



## CHAPTER 55

### *Al-Rahmān: The Beneficent*

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 3 sections; 78 verses)

This chapter takes its title from the name of the Divine Being, *The Beneficent*, with which it begins, and the entire chapter speaks of the beneficence of Allāh, both in the material and spiritual realms, repeating the words: *Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?*

It opens with the statement that the revelation of the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet is an act of Divine beneficence, and then proceeds to speak of the means which Allāh has created for the physical sustenance of man, showing that He Who made such elaborate arrangements for the material welfare of man could not have neglected his spiritual care. The second speaks of the judgment which must overtake the guilty because they persist in rejecting the spiritual benefits which a Beneficent God has provided for them. The third deals with the reward that will accrue to the faithful who avail themselves of those spiritual benefits.

The chapter belongs to the early Makkan period.

#### SECTION 1: Divine Beneficence

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

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1 The Beneficent

الرَّحْمَنُ ۝

2 Taught the Qur'ān.<sup>a</sup>

عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ۝

3 He created man,<sup>a</sup>

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ۝

2a. *Al-Rahmān* is the Beneficent God Who brought things into existence for the sustenance of man before his creation. Man has not earned them. The same Beneficent God, we are here told, has taught the Qur'ān, which is a necessity for the spiritual life of man. It is a Divine gift for the spiritual sustenance of man, like so many gifts for his physical sustenance.

3a. I translate *al-insān* as meaning *man* in a general sense, and accordingly translate *al-bayān* as meaning *expression*, because it is in the faculty of speech that lies man's

- 4 Taught him expression. عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ④
- 5 The sun and the moon follow a reckoning, الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ ⑤
- 6 And the herbs and the trees adore (Him).<sup>a</sup> وَالتَّجْمُرُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ ⑥
- 7 And the heaven, He raised it high, and He set up the measure,<sup>a</sup> وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ ⑦
- 8 That you may not exceed the measure, أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ ⑧
- 9 And keep up the balance with equity, nor fall short in the measure. وَآيَاتِ الْمَوَازِينِ يَا قَوْمِ الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ ⑨
- 10 And the earth, He has set it for (His) creatures; وَالْأَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنْبَاءِ ⑩
- 11 Therein is fruit and palms having sheathed clusters, فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ لِي وَالنَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْأَكْمَامِ ⑪
- 12 And the grain with (its) husk and fragrance.<sup>a</sup> وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ ⑫
- 13 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?<sup>a</sup> فَيَأْتِي الْآءَ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبَانِ ⑬

superiority above other animals. But many commentators interpret *al-insān* as meaning *the perfect man*, i.e., *the Prophet*, because *al-bayān*, or *that in which everything is made manifest* (LL), is an appellation applied to the Holy Qurʾān in 3:138.

6a. This verse and the one preceding it show how everything created, from those large orbs in the heavens to the smallest herbs that grow on land, follows a law. Is not, then, a law needed for the spiritual perfection of man? *Najm* means *star* as well as *herb* (R).

7a. *Mizān* in the Holy Qurʾān does not signify a pair of scales for weighing things, but *a measure*, as signifying *any standard of comparison, estimation, or judgment*, and the term is here, as elsewhere, used in this broad sense. This is made plain in 57:25: “Certainly We sent Our messengers with clear arguments, and sent down with them the Book and the measure (Ar., *mizān*), that men may conduct themselves with equity”, where the *mizān* is that *which enables men to be just in their actions*. It is in this sense that most of the commentators understand this word. Thus, according to Mjd, Tb, and most commentators, *mizān* signifies ‘*adl*, i.e., *justice* (AH), which is explained by Rz as meaning *the giving of their due to those who deserve it*.

12a. The *husk* or the outer covering is generally considered to be a worthless thing. In speaking of it as one of the bounties of God it is hinted that even the husk can be turned into a useful and valuable thing. In contrast with the husk is mentioned the fragrance, which resembles the spirit in the body. Neither should the outer form of the Divine law be considered to be a thing of no use, nor should the spirit of the law be neglected.

13a. This verse is repeated several times in this chapter. In the original the dual form is used instead of the plural, and thus we have instead of *your Lord*, *rabbi-kumā*, i.e., *the*

- 14 He created man from dry clay like earthen vessels, خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ ۝١٤
- 15 And He created the jinn of a flame of fire.<sup>a</sup> وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِنْ مَارِجٍ مِنْ نَارٍ ۝١٥
- 16 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny? فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذَّبَانِ ۝١٦
- 17 Lord of the two Easts, and Lord of the two Wests.<sup>a</sup> رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ ۝١٧
- 18 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny? فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذَّبَانِ ۝١٨
- 19 He has made the two seas to flow freely — they meet: مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ ۝١٩
- 20 Between them is a barrier which they cannot pass.<sup>a</sup> بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَا يَبْغِيَانِ ۝٢٠
- 21 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny? فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذَّبَانِ ۝٢١
- 22 There come forth from them both, pearls large and small. يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ۝٢٢

*Lord of you two.* The commentators generally take the dual form literally, and suppose that the two kinds of rational beings, i.e., the *jinn* and the *men*, are meant. But see 50:24a on the meaning of the dual form, where it is shown that the form is sometimes used by the Arabs to give force to the meaning. That here the dual is used for this purpose is shown by the fact that the blessings mentioned are those which serve as means of sustenance for mankind, such as palms and grain, which are not needed for ethereal beings, as the jinn are considered to be. Hence it is mankind only that is addressed. Even if the dual is taken literally, the two classes addressed are the believers and the disbelievers or the strong and the weak, divisions which are of frequent occurrence in the Holy Qur'ān. The former of these is specially referred to in the concluding words of the last chapter, and hence the personal pronoun *kumā* may refer to them; the jinn not being mentioned in any previous verse, the personal pronoun cannot be taken as referring to them.

15a. For the creation of jinn from fire see 7:12 and 15:27, where it is contrasted with the creation of men from earth. The meaning is explained in 7:12a and 15:27a.

17a. The two Easts and the two Wests signify the different points of the horizon at which the sun rises and sets at the summer and winter solstice. In modern terminology, the two Easts are the Near or the Middle East and the Far East; the two Wests are Europe and America.

20a. The two seas are mentioned in 25:53 and 35:12 as the sweet-water sea and the salt-water sea. A note on the first of these shows what the two seas represent. As in v. 22 here, it is stated in 35:12 also that from both seas fresh flesh and ornaments are obtained; the significance being that useful men would continue to arise from among both believers and non-believers. Some understand that the Red and the Mediterranean Seas are meant. These seas were separated formerly, but are now united by the Suez Canal, and the verse is considered to contain a prophetic mention of this union.

23 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 And His are the ships reared aloft in the sea like mountains.

وَكُلُّ الْجَوَائِرِ الْمُنشَأَتُ فِي الْبَحْرِ  
كَالْأَعْلَامِ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

## SECTION 2: Judgment of the Guilty

26 Everyone on it passes away —

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And there endures forever the person of thy Lord, the Lord of glory and honour.

وَيَبْقَى وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 All those in the heavens and the earth ask of Him. Every moment He is in a state (of glory).<sup>a</sup>

يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Soon shall We apply Ourselves to you, O you two armies.<sup>a</sup>

سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيُّهَ الثَّقَلَيْنِ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 O assembly of jinn and men, if you are able to pass through the regions of the heavens and the earth,

يَمْعَشَرَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ  
أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَ الْأَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوا لَا تَنْفُذُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

29a. LA thus sums up the comments on this verse: "It is His attribute to raise up a mighty one from the lowly and to bring down one who is mighty, and to enrich one who is poor and to impoverish one who is rich".

31a. *Thaqalān*, dual of *thaql*, signifies, literally, *things that a man has with him of such things as burden him*, and then *the household and kindred and party or domestics or servants* (LL). And Ham explains the word *thaqalain*, occurring in pre-Islamic poetry, as meaning *two armies* (LL). The two armies here are the believers and the disbelievers, and Allāh's applying Himself to them signifies the judging of their case so that each should have its reward or punishment. Ham understood the *Arabs* and the *foreigners* (LL), and thus the allusion may be to the conquest of Arabia and the foreign countries. This explanation lends support to what is stated in 72:1a, 3a, that the word *jinn* in the Holy Qur'ān sometimes stands for *foreigners*, and sometimes for the generations to come.

then pass through. You cannot pass through but with authority.<sup>a</sup>

34 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

35 The flames of fire and sparks of brass will be sent upon you, then you will not be able to defend yourselves.<sup>a</sup>

36 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

37 So when the heaven is rent asunder, so it becomes red like red hide.

38 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

39 So on that day neither man nor jinni will be asked about his sin.

40 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

41 The guilty will be known by their marks, so they shall be seized by the forelocks and the feet.

42 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

43 This is the hell which the guilty deny.

44 Round about shall they go between it and hot, boiling water.

45 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

إِلَّا بِسُلْطٰنٍ ۝

فِيَا أَيُّ الْاٰءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبٰنِ ۝

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شُوَاظٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ ۙ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنْتَصِرٰنِ ۝

فِيَا أَيُّ الْاٰءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبٰنِ ۝

فَاِذَا انشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً كَالدِّهَانِ ۝

فِيَا أَيُّ الْاٰءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبٰنِ ۝

فِيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُسْـَٔلُ عَنْ ذَنْبِهِ اِنْسٌ وَّلَا جَانٌ ۝

فِيَا أَيُّ الْاٰءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبٰنِ ۝

يُعْرَفُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ بِسِيْمٰهُمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالْاَعْرَاصِ وَّلَا اَقْدَامٍ ۝

فِيَا أَيُّ الْاٰءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبٰنِ ۝

هٰذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي يُكذِّبُ بِهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ ۝

يُطَوَّفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَّ بَيْنَ حَمِيْمٍ اٰنِ ۝

فِيَا أَيُّ الْاٰءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبٰنِ ۝

33a. The jinn and the men of this verse are the great and the small opponents of the Holy Prophet or the foreigners and the Arabs as shown in the previous footnote. See also 73:18a. All these opponents are told that they cannot escape the punishment.

35a. *Nuḥās* means *copper* or *brass* or *the sparks that fall from brass when it is beaten* (LL). This is also the significance accepted by Bukhārī (B. 65:1v) and Rāghib. Others interpret the word as *smoke*. According to Ḍaḥāk, their punishment in this world is spoken of here, the statement made here amounting to this, that their condition would be like one on whom fire and sparks of brass are sent (R). It is a fact that on most occasions where the punishment of the opponents of Truth is spoken of, it is their punishment here, as well as in the Hereafter. In the use of the word *nuḥās*, which means *sparks of beaten brass*, there seems to be a reference to atomic warfare.

## SECTION 3: Reward of the Righteous

- 46 And for him who fears to stand before his Lord are two Gardens.<sup>a</sup> ﴿٤٦﴾ وَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتَيْنِ ۖ
- 47 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny? ﴿٤٧﴾ فَيَأْتِي الْآلَاءَ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذَّبِينَ ۖ
- 48 Full of varieties. ﴿٤٨﴾ ذَوَاتَا أَفْنَانٍ ۖ
- 49 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny? ﴿٤٩﴾ فَيَأْتِي الْآلَاءَ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذَّبِينَ ۖ
- 50 Therein are two fountains flowing. ﴿٥٠﴾ فِيهِمَا عَيْنُونِ تَجْرِيْنَ ۖ
- 51 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny? ﴿٥١﴾ فَيَأْتِي الْآلَاءَ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذَّبِينَ ۖ
- 52 Therein are pairs of every fruit. ﴿٥٢﴾ فِيهِمَا مِنْ كُلِّ فَاكِهَةٍ زَوْجَيْنِ ۖ
- 53 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny? ﴿٥٣﴾ فَيَأْتِي الْآلَاءَ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذَّبِينَ ۖ
- 54 Reclining on beds, whose inner coverings are of silk brocade. And the fruits of the two Gardens are within reach. ﴿٥٤﴾ مُتَّكِيْنَ عَلَى فُرُشٍ بَطَائِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ ۖ وَ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۖ
- 55 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny? ﴿٥٥﴾ فَيَأْتِي الْآلَاءَ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذَّبِينَ ۖ
- 56 Therein are those restraining their glances, whom no man nor jinni has touched before them. ﴿٥٦﴾ فِيهِنَّ قَصْرَاتٌ أَعْرَافٌ ۚ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ ۖ
- 57 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny? ﴿٥٧﴾ فَيَأْتِي الْآلَاءَ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذَّبِينَ ۖ

46a. The reward of the righteous is plainly spoken of here as two Gardens, i.e., a Garden in this life and a Garden in the Hereafter. The Garden of this life is the spiritual bliss which the righteous find here in the doing of good, whereof gardens and rivers and fruits are symbols. But in these words there may also be a deeper reference here to the worldly conquests which the Muslims were promised, and support to this is lent by the words of a *ḥadīth* which speaks of Saiḥān and Jaiḥān (the two rivers of Persia) and Furāt (the Euphrates, which with the Tigris waters Mesopotamia) and Nīl (the Nile, which waters Egypt) as being the rivers of paradise (Ms., vol. 2, p. 351), the countries which form the valley of these four rivers being among the earliest conquests of Islām, and remaining to this day Muslim lands under Muslim rule. Note further that it is always *two gardens* that are spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān as outward symbols of prosperity and a happy life, as the two gardens of prosperous Saba' (34:15), or the two gardens of the Christian nations (18:32).

58 As though they were rubies and pearls.<sup>a</sup>

كَأَنَّهُنَّ الْيَاقُوتُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فِي أَيِّ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذِّبِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 Is the reward of goodness aught but goodness?

هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فِي أَيِّ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذِّبِينَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 And besides those are two (other) Gardens.<sup>a</sup>

وَمِنْ دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فِي أَيِّ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذِّبِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Inclining to blackness.

مُدْهَامَتَيْنِ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فِي أَيِّ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذِّبِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Therein are two springs gushing forth.

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَصَّاحَتَانِ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فِي أَيِّ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذِّبِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 Therein are fruits and palms and pomegranates.

فِيهِمَا نَاقِهَةٌ وَأَنْخُلٌ وَرُمَّانٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فِي أَيِّ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمْ أَتُكذِّبِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Therein are goodly beautiful ones.<sup>a</sup>

فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَاتٌ حَسَنَاتٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

58a. So far as there is a description of the spiritual blessings of the Hereafter in these words, see 52:20a. So far as it relates to this life, the chaste and modest wives of the faithful are meant. According to a ḥadīth narrated by Umm Salamah, the Prophet's wife, the women of this world are greater in excellence than the ḥūr 'in — "nisā' al-dunyā afdalu min al-ḥūr al-'in" (R).

62a. The faithful are spoken of in the very next chapter as belonging to two classes, the ordinary believers — those on the right hand or *aṣḥāb al-yamīn*, and the foremost or the *muqarrabūn* (56:8, 10); hence the two Gardens of this verse as compared with the two Gardens of v. 46; or, by the two Gardens of v. 46, are meant the Gardens of the Hereafter and by the two Gardens of this verse are meant the Gardens of this world.

70a. *Khairāt* is plural of *khairah*, feminine of *khair*. *Khairah* means a good thing of any kind, a good quality, an excellency (LL). The other word, *ḥisān*, is plural of *ḥasanā'* which, applied to a woman, signifies comely, beautiful, or pleasing (LL). The significance as regards blessings of a life after death is the same as explained in 52:20a. Or, the words contain a description of the faithful women.

71 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ سَرِيكَمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 Pure ones confined to pavilions.

حُورًا مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِي الْخِيَامِ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ سَرِيكَمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 Before them man has not touched them, nor jinni.

لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ سَرِيكَمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 Reclining on green cushions and beautiful carpets.

مُتَّكِلِينَ عَلَى سُرُجٍ خَضِرٍ وَ

عَبَقَرِيِّ حَسَانٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَيَأْتِي الْآءِ سَرِيكَمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 Blessed be the name of thy Lord, the Lord of Glory and Honour!

تَبَارَكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِي الْجَلَالِ

وَ الْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٧٨﴾





## CHAPTER 56

### *Al-Wāqi‘ah: The Event*

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 3 sections; 96 verses)

*The Event* referred to, from which the title of this chapter is taken, is the time of the meting out of reward and punishment to the faithful and the opponents respectively. This chapter speaks of three classes of men, the foremost among the faithful being indicated as a separate class, while the other two are the believers and their opponents. The first section, after stating that men will be divided into three classes, speaks of the two classes of the faithful; the second refers to the guilty opponents, while the third states that judgment is inevitable and the three classes will receive what they deserve.

It is an early Makkan revelation.

#### SECTION 1: Three Classes of Men

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

- 1 When the Event comes to pass<sup>a</sup> —
- 2 There is no belying its coming to pass —
- 3 Abasing (some), exalting (others) —
- 4 When the earth is shaken with a (severe) shaking,
- 5 And the mountains are crumbled to pieces,<sup>a</sup>

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
 إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ۖ  
 لَيْسَ لِبُوقَعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ۖ  
 خَافِضَةٌ سَرِيفَةٌ ۖ  
 إِذَا رُجَّتِ الْأَرْضُ رَجًا ۖ  
 وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا ۖ

1a. Note that the Holy Qur‘ān speaks of the *Hour* or the *Event* not only as signifying the Resurrection, but also very frequently as signifying the doom of its opponents. That doom was, in fact, a foretaste of what they would suffer in the life after death; this is made clear in v. 3

5a. The crumbling of the mountains signifies the fall of great opponents; see 20:105a.

- 6 So they are as scattered dust,  
 7 And you are three sorts.  
 8 So those on the right-hand; how  
 (happy) are those on the right-hand!  
 9 And those on the left; how  
 (wretched) are those on the left!  
 10 And the foremost are the fore-  
 most<sup>a</sup> —  
 11 These are drawn nigh (to Allāh).  
 12 In Gardens of bliss.  
 13 A multitude from among the first,  
 14 And a few from among those of  
 later times,<sup>a</sup>  
 15 On thrones inwrought,  
 16 Reclining on them, facing each  
 other.  
 17 Round about them will go youths  
 never altering in age,<sup>a</sup>  
 18 With goblets and ewers, and a  
 cup of pure drink —  
 19 They are not affected with head-  
 ache thereby, nor are they intoxicated,  
 20 And fruits that they choose,  
 21 And flesh of fowl that they desire,  
 22 And pure, beautiful ones,  
 23 Like hidden pearls.  
 24 A reward for what they did.

فَكَأَنْتَ هَبَاءٌ مُنْتَبِثًا ۝  
 وَكُنْتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلَاثَةً ۝  
 فَأَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ  
 الْمَيْمَنَةِ ۝  
 وَأَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ مَا أَصْحَابُ  
 الْمَشْأَمَةِ ۝  
 وَالسَّيِّقُونَ وَالسَّيْقُوتُونَ ۝  
 أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ۝  
 فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ۝  
 ثُلَّةٌ مِنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝  
 وَقَلِيلٌ مِنَ الْآخِرِينَ ۝  
 عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَوْضُونَةٍ ۝  
 مُتَّكِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَابِلِينَ ۝  
 يُطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُخَلَّدُونَ ۝  
 بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأْسٍ  
 مِنْ مَّعِينٍ ۝  
 لَا يَصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُزْفُونَ ۝  
 وَفَاكِهَةٍ مِمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ ۝  
 وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ۝  
 وَحُورٍ عِدْنٍ ۝  
 كَأَمْثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمَكْنُونِ ۝  
 جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

10a. Those foremost in doing good are foremost in reaping their reward.

14a. Those who accepted the Holy Prophet in the earlier stages of his mission, and had to make greater sacrifices, had a greater reward; but there were others who waited until Islām was established in the land and made no sacrifices. Compare 57:10; 57:10a.

17a. *Khallada* means *he remained* or *continued forever*, and *mukhalladīn* signifies *that never become decrepit*, or *never altering in age*, because there is no decay in the life after death.

- 25 They hear therein no vain or sinful talk — لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْتِيهِمْ ۞
- 26 But only the saying, Peace! Peace!<sup>a</sup> إِلَّا قِيلًا سَلَامًا سَلَامًا ۞
- 27 And those on the right hand; how (happy) are those on the right hand! وَأَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ ۗ مَا أَصْحَابُ الْيَمِينِ ۞
- 28 Amid thornless lote-trees, فِي سِدْرٍ مَّخْضُودٍ ۞
- 29 And clustered banana-trees, وَطَلْحٍ مَّنضُودٍ ۞
- 30 And extensive shade, وَظِلِّ مَمْدُودٍ ۞
- 31 And water gushing, وَمَاءٍ مَّسْكُوبٍ ۞
- 32 And abundant fruit, وَفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ ۞
- 33 Neither intercepted, nor forbidden, لَا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ ۞
- 34 And exalted couches. وَفُرُشٍ مَّرْفُوعَةٍ ۞
- 35 Surely We have created them a (new) creation, إِنَّا أَنْشَأْنَهُنَّ إِنشَاءً ۞
- 36 So We have made them virgins, فَجَعَلْنَهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا ۞
- 37 Loving, equals in age, عُرُبًا أَشْرَابًا ۞
- 38 For those on the right hand.<sup>a</sup> لِأَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ ۞
- 39 A multitude from among the first, ثَلَاثَةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۞
- 40 And a multitude from among those of later times.<sup>a</sup> وَثَلَاثَةٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ ۞

26a. This description of the paradise in early revelation does not differ from that of later revelation. After various blessings are enumerated, their true nature is depicted in one word, Peace. Peace in this world, and Peace in the Hereafter, such is the message of Islām.

38a. It is noteworthy that the blessings granted to the righteous are first spoken of as shades, water, fruits and resting-places; and then, as it were to dispel all doubts as to what these blessings of the next life are, it is said in v. 35, *We have created them a new creation*. These words settle conclusively that, whatever these blessings are, whether shades or trees or water or fruits, they are all the fruits of deeds, which have been made *to grow into a new growth*. The words that follow this statement are no doubt primarily applicable to women, but, as shown in 52:20a, it is only because womanhood stands as a symbol of purity and beauty. Thus *abkār*, plural of *bikr*, means a *virgin*, and also *an action that has not been preceded by its like* (LL). Similarly, *atrāb*, or *equals in age*, as already shown in 38:52a, signifies that the growth of those blessings begins with the growth of spiritual life in man. ‘*Urub* (“loving”) is plural of both ‘*urūb* and ‘*arīb*, the former signifying *a woman that manifests love to her husband*.

40a. Note that these verses do not contradict vv. 13 and 14, as imagined by some Christian critics, for the latter speak only of those who were foremost in accepting the Holy Prophet.

## SECTION 2: The Guilty

41 And those on the left hand; how (wretched) are those on the left hand!

42 In hot wind and boiling water,

43 And shadow of black smoke,

44 Neither cool nor refreshing.<sup>a</sup>

45 Surely they lived before that in ease.

46 And they persisted in the great violation.<sup>a</sup>

47 And they used to say: When we die and become dust and bones, shall we then indeed be raised?

48 Or our fathers of yore?

49 Say: The ancients and those of later times

50 Will surely be gathered together for the appointed hour of a known day.

51 Then shall you, O you who err and deny,

52 Eat of the tree of Zaqqūm,

53 And fill (your) bellies with it;

54 Then drink after it of boiling water;

55 And drink as drinks the thirsty camel.

56 This is their entertainment on the day of Requital.

57 We have created you, why do you not then accept?

58 See you that which you emit?

وَاصْحَابُ الشَّمَالِ ۗ مَا أَصْحَابُ

الشَّمَالِ ۙ

فِي سَمُومٍ وَحَيْبٍ ۙ

وَظِلٍّ مِّنْ يَّحْمُومٍ ۙ

لَّا بَارِدٍ وَلَا كَرِيمٍ ۙ

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُتْرَفِينَ ۙ

وَكَانُوا يُصِرُّونَ عَلَى الْحِنثِ الْعَظِيمِ ۙ

وَكَانُوا يَقُولُونَ ۗ أَإِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا

تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا إِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ۙ

أَوْ آبَاؤُنَا الْأَوَّلُونَ ۙ

قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ ۙ

لَمَجْمُوعُونَ ۗ إِلَىٰ مِيقَاتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ۙ

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا الضَّالُّونَ الْمُكَذِّبُونَ ۙ

لَأَكْلُونَ مِنْ شَجَرٍ مِّنْ زَقُّومٍ ۙ

فَمَائِئُونَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ ۙ

فَشَرِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ۙ

فَشَرِبُونَ شُرْبَ الْهَيْمِ ۙ

هَذَا نَزْلُهُمْ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ۙ

نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ فَلَوْلَا تُصَدِّقُونَ ۙ

أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تُمْنُونَ ۙ

44a. These verses draw a picture of the distress and abasement which were in store for the opponents of truth in this life as well as in the Hereafter.

46a. That is, the violation of Divine commandments.

- 59 Is it you that create it or are We the Creator? ﴿۵۹﴾
- 60 We have ordained death among you and We are not to be overcome, ﴿۶۰﴾
- 61 That We may change your state and make you grow into what you know not.<sup>a</sup> ﴿۶۱﴾
- 62 And certainly you know the first growth, why do you not then mind? ﴿۶۲﴾
- 63 See you what you sow? ﴿۶۳﴾
- 64 Is it you that cause it to grow, or are We the Causer of growth? ﴿۶۴﴾
- 65 If We pleased, We would make it chaff, then would you lament: ﴿۶۵﴾
- 66 Surely we are burdened with debt: ﴿۶۶﴾
- 67 Nay, we are deprived. ﴿۶۷﴾
- 68 See you the water which you drink? ﴿۶۸﴾
- 69 Do you bring it down from the clouds, or are We the Bringer? ﴿۶۹﴾
- 70 If We pleased, We could make it saltish; why give you not thanks? ﴿۷۰﴾
- 71 See you the fire which you kindle? ﴿۷۱﴾
- 72 Is it you that produce the trees for it, or are We the Producer? ﴿۷۲﴾
- 73 We have made it a reminder and an advantage for the wayfarers of the desert.<sup>a</sup> ﴿۷۳﴾
- 74 So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Incomparably Great. ﴿۷۴﴾

61a. It is the Resurrection that is spoken of here. The present state will be changed, we are told, and men will be made to grow into a new creation, which they do not know. Clearly it is not the material body of this life, but a new body which grows out of the deeds of men.

73a. The fire burned at night points out to the desert wayfarer a habitation of men, where he will be welcome. It is called "a reminder" because it represents the reward of evil deeds in another life.

## SECTION 3: Judgment is Inevitable

- 75 But nay, I swear by revelation  
of portions (of the Qur'ān)!—<sup>a</sup> فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِمَرْقِعِ النَّجُومِ ۝
- 76 And it is a great oath indeed, if  
you knew — وَإِنَّهُ لَقَسَمٌ لَّو تَعْلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ ۝
- 77 Surely it is a bounteous Qur'ān,  
78 In a book that is protected,  
79 Which none touches save the  
purified ones.<sup>a</sup> إِنَّهُ تَفْرَأْنِ كَرِيمٌ ۝  
فِي كِتَابٍ مَّكْنُونٍ ۝  
لَّا يَسْطَهءُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ ۝
- 80 A revelation from the Lord of the  
worlds. تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝
- 81 Is it this announcement that you  
disdain? أَفِيهِدَا الْحَدِيثِ أَنْتُمْ مُدْهِنُونَ ۝
- 82 And make your denial your means  
of subsistence.<sup>a</sup> وَتَجْعَلُونَ رِزْقَكُمْ أَنْكُمْ تُكَذِّبُونَ ۝
- 83 Why is it not then that when it  
comes up to the throat, فَكَوْلَا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلُقُومَ ۝

75a. The meaning adopted is in consonance with the context. As to *nujūm*, meaning *portions of the Qur'ān*, see 53:1a, where this verse also is explained. *Mawāqī'* is the plural of *mauqā'*, i.e., *the time or place of the coming down of a thing*, which is the revelation of the Qur'ān in this case. V. 77 makes it clear that it is the revelation of the Qur'ān, for it is to this that the personal pronoun *it* occurring there refers.

As already stated in 37:1a, the object of an oath in such cases is to draw attention to certain facts. The use of *lā* ("nay") in such cases is explained in 75:2a. The significance is that every portion of the Qur'ān bears evidence to its own truth.

79a. Vv. 77, 78 and 79 contain three statements regarding the Qur'ān. According to v. 77, it is bounteous. The word *karīm* used here about the Qur'ān means *generous, liberal, noble or honoured* (LL); and you say of land as *karumat*, meaning *it yielded increase of its seed-produce* (LL). And *karam* (the root-word, inf.) means, when used about the Divine Being (and the same is true of His Word and His Prophet), *ihsān* and *in'ām*, i.e., *doing of good or conferring of benefit* (R). The Qur'ān is called *karīm* on account of the benefit which it brought to humanity, and hence I render it as meaning *bounteous or bountiful*. V. 78 speaks of it as being protected, by which is meant not only that it will be protected against all attempts to destroy it, but also that it will be protected in all its purity in writing. V. 79 states that it can be touched only by those purified by God. This shows that an understanding of the Qur'ān is granted only to those who are pure in heart. It also shows that the Qur'ān should not be touched by one who is impure. Hence the companions were forbidden to carry the Qur'ān to an enemy's country (B. 56:129). Both the verses and this report further show that the Qur'ān existed in a written form from the first, otherwise such injunctions as not to touch or travel with it to the enemy's country would have been meaningless.

82a. The meaning is that you are bent upon giving the lie to the Qur'ān to such an extent as if to give it the lie were your means of subsistence, without which you could not live.

84 And you at that time look on —

وَ أَنْتُمْ حِينِيذٍ تَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

85 And We are nearer to it than you,  
but you see not —

وَ نَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَلَكِنْ

86 Why then, if you are not held  
under authority,

لَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

فَلَوْ لَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ غَيْرَ مَدِينِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

87 Do you not send it back, if you  
are truthful?<sup>a</sup>

تَرْجِعُونَهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

88 Then if he is one of those drawn  
nigh (to Allāh),

فَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

89 Then happiness and bounty and  
a Garden of bliss.

فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّتْ نَعِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

90 And if he is one of those on the  
right hand,

وَ أَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٤٠﴾

91 Then peace to thee from those on  
the right hand.

فَسَلَامٌ لَكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٤٠﴾

92 And if he is one of the rejectors,  
the erring ones,

وَ أَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ  
الصَّالِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

93 He has an entertainment of boil-  
ing water,

فَنَزْلٌ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ ﴿٤١﴾

94 And burning in hell.

وَ تَصْلِيَةٌ جَهِيمٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

95 Surely this is a certain truth.

96 So glorify the name of thy Lord,  
the Incomparably Great.

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ حَقُّ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٤٣﴾

فَسَبِّحْ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٤٣﴾

87a. Sale and others translate *ghaira madīnina* (“not held under authority”) as meaning *not to be rewarded* or *not to be judged*, and call the passage obscure. But *madīnin* means *mamlūkin*, i.e., *held under authority* (LL). The meaning is that, if you are your own masters and not subject to the authority of a Higher Power, why can you not resist death when it comes to you?