

CHAPTER 61

Al-Şaff: The Ranks

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 2 sections; 14 verses)

The title of this chapter is taken from the injunction to the Muslims to fight in defence of the faith in *Ranks*, for fighting was now essential for the preservation of the very life of the Muslim community. After giving that injunction, the first section speaks of Moses and Jesus and of the latter's prophecy with regard to the advent of the Holy Prophet, and this is followed by a prophecy of the triumph of Islām over all other religions. The second section exhorts the Muslims to exert themselves in the cause of truth, if they would see that prophecy fulfilled, citing the example of Jesus. The date of revelation is very probably the first or the second year of the Hijrah.

SECTION 1: Triumph of Islām

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

1 Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allāh; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

2 O you who believe, why say you that which you do not?

3 It is most hateful in the sight of Allāh that you say that which you do not.^a

4 Surely Allāh loves those who fight

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي
 الْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ①
 يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا
 لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ②
 كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا
 مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ③
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي

3a. It is an exhortation to those who professed belief in the Truth to make their actions correspond with their assertions. The triumph of Truth, which is so definitely foretold in this chapter, could not be brought about by boastful talk but by great deeds of sacrifice, and hence this prelude. Mere words, if not carried into action, are hateful to God. It is deeds that open the way to success.

in His way in ranks, as if they were a solid wall.^a

5 And when Moses said to his people: O my people, why do you malign me, when you know that I am Allāh's messenger to you?^a But when they deviated, Allāh made their hearts deviate. And Allāh guides not the transgressing people.

6 And when Jesus, son of Mary, said: O Children of Israel, surely I am the messenger of Allāh to you, verifying that which is before me of the Torah and giving the good news of a Messenger who will come after me, his name being Aḥmad.^a But when he

سَبِيلِهِ صَفًا كَانَهُمْ بُنْيَانٌ مَرصُومٌ ③

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ يُقَوْمِ لِمَ تُوذُّونَنِي وَقَدْ تَعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ④

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِن بَعْدِي

4a. They had to fight in self-defence; see 2:190, 190a, etc.

5a. That Moses was falsely accused by his own followers is stated in 33:69; see 33:69a. Such false imputations by the Israelites against their own prophet are referred to here as an example of the Jewish deviation from truth. An example of Christian deviation is given in the next verse. No wonder that they were inimical to the Prophet, when they did not care even for Moses and Jesus.

6a. We are here told that Jesus had given the good news of the advent of a Prophet whose name was Aḥmad coming after him. That our Prophet was known by two names Muḥammad and Aḥmad is a well-known fact of history. The famous poet Ḥassān mentions the Prophet, in one of his verses, by the name Aḥmad: *Ṣall Allāhu wa man yahuffu bi-'arsh-hi wa-l-ṭayyibūna 'ala-mubāraki Aḥmad*, i.e., Allāh blesses the blessed Aḥmad and so do those who go round about His Throne of Majesty and all pure ones.

The next question is, Does Jesus really speak of the coming of Aḥmad? As regards his sayings, we have to depend on a Greek translation, in which we find the word *Paraclete*, which is translated in English as *Comforter*. We are well aware how translations are sometimes misleading, and therefore the use of the word *Paraclete* in the Greek version, or that of *Comforter* in the English version, does not show what the actual word in the language spoken by Jesus was. But all those qualifications which are given in John 14:16 and 16:7 are met with in the person of the Holy Prophet. He is stated to be one who shall abide forever, and so is the Prophet's law; for after him comes no prophet to promulgate a new law. He is spoken of as teaching all things, and it was with a perfect law that the Holy Prophet came. And clearest of all are the words of John 16:12–14: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me". Now, this prophecy about the *Spirit of Truth*, which is the same as the *Comforter*, clearly stated in John 14:17, establishes the following points: (1) Jesus could not guide into all truth because his teaching was really directed only to the reform of the Israelites, and he denounced only their crying evils; but the teaching of the *Comforter* would be a perfect one, guiding men

came to them with clear arguments, they said: This is clear enchantment.^b

7 And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allāh and he is invited to Islām. And Allāh guides not the unjust people.^a

8 They desire to put out the light of Allāh with their mouths, but Allāh will perfect His light, though the disbelievers may be averse.

9 He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth that He may make

اسْمَهُ أَحْمَدًا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ
قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ①

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ
الْكَذِبَ وَهُوَ يُدْعَىٰ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ②

يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ
وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ ③

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ
وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ

into all truth, and the Holy Qur’ān is the only book which claims to be a perfect law. (2) That the *Comforter* would not speak of himself, but that which he shall hear he shall speak; the words conveying exactly the same idea as those of Deut. 18:18: “And I will put My words in his mouth”, a qualification which is met with only in the person of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. (3) That he will glorify Jesus, and the Holy Prophet did glorify Jesus by denouncing as utterly false all those calumnies which were heaped upon Jesus and his mother.

It is argued, however, that the *Comforter* is here called the *Spirit of Truth*, and hence the words cannot be applicable to a man. But it is equally difficult to see why Jesus should call him *another Comforter*; evidently he was referring to a human being as he himself was. Moreover, we cannot imagine a spirit not speaking of himself but speaking only that which he shall hear, which a comparison with Deut. 18:18 clearly shows to be a prophet like Moses. And it should be noted that the Holy Prophet is frequently called *The Truth* in the Holy Qur’ān, as in 17:81.

Another point worth mentioning is that the different prophecies about the Holy Prophet really refer to the different phases of his life. The two aspects of the life of the Holy Prophet are *jalāl* and *jamāl*, i.e., *an aspect of glory* and *an aspect of beauty*, the first finding its manifestation in the name *Muḥammad* and the second in *Aḥmad*. Each of the two great prophets, Moses and Jesus, prophesied about the Holy Prophet in words expressing that aspect of his life which was in consonance with his own nature — glory finding greater expression in Moses, who was prophet, lawgiver and king at the same time, and beauty in Jesus, on account of the beauty of his moral teachings, while both these elements were combined in the person of the Holy Prophet.

6b. The Holy Prophet is referred to here, as the next verse clearly shows.

7a. By the words, “who forges a lie against Allāh and he is invited to Islām,” are meant the rejectors who called the truth an enchantment, as stated at the end of the last verse, and as shown by the words that follow here: *And Allāh guides not the unjust people*. It was these people that were invited to Islām, while the Prophet was an inviter, as he is elsewhere called; see, for instance, 3:193; 20:108. Their polytheistic beliefs are repeatedly called a forgery in the Holy Qur’ān, as, for instance, in 6:137, and again in 6:138. Or, the Christians are meant who were invited to the Truth, but they forged a lie that Jesus was the son of God and that he took away their sins.

it prevail over all religions, though the polytheists are averse.^a كُلِّهِ وَ لَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ③

SECTION 2: Establishment of Truth needed Sacrifices

10 O you who believe, shall I lead you to a merchandise which will deliver you from a painful chastisement?

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَارَةٍ تُنَجِّيكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ ⑩

11 You should believe in Allāh and His Messenger, and strive hard in Allāh's way with your wealth and your lives. That is better for you, did you but know!

تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ⑪

12 He will forgive you your sins and cause you to enter Gardens wherein rivers flow, and goodly dwellings in Gardens of perpetuity — that is the mighty achievement —

يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلُكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَسَاكِنَ كَثِيرَةً فِي جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ ط ذَلِكِ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ⑫

13 And yet another (blessing) that you love: help from Allāh and a victory near at hand; and give good news to the believers.^a

وَ أُخْرَىٰ تُحِبُّونَهَا ط نُصْرًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ط وَ بَشِيرًا لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ⑬

14 O you who believe, be helpers (in the cause) of Allāh, as Jesus, son of Mary, said to the disciples: Who are my helpers in the cause of Allāh? The disciples said: We are helpers (in the cause) of Allāh. So a party of the Children of Israel believed and

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا أَنْصَارَ اللَّهِ كَمَا قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لِحَوَارِيِّنَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ فَأَمْنَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَ كَفَرَتْ طَائِفَةٌ ⑭

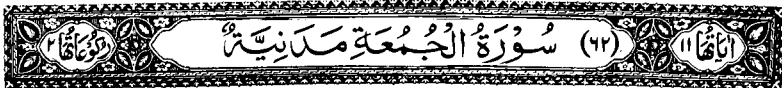
9a. Verses 8 and 9 contain two different prophecies. In the first of these we are told that all attempts to annihilate Islām will fail, and they did fail. In the second it is affirmed that Islām will be made the predominant religion, the truth of which was witnessed by Arabia in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. But both prophecies have a wider significance. Attempts are still being made to annihilate Islām, and the Divine promise is that all these attempts shall be brought to naught; while the predominance of Islām over all the religions of the world would in time be established, as clearly as it was in Arabia. The commentators say that this predominance will be brought about through the Promised Messiah (Rz). Polytheists, it should be noted, include the Christians, for they adopted the polytheistic doctrine of Trinity.

13a. The prophecy in the previous verse relates to the Hereafter, while that in this verse relates to the victories of the Muslims over the disbelievers.

another party disbelieved; then We aided those who believed against their enemy, and they became predominant.^a

فَأَيَّدْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَىٰ عَدُوِّهِمْ
فَأَصْبَحُوا ظَاهِرِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

14a. The description applies to the triumph of the teachings of Christ over those who opposed the dissemination of his teachings, and speaks prophetically of the ultimate triumph of Islām over all other religions of the world.



CHAPTER 62

Al-Jumu'ah: The Congregation

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 2 sections; 11 verses)

This chapter receives its name from the exhortation to gather together on the day of *Congregation*, or *Friday*. The first section, after stating that the Prophet was a purifier of his immediate followers as well as of those who would come later on, warns the Muslims of the danger which brought about the downfall of the Jewish nation. They had with them the letter of the law, but were not true to its spirit. The reason for this was that they gave themselves up to worldly occupations and did not even observe their Sabbath, which was set apart for religious devotion. The second section enjoins the Muslims not to neglect their prayers in congregation, and the congregation of Friday is specially spoken of.

The date of revelation of this chapter may be assigned to the first year of the Hijrah.

SECTION 1: Muslims chosen for Divine Favours

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

1 Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allāh, the King, the Holy, the Mighty, the Wise.

2 He it is Who raised among the illiterates^a a Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His messages and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom — although they were before certainly in manifest error —

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَسْبِيحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي
الْاَرْضِ الْمَلِكِ الْقَدُّوسِ الْعَزِيزِ
الْحَكِيمِ ۝

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْاُمَمِیْنَ رَسُوْلًا
مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰیٰتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَ اِنْ
كَانُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ۝

2a. For the word *Ummi*, see 2:78a, 7:157a.

3 And others from among them who have not yet joined them. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.^a

4 That is Allāh's grace; He grants it to whom He pleases. And Allāh is the Lord of mighty grace.

5 The likeness of those who were charged with the Torah, then they observed it not, is as the likeness of the ass carrying books. Evil is the likeness of the people who reject the messages of Allāh. And Allāh guides not the iniquitous people.

6 Say: O you who are Jews, if you think that you are the favourites of Allāh to the exclusion of other people, then invoke death, if you are truthful.^a

7 But they will never invoke it because of what their hands have sent before. And Allāh is Knower of the wrongdoers.

8 Say: The death from which you flee, that will surely overtake you; then you will be sent back to the Knower of

وَأَخْرَجِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ⑥

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ⑦

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ
يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ
أَسْفَارًا طِبْسٌ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ⑧

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا إِنْ زَعَمْتُمْ
أَنَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ لِلَّهِ مِنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ
فَتَسْتَوُوا الْمَوْتِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ⑨

وَلَا يَتَنَبَّؤُنَهُ آبَاءُ آبَائِكُمْ
أَيُّدِيهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ⑩

قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ
فَاتَهُ مُلَقِيكُمْ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عِلْمِ

3a. Abū Hurairah says: "We were sitting with the Holy Prophet when the chapter entitled *al-Jumu'ah* was revealed to him, and in it the words *others from among them who have not yet joined them*. I asked the Holy Prophet: 'Who are these?' He gave no reply until I questioned him thrice. Salmān, the Persian, was sitting among us, and the Holy Prophet placed his hand on Salmān, and said, 'Even if faith were near the Pleiades, a man from among these would surely find it.'" (B. 65: lxii, 1). This report would show that the verse applies to a man of Persian descent. As other reports show that the Messiah would appear among the Muslims at a time when they would have the letter of the law with them but would not be true to its spirit, the reference in the report given here is particularly to the Messiah or to his time. The significance is that after a time, when the true spirit of Islām should have been lost, a man would be raised who, again receiving the light from the Holy Prophet, would spread the light of Islām in the world. But some commentators understand that non-Arabs, or all Muslims coming after the Prophet, are meant (Rz, JB). The Prophet would thus be the teacher forever, through his disciples, and no Israelite prophet would be sent as a teacher to the Muslim community.

6a. The prayer for death spoken of here is the same as that in 2:94, for which see 2:94a.

the unseen and the seen, so He will inform you of that which you did.

الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيَدَّبِّعِكُمْ بِمَا
كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩﴾

SECTION 2: Friday Prayer

9 O you who believe, when the call is sounded for prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allāh and leave off traffic. That is better for you, if you know.^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ
لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا
إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ
خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

10 But when the prayer is ended, disperse abroad in the land and seek of Allāh's grace, and remember Allāh much, that you may be successful.

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا
فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ
وَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 And when they see merchandise or sport, they break away to it, and leave thee standing.^a Say: What is with Allāh is better than sport and merchandise. And Allāh is the best of Providers.

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا
انْفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ قَائِمًا طُلُ مَا عِنْدَ
اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِمَّنْ اللَّهْوِ وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ
وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿١١﴾

9a. The word *Jumu'ah* is derived from *jama'a*, he gathered, and *yaum al-Jumu'ah* means the *day of Congregation*. The time of the *Jumu'ah* is just after noon, and the service, which consists only of two *rak'ahs* instead of the four *rak'ahs* of the early afternoon prayer, is preceded by a sermon. The words of this verse and those of the following show that ordinary business may be carried on by a Muslim on Friday before or after the *Jumu'ah* prayer. Hence, unlike the Jewish and the Christian Sabbaths, it is not necessarily a day of rest. But attendance at the *Jumu'ah* prayers is obligatory, and as soon as the call to prayer is sounded, every Muslim is bound to leave business of every kind and immediately hasten to the mosque. Every nation has a Sabbath, or a so-called day of Divine service set apart from the ordinary weekdays, but in practice, the whole day is never given to prayer. In fact, a Muslim, who is allowed to do his ordinary work on Friday, gives more time to his prayers than the majority of those who recognize a seventh day as their Sabbath. The idea underlying the Sabbath is, no doubt, a temporary cessation of the material and physical activities, to give place to spiritual exercise and to holding communion with the Divine Being. Islām, on the other hand, requires communion with the Divine Being to be observed throughout the entire week, five times daily. Thus it gives a real chance to its followers for the exercise and development of the spiritual faculties, which in others lie quite dormant. The Islamic division of prayers is much more suited to elevate a man spiritually, affording true spiritual food to the soul than is to be discovered in any other form of worship.

11a. Those spoken of here are apparently the hypocrites. The fact that the next chapter deals with the hypocrites corroborates this.