will regret what they hid in their souls.^b

مَنْ عُنْدِهِ فَيُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا أَسْرُوا
فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ لَدِيمِينَ ۝

53 And those who believe will say: Are these they who swore by Allāh with their most forcible oaths that they were surely with you? Their deeds will bear no fruit, so they will be losers.^a

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ
اٰقْسَمُوا بِاللّٰهِ جَهْدَ اٰيْمَانِهِمْ اِنَّهُمْ
لَسَعَامٌ حِطَّتْ اَعْمَالُهُمْ فَاصْبِرُوا خَيْرَ لَكُمْ ۝

54 O you who believe, should anyone of you turn back from his religion, then Allāh will bring a people, whom He loves and who love Him, humble towards the believers, mighty against the disbelievers, striving hard in Allāh's way and not fearing the censure of any censurer. This is Allāh's grace — He gives it to whom He pleases. And Allāh is Ample-giving, Knowing.^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنكُمْ
عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ
يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ
يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ
لَوْمَةً لَّا يَمِطُ ذَلِكَ فَضْلَ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ
مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

55 Only Allāh is your Friend and His Messenger and those who believe, those who keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and they bow down.^a

اِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ
الزَّكٰوةَ وَهُمْ سٰرِكُونَ ۝

52b. By *victory* is meant a victory for the Muslims, and the reference is clearly to the conquest of Makkah. It shows that these verses were revealed before the conquest of Makkah in the year 8 A.H. The reference in *amr* or *commandment* is evidently to the establishment of the Kingdom of Islām, by which is meant the dominance of Islām, there being a further reference to the spiritual conquests of Islām in v. 54, for which see 54a.

53a This was a prophecy that what the hypocrites were doing in opposition to the Prophet would prove of no effect. They would not be able to achieve the end which they had in view, and instead of bringing any loss to the Prophet they themselves would be the losers.

54a. The Muslims were severely persecuted while at Makkah and their troubles at Madinah increased tenfold owing to the presence of warring tribes on all sides. Yet they faced all these hardships with the greatest perseverance, and cases of apostacy were rare. In 6 A.H. Heraclius asked Abū Sufyān, who was then the leader of hostilities against the Prophet: "Does anyone of them apostatize out of hatred for his religion?" Abū Sufyān's reply was, No. Again he asked him: Are they increasing or decreasing? Abū Sufyān said; "They are increasing in numbers" (B. 1:1). It is a fact that apostacy never thinned the ranks of Islām.

55a. After warning the weak-hearted against taking their enemies for friends, the Holy Qur'ān now tells them who is their real friend who can help them in their

56 And whoever takes Allāh and His Messenger and those who believe for friend — surely the party of Allāh, they shall triumph.

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

SECTION 9: The Mockers

57 O you who believe, take not for friends those who take your religion as a mockery and a sport, from among those who were given the Book before you and the disbelievers; and keep your duty to Allāh if you are believers.^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ
اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُوءًا وَلُغِبًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ
أَوْتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكَافِرَ
أُولِيَاءَ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ لَكُمْ مَعَهُ مَوَازِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And when you call to prayer they take it as a mockery and a sport. That is because they are a people who understand not.

وَإِذَا نَادَيْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ اتَّخَذُوا
هُزُوءًا وَلُغِبًا ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Say: O People of the Book, do you find fault^a with us for aught except that we believe in Allāh and in that which has been revealed to us and that which was revealed before, while most of you are transgressors?

قُلْ يَا هَلْ أَتَيْنَا بِكُم مِّنْ آيَاتٍ
أَنْ أَمْتًا يَا اللَّهُ وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا
مِن قَبْلِ ۗ إِنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لَفٰسِقُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 Say: Shall I inform you of those worse than this in retribution from Allāh? They are those whom Allāh has cursed and upon whom He brought His wrath and of whom He made apes and swine, and who serve the devil.

قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِّنْ ذَلِكَ مَثُوبَةً
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ
وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْفَرَادَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ
الطَّاغُوتَ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَامًا وَأَضَلُّ

distresses and difficulties. Allāh is really the only Friend of a believer; only He can come to his help in time of need. But there was God's Messenger among them and if God was a believer's true Friend, so was His Messenger, whose heart was full of sincerest sympathy for the true believers.

57a. The Muslims were prohibited from having friendly relations with those who mocked their religion and their Prophet. Friendship with such people would indeed have led to a similar bent of mind.

59a. *Naqama* followed by *min* means *he found fault with* (R).

These are in a worse plight and further astray from the straight path.^a

عَنْ سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ۝

61 And when they come to you, they say, We believe, and surely they come in unbelief and they go forth in it. And Allāh knows best what they conceal.

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ قَوْلْنَا آمَنَّا وَقَدْ دَخَلُوا
بِالْكُفْرِ وَهُمْ قَدْ خَرَجُوا بِهِ وَاللَّهُ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْتُمُونَ ۝

62 And thou seest many of them vying one with another in sin and transgression, and their devouring illegal gain. Certainly evil is that which they do.^a

وَتَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْإِثْمِ
وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ الشُّحْتَ ط لَيْسَ
مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

63 Why do not the rabbis and the doctors of law prohibit them from their sinful utterances and their devouring unlawful gain? Certainly evil are the works they do.

لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَنْ
قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ الشُّحْتَ ط
لَيْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ۝

64 And the Jews say: The hand of Allāh is tied up. Their own hands are shackled and they are cursed for what they say. Nay, both His hands are spread out.^a He disburses as He pleases. And that which has been

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ غُلَّتْ
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَعُنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا بَلْ يَدُهُ
مَبْسُوطَاتٌ لَا يَنْفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ ط وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ
كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنْ سُرَّتِكَ

60a. Those who are spoken of as having been made apes and swine are the Jews. See 2:65b as explaining the significance of these words. It is remarkable that, though the people spoken of here are in both places the same, they are on one occasion called simply apes and on the other apes and swine. In addition, the same people are here spoken of as serving the devil. The concluding words that the people who were thus made apes and swine and the servants of the devil are “in a worse plight and further astray from the straight path”, are conclusive as establishing the fact that they were still men, because apes and swine could not be said to be straying from the straight path. The next verse makes this plainer, for these very apes and swine are there described as coming to the Messenger with unbelief and going away with unbelief.

62a. *Suht* signifies any property that is forbidden, not lawful to be gained (LL). It is also applied to a *bribe* (R).

64a. The Muslims as a community were mostly poor people who accepted the truth. Moreover, they had left their property at Makkah. The Madīnah Muslims were an agricultural community and naturally not rich. The Jews on the other hand carried on business and their usurious transactions had made them very rich, hence they taunted the Muslims, saying that Allāh’s hand was fettered. Compare also 3:181 and see 3:181a. The words — *both His hands are spread out* — indicate that He will enrich the Muslims materially as well as spiritually.

revealed to thee from thy Lord will certainly make many of them increase in inordinacy and disbelief. And We have cast among them enmity and hatred till the day of Resurrection. Whenever they kindle a fire for war Allāh puts it out, and they strive to make mischief in the land.^b And Allāh loves not the mischief-makers.

65 And if the People of the Book had believed and kept their duty We would certainly have removed from them their evils, and made them enter gardens of bliss.

66 And if they had observed the Torah and the Gospel and that which is revealed to them from their Lord, they would certainly have eaten from above them and from beneath their feet. There is a party of them keeping to the moderate course; and most of them — evil is that which they do.^a

طُعْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا وَالْقَيْبَاتِ بَيْنَهُمُ الْعِدَاةَ
وَالْبَعْضَاءِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ كَلِمًا أَوْ قَدُوا
تَأْرًا لِلْحَرْبِ أَطْفَأَهَا اللَّهُ وَيَسْعُونَ فِي
الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَكُنَّا
عَهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَآ ذَخْلَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٦٦﴾

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ آتَمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ
وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا
مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ أَسْرَاجِهِمْ
مِنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُقْتَصِدَةٌ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ
سَاءَ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

SECTION 10: Christian Deviation from the Truth

67 O Messenger, deliver that which has been revealed to thee from thy Lord; and if thou do (it) not, thou

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ
رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ

64b. It is clear from this that the Jews had a hand in the battles which the Quraish waged against Islām; in fact they gave them promises of help from within if they attacked Madinah; perhaps they also financed these wars. The casting of enmity among them may relate to the enmity between the Jews and the Christians, because both are again and again referred to in this chapter.

66a. If they had observed the Torah and the Gospel which contained clear prophecies of the Prophet's advent, they would have believed in the revelation of the Qur'an as well. The eating from above is in reference to spiritual blessings and eating from beneath their feet signifies the earthly provisions; i.e., they would have had abundance of both. The attitude of liberality adopted by Islām towards even its most implacable foes is remarkable. Notwithstanding their strong enmity to Islām, a party of the Jews and the Christians is described as *keeping to the moderate course*.

hast not delivered His message. And Allāh will protect thee from men. Surely Allāh guides not the disbelieving people.^a

68 Say: O People of the Book, you follow no good till you observe the Torah and the Gospel and that which is revealed to you from your Lord.^a And surely that which has been revealed to thee from thy Lord will make many of them increase in inordinacy and disbelief; so grieve not for the disbelieving people.

69 Surely those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabians and the Christians — whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day and does good — they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve.

70 Certainly We made a covenant with the Children of Israel and We sent to them messengers. Whenever a messenger came to them with that which their souls desired not, some

وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ
حَتَّى تُقِيمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَدَانِ
كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ
طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى
الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا
وَالصُّبْحُونَ وَالنَّصَارَى مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ
وَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ رَسُولًا قُلْنَا جَاءَهُمْ
رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَمْ تُهْتَمُّوا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ فَلَاقُوا فِرْقًا

67a. In Makkah the Prophet's only enemies were the Quraish. His flight to Madinah increased the difficulties tenfold. The Jews were a powerful nation, and a little plain speaking had made them the most dreadful enemies. Similar was the case of the Christians. The other tribes of Arabia had also, by this time, been successfully excited by the Quraish to side with them. The promise is therefore given that the Prophet will remain under Divine protection as against the innumerable dangers that threatened him from all quarters and the numerous plots against his life. But there is also a reference here to the Prophet's spiritual protection. Commenting on this verse, R says: "The 'ishmat, or protection, of the prophets is God's protection of them, in the first place, by characterizing them with purity of essence (i.e. creating them pure from every sin in their very nature), then by granting them bodily as well as spiritual excellence, then by granting them help and keeping them firm (in trials), then by sending down tranquillity upon them and by the protection of their hearts (against evil)". RM also gives a similar explanation and says that their protection means their protection from sins from among all people.

68a. This is a very severe condemnation of the contention of the Jews and the Christians. They had not preserved the Torah and the Gospel in their purity, and whatever remained of the original teachings of the prophets they did not act upon it, nor did they care for the prophecies which their own Books contained.

(of them) they called liars and some they (even) sought to kill.

71 And they thought that there would be no affliction,^a so they became blind and deaf; then Allāh turned to them (mercifully) but many of them (again) became blind and deaf.^b And Allāh is Seer of what they do.

72 Certainly they disbelieve who say: Allāh, He is the Messiah, son of Mary. And the Messiah said: O Children of Israel, serve Allāh, my Lord and your Lord.^a Surely whoever associates (others) with Allāh, Allāh has forbidden to him the Garden and his abode is the Fire. And for the wrongdoers there will be no helpers.

73 Certainly they disbelieve who say: Allāh is the third of the three.^a And there is no God but One God. And if they desist not from what they say, a painful chastisement will surely befall such of them as disbelieve.^b

كَذَّبُوا وَفِرُّوْا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ۝٧١

وَحَسِبُوْا اِلَّا تَكُوْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَعَمَوْا
وَصَمُّوْا ثُمَّ تَابَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَمَّ
عَمَوْا وَصَمُّوْا كَثِيْرٌ مِنْهُمْ ۝٧٢ وَاللّٰهُ
بَصِيْرٌۢ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝٧٣

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ
الْمَسِيْحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۝٧٢ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيْحُ
يَبْنِيْ اِسْمَاعِيْلَ اعْبُدُوْا اللّٰهَ سَرِيْبِيْ وَ
رَبُّكُمْ اِنَّكُمْ مِّنْ يُّشْرِكِ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدْ
حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا وُجِدَ
الْقَارِطُ وَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِيْنَ مِنْ اَنْصٰرٍ ۝٧٣

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ ثَلٰثٌ
ثَلٰثَةٌ ۝٧٣ وَمَا مِنْ اِلٰهٍ اِلَّا اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ
۝٧٣ وَاِنْ لَّمْ يَنْتَهُوْا عَمَّا يُفْعَلُوْنَ لَيَكْسِبْنَ
الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْهُمْ عَذٰبَ اَلِيْمًا ۝٧٤

71a. Although they had been repeatedly warned of the afflictions which would befall them, they still thought that, being a favoured nation, they would not suffer punishment for their evil deeds. They had been subjected to great sufferings at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian rulers who followed him, large numbers having been slain and the rest taken prisoners. And again they suffered at the hands of Titus. See v. 78 where this affliction is spoken of as coming after David and Jesus.

71b. Allāh's turning mercifully to them signifies the advent of Jesus, and their becoming blind and deaf a second time refers to their rejection of him.

72a. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:10).

73a. The well-known Christian doctrine of the Trinity is here plainly referred to. It should be noted that the name of Mary is never mentioned in connection with the doctrine of the Trinity. But as the Christians, especially the Roman Catholics, invested Mary with Divine character, as being the mother of God, the Qur'ān often mentions her along with Jesus as being an ordinary mortal.

73b. If the Jews were punished on account of their rejecting the prophets, the Christians are here told that punishment is also in store for them for their going to the

74 Will they not then turn to Allāh and ask His forgiveness? And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لَهُ وَاللَّهُ
عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a messenger; messengers before him had indeed passed away. And his mother was a truthful woman. They both used to eat food.^a See how We make the messages clear to them! then behold, how they are turned away!

مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ
قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ
صِدِّيقَةٌ ۖ كَانَا يَأْكُلِنَ الطَّعَامَ
أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُفَيِّقُنَ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ
أَنْظُرْ إِلَىٰ يُؤْفِكُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 Say: Do you serve besides Allāh that which controls for you neither harm nor good? And Allāh — He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا
يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا وَاللَّهُ هُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Say: O People of the Book, exaggerate not in the matter of your religion unjustly, and follow not the low desires of people who went astray before and led many astray, and went astray from the right path.^a

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْتَوُوا فِي
دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ
قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَصْلُوا
كَثِيرًا ۖ ضَلُّوا عَنْ سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٧٧﴾

SECTION 11: Christian Nearness to Islām

78 Those who disbelieved from among the Children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David and

لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ
عَلَىٰ لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ

other extreme in raising a mortal to the dignity of Godhead. The doctrine of the Atonement has slowly and gradually made the Christian world forget God altogether, and material advancement and the acquisition of worldly power has become their only concern. They first sought to subjugate the whole world, and, having done that, they are now seeking to overpower each other. Their mutual hatred and enmity as a punishment for their violation of the covenant of God has been already clearly spoken of in v. 14, and again in v. 64, as also in an earlier revelation: “And on that day We shall let some of them surge against others” (18:99).

75a. Feeling hungry and partaking of food shows that both Jesus and his mother were ordinary mortals. Every living thing needs food; it is only the Supreme Being Who has no need of it. As Jesus is clearly spoken of as eating food while alive, he could not remain alive without food, and this verse thus negatives the allegation that Jesus is still alive.

77a. The *ghuluww* or *exaggeration* spoken of here refers to the Christian doctrine raising a mortal to the dignity of Godhead. The Christians are here told that in making this doctrine the basis of their religion they have only followed an erroneous doctrine preached by a people before them. Recent criticism has shown that the Christians have

Jesus, son of Mary. This was because they disobeyed and exceeded the limits.^a

79 They forbade not one another the hateful things they did. Evil indeed was what they did.

80 Thou seest many of them befriending those who disbelieve. Certainly evil is that which their souls send before for them, so that Allāh is displeased with them, and in chastisement will they abide.

81 And if they believed in Allāh and the Prophet^a and that which is revealed to him, they would not take them for friends, but most of them are transgressors.

82 Thou wilt certainly find the most violent of people in enmity against the believers to be the Jews and the idolators; and thou wilt find the nearest in friendship to the believers to be those who say, We are Christians. That is because there

ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

كَانُوا إِلَّا يَتَّبِعُونَ هُنَّ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ
لَيْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

تَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا لَيْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ
أَنْ سَخَطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِي الْعَذَابِ
هُمْ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

وَكَانُوا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالنَّبِيِّ وَمَا
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَا اتَّخَذُوا لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَلَكِنْ
كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا
وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِيْ ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّ مِنْهُمْ قِسِيْسِيْنَ وَرُهَبَانًا وَ

only followed previous idolatrous nations in ascribing a son to God. This subject has been fully discussed in *The Sources of Christianity* by the late Khwāja Kamāl-ud-Dīn.

78a. After Moses, David and Jesus, who represent the highest achievement of Israelite prophethood in temporal and spiritual glory, spoke of the advent of the Holy Prophet in unmistakable terms. The *curse* is used here in its original sense of being removed further off from Divine mercy. Both prophets had warned the Jews that their transgressions called for Divine punishment which should soon overtake them if they did not mend their ways. The time of both was followed by a great affliction overtaking the Jews, in the respective depredations of the Babylonian kings and the destruction wrought by Titus.

81a. By *al-Nabī* or *the Prophet* in the Qur'an is always meant the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, and he is often spoken of and addressed as *al-Nabī* or *al-Rasūl*, *the Prophet* or *the Messenger*. In fact, he is referred to as *the Prophet* or *that Prophet* in earlier prophecy as well (John 1:21, 25). The Jews professed belief in the Unity of God, yet they made a common cause with the idolatrous Quraysh to uproot Islām which was a religion of pure monotheism.

are priests and monks among them and because they are not proud.^a

﴿٨٣﴾ أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

Part 7

83 And when they hear that which has been revealed to the Messenger thou seest their eyes overflow with tears because of the truth they recognize. They say: Our Lord, we believe, so write us down with the witnesses.^a

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰ أَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 And what (reason) have we that we should not believe in Allāh and in the Truth that has come to us, while we earnestly desire that our Lord should cause us to enter with the righteous people?

وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَنَطْمَعُ أَنْ يُدْخِلَنَا رَبُّنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

85 So Allāh rewarded them for what they said, with Gardens where-

فَأَنشَأْنَا لَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَلِكَ

82a. The Christians were nearer to Islām than the Jews, not only because the Muslims accepted Jesus Christ as a prophet of God, but because there were still among them many people who feared and worshipped God — there were priests and monks among them as the verse says. It is a fact that the Christian attitude towards Islām was never so inimical as the Jewish. The Negus, Emperor of Abyssinia, accepted Islām when he came to know of it through the Muslim emigrants in that country. Heraclius was favourably disposed towards it; even the Christian deputation of Najrān towards the end of the Prophet's life was so impressed with the Prophet's arguments that it decided not to have a *mubāhalah* with him. But the words here are more of a prophetic nature, and it is a fact that in the early history of Islām, the Christians in Egypt, in North Africa, in Syria, in Persia and other countries, accepted Islām in very large numbers, so that many of those communities became Muslims entirely or predominantly. At present, too, when Islām is being presented to the West, the Christians are receiving the message with an open heart.

83a. This refers to the Christians who believed. An important personage belonging to this class was the Negus of Abyssinia, in whose dominions the Muslims found shelter in the early days of the Prophet's mission, when compelled to flee from Makkah on account of the severe persecutions of the Quraiṣh. Even there they were followed by a deputation of the persecutors, who, in order to excite the religious hatred of the Christian monarch against the homeless Muslims, represented to the Negus that the fugitives not only denounced the idols of the Arabs but also spoke disparagingly of Jesus Christ. Whereupon, the Muslims being called upon to answer the charge, their leader read out the portion of the chapter "Mary" dealing with Jesus Christ, and the words so impressed the Negus that he wept, and said that Jesus Christ was not one whit more than the Qur'ān described him to be. That he subsequently became a true convert to Islām is clearly shown by a funeral service having been held for him by the Holy Prophet when news of his death reached Madinah (B. 23:4).

in rivers flow to abide in them. And that is the reward of the doers of good.

جَزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 And those who disbelieve and reject Our messages, such are the companions of the flaming fire.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾

SECTION 12: A Warning – Besetting Sins of Previous People

87 O you who believe, forbid not the good things which Allāh has made lawful for you and exceed not the limits. Surely Allāh loves not those who exceed the limits.^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْرِمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88 And eat of the lawful and good (things) that Allāh has given you, and keep your duty to Allāh, in Whom you believe.

وَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 Allāh will not call you to account for that which is vain in your oaths, but He will call you to account for the making of deliberate oaths; so its expiation^a is the feeding of ten poor men with the average (food) you feed your families with, or their clothing, or the freeing of a neck. But whoso finds not (means) should fast for three days. This is the expiation of

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْأَيْمَانِ فَلَكَآرِثَةُ إِطْعَامِ عَشْرَةِ مَسْكِينٍ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ ط فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامٌ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ كَفَّارَةُ أَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا

87a. These words not only denounce such self-denying practices as those adopted by the Christian monks, spoken of in the last section, but also the act of depriving oneself of Divine blessings by falling into evil and slothful habits. Thus, while the Muslims are told on the one hand not to follow the self-imposed restrictions of the Christians, they are at the same time warned that they can enjoy Divine blessings only so long as they strive arduously for them.

89a. It is wrong to suppose that this verse sanctions the expiation of all kinds of oaths. Reading it along with the previous verses shows that the oaths referred to are in relation to vows, etc., by which one forbids oneself what is otherwise lawful. The injunction at the end of this verse, *keep your oaths*, also shows that oaths cannot be violated generally, and therefore expiation is only allowed in the case of oaths by which a man deprives himself of some lawful thing or of an occasion of virtue, as in 2:226. It is further evident that the Book which lays stress upon the faithful performance of all kinds of engagements could not allow the violating of agreements which had been confirmed with oaths.

your oaths when you swear. And keep your oaths.^b Thus does Allāh make clear to you His messages that you may give thanks.

حَلَفْتُمْ وَأَحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ كَذَلِكَ يبين
الله لكم آياته لعلكم تشكرون ﴿٨٩﴾

90 O you who believe, intoxicants and games of chance and (sacrificing to) stones set up and (dividing by) arrows^a are only an uncleanness, the devil's work; so shun it that you may succeed.^b

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ
وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَسْرَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ
الشَّيْطَانِ فَأَجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

91 The devil desires only to create enmity and hatred among you by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you back from the remembrance of Allāh and from prayer. Will you then keep back?^a

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ
وَالْبُغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ
عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ ۖ فَهَلْ
أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

92 And obey Allāh and obey the Messenger and be cautious. But if you turn back then know that the duty of Our Messenger is only a clear deliverance of the message.

وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَاطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَاحْذَرُوا
فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا إِنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا
الْبَلْغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٩٢﴾

93 On those who believe and do good there is no blame for what they eat,^a when they keep their duty and

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا

89b. The phrase *ihfazū aimāna-kum* bears two interpretations. It means *keep your oaths*, i.e. be true to your oaths when you take them; and it also means *guard your oaths*, i.e. do not take oaths unless there is an urgent need.

90a. See v. 3, and 3b, 3c.

90b. This verse totally prohibits all intoxicants and games of chance; and besides, by classing them with sacrifices to stones set up for idols and dividing by arrows, subjects them to the prohibition of v. 3. It is related that when this verse was revealed a crier proclaimed in the streets of Madinah that wine was prohibited, and in response to this every jar of wine in a Muslim house was emptied, so that wine flowed in the streets (B. 46:20). Never in the history of the world was such a deep-rooted evil as drink so suddenly yet so completely eradicated.

91a. Only one very clear reason is here given why intoxicants and games of chance are forbidden. Elsewhere it is clearly stated that in intoxicants and games of chance there is a great sin (2:219).

93a. The verse speaks of those who died before the prohibition came. But even if it be taken to refer to all believers, it would not justify doing what is unlawful, because one who believes, does good deeds, and keeps his duty will not approach any prohibited

believe and do good deeds, then keep their duty and believe, then keep their duty and do good (to others). And Allāh loves the doers of good.

وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقُوا وَأَمُورُهُمْ
اتَّقُوا أَحْسَنُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

SECTION 13: Inviolability of the Ka'bah

94 O you who believe, Allāh will certainly try you in respect of some game which your hands and your lances can reach, that Allāh may know who fears Him in secret. Whoever exceeds the limit after this, for him is a painful chastisement.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَبِئْسَ مَا كَفَرْنَا
مَنْ الصَّيْدِ تَنَاثُرًا إِلَيْكُمْ وَرَمَاهُمْ
لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَخَافُهُ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ فَمَنْ
أَعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَعَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٥﴾

95 O you who believe, kill not game while you are on pilgrimage.^a And whoever among you kills it intentionally, the compensation thereof is the like of what he killed, from the cattle, as two just persons among you judge, as an offering to be brought to the Ka'bah, or the expiation thereof is the feeding of the poor or equivalent of it in fasting, that he may taste the unwholesome result of his deed. Allāh pardons what happened in the past. And whoever returns (to it), Allāh will punish him. And Allāh is Mighty, Lord of Retribution.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ
وَأَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ ۚ وَمَنْ قَتَلَهُ مِنْكُمْ مُتَعَمَّدًا
فَجَزَاءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ يَحْكُمُ
بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ هَدْيًا بِلِغَةِ الْكَعْبَةِ
أَوْ كَفَّارَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسْكِينٍ أَوْ عَدْلٌ ذَلِكَ
صِيًّا مَأْلُوقٌ ۚ وَبِالْأَمْرِ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْمَا
سَلَفٌ ۚ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ ۚ
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ﴿٩٦﴾

96 Lawful to you is the game of the sea^a and its food,^b a provision for

أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ مَتَاعًا

thing. In thrice mentioning belief and regard for duty, the reference is to the threefold duty of man, viz., to Allāh, to himself, and to others. Or, by the repetition of *believing* is meant carrying out belief into practice.

95a. The prohibition to kill game when on pilgrimage, mentioned in vv. 94–96, is a token of respect for the security of the Ka'bah (see v. 97), in addition to being a measure necessary for the safety of life in such a large gathering.

96a. *Bahr* is used here in an extensive sense, and by the game of the sea is meant all water game, whether sea, river, pond, or lake.

96b. The *ṭa'ām* (lit. *food*) of the sea is here distinguished from its game, and means *what is found, the sea or the river having thrown it (on dry land)* (B. 72:12), or *what is*

you and for the travellers, and the game of the land is forbidden to you so long as you are on pilgrimage, and keep your duty to Allāh, to Whom you shall be gathered.

لَكُمْ وَاللشَّيْءِ رَاقٍ وَحُرْمٍ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدِ
الْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرْمًا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي
إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

97 Allāh has made the Ka'bah,^a the Sacred House, a means of support for the people,^b and the sacred month and the offerings and the victims with garlands. That is that you may know that Allāh knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and that Allāh is Knower of all things.

جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَامًا
لِّلنَّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْهَدْيَ
وَالتَّقْلِيدَ ذَلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ أَنْ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ
مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

98 Know that Allāh is Severe in requiting (evil) and that Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

رَاعِمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ وَأَنَّ
اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

99 The duty of the Messenger is only to deliver (the message). And Allāh knows what you do openly and what you hide.

مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

100 Say: The bad and the good are not equal, though the abundance of the bad may please thee. So keep your duty to Allāh, O men of understanding, that you may succeed.

قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْخَيْرُ وَالشَّرُّ وَلَوْ
أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَيْرِ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَا أُولِي
الْأَبْصَارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

left by the water having receded from it, for the catching of which no struggle is needed (Rz). According to I'Ab, *ta'am* means *what dies of itself* in water — (it is allowed) unless it stinks (B. 72: 12).

97a. *Ka'bah*, from *ka'ba*, meaning *it swelled* or *became prominent*, is so called because of *its prominence*, or it is a prophetic name showing that it shall forever have eminence in the world. *Al-Bait al-Haram* (*The Sacred* or *Inviolable House*) is also one of its names, and among the Arabs it was known as *Bait Allāh*, or *the House of Allāh*. The building proper is 55 feet by 50 feet, but the whole courtyard in which it stands measures 530 feet by 500 feet.

97b. This is a prophetic announcement that the Ka'bah will forever remain a support or stay for men, where pilgrims will flock from all parts of the world. The reference to this prophecy is elucidated in the concluding words: "That is that you may know that Allāh knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth"; that is, the fulfilment of this prophecy in all future ages will be a sign of the great knowledge of Allāh, Who pronounced it at a time when the Ka'bah was hardly known beyond the environs of Arabia; see 3:97a.