



CHAPTER 9

Al-Barā'at: The Immunity

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 16 sections; 129 verses)

The title of this chapter is taken from the opening statement, which contains a declaration of *immunity* from obligations with such of the idolatrous tribes as had repeatedly broken their engagements. This declaration is one of the most important events in the history of Islām, for hitherto the Muslims had constantly suffered from the hostility of the unscrupulous idolatrous tribes who had no regard for their treaties, dealing a blow at the Muslims whenever they had an opportunity of doing so. The chapter is known under various other names, *al-Taubah* or *Repentance*, being the best known. This is not really a new chapter, and this accounts for the *Bismillāh* being omitted from the opening. It is admittedly a part of the last chapter, while a distinct name has been assigned to it by reason of the importance of the declaration of *immunity*, from which it takes its name. A reference to the seventh and the eighth sections of the last chapter will show that the idolaters repeatedly broke the agreements which bound them to remain on peaceful terms with the Muslims. This frequent violation ultimately led to the declaration of immunity, because it was impossible that the Muslims should be bound forever by the terms of those agreements, while their enemies could repudiate them with impunity.

A declaration of immunity necessitated by the repeated treaty violations of the idolaters is made in the first section, with two clear exceptions; one in the case of those tribes who had remained true to their obligations, and a second in the case of idolaters who sought protection from the Muslims. These latter were to be conducted safely to their tribes, and were not to be molested in any way. The second section gives the chief reason for freeing the Muslims from the liabilities of certain agreements, again stating expressly that the Muslims were to stand firm by their agreements so long as the other party adhered to their terms. In the third section the idolaters are told that their pretensions relating to the entertainment of the pilgrims and the repairing or building of the Sacred House could not save them from the consequences of their evil deeds, while the conclusion of that section calls attention to the sacrifices which the Muslims would now be required to make in the cause of truth. The fourth section states how Islām was triumphing in Arabia, while the fifth, after speaking of the falling off of the Jews and the Christians from the pure monotheism of their great prophets, predicts the final triumph of Islām, the only religion of pure monotheism in the whole world. Thenceforward to the end, with the exception of the last three sections, are contained references to the Tabūk expedition, and particularly to those who had been guilty of default in joining that expedition. Thus the hypocrites had made their presence clearly felt among the Muslims from the time of the battle of Uḥud, in the third year of the Hijrah, and they had been given a chance up to the close of the ninth year to mend their ways, and the final word with regard to them was now urgently needed. The three concluding sections are a

natural sequel to the subject of hypocrisy. The fourteenth speaks of the faithful, and the fifteenth of their duty towards God and His Prophet, their attention being drawn in the closing words of this section to the necessity of proper arrangements for the propagation of the Faith. Thus at the end of a chapter which almost entirely deals with treaty obligations, ultimatums and wars, the faithful are told that every Muslim community must contribute men to carry the message of Truth to the whole world, which was the real object of Islām. The last section speaks of the Prophet's great anxiety for the hypocrites as well as the believers.

The whole of this chapter was revealed in the ninth year of the Hijrah, the opening verses belonging to the close, and the major portion to about the middle, of that year, during or after the Tabūk expedition, which took place in the month of Rajab in the ninth year of the Hijrah.

SECTION 1: Declaration of Immunity

1 A declaration of immunity from Allāh and His Messenger to those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement.^a

بَرَاءَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ
عٰهَدْتُمْ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝

2 So go about in the land for four months and know that you cannot escape Allāh and that Allāh will disgrace the disbelievers.

فَسِيحُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَاعْلَمُوا
أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ
مُخْزِي الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

3 And an announcement from Allāh and His Messenger to the people on the day of the greater pilgrimage^a that Allāh is free from liability to the idolaters, and so is His Messenger. So if you repent, it will be better for you; and if you turn away, then know that you will not escape Allāh. And announce painful chastisement to those who disbelieve —

وَأَذَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ
يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ
مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۖ وَرَسُولُهُ ۚ فَإِنْ
تُبْتُمْ فَوَاحِشٌ لِّكُمْ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَاعْلَمُوا
أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ ۖ وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا بِعَذَابِ آلِيمٍ ۝

4 Except those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement, then they have not failed you in anything and have not backed up anyone

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عٰهَدْتُمْ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ
تُمْ لَمْ يَنْفُصُوكُمْ شَيْئًا وَ لَمْ يُظَاهِرُوا
عَلَيْكُمْ أَحَدًا فَآتَوْهُمُ إِلَيْهِمْ عٰهَدْتُمْ إِلَى

1a. This verse is to be read along with v. 4, which makes a clear exception in favour of those who did not fail in their agreements. It is a fact that the idolatrous tribes of Arabia broke their agreements with the Muslims again and again (8:56), yet the Muslims were enjoined to accept peace if the disbelievers consented to it, even after repeated violations (8:61). But this state of things could not continue long, for it was soon found that it was impossible to trust such neighbours. This repudiation of agreements took place on a large scale when the Muslims were absent on the Tabūk expedition. The first thirteen verses of this chapter were publicly proclaimed by 'Ali, on the occasion of the pilgrimage in the ninth year of the Hijrah, and the following announcements made as the result: (1) that no idolater shall approach the Sacred House after this; (2) that no one shall go naked round the Ka'bah (B. 65: ix, 3). The attitude of the tribes to whom this ultimatum was given through 'Ali is well indicated in their reply: "O 'Ali, deliver this message to thy cousin (i.e. the Prophet), that we have thrown the agreements behind our backs, and there is no agreement between him and us except smiting with spears and striking with swords" (Rz).

3a. By *the day of the greater pilgrimage* is meant either the ninth of *Dhu-l-Hijjah*, when all pilgrims gather together in the plain of 'Arafāt, or the tenth when they assemble in Minā.

against you; so fulfil their agreement to the end of their term. Surely Allāh loves those who keep their duty.^a

مَدَّ تَيْهَمُ ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ④

5 So when the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters,^a wherever you find them, and take them captive and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush. But if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, leave their way free. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.^b

فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ فَاقْتُلُوا
الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ
وَاحْصُرُوهُمْ وَاعْبُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصِدٍ
وَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ
فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ⑤

6 And if anyone of the idolaters seek thy protection, protect him till he hears the word of Allāh, then convey him to his place of safety. This is because they are a people who know not.^a

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ
فَأَجْرُهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ اتَّبَعَهُ
فَأَجْرُهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ اتَّبَعَهُ
مَأْمُونٌ ⑥

4a. Only two tribes, the Banī Ḍamrah, and the Banī Kanānah, are related to have adhered to their treaties. The exception given here makes it clear that the Muslims were not fighting with the idolaters on account of their religion, but on account of their having been untrue to their engagements.

5a. The clear exception of the last verse shows that by the idolaters here are meant, not all idolaters or polytheists wherever they may be found in the world, not even all idolaters of Arabia, but only those idolatrous tribes of Arabia assembled at the pilgrimage who had first made agreements with the Muslims and then violated them.

5b. The exception here has given rise to much misconception. It is thought that it offers to the disbelievers the alternative of the sword or the Qur'ān. Nothing is farther from the truth. The injunction contained in the first part of the verse establishes the fact that the whole verse relates to certain idolatrous Arab tribes who had broken their engagements with the Muslims, and who had now been apprised of a similar repudiation by the Muslims. The order to kill them and to make them prisoners and to besiege them and ambush them amounts clearly to an order to fight against them, as it is in war only that all these things are made lawful. They had so often broken their word that they could no more be trusted. Yet, if they joined the brotherhood of Islām, and there was an absolute change in their condition, the punishment which they otherwise deserved could be remitted. It was a case of forgiving a guilty people who had repented. It should also be noted that a mere confession of the faith is not required; what is required is an absolute change, so that the old crimes are all abandoned. Therefore, along with the confession of the faith, it is required that they should keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate. The subject is further clarified in the next verse and the following section.

6a. This verse leaves no doubt that the Prophet was never ordered to kill anyone on account of his religion. "You shall give him a safe conduct that he may return home again securely in case he shall not think fit to embrace Muhammadanism" (Sale).

SECTION 2: Reasons for the Immunity

7 How can there be an agreement for the idolaters with Allāh and with His Messenger, except those with whom you made an agreement at the Sacred Mosque? So as long as they are true to you, be true to them. Surely Allāh loves those who keep their duty.^a

كَيْفَ يَكُونُ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ عَهْدٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَعِنْدَ رَسُولِهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ فَمَا اسْتَقَامُوا لَكُمْ فَاسْتَقِيمُوا لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٧﴾

8 How (can it be)? And if they prevail against you, they respect neither ties of relationship nor covenant in your case. They would please you with their mouths while their hearts refuse; and most of them are transgressors.

كَيْفَ وَإِن يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ لَا يَرْفُقُوا فِيكُمْ إِلَّا وَلَا ذِمَّةَ يُرْضُونَكُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتَأْبَى قُلُوبُهُمْ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾

9 They have taken a small price for the messages of Allāh, so they hinder (men) from His way. Surely evil is that which they do.

اشْتَرَوْا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِهِ إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩﴾

10 They respect neither ties of relationship nor covenant, in the case of a believer. And these are they who go beyond the limits.^a

لَا يَرْفُقُونَ فِي مُمْرِسِينَ إِلَّا وَلَا ذِمَّةَ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 But if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, they are your brethren in faith. And We make the messages clear for a people who know.

فَإِن تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَخِوْا إِلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَنَفَّصْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 And if they break their oaths after their agreement and revile your religion, then fight the leaders of

وَإِن تَكْفُرُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ فَمِن بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ وَطَعْنُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ فَقَاتِلُوا أَيْمَةَ الْكُفْرِ

7a. So long as the idolaters were true to their agreements, the Muslims were required to be true to them. Just as in the case of war, the Muslims were not allowed to fight until the enemy had first attacked, so, in the case of repudiation of agreements, it was the enemy who first repudiated the agreement.

10a. Note the repeated assertions of the Qur'an that the disbelievers were not to be fought against for their disbelief but for their being first in starting war or repudiating agreements. No remedy was left for the covert mischief of these people, except that the agreements should be overtly repudiated and a period put to all their mischief.

disbelief — surely their oaths are nothing — so that they may desist.^a

13 Will you not fight a people who broke their oaths and aimed at the expulsion of the Messenger, and they attacked you first? Do you fear them? But Allāh has more right that you should fear Him, if you are believers.

14 Fight them; Allāh will chastise them at your hands and bring them to disgrace, and assist you against them and relieve the hearts of a believing people,

15 And remove the rage of their hearts.^a And Allāh turns (mercifully) to whom He pleases. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.

16 Do you think that you would be left alone while Allāh has not yet known those of you who struggle hard and take not anyone as an intimate friend besides Allāh and His Messenger and the believers? And Allāh is Aware of what you do.

إِنَّهُمْ لَا آيْمَانَ لَكُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَنْتَهُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

أَلَا تَقَاتِلُونَ قَوْمًا نَكَثُوا آيْمَانَهُمْ وَهَمُّوا
بِإِخْرَاجِ الرَّسُولِ وَهُمْ بَدَءُواكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ
أَتَخْشَوْنَهُمْ قَالَ اللهُ أَحْسَنُ أَنْ تَخْشَوْهُ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبُهُمُ اللهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَ
يُخْزِيهِمْ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ
صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

وَيَذِهُبُ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَيَتُوبُ اللهُ عَلَى
مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٦﴾

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُتْرَكُوا أَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَأَمْ يَبْتَغُوا مِنْ
دُونِ اللهِ وَلَا رَسُولِهِ وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَلِيَجْزِيَ اللهُ خَيْرًا بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

SECTION 3: Idolaters' Service of the Sacred House

17 The idolaters have no right to maintain the mosques of Allāh, while bearing witness to disbelief against themselves. These it is whose works

مَا كَانَ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يَعْمُرُوا مَسَاجِدَ
اللهِ شَاهِدِينَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ بِالْكُفْرِ أُولَٰئِكَ

12a. Note, again, that those leaders of disbelief are to be fought against *who break their oaths after their agreements*.

15a. It is said to refer to the *Khuzā'ah*, who, having become Muslims, suffered severely at the hands of the *Banī Bakr*, assisted by the *Quraysh*; but the reference may as well be to the Muslims in general, who had suffered the severest persecutions at the hands of the disbelievers. The punishment of the persecutors would no doubt relieve the hearts of the believers.

are vain; and in the Fire will they abide.^a

حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Only he can maintain the mosques of Allāh who believes in Allāh and the Last Day, and keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate and fears none but Allāh. So these it is who may be of the guided ones.

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنِ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَحْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنْ يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Do you hold the giving of drink to the pilgrims and the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque^a equal to (the service of) one who believes in Allāh and the Last Day and strives hard in Allāh's way? They are not equal in the sight of Allāh. And Allāh guides not the iniquitous people.

أَجَعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَجَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَوُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Those who believed and fled (their homes), and strove hard in Allāh's way with their wealth and their lives, are much higher in rank with Allāh. And it is these that shall triumph.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Their Lord gives them good news of mercy and pleasure, from Himself, and Gardens wherein lasting blessings will be theirs,

يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَرِضْوَانٍ وَجَنَّاتٍ لَهُمْ فِيهَا نَجِيمٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Abiding therein for ever. Surely Allāh has a mighty reward with Him.

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

17a. By the mosques of Allāh is meant particularly the Sacred Mosque at Makkah, as being the centre of all the mosques of the world. This is made clear by the use of the words Sacred Mosque in v. 19 instead of the mosques of Allāh. It had long remained in the hands of the idolaters, who abode therein, visiting and repairing it, having placed a large number of idols within it. With the conquest of Makkah the Sacred Mosque was denuded of all idols, and was now as pure an emblem of monotheism as in the time of Abraham. Hence the idol-worshippers had nothing to do with it now.

19a. It is generally supposed to refer to 'Abbās, the Prophet's uncle, whose charge was giving drink to pilgrims and guarding the Sacred Mosque. But really a comparison is drawn here between all such minor acts of charity and public utility and the great responsibility of every individual to exert himself to his utmost to establish the Truth.

23 O you who believe, take not your fathers and your brothers for friends if they love disbelief above faith. And whoever of you takes them for friends, such are the wrongdoers.

24 Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your wives and your kinsfolk and the wealth you have acquired, and trade whose dullness you fear, and dwellings you love, are dearer to you than Allāh and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait till Allāh brings His command to pass. And Allāh guides not the transgressing people.^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا آبَاءَكُمْ
وَإِخْوَانَكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ
عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ ۖ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَمِنكُمْ
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

قُلْ إِن كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ
وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا
وَيِجَارَةٌ تُخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسْكِنٌ
تَرْضَوْنَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ
فَتَرْتَوُونَ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ
وَ اللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

SECTION 4: Islām made Triumphant in Arabia

25 Certainly Allāh helped you in many battlefields, and on the day of Ḥunain, when your great numbers made you proud, but they availed you nothing, and the earth with all its spaciousness was straitened for you, then you turned back retreating.^a

لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ
وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ
فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا وَصَافَتْ
عَلَيْكُمْ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحَبَتْ
تَمًّا وَلَيْتُمْ مُدْرِكِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

24a. A true Muslim may have wealth, may carry on trade, may have magnificent houses, but these should not be dearer to him than Allāh and exertion in His path. In other words, he should be ready to sacrifice all these interests for a higher purpose, before which all these sink into insignificance. The essential difference between the Gospel teaching and the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān is that while the former condemns wealth and the amassing of wealth outright, the latter does not require one actually to hate riches, but rather not to be obsessed by wealth to the neglect of one's higher duties and responsibilities. The acquisition of wealth is not harmful so long as it is not made the real aim of life, but has its proper place as the means to an end.

25a. With the declaration of immunity, there would naturally be an apprehension in the minds of the Muslims that the struggle would grow harder. Hence they are given an assurance of Divine help, amply justified by their previous experience.

The battle of Ḥunain, fought in the eighth year of the Hijrah in the valley of Ḥunain, at about three miles from Makkah, differed from the other battles inasmuch as the Muslims here outnumbered the enemy, the tribes of Hawāzīn and Ṭhaqīf being about 4,000 strong, while the Muslims are said to have been as many as ten or even twelve thousand. The archers of the enemy were good marksmen, and had occupied strong positions in the mountain passes. The Muslim army, on the other hand, contained two

26 Then Allāh sent down His calm upon His Messenger and upon the believers, and sent hosts which you saw not, and chastised those who disbelieved. And such is the reward of the disbelievers.

ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ جُنُودًا لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَعَذَّبَ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكٰفِرِينَ ۝

27 Then will Allāh after this turn mercifully to whom He pleases. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.^a

ثُمَّ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَلَى مَنْ
يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝

28 O you who believe, the idolaters are surely unclean,^a so they shall not approach the Sacred Mosque after this year of theirs.^b And if you fear poverty, then Allāh will enrich you out of His grace, if He please.^c Surely Allāh is Knowing, Wise.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اِنَّمَآ الْمُشْرِكُوْنَ
نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَفْعَلُوْنَ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ
بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هٰذَا ۚ وَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ عَيْلَةً
فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيْكُمْ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ اِنْ شِئْتُمْ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ۝

29 Fight those who believe not in Allāh, nor in the Last Day, nor forbid that which Allāh and His Messenger have forbidden, nor follow the Religion of Truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgement of

قَاتِلُوا الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَلَا
بِالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُوْنَ مَا حَرَّمَ
اللّٰهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُوْنَ دِيْنََ الْحَقِّ
مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ حَتّٰى يُعْطُوا

thousand men of Makkah, some of them still adhering to idolatry. Unfortunately this was the advance party of the army, and, unable to face the archers, they retreated causing disorder to the whole army. The Prophet, however, led the assault, at first alone, in face of the archers, but was soon joined by others and a victory was obtained, as the next verse shows.

27a. The reference may be to the prisoners of the Hawāzīn, who numbered thousands, and who were all set free as an act of favour by the Holy Prophet, or to their ultimately coming over to Islām.

28a. Because they indulged in evil practices and went naked round the Ka'bah. Compare 5:90, where idols are declared to be unclean.

28b. The year of the proclamation, i.e. the ninth year of the Hijrah.

28c. The importance of Makkah as a commercial centre lay in the fact that the whole of Arabia repaired to it in the season of the pilgrimage, and there carried out important commercial transactions. The prohibition referred to in the first part of the verse could have been easily foreseen as affecting the commerce, and consequently the prosperity of Makkah, but worldly or business considerations never interfered with the carrying out of the moral reforms of Islām.

superiority and they are in a state of subjection.^a ﴿الْجُرْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ﴾

SECTION 5: Islām will Triumph in the World

30 And the Jews say: Ezra is the son of Allāh; and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of Allāh. These are the words of their mouths.^a They imi-

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عِزَّىٰرُ بْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ
النَّصْرَى الْمَسِيحُ بْنُ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ
بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهِئُونَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

29a. The last word on the wars with the idolaters of Arabia having been said, this verse introduces the subject of fighting with the followers of the Book. Though the Jews had for a long time assisted the idolatrous Arabians in their struggle to uproot Islām, the great Christian power, the Roman Empire, had only just mobilized its forces for the subjection of the new religion, and the Tabūk expedition followed, which constitutes the subject-matter of a large portion of what follows in this chapter. As the object of this Christian power was simply the subjection of the Muslims, the words in which their final vanquishment by the Muslims is spoken of are different from those dealing with the final vanquishment of the idolatrous Arabians. The Qur'ān neither required that the idolaters should be compelled to accept Islām, nor was it in any way its object to bring the Christians into subjection. On the other hand, the idolaters wanted to suppress Islām by the sword, and the Christians first moved themselves to bring Muslim Arabia under subjection. The fate of each was, therefore, according to what it intended for the Muslims. The word *jizyah* is derived from *jazā*, meaning *he gave satisfaction*, and means, according to LL, *the tax that is taken from the free non-Muslim subjects of the Muslim Government whereby they ratify the compact that ensures them protection*; or, according to AH, *because it is a compensation for the protection which is guaranteed them, the non-Muslim subjects being free from military service*.

The phrase '*an yad-in* has been explained variously. The word *yad* (lit., *hand*) stands for *power* or *superiority*, the use of the *hand* being the real source of the superiority of man over all other animals, and the apparent meaning of the phrase is *in acknowledgement of your superiority in protecting their lives, etc.* (AH). It may also be added that the permission to fight, as given to the Muslims, is subject to the condition that the enemy should first take up the sword, *Fight in the way of Allāh against those who fight against you* (2:190). The Holy Prophet never overstepped this limit, nor did his followers. He fought against the Arabs when they took up the sword to destroy the Muslims, and he led an expedition against the Christians when the Roman Empire first mobilized its forces with the object of subjugating the Muslims. And so scrupulous was he that, when he found that the enemy had not yet taken the initiative, he did not attack the Roman Empire, but returned without fighting. Later on, however, the Roman Empire, like the Persians, helped the enemies of Islām and fomented trouble against the newly established Muslim Kingdom, as a result of which both these empires came into conflict with the Muslims and, notwithstanding the fact that both the Persians and the Romans were very powerful nations with unlimited resources and strong military organizations, and that they both tried at one and the same time to subjugate Islām, the result was what is predicted here in clear words — they were both reduced to a state of subjection by an insignificant nation like the Arabs.

30a. That there was a sect among the Jews who raised Ezra to the dignity of godhead, or son of God, is shown by Muslim historians. *Qasṭalānī* says, in the *Kitāb al-Nikāh*, that there was a party of Jews who held this belief. Nor did the Jews deny this allegation. The

tate the saying of those who disbelieved before.^b Allāh's curse be on them! How they are turned away!

مَنْ قَبِلُ قَاتِلُهُمُ اللَّهُ ﷻ أَلَيْ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 They take their doctors of law and their monks for lords besides Allāh, and (also) the Messiah, son of Mary. And they were enjoined that they should serve one God only — there is no god but He. Be He glorified from what they set up (with Him)!^a

اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا ۗ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ سُبْحٰنَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 They desire to put out the light of Allāh with their mouths, and Allāh will allow nothing save the perfection of His light, though the disbelievers are averse.^a

يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَيَأْبَى اللَّهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يُتِمَّ نُورَهُ ۚ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

Qur'ān, too, mentions it only here in connection with the Christian doctrine, never blaming the Jews directly in the many controversies with them in the earlier chapters, and this shows that the Jewish nation as a whole was not guilty of entertaining this belief.

Another explanation of the statement made here is the free use of the word *son*. Elsewhere the Qur'ān says of the Jews and the Christians that they call themselves *the sons of Allāh and His beloved ones* (5:18), the meaning only being that they considered themselves *special favourites* of the Divine Being. Hence the belief regarding Ezra may be interpreted in the same light, for there is clear evidence that the Talmudists used very exaggerated language concerning him. Among the prophets of Israel, Ezra was specially honoured. In Rabbinical literature Ezra was considered “worthy of being the vehicle of the law, had it not been already given through Moses”. “He is regarded and quoted as the type of person most competent and learned in the law. The Rabbis associate his name with several important institutions” (*Jewish Encyclopaedia*).

30b. We are here told that the Christian doctrine that Jesus Christ was the son of God was borrowed from earlier pagan people. Recent research has established the fact beyond all doubt. In fact, when St. Paul saw that the Jews would on no account accept Jesus Christ as a messenger of God, he introduced the pagan doctrine of sonship of God into the Christian religion, so that it might become more acceptable to the pagans.

31a. Most of the commentators agree that it does not mean that they took them actually for gods; the meaning is that they followed them blindly in what they enjoined and what they forbade, and therefore they are described as having taken them for lords, on account of attaching to them a Divine dignity. It is related in a *ḥadīth* that, when this verse was revealed, 'Adī ibn Ḥātim, a convert from Christianity, asked the Holy Prophet as to the significance of this verse, for, he said, we did not worship our doctors of law and monks. The Holy Prophet's reply was: *Was it not that the people considered lawful what their priests declared to be lawful, though it was forbidden by God.* Ḥātim replied in the affirmative. That, the Prophet said, was what the verse meant (Tr. 44:9; I). Muslims who accord a similar position to their *pīrs* or saints are guilty of the same error.

32a. This is a prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Islām in face of severe opposition from the Jews and Christians. All opposition to truth, whether based on force or propaganda,

33 He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth that He may make it prevail over all religions,^a though the polytheists are averse.

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَ
دِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ ۗ
وَكَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 O you who believe, surely many of the doctors of law and the monks eat away the property of men falsely, and hinder (them) from Allāh's way. And those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in Allāh's way — announce to them a painful chastisement,^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْأَخْبَارِ
وَالرُّهْبَانِ لِيَآكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ
بِالْبَاطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَالَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالفِضَّةَ
وَلَا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ
بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

is here compared with putting out the Divine light by blowing with the mouth to show that all such attempts would prove futile. The Divine light will be made perfect, by which is meant the triumph of Islām throughout the world, as the next verse states clearly.

33a. The prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Islām in the whole world is repeated thrice in the Holy Qur'ān, in exactly the same words — here and in 48:28 and 61:9. Here as well as in 61:9 it is mentioned in connection with Christianity, while in 48:28, it is mentioned in connection with the Arab opposition to Islām. In Arabia itself, Islām became triumphant in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. Idolatry was wiped out from the face of the country, while many of the Jews and Christians accepted the Religion of Truth. The Prophet's death, instead of putting any check to the advance of Islām, was a signal for an unparalleled advance of his religion. The first century of the Muslim era saw, not only vast Christian communities swelling the ranks of Islām, in Egypt, North Africa, Asia Minor, Persia and Central Asia, but also brought to light the amazing fact that Islām, coming in contact with all the great religions of the world, with Zoroastrianism in Persia, with Buddhism and Hinduism in India and Afghanistan, and with Confucianism in China, conquered the hearts of the followers of every religion and they accepted the message of Truth in vast numbers, so that great Muslim communities sprang up in the whole known world, and the light of Islām enlightened the whole world from the farthest East to the farthest West.

The reason for this triumph, unprecedented in the history of religion, is not far to seek. It was the Religion of Truth; it presented the whole truth and infused a new life into all people who accepted it, while every other religion presented only partial truth. Every religion accepted this or that prophet, while Islām accepted all the prophets of the world, and every religion had obscured the great Truth of Divine Unity by mixing up with it some kind of *shirk*, while Islām presented the purest monotheism. Islām thus presenting the Perfect Light of Divine Unity and the whole Truth relating to prophethood appealed to every people, and the truth of the words — *He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth that He may make it prevail over all religions* — shone out in full resplendence. Yet we are told in reliable *hadith* that even a greater manifestation of the fulfilment of these words will be witnessed in the latter days when the Messiah of this *ummah* makes his appearance (IJ, Rz). And the final manifestation of this great truth is foreshadowed in the gradual acceptance of the principles of Islām throughout the whole world, notwithstanding the fact that the political power of Islām is at its lowest ebb.

34a, see next page.

35 On the day when it will be heated in the Fire of hell, then their foreheads and their sides and their backs will be branded with it: This is what you hoarded up for yourselves, so taste what you used to hoard.^a

يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فُتَنُ كُفْرًا
بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ
هَذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ فَذُوقُوا
مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Surely the number of months with Allāh is twelve months by Allāh's ordinance, since the day when He created the heavens and the earth — of these four are sacred. That is the right religion; so wrong not yourselves therein.^a And fight the polytheists all together as they fight you all together.^b And know that Allāh is with those who keep their duty.

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ
شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ذَلِكَ
الِدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ
أَنفُسَكُمْ وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً
كَمَا قَاتَلْتُمُوهُمْ كَافَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 Postponing (of the sacred month)^a is only an addition in dis-

إِسْمَا النَّسِيءِ زِيَادَةٌ فِي الْكُفْرِ يُصَلُّ بِهِ

34a. The acquisition of wealth is not disallowed, but the hoarding of it so as not to spend it in the cause of truth and for the welfare of humanity is denounced.

35a. The punishment of an evil is spoken of throughout the Holy Qur'ān as similar to the evil. Even in this world, a man feels a torment similar to the nature of the evil in which he indulges. Being branded with the hoarded wealth is thus a fit description of the chastisement of the hoarders.

36a. The allusion here is to the Arab practice of postponing the pilgrimage to a month other than that in which it fell, for which see the next verse. Whether the object was intercalation, in order to make the solar and lunar year tally, or whether a continuous cessation of war for a fourth part of the year was too long, is a disputed point; but such postponement was undoubtedly a great hardship for a majority of the people.

36b. Fighting was prohibited in the sacred months (2:217). Excepting this, the Muslims were told to fight with the idolaters as the idolaters fought with them, i.e. since all idolaters united in fighting with the Muslims, the latter, too, should unite in fighting with them.

37a. According to most of the commentators, *nasi'* means *postponement*, and the reference here is to the practice of postponing observance of the sacred month, thus allowing an ordinary month to be observed as sacred and a sacred month to be treated as ordinary. This practice interfered with the security of life which was guaranteed in the sacred months, and is, therefore, denounced. According to others, *nasi'* means *addition* (of a month), and refers to the practice of the intercalation of a month every fourth year. AH prefers the first, and says that the three successive months of *Dhu-l-Qa'dah*, *Dhu-l-Hijjah* and *Muharram* seemed too long for them to refrain from their depredations and bloodshed, and therefore they violated the last of these, keeping sacred instead the next month.

belief, whereby those who disbelieve are led astray. They allow it one year and forbid it (another) year, that they may agree in the number (of months) which Allāh has made sacred, and thus make lawful what Allāh has forbidden. The evil of their doings is made fair-seeming to them. And Allāh guides not the disbelieving people.

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُحِلُّونَهُ عَامًا وَيُحَرِّمُونَهُ
عَامًا لِيُوَاطِّئُوا عِدَّةَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ فَيُحِلُّوا
مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ أَعْمَالِهِمْ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝

SECTION 6: The Tabūk Expedition

38 O you who believe, what (excuse) have you that when it is said to you, Go forth in Allāh's way, you should incline heavily to earth? Are you contented with this world's life instead of the Hereafter? The provision of this world's life is but little as compared with the Hereafter.^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَا لَكُمْ إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ
انْفِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَنْتَقَلْتُمْ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ
أَرْضَيْتُمْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ
فَمَا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ
إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ۝

39 If you go not forth, He will chastise you with a painful chastisement,^a and bring in your place a people other than you, and you can do Him no harm. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

إِلَّا تَنْفِرُوا يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا
وَيَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ وَلَا تَضُرُّوهُ
شَيْئًا وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

40 If you help him not, Allāh certainly helped him when those who disbelieved expelled him — he being the second of the two; when they

إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِي اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ

38a. The reference here is to the expedition of Tabūk, which was undertaken in the middle of the ninth year of the Hijrah owing to the threatening attitude of the Roman Emperor. There were many hindrances to the raising of an army sufficient to meet the strong forces of the Roman Empire. The chief of these, as enumerated by Rz, are: (1) a great drought; (2) the length of the journey to the confines of Syria; (3) the ripening of the fruits, which were now ready to be gathered; (4) the intensity of the heat; and (5) the organization and power of the Roman army. In spite of all these difficulties 30,000 men gathered round the Prophet's banner.

39a. The reference here and in what follows is to certain men, who, while professing belief, hesitated to accept the Prophet's call to get ready for the expedition.

were both in the cave, when he said to his companion: Grieve not, surely Allāh is with us.^a So Allāh sent down His tranquillity on him and strengthened him with hosts which you saw not, and made lowest the word of those who disbelieved. And the word of Allāh, that is the uppermost. And Allāh is Mighty, Wise.

إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا
فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ
لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
السُّفْلَىٰ وَكَلِمَةَ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ
عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ④

41 Go forth, light and heavy,^a and strive hard in Allāh's way with your wealth and your lives. This is better for you, if you know.

إِنْفِرُوا خِفَافًا وَثِقَالًا وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ
وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ
لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ④

42 Had it been a near gain and a short journey, they would certainly have followed thee, but the hard journey was too long for them.^a And they will swear by Allāh: If we had been able, we would have gone forth with

لَوْ كَانَ عَرَصًا قَرِيبًا وَسَفَرًا قَاصِدًا
لَّاتَّبَعُوكَ وَلَكِنْ بَعَدَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الشُّقَّةُ
وَسَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَوِ اسْتَطَعْنَا لَخَرَجْنَا
مَعَكُمْ يُهْلِكُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ

40a. This refers to the Prophet's flight from Makkah, when he was forced to hide himself in a cave called *Thaur*, about three miles from Makkah, with only one companion, Abū Bakr. The believers are told that Allāh saved the Prophet from the hands of his enemies when he had but one companion amidst a whole nation of enemies, and that Allāh would help him now.

Abū Bakr's devotion to the Holy Prophet was so great that the latter chose him to be his "sole companion", *the second of the two*, in that most critical hour of his life. The following account from Muir will explain the reference: "He himself went straightway to the house of Abū Bakr, and after a short consultation ventured the plan for immediate flight. Abū Bakr shed tears of joy; the hour of emigration had at last arrived, and he was to be the companion of the Prophet's journey ... They crept in the shade of the evening through a back window, and escaped unobserved from the southern suburb. Pursuing their way south, and clambering in the dark up the bare and rugged ascent, they reached at last the lofty peak of Mount Thaur, distant about an hour and a half from the city, and took refuge in a cavern near its summit ... The sole companion, or in Arabic phraseology *the second of the two*, became one of Abū Bakr's most honoured titles ... Muḥammad and his companion felt it no doubt to be a time of jeopardy. Glancing upwards at a crevice through which the morning light began to break, Abū Bakr whispered: 'What if one were to look through the chink and see us underneath his very feet!' 'Think not thus, Abū Bakr!' said the Prophet, 'We are two, but God is in the midst a third.' "

41a. That is, whether it is easy or difficult for you to proceed or whether you are sufficiently armed or not.

42a. Tabūk was midway between Madinah and Damascus. The Arabs were accustomed to fighting near home; hence, the distance was one of the chief considerations which held back those who were insincere.

you. They cause their own souls to perish; and Allāh knows that they are liars.

إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ۝

SECTION 7: The Hypocrites

43 Allāh pardon thee!^{43a} Why didst thou permit them until those who spoke the truth had become manifest to thee and thou hadst known the liars?

عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْكَ لِمَ أَذِنْتَ لَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَّبِعُونَ
لَكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَكَعَلَمَ الْكٰذِبِينَ ۝

44 Those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day ask not leave of thee (to stay away) from striving hard with their wealth and their persons. And Allāh is Knower of those who keep their duty.

لَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ أَن يُجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ
وَاللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم بِالْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

45 They alone ask leave of thee who believe not in Allāh and the Last Day, and their hearts are in doubt, so in their doubt they waver.

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَامْرَأَاتُ فُلُوْهُمُ فَهُمْ
فِي سَرَيبِهِمْ يَتَرَدَّدُونَ ۝

46 And if they had intended to go forth, they would certainly have provided equipment for it; but Allāh did not like their going forth. So He withheld them, and it was said: Hold back with those who hold back.

وَكَوْا أَسْرَادًا وَالنُّجْرُوحَ لَا عُدَّةَ لَهُ عَدَّةٌ
وَلٰكِنْ كَرِهَ اللَّهُ اشْتِعَانَهُمْ فَتَبَطَّهْمُ وَقِيلَ
اقْعُدُوا مَعَ الْفٰعِيَيْنَ ۝

47 Had they gone forth with you, they would have added to you naught but trouble, and would have hurried to and fro among you seeking (to sow) dissension among you. And among you there are those who

كُوْا حَرَجًا فِيْكُمْ مَّا زَادُوْكُمْ اِلَّا حَبَالًا
وَاَوْصَعُوْا خِلَالَكُمْ يَبْعُوْكُمْ الْفِتْنَةَ وَفِيْكُمْ

43a. 'Afa-llāhu 'an-ka (lit., Allāh pardon thee), does not convey the significance of pardon of sins; it is rather the equivalent of Allāh bless thee! or may Allāh set thy affairs aright! In previous battles, too, the hypocrites always stayed away, offering one excuse or another. But the Divine purpose in this last expedition of the Prophet was to bring about a clear distinction, and to clean the Muslim society of the hypocritical element thoroughly. Such a distinction was really brought about later on as vv. 83, 84 point out, the Prophet being told there that all spiritual relations with the hypocrites were to be cut off.

would listen to them. And Allāh well knows the wrongdoers.^a

48 Certainly they sought (to sow) dissension before, and they devised plots against thee till the Truth came, and Allāh's command prevailed, though they did not like (it).

49 And among them is he who says: Excuse me and try me not. Surely into trial have they already fallen, and truly hell encompasses the disbelievers.

50 If good befalls thee, it grieves them; and if hardship afflicts thee, they say: Indeed we had taken care of our affair before. And they turn away rejoicing.

51 Say: Nothing will afflict us save that which Allāh has ordained for us. He is our Patron; and on Allāh let the believers rely.

52 Say: Do you await for us but one of two most excellent things? And we await for you that Allāh will afflict you with chastisement from Himself or by our hands. So wait; we too are waiting with you.^a

53 Say: Spend willingly or unwillingly, it will not be accepted from

سَمِعُونَ لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

لَقَدْ ابْتَغَوْا الْفِتْنَةَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَقَدَّبُوا لَكَ
الْأُمُورَ حَتَّى جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَظَهَرَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ
وَهُمْ كَارِهُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَقُولُ ائْذَنْ لِي وَلَا تَفْتِنِّي
أَلَا فِي الْفِتْنَةِ سَقَطُوا وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ
لَمُجِيطَةٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

إِنْ تُصِيبَكَ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُصِيبَكَ
مُصِيبَةٌ يَقُولُوا قَدْ أَخَذْنَا أَمْرَنَا مِنْ
قَبْلُ وَبِتَوَكُّؤِنَا هُمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ
مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

قُلْ هَلْ نَرْتَضُونَ بِنَا إِلَّا إِحْدَى
الْحُسْنَيْنَيْنِ وَنَحْنُ نَرْتَضِي بِكُمْ
أَنْ يُصِيبَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا
أَوْ بِأَيْدِينَا فَتَرْتَضُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُتَرَضُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

قُلْ أَنْفَعُوا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا لَنْ يُتَقَبَلَ

47a. These verses were revealed during the journey to Tabūk, where most of the hypocrites themselves were not present. But a few had accompanied the expedition to inform others of their party of the happenings on the way.

52a. The two most excellent things are, the laying down of life in the cause of Truth, or being sharer in the ultimate triumph of Truth. The Muslims never thought that they could be defeated. They would either die defending the cause of Truth or live and conquer.

The only punishment that the hypocrites received from the hands of the Muslims was that they were named and asked to leave the mosque (IJ). Otherwise their liberty was not interfered with. There is mention of one of them living in Madinah to the time of 'Uthmān, the third Caliph, in full enjoyment of his rights as a citizen; the only distinctive treatment mentioned of him is that the poor-rate was not accepted from him by the Holy Prophet, or by his three immediate successors. See also the next verse.

you. Surely you are a transgressing people.

54 And nothing hinders their contributions being accepted from them, except that they disbelieve in Allāh and in His Messenger and they come not to prayer except as lazy people, and they spend not but while they are reluctant.

55 Let not then their wealth nor their children excite thine admiration. Allāh only wishes to chastise them therewith in this world's life and (that) their souls may depart while they are disbelievers.^a

56 And they swear by Allāh that they are truly of you. And they are not of you, but they are a people who are afraid.

57 If they could find a refuge or caves or a place to enter, they would certainly have turned thereto, running away in all haste.

58 And of them are those who blame thee in the matter of the alms. So if they are given thereof, they are pleased, and if they are not given thereof, lo! they are enraged.

59 And if they were content with that which Allāh and His Messenger gave them, and had said: Allāh is sufficient for us; Allāh will soon give us (more) out of His grace and His

مِنْكُمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ أَنْ تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ نَفَقَاتُهُمْ
إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَكَأَنَّهُمْ
يَأْتُونَ الصَّلَاةَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالَىٰ وَكَأَنَّهُمْ
يُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا وَهُمْ كَارِهِونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ
إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا وَتَرْهَقَ أَنفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

وَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُمْ لَمِنكُمْ وَمَا هُمْ
مِنْكُمْ وَلَكِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَفْرَقُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

لَوْ يَجِدُونَ مَلْجَأً أَوْ مَعْرَاجًا أَوْ مَدْخَلًا
لَوَلَّوْا إِلَيْهِ وَهُمْ يَجْمَحُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَلْمِزُكَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ فَإِنْ
أَعْطُوا مِنْهَا رَضُوا وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطَوْا مِنْهَا
إِذَا هُمْ يَسْخَطُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا مَا آلَتْهُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ
وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

55a. The hypocrites experienced earthly torture about their property and children for two reasons: (1) because, avowing their belief in Islām, they had to take some share in its defensive expeditions and thus spend part of their property, unwillingly though it was, in the cause of Islām; (2) the children of many of them were true believers, and they knew that after their death their property and their children were to become a source of strength to the very religion which they tried to extirpate.

Messenger too: surely to Allāh we make petition.

وَرَسُولُهُ إِنَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَاغِبُونَ ﴿٥﴾

SECTION 8: The Hypocrites

60 (Zakāt) charity is only for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer it, and those whose hearts are made to incline (to truth), and (to free) the captives, and those in debt, and in the way of Allāh and for the wayfarer — an ordinance from Allāh. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.^a

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ
وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغُرَمِيِّنَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ قَرِيبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥﴾

61 And of them are those who molest the Prophet and say, He is (all) ear.^a Say: A hearer of good for you

وَمِنْهُمْ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ النَّبِيَّ وَيَقُولُونَ
هُوَ آذُنٌ قُلْ أَذُنٌ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ

60a. That by *sadaqāt* in the opening of the verse is meant the *obligatory charity*, called *zakāt*, and not voluntary alms, is shown by the concluding words of the verse, which call it *an ordinance* from Allāh. The verse defines the objects for which the poor-rate may be spent. Altogether eight heads of expenditure are recognized. There are the poor, or those in straitened circumstances; then there are the needy, by which are meant people who need some help to enable them to earn their living. Poor students and craftsmen or business men without sufficient means are included in this category. Thirdly, there are the collectors of *zakāt* and other people employed to administer the funds. This shows that the institution was meant for raising a public fund, whose management should entirely be in the hands of a public body. The Qur'an does not recognize it as a private charity. It is sad to note that, as the Qur'an would have it, the institution of *zakāt* is entirely neglected by the Muslims. In the fourth class are people whose hearts are made to incline to Truth. With respect to the preaching of a religion there is always a class which is ready to listen but the carrying of the message of Truth to them needs funds. There are also people who may need help, if they accept the Truth. Expenses in this connection are recognized here as a part of the necessary expenditure of poor-rate. The fifth head relates to the freeing of the prisoners of war. Islām thus laid down a permanent basis for the abolition of slavery. The sixth class is that of debtors — people who incur debts for right purposes. Islām requires all the members of the society to live in a free atmosphere, and those burdened with debt must therefore be freed of their burdens. Squanderers of wealth are, however, not included in this category. The seventh head is in general words, *fi sabil Allāh*, or in the way of Allāh. Some limit the significance of these words to warriors (fighting in defence of faith and the community), or those who are engaged in propagating Islamic truths, while others think that the words are general and include every charitable purpose. The eighth head is that of wayfarers, people who are stranded in a country, to whatever religion or nation they may belong.

61a. The word *udhun*, lit., *an ear*, is applied to *one who hears and believes everything that is said to him*, "as though by reason of the excess of his listening he were altogether the organ of hearing, like as a spy is termed 'ain" (lit., *eye*) (LL). The hypocrites

— he believes in Allāh and believes the faithful, and is a mercy for those of you who believe. And those who molest the Messenger of Allāh, for them is a painful chastisement.

62 They swear by Allāh to you to please you; and Allāh — as well as His Messenger — has a greater right that they should please Him, if they are believers.^a

63 Know they not that whoever opposes Allāh and His Messenger, for him is the Fire of hell to abide in it? That is the grievous abasement.

64 The hypocrites fear lest a chapter should be sent down concerning them, telling them plainly of what is in their hearts. Say: Go on mocking, surely Allāh will bring to light what you fear.

65 And if thou ask them, they would certainly say: We were only talking idly and sporting. Say: Was it Allāh and His messages and His Messenger that you mocked?

66 Make no excuse, you disbelieved after your believing. If We pardon a party of you, We shall chastise a party, because they are guilty.^a

بِاللَّهِ وَيُؤْمِنُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَرَحْمَةً لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ رَسُولَ
اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

يَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَكُمْ لِيَرْضَوْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ وَ
رَسُولُهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُرْضَوْا إِنْ كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ مَنْ يُحَادِدِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
فَأَنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا ذَلِكَ
الْخِزْيُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٤﴾

يَحَدَّرُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ أَنْ تَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُورَةٌ
تُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ قُلْ اسْتَهْزِئُوا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُخْرِجٌ مَا تَحَدَّرُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

وَلَيْنُ سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ
وَنُلْعَبُ قُلْ يَا لِلَّهِ وَإِيَّاهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

لَا تَعْتَنِ رُؤُوفًا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ
إِنْ نَعْتُ عَنْ طَائِفَةٍ مِنْكُمْ نَعْدَابٌ
طَائِفَةٌ يَا لَهُمْ كَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

made various derogatory remarks concerning the Prophet, saying among other things, that he was a man who believed everything that he heard, and they were therefore sure that they would make him believe their hypocritical professions. Rodwell is wrong when he says in his note on this word that *udhun* means *injure*. Palmer has also made a mistake here. The error is due to the confusion of the word with *adh-an*, which is quite a different word, being from the root *adhā*.

62a. Though Allāh and His Messenger are both mentioned together, the duty of the faithful is here said to be to please *Him*, i.e. Allāh alone.

66a. History shows that most of the hypocrites ultimately repented and sincerely joined the ranks of the faithful.