



CHAPTER 34

Al-Saba': **The Saba'**

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 6 sections; 54 verses)

The title of this chapter is taken from that of a city of the same name, i.e. *Saba'*, which was situated in Yaman and was destroyed by a flood. The warning given in this chapter applies to all nations that are made great and prosperous but fall into luxurious habits. Ease engenders evil, which brings decay and ruin. Hence it was a warning to the Quraish, no doubt, but it is equally a warning to all nations who are made masters of the earth but fall into the ways of ease and luxury and suffer the consequences.

The first section asserts the truth of the judgment, a judgment the truth of which is not witnessed only in the life after death, but is clearly seen working in this very life. This judgment overtakes individuals as well as nations, and two instances are cited in the second section of how prosperous nations are swept out of existence when they fall into evil ways. Judgment will therefore overtake the Quraish; and their false deities, we are told in the third section, will not avail them in the least. An encounter will be brought about between the two parties, resulting in a victory for the Muslims. The fourth section describes the plight of the leaders of evil, the leaders and the followers blaming each other. The fifth states that their very deities will then be unable to help them, and that they will be punished, as deniers of Truth have always been punished. The last section asserts that Truth will prosper and falsehood vanish before it.

With this chapter is introduced another group of six Makkan chapters, which in all probability belong to the middle Makkan period. This, the first chapter of this group, begins with *al-hamdu li-llāh, praise be to Allāh!* while the last chapter of this group, the 39th, ends with exactly the same words, and thus Allāh is praised for bringing about the triumph of Truth, which is the subject-matter of these chapters.

SECTION 1: Judgment is certain

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

1 Praise be to Allāh! Whose is whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, and to Him be praise in the Hereafter! And He is the Wise, the Aware.

2 He knows that which goes down into the earth and that which comes out of it, and that which comes down from heaven and that which goes up to it. And He is the Merciful, the Forgiving.

3 And those who disbelieve say: The Hour will never come to us. Say: Yea, by my Lord, the Knower of the unseen! it will certainly come to you. Not an atom's weight escapes Him in the heavens or in the earth, nor is there less than that nor greater, but (all) is in a clear book,^a

4 That He may reward those who believe and do good. For them is forgiveness and an honourable sustenance.

5 And those who strive hard in opposing Our Messages, for them is a painful chastisement of an evil kind.

6 And those who have been given knowledge see that what is revealed to thee from thy Lord, is the Truth and it guides into the path of the Mighty, the Praised.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ الْخَصْدُ فِي الْأَخْيَرِ
وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ①

يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلْبِغُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ
مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ
فِيهَا وَهُوَ الرَّحِيمُ الْغَفُورُ ②

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَأْتِينَا السَّاعَةُ
قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَتَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ
لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا أَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ
وَلَا أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ③

لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ④

وَالَّذِينَ سَعَوْا فِي آيَاتِنَا مُعْجِزِينَ
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِّنْ رَّجْزٍ أَلِيمٌ ⑤

وَيَرَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ
إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَيَهْدِي
إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ⑥

3a. The verse states the immutable law that every deed is followed by a consequence, and nothing should be looked upon as too small to produce an effect. The two verses that follow are an illustration of this law; good meets with a good reward and evil with an evil punishment. It should be noted that the Qur'ān here speaks of an *atom* and also of something less than an atom. As *less than an atom* could only be a part of an atom, evidently the suggestion here is that an atom could be broken into pieces.

7 And those who disbelieve say: Shall we show to you a man who informs you that, when you are scattered the utmost scattering, you will then be in a new creation?

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَلْ نَدُلُّكُمْ
عَلَى رَجُلٍ يُنذِرُكُمْ إِذَا مُرِّقْتُمْ كَلًّا
مُسَدِّقٍ إِنَّكُمْ لَفِي حَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ۝

8 Has he forged a lie against Allāh or is there madness in him? Nay, those who believe not in the Hereafter are in torment and in far error.

أَفْتَدَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَمْ بِهِ حِجَّةٌ
بَلِ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ
فِي الْعَذَابِ وَالضَّلَالِ الْبَعِيدِ ۝

9 See they not what is before them and what is behind them of the heaven and the earth? If We please, We can make them low in the land or bring down upon them a portion of heaven. Surely there is a sign in this for every servant turning (to Allāh).^a

أَفَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا
خَلْفَهُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّ
نَسْأًا نَخْسِفُ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ أَوْ نَسُفُّظُ
عَلَيْهِمْ كِسْفًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ
لَآيَةً لِّكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُنِيبٍ ۝

SECTION 2: Favours followed by Retribution

10 And certainly We gave David abundance from Us: O mountains, repeat praises with him,^a and the birds, and We made the iron pliant to him,^b

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ مِنَّا مَقْضًى لِيُجَاهِلَ
أَوْرَثِي مَعَهُ وَالطَّيْرِ وَآلِ الْبَابِ
الْحَدِيدَ ۝

11 Saying: Make ample (coats of

إِنْ أَعْمَلْ سَبِغَتْ وَقَدِّرْ فِي السَّرْدِ

9a. This is the ever-recurring argument of the Holy Qur'ān. The disbelievers deny the last Resurrection, the life after death, the sublime principle of the accountability of human actions, which forms the only basis of high morals, and they are told that, as a proof of the truth of the Resurrection, they will be brought low in this very life for standing in the way of the advancement of Truth. It is compared with the coming of a portion from heaven because they would not be able to avert it.

10a. *Awwaba* literally signifies *he returned* (LL), and applied to a company of men, *it journeyed by day* (LL), and metonymically *āba* or *awwaba* signifies *he returned from disobedience to obedience* or *repeated the praises of God*. By the mountains repeating the praises of Allāh, some understand the praising of Allāh in the sense in which all inanimate objects are spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān as glorifying God, while others think that the mountains' echoing David's loud praises is meant. But the mention of birds, the attendants of a victorious army (see 16:79a), and iron along with it shows that the reference is to the conquests of David; and the singing of praises by the mountains therefore carries the significance of those residing on mountains yielding to David. Or the *jibāl* (mountains) may here signify *mighty men* (see 20:105a), who are thus commanded to march along with him to conquer the enemy.

10b. The making of the iron pliant to him signifies the extensive use of iron by him in his battles, and so do the coats of mail in the next verse.

mail), and assign a time to the making of coats of mail and do ye good. Surely I am Seer of what you do.^a

12 And (We made) the wind (subservient) to Solomon; it made a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening;^a and We made a fountain of molten brass to flow for him.^b And of the jinn there were those who worked before him by the command of his Lord. And whoever turned aside from Our command from among them, We made him taste of the chastisement of burning.^c

13 They made for him what he pleased, of synagogues and images,

وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١٠﴾

وَلَسَلِيلِنَ الرِّيحِ عُدُّهَا شَهْرٌ وَرَوَاحُهَا شَهْرٌ ۗ وَأَسَلْنَا لَهُ عَيْنَ الْقِطْرِ ۗ وَمِنَ الْجِنِّ مَن يَعْمَلُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِ ۗ وَمَن يَرِغْ مِنْهُمُ ۖ عَن أَمْرِنَا نَذَرُهُ مِنَّ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿١١﴾

يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ مِنْ مَّحَارِبٍ وَتَمَاثِيلٍ وَجِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ

11a. The subject of the previous verse is continued. David is enjoined to prepare himself and his army for severe battles, hence the necessity of coats of mail to save life. Some think that the commandment signifies that David should not take anything from the treasury for his own livelihood, and that he should earn his livelihood by an industry, such as the making of coats of mail (Kf). *Sābighāt* is the plural of *sābighah*, which is an adjective meaning *ample* or *vast*, and is here considered as standing for the noun which it qualifies, for you say *dir'-un sābighat-un* meaning *an ample coat of mail*. But you also say *ni'mat-un sābighat-un*, i.e., a complete benefit (LL), and the order given here may imply the doing of perfect deeds. *Sard* means *coats of mail* or *their rings* (LL), and *qad-dara* signifies *he made it according to a measure* or *proportioned it*, and also *he assigned a particular time for it* (LL). Rz favours the latter interpretation, i.e., David is commanded not to employ his whole time in such occupations, for the real object is to do good.

12a. See 21:81a. The significance is that Solomon's ships were made to traverse a month's journey in a day by favourable winds. For Solomon's navy, see 1 Kings 9:26. But it should be noted that *riḥ* (wind) means also *power* or *dominance* or *conquest* (LL), and therefore the meaning may be that Solomon's kingdom was so large that it was a month's journey to the East and a month's journey to the West.

12b. "Also he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim" (2 Chron. 4:2).

12c. These jinn were no other than the strangers whom Solomon subjected to his rule and forced into service. See 2 Chron. 2:2–18: "And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountain". Note that the jinn of this verse are the *shayāṭīn* of 38:37 — "(We subjected to Solomon) the devils, every builder and diver" — where the *shayāṭīn* or devils are explained by the Qur'an itself to be no others than the builders and divers whom Solomon had forced into labour. In the first volume, Tabrezi in his commentary on *Ḥimāsah* remarks: "Abū 'Ulā says the Arabs speak of the jinn frequently, likening a man who is clever in executing affairs to the jinnī and the *shaiṭān* or devil, and hence they say *his jinn is gone*, when they mean that he became weak and abased". This explanation, along with that which the Qur'an itself affords, settles the question of the jinn and the devils employed by Solomon.

and bowls (large) as watering-troughs and fixed cooking-pots.^a Give thanks, O people of David! And very few of My servants are grateful.

14 But when We decreed death for him, naught showed them his death but a creature of the earth that ate away his staff. So when it fell down, the jinn saw clearly that, if they had known the unseen, they would not have tarried in humiliating torment.^a

15 Certainly there was a sign for Saba' in their abode — two gardens on the right and the left. Eat of the sustenance of your Lord and give thanks to Him. A good land and a Forgiving Lord!

16 But they turned aside, so We sent upon them a violent torrent, and in place of their two gardens We gave them two gardens yielding bitter fruit and (growing) tamarisk and a few lote-trees.^a

17 With this We requited them because they were ungrateful; and We punish none but the ingrate.

رُسِيَتْ طِإْعَمُوْا اِلَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا ط
 وَكَلِيْلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِي الشُّكُوْرُ ﴿١٤﴾
 فَلَمَّا قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ
 عَلَىٰ مَوْتِهِ اِلَّا دَابَّةٌ اَلْاَرْضِ تَاْكُلُ
 مِنْ سَاكِتِهِ ؕ فَلَمَّا خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ الْجِنُّ اَنْ
 لَّوْكَ اَتَوْا يَعْلَمُوْنَ الْعَيْبَ مَا لِيْتُوْا
 فِي الْعَذَابِ الْمُهِيْنِ ﴿١٥﴾
 لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِي مَسْكِهُمْ اٰيَةٌ
 جَنَّتٍ عَنْ يَمِيْنٍ وَ اَسْمَالٍ ؕ
 كُلُوْا مِنْ رِّزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَ اشْكُرُوْا لَهٗ
 بَلَدًا طَيِّبَةً ؕ وَ رَبُّكُمْ غَفُوْرٌ ﴿١٦﴾
 فَاعْرَضُوْا فَاَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ
 الْعُوْمِ وَ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ بِجَنَّتَيْهِمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ
 ذَوَاتِيْ اَكْمَلِ خَمْطٍ وَ اَنْشَلٍ وَ نَشِيْءٍ
 مِّنْ سِدْرٍ قَلِيْلٍ ﴿١٧﴾
 ذٰلِكَ جَزَآئُهُمْ بِمَا كَفَرُوْا وَ هَلْ
 يُجْزَى اِلَّا الْكَفُوْرُ ﴿١٨﴾

13a. For the graving of cherubims on the walls, see 2 Chron. 3:7; for the casting of oxen, 2 Chron. 4:3; for the making of lavers, pots, basins, etc., 2 Chron. 4:11, 14.

14a. The reference in *the creature of the earth that ate away his staff* is to his son's weak rule, under whom the kingdom of Solomon went to pieces. It appears that Solomon's successor, Rehoboam, led a life of luxury and ease, and instead of acting on the advice of the older men, he yielded to the pleasure-seeking wishes of his companions (1 Kings 12:13), and it is to his luxurious habits and easy mode of life that the Holy Qur'an refers when it calls him *a creature of the earth*. The eating away of his staff signifies the disruption of the kingdom. The jinn, as already remarked, mean the rebellious tribes who had been reduced to subjection by Solomon, and who remained in subjection to the Israelites for a time, until the kingdom was shattered. This instance, as well as the one following, contains a warning for the Muslims as to the result of falling into luxury and ease, by which, however, they benefited little; the ultimate fate of the respective kingdoms of the Umayyads and Abbasides was the same as that of Solomon's kingdom. See also 38:34a.

16a. Saba' was "a city of Yaman, also called *Ma'ārab*; it was about three days' journey from Ṣan'ā. The bursting of the dyke of Ma'ārab and the destruction of the city by a flood are historical facts, and happened in about the first or second century of our era" (Palmer).

It is usual to speak of two gardens, for large cultivated areas were bounded by a garden on each side.

18 And We made between them and the towns which We had blessed, (other) towns easy to be seen,^a and We apportioned the journey therein: Travel through them nights and days, secure.

19 But they said: Our Lord, make longer stages between our journeys.^a And they wronged themselves; so We made them stories and scattered them a total scattering. Surely there are signs in this for every patient, grateful one.

20 And the devil indeed found true his conjecture concerning them, so they follow him, except a party of the believers.

21 And he has no authority over them, but that We may know him who believes in the Hereafter from him who is in doubt concerning it. And thy Lord is the Preserver of all things.

وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ الْقُرَى الَّتِي بَرَكْنَا فِيهَا قُرَى ظَاهِرَةً وَ قَدَرْنَا فِيهَا السَّيْرَ سَيْرًا وَيُفِيهَا لَيْالٍ وَ أَيَّامًا آمِنِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا بَعِدْ بَيْنَ أَسْفَارِنَا وَظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ وَ مَرَقَاتٍ لِّ كُلِّ مَسْرُوقٍ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿١٩﴾

وَ لَقَدْ صَدَّقَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِبْلِيسُ ظَنَّهُ فَاتَّبَعُوهُ إِلَّا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾
وَ مَا كَانَ لَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّن سُلْطٰنٍ إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَن يُّؤْمِنُ بِالْآخِرَةِ مِمَّنْ هُوَ مِنهَا فِي شَكٍّ وَ رَبُّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَفِيظٌ ﴿٢١﴾

SECTION 3: A Victory for the Muslims

22 Say: Call upon those whom you assert besides Allāh; they control not the weight of an atom in the heavens or in the earth, nor have they any partnership in either, nor has He a helper among them.^a

قُلْ ادْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ لَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَ مَا لَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن شَرِكٍ وَ مَا لَهُ مِنْهُمْ مِّن ظَهِيرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

18a. The cities were so close to each other that one could be seen from the other, or they were conspicuous from the road. It is an indication of the great prosperity of the country. The blessed towns are the towns of Syria, with which they carried on trade.

19a. It is not necessary that they should have thus prayed in words. It is a description of their actual condition, i.e., they were not grateful for the blessings and fell into evil ways, which resulted in punishment overtaking them.

Speaking of the trade of Yaman with Syria, Muir says: "The commerce assumed great dimensions and enriched the nation ... and, which is remarkable, the number of stages from Haḍramaut to Ayla, given ... as seventy, exactly corresponds with the number at the present day". The reference in the previous verse to the appointment of the journey might be to these stages.

22a. It refers to the helplessness of the supposed gods to assist their votaries when distress overtakes them.

23 And intercession avails naught with Him, save of him whom He permits. Until when fear is removed from their hearts, they say: What is it that your Lord said? They say: The Truth. And He is the Most High, the Great.

وَلَا تَنْفَعُ الشَّفَاعَةُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا لِمَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فُزِعَ عَنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَاذًا مَا إِذَا قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ طَبَّأُوا الْحَقَّ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٣٣﴾

24 Say: Who gives you sustenance from the heavens and the earth? Say: Allāh. And surely we or you are on a right way or in manifest error.^a

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ قُلْ اللّٰهُ ۗ وَرَبُّنَا اَوْ اِيَّاكُمْ نَعْلَىٰ هٰدَىٰ اَوْ فِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

25 Say: You will not be asked of what we are guilty, nor shall we be asked of what you do.

قُلْ لَا تُسْأَلُوْنَ عَمَّا اٰجْرَمْنَا وَلَا نُسْأَلُ عَمَّا نَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾

26 Say: Our Lord will gather us together, then He will judge between us with truth. And He is the Best Judge, the Knower.^a

قُلْ يٰۤجَمْعُ بَيْنَنَا رَبُّنَا ثُمَّ يَفْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَهُوَ الْفَتّٰحُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٣٦﴾

27 Say: Show me those whom you join with Him as associates. By no means (can you)! Nay, He is Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise.

قُلْ اَرُوْنِي الَّذِيْنَ اَلْحَقْتُمْ بِهٖ شُرَكَاءَ كَلَّا ۗ بَلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿٣٧﴾

28 And We have not sent thee but as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind, but most men know not.^a

وَمَا اَرْسَلْنَاكَ اِلَّا كَافَّةً ۗ لِلنّٰسِ بَشِيْرًا وَّاُنْذِيْرًا ۗ وَلٰكِنْ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٨﴾

29 And they say: When will this promise be (fulfilled), if you are truthful?

وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ مَتٰى هٰذَا الْوَعْدُ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٣٩﴾

24a. The meaning is that as surely as you are in manifest error, so surely are we on a right way.

26a. This is a prophecy which was fulfilled in the first decisive battle which clearly decided the issue between the Muslims and their opponents. The question in v. 29 further on — when will this promise be fulfilled? — makes it quite clear.

28a. The Prophet is repeatedly spoken of as having been sent as a messenger to all people, in the earliest as well as the later revelations. He is called "A warner to the nations (25:1), "A mercy to the nations" (21:107), and so on. In one place, his being sent to men is qualified by the word *jamī'an* (7:158), which means *all*. Here it is qualified by the word *kāffah*, which means *all without an exception*. This word is derived from *kaff*, which means *preventing* or *withholding*, the implication being that it includes *all and does not prevent* or *withhold* anyone, or *all without an exception*.

30 Say: You have the appointment of a day^a which you cannot postpone by an hour, nor hasten on.

قُلْ لَكُمْ مِيعَادُ يَوْمٍ لَا تَسْتَأْخِرُونَ
عَنْهُ سَاعَةً وَلَا تَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ۝

SECTION 4: The Leaders of Evil

31 And those who disbelieve say: We believe not in this Qur'ān, nor in that which is before it.^a And if thou couldst see when the wrongdoers are made to stand before their Lord, throwing back the blame one to another! Those who were reckoned weak say to those who were proud: Had it not been for you, we would have been believers.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ بِهَذَا
الْقُرْآنِ وَلَا بِالَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ۗ
وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ مَوْتُوا فَوْنَ عِنْدَ
رَبِّهِمْ ۖ يَرْجِعُ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ الْقَوْلَ
يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَضْعَفُوا لِلَّذِينَ
اسْتَكْبَرُوا لَوْلَا أَنْتُمْ لَكُنَّا مُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

32 Those who were proud say to those who were deemed weak: Did we turn you away from the guidance after it had come to you? Nay, you (yourselves) were guilty.

قَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَضْعَفُوا
أَنَحْنُ صَدَدْنَا عَنْ الْهُدَىٰ بَعْدَ إِذْ
جَاءَكُمْ بَلْ كُنْتُمْ مُجْرِمِينَ ۝

33 And those who were deemed weak say to those who were proud: Nay, (it was your) planning by night and day when you told us to disbelieve in Allāh and to set up likes with Him. And they will manifest regret when they see the chastisement. And We put shackles on the necks of those who disbelieve. They will not be requited but for what they did.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَضْعَفُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا
بَلْ مَكْرُؤًا بَيْلًا وَ النَّهَارِ إِذْ تَأْمُرُونَنَا أَنْ
تَكْفُرَ بِاللَّهِ وَ تَجْعَلَ لَهُ أَندَادًا ۗ وَسَأَوْا
الْعَذَابَ لَمَّا رَأَوْا الْعَذَابَ ۗ وَ جَعَلْنَا
الْأَغْلَالَ فِي أَعْنَاقِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۗ هَلْ
يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

34 And We never sent a warner to a town but those who led easy lives in it said: We are disbelievers in that with which you are sent.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّذِيرٍ
إِلَّا قَالَ مُنْذِرُونَا إِنَّا نُمِرْنَا
بِهِ كَفْرًا ۗ ۝

30a. The first encounter between the Muslims and their enemies took place in the battle of Badr, after the first year of the Flight had passed away. Elsewhere the same question is answered by the words: "Maybe somewhat of that which you seek to hasten has drawn nigh to you" (27:72).

31a. They reject not only the Qur'ān but also previous revelation, because it contains prophecies about the appearance of the Holy Prophet.

35 And they say: We have more wealth and children, and we cannot be punished.

36 Say: Surely my Lord amplifies and straitens provision for whom He pleases, but most men know not.^a

وَقَالُوا نَحْنُ أَكْثَرُ أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَادًا
وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾
قُلْ إِنَّ سَرِيَّيَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن
يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ
لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

SECTION 5: Wealth does not stand for Greatness

37 And it is not your wealth, nor your children, that bring you near to Us in rank; but whoever believes and does good, for such is a double reward for what they do, and they are secure in the highest places.^a

38 And those who strive in opposing Our messages, they will be brought to the chastisement.

39 Say: Surely my Lord amplifies provision for whom He pleases of His servants and straitens (it) for him. And whatsoever you spend, He increases it in reward,^a and He is the Best of Providers.

40 And on the day when He will gather them all together, then will He say to the angels: Did these worship you?

41 They will say: Glory be to Thee! Thou art our Protecting Friend, not they; nay, they worshipped the jinn; most of them were believers in them.^a

وَمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ بِالَّتِي
تُقَرَّبُ بِكُمْ عِنْدَنَا ذُلْفَى إِلَّا مَن
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّ لَكَ لَهُمْ جَزَاءً
الضَّعِيفِ بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَهُمْ فِي الْعَرْشَاتِ
أَمْنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾
وَالَّذِينَ يَسْعَوْنَ فِي آيَاتِنَا مُعْجِزِينَ
أُولَئِكَ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾
قُلْ إِنَّ سَرِيَّيَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن
يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ لَهُ وَمَا
أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ وَهُوَ
خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾
وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ يَقُولُ
لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ أَهَؤُلَاءِ أَيْتَكُمْ كَانُوا
يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾
قَالُوا سُبْحٰنَكَ أَنْتَ وَلَيْتْنَا مِنْ
دُونِهِمْ بَلْ كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ الْجِنَّ
كَانَتْ لَهُمْ مِنْهُمْ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

36a. This expression is always used to signify that Allāh will give ample means of subsistence to the weaker party and strengthen them against the wealthy transgressors.

37a. Not only in the highest places in paradise, but also in the highest places in this life — a truth which finds abundant illustration in the lives of the early Muslims.

39a. *Akhlafa* is used in the sense of *exceeding* or *surpassing so as to leave another thing behind* (from *khalf*, meaning *behind*) (LL). Hence *yukhlifu-hū* here signifies that Allāh gives him such a great reward as to leave behind what he had spent in His way.

41a, see next page.

42 So on that day you will not control profit nor harm for one another. And We will say to those who were iniquitous: Taste the chastisement of the Fire, which you called a lie.

43 And when Our clear messages are recited to them, they say: This is naught but a man who desires to turn you away from that which your fathers worshipped. And they say: This is naught but a forged lie! And those who disbelieve say of the Truth when it comes to them: This is only clear enchantment!

44 And We have not given them any Books which they read, nor did We send to them before thee a warner.^a

45 And those before them rejected (the truth), and these have not yet attained a tenth of that which We gave them,^a but they gave the lie to My messengers. How (terrible) was then My disapproval!

قَالِيَوْمَ لَا يَمْلِكُ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ نَفْعًا
وَلَا ضَرْحًا وَنَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا
ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ النَّارِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ بِهَا
تُكذِّبُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَُوا
مَا هَذَا إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَصُدَّكُمْ
عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْبُدُ آبَاءَكُمْ وَقَالُوا مَا
هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ مُّفْتَرًى وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ إِنَّ هَذَا
إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

وَمَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ يَدْرُسُونَهَا
وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ قَبْلَكَ مِنْ نَذِيرٍ ﴿٦٩﴾

وَكَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ لَوْ مَا
بَكَغُوا وَمَعْشَارٌ مِمَّا آتَيْنَاهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوا
رُسُلِي فَكَيْفَ كَانَ تَكْذِيرِي ﴿٧٠﴾

SECTION 6: Truth will prosper

46 Say: I exhort you only to one thing, that you rise up for Allāh's sake by twos and singly; then ponder! There is no madness in your companion. He is only a warner to you before a severe chastisement.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَعِظُكُمْ بِوَاحِدَةٍ أَنْ تَقُومُوا
لِلَّهِ مَثْنَىٰ وَفُرَادَىٰ ثُمَّ تَتَفَكَّرُوا مَا
بِصَاحِبِكُمْ مِنْ جِنَّةٍ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ
لَكُمْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ ﴿٧١﴾

41a. Compare this with the last section, and it will be clear that the very persons mentioned there as the proud ones are spoken of here as the jinn.

44a. That is, no Book was ever given nor any warner ever raised that taught polytheism; or the meaning may be that, whereas warners appeared all about Arabia, Makkah had not yet seen one.

45a. That is, in power or in material prosperity the Quraish could not stand comparison with many of the early nations.

47 Say: Whatever reward I ask of you, that is only for yourselves. My reward is only with Allāh, and He is a Witness over all things.

قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُمْ مِنْ أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ
إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٥٧﴾

48 Say: Surely my Lord casts the Truth, the great Knower of the unseen.

قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَفْضِلُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلامًا
الْغُيُوبِ ﴿٥٨﴾

49 Say: The Truth has come, and falsehood neither originates, nor reproduces.^a

قُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَما يُبَدِّلُ الْبَاطِلُ
وَما يُوعِدُ ﴿٥٩﴾

50 Say: If I err, I err only to my own loss; and if I go aright, it is because of what my Lord reveals to me. Surely He is Hearing, Nigh.

قُلْ إِنْ صَلَّيْتُ فَأَتَمَّ أَضَلُّ عَلَى نَفْسِي
وَلَنْ أَهْتَدَيْتُ فِيمَا يُرْوَى إِلَيَّ مِنْ رَبِّي
إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ قَرِيبٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

51 And couldst thou see when they become terrified, but (then) there will be no escape and they will be seized from a near place,^a

وَكُلُّوا تَرَوْنَ إِذْ فَرَعُوا فَلَا قُوَّةَ
مِنْ مَكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ ﴿٦١﴾

52 And they will say: We believe in it. And how can they attain (to faith) from a distant place?^a

وَقالُوا آمَنَّا بِهِ وَأَنَّى لَهُمُ التَّنَاقُوشُ
مِنْ مَكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٦٢﴾

53 And they indeed disbelieved in it before, and they utter conjectures with regard to the unseen from a distant place.^a

وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا بِهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَيَقْذِفُونَ
بِالْغَيْبِ مِنْ مَكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٦٣﴾

54 And a barrier is placed between them and that which they desire,^a as was done with their partisans before. Surely they are in a disquieting doubt.

وَحِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ ما يَشْتَهُونَ
كَمَا فُعِلَ بِأَشْيَاءِهِمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ
إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا فِي شَكٍّ مُرِيبٍ ﴿٦٤﴾

49a. The Truth may stand for Unity and falsehood for polytheism, the significance being that idol-worship will never again find access to Makkah. Compare 17:81: "Say: The Truth has come and falsehood vanished. Surely falsehood is ever bound to vanish".

51a. In this world, they were seized upon at Badr and again at Makkah.

52a. For death shall then have removed them into the other world.

53a. Their conjectures that the Prophet will not be successful have no value, as they have no access to the unseen.

54a. Indeed, no punishment is greater than failure to attain that which a man desires most eagerly. This is the hell of this life.