91. «Surely, those who disbelieve after they have believed and then increase in disbelief, their repentance shall not be accepted, and these are they who have gone astray.377

92. As for those who have disbelieved, and die while they are disbelievers, there shall not be accepted from any one of them even an earth-full of gold though he offer it in ransom. It is these for whom shall be a grievous punishment, and they shall have no helpers.378

93. «Never shall you attain to righteousness unless you spend out of that which you love; and whatever you spend, Allah surely knows it well.379

377. Commentary:
The verse does not mean that the repentance of apostates shall in no case be accepted because this inference runs counter to 3:90 according to which repentance is acceptable at every stage. So the reference in the words, their repentance shall not be accepted, is to those persons only who make a profession of repentance but are not sincere in it, and, instead of reinforcing their profession by bringing about a real and practical change in their lives, actually increase in disbelief. The words, these are they who have gone astray, placed at the end of the verse corroborate this inference, for they show that in spite of a lip-profession of repentance they still continue to follow a course of error. Such repentance cannot be genuine and hence cannot be accepted.

378. Commentary:
This verse further explains the true significance of repentance. So long as death does not overtake one and the door of performing good works is open, the door of repentance is also open. But in no case will mere lip-repentance of disbelievers or their alms be accepted. If there is no faith in the heart, mere giving of alms or mere apparently good works cannot win the pleasure of God, even if one spends large quantities of gold.

379. Important Words:
الصبر (righteousness) means, goodness of a high order (Mufradât). The Holy Prophet has explained the word الصبر as i.e. the excellence of moral qualities (Muslim & Musnad). See also 2:45, 178. As true belief is the basis of all goodness, so the word الصبر may also be taken to mean true belief.

Commentary:
Since the word الصبر means, goodness or righteousness of a high order or excellence of morals, the verse purports to say that though God is cognizant of, and suitably rewards, each and every thing that one spends in the cause of Allah, yet the goodness of a high order,
94. All food was lawful to the children of Israel, except what Israel forbade himself before the Torah was sent down. Say, 'Bring, then, the Torah and read it, if you are truthful.'

most acceptable in His sight, can be achieved only by spending out of things, be they material or otherwise, which one loves most, for the obvious reason that such spending involves the greatest sacrifice.

In the preceding verse it is said, 'there shall not be accepted from any one of them even an earth-full of gold, though he offer it in ransom.' From this some people might conclude that spending in the cause of God was of no use. To remove this possible misunderstanding it is pointed out here that spending in the cause of God is a highly meritorious act and spending what is best naturally brings the highest good. The preceding verse refers only to such disbelievers as die in their disbelief.

The verse may be interpreted in three ways: (1) if َلَّا is taken to mean true faith, the verse would mean that as disbelievers think more of their worldly interests than of God, they are unable to recognize the truth of Islam. Thus the verse signifies that in order to attain true faith, which is the essence of all righteousness and the highest form of good, one must be prepared to sacrifice everything that one holds dear. (2) If َلَّا is taken in the sense of goodness of a high order, the verse would mean that though whatever is spent in the cause of God is an act of righteousness, yet the highest stage of righteousness can be attained only by spending in the way of God that which one loves best. (3) If, however, the word َلَّا is taken to mean high morals, the verse would signify that high morals cannot be attained without inculcating a true spirit of sacrifice.

It is on record in the Hadith that when this verse was revealed, Abū Ṭalḥa, a Companion of the Holy Prophet, stood up and addressing him said, "O Messenger of God, my garden known as Bi'r Rauhā (this garden was situated opposite to the Mosque at Medina) is to me the dearest of my property and I hereby give it in charity" (Bukhārī, ch. on Tafsīr). This illustrates how the early converts to Islam strove to practise the highest good, as the Quran enjoined upon them.

380. Important Words:

َلَّا (all) is a very common Arabic word used to express two senses: (1) all members of a group; (2) all parts of an individual thing. The word may generally be rendered as, all; whole; each; every one, etc. It is also sometimes used in the sense of not "all" but "the majority of", and rarely even in the sense of "some" or "part of" (Aqrab & Taj).

Commentary:

The preceding verses emphasize the importance of complete submission to the will of God. The highest good cannot be attained without the sacrifice of most beloved things, including personal and national sentiments. The present verse cites an apt illustration. Whereas God had allowed "all food" to the Jews, the Israelites forbade themselves parts thereof on the ground that Jacob, for personal and medical considerations, abstained from partaking of them. But as the word Israel, primarily the name of Jacob, is also used about his children and descendants and has been so used in the Bible, it may also be taken in this
95. Now whoso forges a lie against Allah after this, then it is these that are the wrongdoers.  

96. Say, 'Allah has spoken the truth: follow, therefore, the religion of Abraham, \textit{who was ever inclined to God}; and he was not of those who associate gods with God.'

\begin{quote}
\textit{See 3:68.}
\end{quote}

sense in the second clause of the present verse.

By saying, \textit{All food was lawful to the children of Israel}, the Quran also refutes an objection of the People of the Book, which served as an obstacle in the way of their accepting Islam. There were certain kinds of food which the Jews abstained from eating but which were allowed by Islam. One such thing was the sciatic nerve, to which reference is made in Gen. 32:32. Jacob suffered from sciatica, and, therefore, for medical reasons he forbade himself the use of the sciatic nerve as food. This was a personal matter but the children of Israel followed his example blindly and made it a rule of conduct to abstain from the eating of the sinew. It was not forbidden by Law, the abstention being purely voluntary.

Moreover, the incident which led to the abandonment of the sciatic nerve as food by Israel and later by the Israelites took place long before the Torah was revealed. The Torah itself does not forbid it but merely mentions it as a practice of the Jews who had, therefore, no right to object to its use by the Muslims. The objection, if valid, also held good against Abraham and many other Prophets. Besides, there are some foods which were used by Abraham and his descendants but were later forbidden by the Torah. The camel is an instance of this kind. Hence, the verse purports to say that if certain foods used by the patriarchs are allowed to other peoples, the Jews have no right to object.

It may be pointed out here that there is a difference of meaning between \textit{kullu-la‘āmin} and \textit{kull al-la‘āmi} as used in the present verse. The former means, every kind of food, while the latter means, all food i.e. the whole food. It appears that the Jews objected that the Muslims ate the whole meat, not excepting even the nerve.

381. \textbf{Commentary:}

The word \textit{الله} (this) refers to the statement made in the preceding verse. To say that such and such parts of food were disallowed by God whereas He had not forbidden them, or even without directly attributing any commandant to God persistently to abstain from partaking of a lawful food without just reason virtually amounted to forging a lie against God which only wrongdoers could resort to.

382. \textbf{Commentary:}

By saying that Abraham was ever obedient to God, the verse hints that he did not prohibit the eating of any particular meat of his own accord, as the Israelites have done. So by differing from the Israelites in this matter, Islam does not go against the way and the practice of the Prophets of God, particularly that of Abraham.

By saying that Abraham did not associate gods with God, the Jews are reminded that it
97. Surely, the first House founded for mankind is that at Becca, abounding in blessings and a guidance for all peoples.\(^{383}\)

98. In it are manifest signs; it is the place of Abraham; and whoso enters it, enters peace. And pilgrimage to the House is a duty which men—those who can find a way thither—owe to Allah. And whoever disbelieves, let him remember that Allah is surely independent of all creatures.\(^{384}\)


is they themselves who set up gods with God and go against the religion of Abraham, to whom the will of his Master was all in all.

383. Important Words:

\(\text{كَبَّة} \) (Becca) is the name given to the valley of Mecca. The word is probably derived from \(\text{كَبَّ} \), i.e. he pushed him into a narrow and crowded place. They say \(\text{كَبَّ} \) means, he dealt blows on his neck and broke it. \(\text{كَبْتَ} \) means, the people crowded round the thing. The valley of \(\text{كَبَّة} \) (Mecca) is called \(\text{كَبَّة} \) (Becca) probably on account of the crowding of the people there, or because it used to break the necks of the tyrants (Aqrab). The word \(\text{كَبَّة} \) (Becca) is also considered by some to be the same as Mecca, its \(\text{مُكَبَّة} \) having been changed into \(\text{مَكَّة} \). These two letters are interchangeable as in \(\text{لمَكَّة} \) and \(\text{لَاذِمَة} \).

Commentary:

See note on 2:128 with regard to the antiquity of the Ka'ba.

In this verse, the Quran draws the attention of the People of the Book to the antiquity of the Ka'ba in order to point out that the real and original centre of God's religion is the Ka'ba, those adopted by Jews and Christians being of later origin. Just as certain foods which Jews abstained from were not originally forbidden but came subsequently to be held unlawful, similarly their Qibla was not the original Qibla but was adopted as such at a subsequent time.

384. Commentary:

After alluding to the historical evidence in favour of the Ka'ba, the Quran proceeds to state that reason also demands that the Ka'ba should be adopted as the Qibla. The verse gives three reasons to show that the Ka'ba is entitled to be adopted as the Qibla or the centre of God's religion.

The first reason, as hinted in the words, the place of Abraham, is that Abraham came and prayed here. Jews and Christians, to both of whom Abraham is worthy of great reverence, have to admit that Abraham visited the place. Therefore it cannot be denied that it is a blessed place.

The second reason, referred to in the words whoso enters it enters peace, is that the Ka'ba not only promises but also affords peace and security to those who enter it. This promise has been literally fulfilled. Temporally, God has ever protected it against wars and invasions both in ancient and modern times. The way in which Abraha, ruler of Yemen, and his hosts
were destroyed when they tried to invade the Ka'ba and the way in which this territory, which then formed a part of the dominion of Turkey, was kept outside the conflict during the last World War (1914-18) afford remarkable instances of how miraculously God protects the Ka'ba. Unlike the sacred places of other nations, it has never fallen into the hands of a people who would not revere it. Even in the Days of Ignorance when the different tribes of pagan Arabia were constantly at war with one another, the territory of the Ka'ba was held to be sacred and no fighting was allowed therein. Spiritually, also, it is a place of security for those who enter it in the spiritual sense, i.e. embrace the religion of Islam. They become recipients of divine favours and enjoy security from the punishment of God.

The third reason which entitles the Ka'ba to be adopted as the Qibla is hinted at in the words, pilgrimage to the House is a duty which men owe to God. The verse contains an implied promise on the part of God that the Ka'ba shall ever continue to be the centre to which men of different countries and diverse nations will resort for Pilgrimage. The fulfilment of this promise is proof of the fact that the Ka'ba has indeed been designed by God to be the Qibla of all nations.

Every Muslim who can find a way to Mecca is bound to perform Pilgrimage to the Ka'ba once in his lifetime. If he performs it more than once, it is regarded as a supererogatory act of devotion.

The words, who can find a way thither, embody three conditions: (1) one should have the necessary conveyance for performing the journey; (2) one should have the necessary money to bear the expenses; and (3) there should be peace and security on the way (Dāwūd). If a person is sick, he is supposed to have no "way" and Pilgrimage does not become obligatory on him.

The words, and whoever disbelieves (let him remember) that Allah is surely independent of all creatures, signify that whoever refuses to accept the Ka'ba as the Qibla, in spite of the arguments given in its favour, should remember that these commandments have been given for the good of man himself; so if he does not act upon them, he only harms himself and does no harm to God, Who is "independent of all creatures."

The object of Pilgrimage is to accustom men to leave their home and country and suffer separation from relatives and friends for the sake of God. The Pilgrimage to Mecca is also a symbol of the respect shown to places where the will of God was specially manifested and a reminder of the incidents connected with that manifestation. It reminds believers of the long and hazardous journey of Abraham and Ishmael to the desert valley of Mecca and of Ishmael's being left in that desert by Abraham; it tells them in speechless eloquence how those who make sacrifices in the way of God are protected and honoured by Him; and it fosters their faith in the power and might of God. Again, the pilgrim, on finding himself near the place which has, from the beginning of the world, been dedicated to the worship of God, is sure to experience a peculiar spiritual association with those who have, through centuries, been bound together by the love and remembrance of God.

Beside this, the Pilgrimage to Mecca has great social and political significance; for Muslims from all parts of the world who meet here once a year can exchange views and establish and renew relations of love and brotherhood. They have opportunities of acquainting themselves with the problems that confront Muslims in different countries, of copying one another's good points, profiting by one another's experience and of co-operating with one another. It is, however, a matter of great regret that
99. Say, "O People of the Book! why deny ye the Signs of Allah, while Allah is Watchful of what you do?"\textsuperscript{385}

100. Say, ‘O People of the Book! why hinder ye the believers from the path of Allah, seeking to make it crooked, while you are witnesses thereof? And Allah is not unmindful of what you do."\textsuperscript{386}

101. O ye who believe! if you obey any party of those who have been given the Book, they will turn you again into disbelievers after you have believed.\textsuperscript{387}

\textsuperscript{385} Important Words:

\textsuperscript{386} Commentary:

\textsuperscript{387} Commentary:
102. How would you disbelieve, while to you are rehearsed the Signs of Allah, and His Messenger is present among you? "And he who holds fast to Allah is indeed guided to the right path."  

R. 11 103. O ye who believe! fear Allah as He should be feared; and let not death overtake you except when you are in a state of submission.

had turned believers and others who were indifferent. Muslims have already been warned of this danger in 2:110.

388. Commentary:
The words, who holds fast to Allah, have two meanings: (1) whoever preserves himself from sin by acting on God's commandments; (2) whoever connects himself with Allah and cleaves firmly to Him, thereby securing for himself an everlasting source of rise and progress.

389. Commentary:
As the spiritual degradation of the Jews was due to lack of or God-fearingness, Muslims are warned to be ever-watchful in this respect. The words rendered as, Fear Allah as He should be feared, embody a strong appeal in favour of (righteousness) and signify that on the one hand we should have a firm conviction that if we are remiss God will visit our sins with His punishment; and on the other we should also have a firm faith in His mercy and forgiveness. There is a tradition related by ‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbās which explains the above words as meaning: "God should be obeyed, and should not be disobeyed. We should be grateful to Him, and should not show ingratitude to Him. We should remember Him and not forget Him." (Kathīr). The words also mean that one should not fear any reproach with respect to God, and should observe equity for God's sake even if by doing so one may have to injure one's own self or one's parents or children or other near relatives.

The words, let not death overtake you except when you are in a state of submission, mean that we should be ever resigned to the will of God, so that when death overtakes us, it should find us obedient and resigned to His will. As the hour of death is not known, one can be sure of dying in a state of resignation to God only if one is continually in that condition, hence the expression means that one should always remain obedient to God. It may also mean that our love of obedience to God should be such that He, out of regard for our feelings, may not let death come upon us at a time when we are not perfectly resigned to Him.
And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allah and be not divided; and remember the favour of Allah which He bestowed upon you when you were enemies and He united your hearts in love so that by His grace you became as brothers; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah explain to you His commandments that you may be guided.

390. Important Words:
- جل (rope). They say جل‬ i.e. he bound or tied him with a rope or cord. جل (means, he caught the game with a snare or net.
- حمل (woman). حمل means, the woman became pregnant.
- جل (means, a rope or cord or anything with which a thing is tied or made fast; a bond or cause of union or link of connection, such as a bond of love or friendship; mutual connection by such a bond; a covenant or compact; an obligation by which one becomes responsible for the safety of a person or thing; a promise or assurance of security or safety; an artery, vein or nerve (Lane). It also means alliance and protection (Aqrab).

Commentary:
Another cause of the spiritual degradation of the Israelites was that they did not remain united but split up into sections, finding fault with one another. The verse warns Muslims against that danger. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "The Book of God is the rope of Allah which has been extended from the heavens to the earth" (Jarir, iv. 30).

Broadly speaking, there are three things which may be taken to have been here meant by the rope of God, by holding fast to which Muslims may remain united and be safe against disunion and disruption: (1) the Quran; (2) the Messenger of God; (3) the Successors to the Messenger of God.

The similitude may have reference to seafaring. Ropes are thrown to save the life of a drowning man. When a man falls into the sea or when a boat is wrecked by a storm, people in the boat or those standing on the shore throw out ropes to those who are struggling for their lives in the sea. The similitude is thus incidentally a refutation of the objection that the Quran restricts its similitudes to such objects only as were known to the desert-dwellers of Arabia.

It may be noted here that whenever the Quran speaks of the open or secret hostility of the enemies of Islam, it exhorts Muslims to be strong of faith; for it is at such times that one is likely to waver and show weakness in resolution. Thus after referring to the hostility of the People of the Book (3: 100, 101) the Quran exhorts Muslims: (1) to fear God as He should be feared (3: 103); (2) to be constant in obedience to God (3: 103); and (3) to hold fast to the rope of God and preserve themselves from disunion (3: 104).

The words, remember the favour of Allah, signify that as one can appreciate a boon of
105. And let there be among you a body of men who should invite to goodness, and enjoin equity and forbid evil. And it is they who shall prosper. 391

God properly only when one experiences the disadvantages that result from its absence, so the Quran reminds Muslims of the discord and enmity that existed between them before they became united in Islam.

The words, He united your hearts in love, show that according to Islam it is no great virtue to bear no malice or hatred to others. Nor does Islam inculcate a life of seclusion and detachment. What it requires is positive love for, and active sympathy with, fellow beings. One who is devoid of this is really devoid of true faith.

391. Commentary:

The word خير (goodness) here signifies Islam, because goodness in general is included in the word إكر (equity) used immediately after it. In fact, the true Faith (Islam) is the only goodness in the true sense of the word. The verse purports to say that as by making you enter the fold of Islam God has delivered you from a pit of fire, you should also try to deliver others from the fire of disbelief.

The words, And let there be among you a body of men who should invite to goodness, do not mean that the duty of preaching is confined to a few only. What is meant is that, whereas all should try to preach and propagate the truth of Islam, there should be a party of men among Muslims who should be wholly and solely devoted to this work.

As for the method of preaching, the Quran says elsewhere, Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation and argue with them (the disbelievers) in a way that is best (16:126). And the Holy Prophet is reported to have said, “If any one of you sees anything evil, let him remove it with his hand. If he cannot do it with his hand, then let him forbid it with his tongue. If he cannot do even that, then let him at least detest it in his mind, and that is the weakest kind of faith” (Muslim).

The verse also suggests a way by following which Muslims can maintain their unity. So long as a Muslim people have their attention concentrated on the preaching of Islam and doing good, they will live in peace among themselves, for disunion is mostly born of idleness and a false sense of security.

Each and every individual Muslim is not enjoined here to devote himself wholly to the preaching of Islam; for if it were so, Muslims could not earn their livelihood nor take part in other healthy pursuits of life. So, though all must contribute their quota, only a section of the community is required to devote itself exclusively to the work of preaching.
106. And be not like those who became divided and who disagreed among themselves after clear proofs had come to them. And it is they for whom there shall be a great punishment. \(^{392}\)

107. On the day when some faces shall be white, and some faces shall be black. As for those whose faces will be black, it will be said to them: 'Did you disbelieve after believing? Taste, then, the punishment because of your disbelief.' \(^{393}\)

---

392. Commentary:

The Quran does not merely give general philosophic teachings but actually refers to historical facts to bring home to the Faithful the gravity of the dangers that proved the ruin of peoples gone by. The verse, therefore, aptly refers to the dissensions of the People of the Book, and Muslims are enjoined to avoid them. The Holy Prophet says: "Whoso separates himself from the body of the Muslims even by the space of a span, throws off from his neck the rope of Muslim brotherhood (Dáwíd). Again, "who severs his connection (with the community of the Muslims) will be cast into the Fire" (Tirmidhi, ch. on Fitan).

393. Important Words:

*Piš* (shall be white) is derived from *aš*. They say *aš Piš thanā* i.e. he exceeded him in whiteness. *Piš* signifies whiteness, and *'aš* means white (Aqrab). The expression *aš Piš* means, his face became white, meaning, his face became expressive of joy i.e. he became joyful (Lane).

*Wud* (will turn black) is derived from *sad*. They say *sad thanā* i.e. he exceeded him in blackness. *Wud* means, he or it turned black. *Sod* means, blackness, and *aš Sod* means, black (Aqrab). *Wud* means, his face became black, meaning, his face became expressive of grief or sorrow (Lane). Whiteness is sometimes used to denote a good and happy condition; while blackness is a token of a bad condition and failure (Aqrab under *yās*).

Commentary:

The Quran itself explains "whiteness" and "blackness" as emblematic of "happiness" and "sorrow" respectively (see 3:108 and 16:59 and also compare 75:23 and 80:39, 40). Similarly, when a person does a deed for which he is praised, the Arabs say of him *aš Sod thanā* i.e. the face of such a one has become white or *Piš thanā* i.e. God has made the face of such a one white. On the contrary, if a person does a deed for which he is reproached, it is said of him *Sod thanā* i.e. his face has become black, or *Wud thanā* i.e. Allah has blackened his face. Thus the words *Piš* and *Wud* are used to denote a change of condition whether good or bad.
108. And as for those whose faces will be white, they will be in the mercy of Allah; therein will they abide.

109. These are the Signs of Allah, We rehearse them to thee while they comprise the truth; and Allah wills not any wrong to His creatures.

110. And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and to Allah shall all affairs be returned for decision.

The words, *Allah wills not any wrong*, mean that by calling upon mankind to accept the Holy Prophet, God does not intend to cause them harm; in fact, He desires to have mercy on them. The interests of mankind required that a Prophet should have been sent to them.

394. Important Words:
The words (lit. 'with truth' and translated as, while they comprise the truth) signify, *firstly*, that these Signs or words of God are full of truths; *secondly*, that they have come as a matter of right i.e. you had a right to receive them; *thirdly* that, this was the proper time for their recital. See also 3:4

395. Commentary:
As whatever is in the heavens and in the earth belongs to God, so it was in the fitness of things that finally a Prophet with a universal mission should have been raised. The previous system of raising separate Prophets for separate peoples and separate periods was meant only by way of preparation. Now was the time of one God and one Prophet.
111. aYou are the best people raised for the good of mankind; byou enjoin what is good and forbid evil and believe in Allah. And if the People of the Book had believed, it would have, surely, been better for them. Some of them are believers, but most of them are disobedient.\textsuperscript{396}

112. They cannot harm you save a slight hurt; and if they fight you, they shall show you their backs. Then they shall not be helped.\textsuperscript{397}

\textsuperscript{396} Commentary:

The verse not only claims that the Muslims are the best people—a great claim indeed—but also gives reasons for it. These reasons are: (1) Muslims have been raised for the good of others; (2) they have been raised not for the good of any one people or any one country but for the good of all mankind; (3) it has been made their duty to enjoin what is good and forbid evil and believe in one God. The history of Islam bears ample testimony to the fact that Muslims fulfilled all the hopes expressed in this verse. They were not only the torch-bearers of Islam to the four corners of the world but they also contributed to the betterment of other peoples in a most remarkable manner. The renaissance of the West was mostly, if not entirely, due to their influence (e.g. The Making of Humanity by Robert Briffault).

The greatness of a people is proportionate to the magnitude of their work. As Muslims were to bring about the good of all mankind, they have been declared the greatest of all peoples. In fact, the real purpose of a Muslim's life is to do good to humanity. As Islam is the greatest good, so Muslims have been enjoined to convey its message to the whole world. They are also required to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. There are other people also who claim to enjoin good and forbid evil, but their aim in doing so is to contribute to the strength or betterment of their own respective communities. The Quran warns Muslims against having such restricted motives by adding the words, and you believe in Allah, i.e. your preaching should be for God's sake only Who is the Lord of the worlds.

The assignment of this great task to Muslims also implies the appearance of divine Messengers among them from time to time, for it is heavenly Messengers alone who can best perform this duty; and it is through them that we can properly realize the true significance of this task.

It may also be pointed out here that, according to this verse, the excellence of the Muslim people is governed by, and is subject to, the above conditions i.e. preaching Islam to mankind and enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil; mere lip-profession of Islam cannot entitle anyone to claim excellence.

\textsuperscript{397} Commentary:

The words, they cannot harm you save a slight
113. "Smitten shall they be with abasement wherever they are found, unless they have protection from Allah, or protection from men. They have incurred the wrath of Allah, and smitten are they with wretchedness. That is because they would reject the Signs of Allah and kill the Prophets unjustly. That is because they rebelled and used to transgress."

hurt, signify that Jews, in spite of their great enmity to Islam, will not be able to do Muslims more than a slight injury, and this is what actually happened.

The words, they shall show you their backs, contain a prophecy which met with its fulfilment three times by the defeat at Medina of the hostile Jewish tribes who made common cause with the Arab tribes. They were guilty of treachery and met with the punishment they deserved.

The words are equally applicable to the enemies of Islam in general. Preaching of the divine message can bring upon Muslims only temporary trouble. If they persevere in preaching with sincerity and patience, they are sure to come out successful in their endeavour. On the other hand, if the enemies of Islam take up arms against Muslims for their preaching of Islam, God will help the latter against their enemies and grant them victory.

398. Important Words:

اءل (protection). See 3:104.

سکن (wretchedness) is derived from سكن i.e. be or it was or became still or silent or motionless. سکن means, the state of a سکن; lowliness or submissiveness; lowness, abasement or humiliation; paucity of property; evil state or condition; weakness; poverty of mind, etc. (Lane). It also means disgrace and wretchedness (Aqrab); also loss of the power of movement (Mufradiit).

Commentary:

This verse contains an important and far-reaching prophecy regarding Jews. They are for ever doomed to disgrace and humiliation. They have ever to live in subjection to other Powers. The history of the Jewish people from the time of the Holy Prophet up to the present day bears woeful testimony to the truth of this awful prophecy. In all countries and in all ages, the present age of enlightenment and toleration not being excepted, they have been the victims of bitter persecution and have been subjected to diverse kinds of disgrace and humiliation. Their practice of usury has also made them the hated of all nations.

The word ئ meaning here as "protection" is full of significance and is applicable in almost all its different meanings for which see 3:104. Generally speaking, the divine rope, or in other words, "protection from Allah," refers to Islam; and "protection from men" refers to the protection of non-Muslim Powers. The latter may be illustrated by the Treaty of Versailles, which afforded the Jews a temporary protection, while the former was made possible through a section of them accepting the Holy Prophet. In the present age, the Promised Messiah (Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam), whom
114. "They are not all alike. Among the People of the Book there is a party who stand by their covenant; they recite the word of Allah in the hours of night and prostrate themselves before Him."

115. They believe in Allah and the Last Day, and enjoin what is good and forbid evil, and hasten, vying with one another, to good works. And these are among the righteous.

God has raised as the saviour of mankind, is the emblem of protection for the Jews. They can save themselves by accepting him.

The word مِكَّة rendered as “wretchedness” also signifies, humiliation, disgrace, and loss of the power of movement. All these have been the fate of the Jews. They have often been expelled from countries, and even today in Russia there are certain districts which they are not permitted to enter. The recent persecution of the Jews in Germany and other countries of Europe is only too well-known to need a reference.

The clause, kill the Prophets unjustly, refers not only to the attempt of the Jews to crucify Jesus, but also to their plots to kill the Holy Prophet of Islam.

The verse also serves as a warning to Muslims that if they rejected the Promised Messiah, who has come in the spirit and power of Jesus as well as of the Holy Prophet and whose duty it is to preach and rejuvenate Islam, they would also be smitten with the same disgrace which has been the lot of the Jews for their rejection of Jesus and the Holy Prophet.

399. Important Words:

(a party who stand by the covenant) may give a number of meanings besides the one given in the text e.g.: (1) a party or people who perform well the duties entrusted to them; (2) a people who stand up for Prayer in the latter part of the night, an act of worship highly commended both in the Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet.

Commentary:

The words, a party who stand by their covenant, refer to those among the Jews who embraced Islam (see the next verse and also 4:163). The view finds further support from the words, and prostrate themselves before Him, for (prostration) was not included in the worship performed by Jews. The exhortation to Mary conveyed in the words, and prostrate thyself (3:44), was only an exceptional commandment specifically meant for her.
116. And whatever good they do, they shall not be denied its due reward; and Allah well knows the Godfearing. 400

117 As for those who disbelieve, their possessions and their children shall not avail them aught against Allah; and these are the inmates of the Fire; therein shall they abide. 461

118. The likeness of what they spend for the present life is as the likeness of a wind wherein there is intense cold, which smites the harvest of a people who have wronged themselves and destroys it. And Allah has not wronged them, but they wrong themselves. 402

400. Commentary:
The verse shows that Islam is not a national or tribal religion, but that whoever joins it, no matter from what nation or creed he comes, will receive the same reward as any other follower of the Faith, provided, of course, he acts righteously. In Islam no preferential or prejudicial treatment is meted out to the members of any particular nationality. A Jew, and for that matter any other man, after embracing Islam, is on a par with an Arab Muslim.

401. Commentary:
If disbelievers employ their wealth and their children in opposition to God, these shall not serve as protection against divine punishment which must overtake them. But if they employ their wealth and their children in order to win the pleasure of God, this is sure ultimately to lead to their guidance. A Companion of the Holy Prophet is reported to have once said to him that in the Days of Ignorance i.e., before he accepted Islam, he had given a hundred camels in charity and asked him whether that charity would bring him any reward. The Holy Prophet promptly replied, “Your acceptance of Islam is a result of the very charity you practised” (Bukhārī, ch. on Zakāt).

402. Important Words:
مراسب (intense cold). They say، i.e. the door made a sound or a creaking sound. مرآة means, the bird (hawk or falcon) uttered its cry. مرآة means, it (plant) became smitten with intense cold; or he (a person) had an iron collar put round his neck. So مرآة means: (1) intense cold; (2) cold that smites the herbage and
119. O ye who believe! a take not others than your own people as intimate friends; they will not fail to corrupt you. They love to see you in trouble. Hatred has already shown itself through the utterances of their mouths and what their breasts conceal is greater still. We have made clear to you Our commandments, if you will understand:


\[\text{Commentary:}\]

The idea underlying this verse is that the efforts of the disbelievers against Islam will react only against themselves. Whatever they do and whatever they spend with a view to injuring or destroying Islam will only injure the disbelievers themselves. God sent Islam for the good of the people, but by rejecting it they are bringing about their own ruin.

\[\text{403. Important Words:}\]

- **جماعة** (intimate friends) is derived from شماع, i.e. it was or became hidden. **جماعة** means, a lining; an inner vest; a close and intimate friend or friends; a friend or friends to whom one reveals one’s secrets (Aqrab).

- **خيانة** (corruption) is derived from خباي. They say خباي, i.e. he made him or it corrupt or evil. **خباي** means, the grief affected and vitiated his reason. خباي الرجل من كذا means, he confined the man and prevented him from it. خباي means, corruption or bad condition whether of body or reason or actions; loss or deterioration; ruin or destruction; fatal poison (Aqrab).

- **عنة** (in trouble) is derived from عنة. They say عنة, i.e. the thing became bad or corrupt. **عنة** means, misfortune befell him and he got into trouble. **عنة** زيد means, the bone became weak and broke after it was in a good condition. **عنة الرجل** means, the man committed a sin (Aqrab). See also 2:221.

\[\text{Commentary:}\]

The words لا بالونكم خباي, rendered as, they will not fail to corrupt you, may also mean:

(1) they have no scruple in ruining you; (2) they leave no stone unturned to spoil your work; (3) they will do what they can to corrupt your religion; (4) they are always busy in injuring you.

The words ودراً ما هنم (they love to see you in trouble) may, in the light of the meanings given under Important Words above, mean:

(1) they love to see you fall into calamity and misfortune; (2) they love to see you perish; (3) they love to see you become weak and broken; (4) they love to see you become sinful.

Obviously, this verse refers to avoiding such non-Muslims only as are at war with Muslims or such as seek to injure Islam in any other way. It does not require Muslims to have absolutely no relations with any non-Muslim. Elsewhere, the Quran says: Allah forbids you
120. Behold, you are those who love them, but they love you not. And you believe in all the Book. When they meet you, they say, 'We believe;' but when they are alone, they bite their finger-tips at you for rage. Say, 'Perish in your rage.' Surely, Allah knows well what is hidden in your breasts. 404

121. If anything good befall you, it grieves them; and if an evil befall you, they rejoice thereat. But if you be steadfast and righteous, their designs will not harm you at all: surely, Allah encompasses all that they do. 405

not respecting those who have not fought against you on account of your religion and who have not driven you out from your homes, that you be kind to them and deal equitably with them. Surely Allah loves those who are equitable (60:9).

404. Commentary:

As borne out by the context, words like "and they do not believe in all the Book" must be taken to be understood after the words, you believe in all the Book.

The words, perish in your rage, have been addressed to such Jews as are the enemies of Islam and seek to destroy it. The words are meant as a rebuke. When every effort has been made to reform them, and they would not listen, then they should suffer the consequences of their blind hostility.

405. Commentary:

The enemies of Islam, both open and secret, are grieved to see the success of believers and try to minimize it. But when Muslims meet with some failure, they rejoice and try to exaggerate it. Their object is to dishearten and discourage believers.

The words, Allah encompasses their deeds, signify that God will bring to nought all their doings and destroy them. Muslims should not therefore fear them. All machinations of the enemies of Islam are known to God, Who will frustrate them.
And remember the time when thou didst go forth early in the morning from thy household, assigning to the believers their positions for battle. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

406. Commentary:

In the preceding verses Muslims have been taught the lesson of patience, perseverance and righteousness. If they act upon it, they will succeed and no enemy can injure them. Now the same lesson is brought home to them by an illustration from their current history.

The verse refers to the important Battle of Uhud, which was fought in the third year of Hijra. After sustaining a crushing defeat at Badr, the Quraysh of Mecca began to make preparations in earnest for another attack on the Holy Prophet and his followers at Medina. Accordingly, next year a well-equipped army of 3,000 warriors marched against Medina under the leadership of Abu Sufyan. When the Holy Prophet heard of it, he consulted his Companions as to the best way of meeting the enemy. The majority of the older Companions were of the opinion that they should remain in the city and defend themselves. 'Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salil, leader of the hypocrites, was also of the same opinion. The Holy Prophet also held the same view. He had seen in a dream that the Muslim army had suffered a loss, although it had also inflicted loss on the enemy. So he desired to remain in the city and there wait for the enemy. But the majority of his followers, mostly young men and such of the older people as had not taken part in the Battle of Badr, were eager to march out of Medina and meet the enemy in pitched battle. The Holy Prophet respected the wishes of the majority and decided to march out. Later, however, the majority thought better of the matter and veered round to the opinion of the Holy Prophet. But now the Holy Prophet refused to change his mind, saying that it did not behove a Prophet of God to put down his armour after he had once put it on till God decided between him and the enemy. So he marched out of Medina with a force of 1,000 men. A large party of Jews, who were apparently in alliance with the Muslims, wished to join him. But the Holy Prophet did not accept their help. They were a treacherous people and God had just warned him against them, saying, They will not fail to corrupt you; they love to see you in trouble (3:119).

When the Holy Prophet had proceeded some distance, 'Abdullah bin Ubayy, leader of the hypocrites, deserted and returned to Medina. On the pretext that his advice to stay in Medina had been ignored and that the help of the Jews, whom he had brought as reinforcement, had also been rejected. This reduced the Muslim army to only 700 men. At this sudden defection on the part of 'Abdullah, a tribe from the Khazraj called Banu Haritha, and a tribe from the Aus called Banu Salma, in spite of being sincere Muslims, showed signs of wavering and thought of deserting, but God saved them from such defection (3:123).

On entering the valley of Uhud, the Holy Prophet arrayed his men in battle order with their backs towards the hill and their faces towards Medina. As a further precaution, he stationed 50 archers at a certain point on the hill in the rear of the Muslim army under the leadership of 'Abdullah bin Jubair, with express orders not to quit the place until so ordered by the Prophet himself, even if they saw the
123. When two of your groups meditated cowardice, although Allah was their friend. And upon Allah should the believers rely.  

Meccans fleeing before the Muslims or even if they saw the Muslims being defeated and their bodies being eaten by birds.

As was the custom in Arabia, the battle commenced with single combats, resulting in the death of several disbelievers and some Muslims. Then the enemy made a general assault, which was repeated thrice, and each time they were completely repulsed. The battle waged hot, but at last the enemy force broke and they were forced to flee, pursued by the Muslims, so much so that some of the latter began to collect the booty.

When the party stationed on the hill in the rear of the army saw this, they thought of leaving their position, thinking that as the battle was over the object of the Holy Prophet's commandment was fulfilled and their presence on the hill was no longer needed. Their leader remonstrated with them and asked them to stick to the place in obedience to the Holy Prophet's command. But they paid no heed to his words and left the place. A few, however, remained behind with him on the hill. Khālid bin Walīd, who was among the disbelievers, having not yet embraced Islam, at once saw his opportunity and with a party of disbelievers attacked and killed the few men with their leader who had remained behind, and fell on the Muslims from the rear. Seeing this, the fleeing Meccans also took heart and returned to the attack, and in the confusion that followed some one mischievously shouted that the Prophet had been killed. This disheartened the believers, some of whom fled to Medina, and others left the battlefield, overwhelmed with grief at the supposed death of their Holy Master. Many, however, not desiring to live when the Prophet was dead, rushed into the ranks of the enemy and died fighting bravely.

The confusion was so complete that the Holy Prophet was at one time left with only twelve Companions; at another time, he had only two Companions with him and was thus practically left all alone. All this time, he was the centre of the enemy's attacks, but the few Companions that stood by him shielded him with their bodies and, standing like statues of stone, received all the arrows and all the blows on their bodies which became pierced like sieves. But they did not swerve even by the fraction of an inch from their place lest by so doing they should expose the body of the Holy Prophet. Whenever any one of them fell, his place was promptly taken by another. The Holy Prophet was also wounded. One of his teeth was broken by a stone and a ring of his helmet was smashed into his face by a ruthless blow. When the Companions who still remained in or near the battlefield learned that their Master was alive, a section of them gathered round him and, repelling the attacks of the enemy, slowly took him to a safe place on the hillside. Then the enemy withdrew. More than seventy of the Companions fell in the battle, including Hamzah, the valiant uncle of the Holy Prophet; and many were wounded. But as later events showed, this calamity, however great in itself, did not prove a check to the forward march of Islam. The rest of the battle is described in the succeeding verses.

407. Important Words:

They say }يتكل (should rely) is derived from } ولكن (wakala). i.e. he left the matter
124. "And Allah had already helped you at Badr when you were weak. So take Allah for your protector that you may be grateful.\[408\]

\[\text{Commentary:}\]

The two groups mentioned here were, as stated above, the two tribes of Banū Salma and Banū Ḥāritha, belonging respectively to Aus and Khazraj. Their idea of returning (referred to in the note under the preceding verse) was not due to any doubt on their part with regard to the truth of Islam, but was merely due to weakness born of attending circumstances. But as they were sincere believers, God saved them from yielding to this weakness. See also note on 3:122.

The clause, upon Allah should the believers rely, does not mean that a Muslim should neglect material means and confine himself to praying to God and waiting for His help. This is a misguided conception of تَرْكَ (trusting in God) which finds no support in Islamic teachings. What Islam teaches is this, that a true believer should use all the available means of attaining an object but should, at the same time, not rely upon them. He should trust in God alone looking upon worldly means as only being effective under the will of God. "Tie the knees of your camel and then trust in God," says the Holy Prophet—an extremely difficult position but nevertheless the only right way of demonstrating true faith in God!

\[\text{408. Important Words:}\]

بدر (Badr) literally means the full moon. The verb form بُرِ ا (Badr) from which the noun form is derived gives the sense of making haste. They say بُرِ ا (Badr) i.e. he hastened towards it. بدر, in the sense of full moon, is so called because it hastens to rise before the sun sets and to set before the sun rises. بدر is also the name of a place on the route between Mecca and Medina. It takes its name from a spring which belonged to a man named بدر. The Battle of Badr referred to here took place near this place.

\[\text{Commentary:}\]

These words are addressed to Muslims through the Holy Prophet, who actually used them after the Battle of Uhud. They remind the Faithful that God had granted them victory at Badr while they were much weaker than at the time of the Battle of Uhud, because they behaved obediently, patiently and God-fearingly on that occasion. So the setback at Uhud was due to their own weakness and the disobedience, though not quite intentional, which some of them showed to their Master. But the words also imply a promise of help in future if the Muslims repent of their mistake and behave like true believers.
125. When thou didst say to the believers, "Will it not suffice you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels sent down from on high?" 409

126. Yea, if you be steadfast and righteous and they come upon you immediately in hot haste, your Lord will help you with five thousand angels, attacking vehemently. 410

409. Commentary:
The verse means that if the Meccans made another attack upon Muslims sometime after Uhud, God would help the latter by sending down a force of three thousand angels. It is a mistake to think that these words refer to the Battle of Badr which has been mentioned in the preceding verse only incidentally in order to cite an illustration of how God helped steadfast Muslims in times of danger. Moreover, the number of angels sent at the Battle of Badr was, according to 8: 10, one thousand and not three thousand, as here stated. The fulfilment of the present promise is referred to in 3: 152 below.

410. Important Words:
فور (immediately) is derived from فَعَا. They say فَعَنْمَا, i.e. the water gushed forth from the earth. فَعَنْمَا means, the contents of the cooking pot vehemently boiled and rose high in it. فَعُرْنَا means, the intensity of heat or anger or the like. فَعَرْنَا الْهَيَار means, the first part of the day. فَعَرْنَا الْهَيَار signifies the state or condition that comes without delay. The Arabs say مَعْطَرْب من فَعُرْنَا, he returned or turned back immediately without tarrying (Aqrab).

سوم (attacking vehemently) is derived from سُوم. They say سُوم التَّوَرَّس, he branded the horse with a brand. سوم الخيل means, he let loose the horses for grazing, سُوم على عيّم means, he suddenly and vehemently attacked them and wrought havoc among them (Aqrab). In the verse under comment the word is used in the last-mentioned sense.

Commentary:
The verse signifies that if the disbelievers returned to the attack at once, without giving the Muslims any opportunity to recoup themselves, God would help the latter with five thousand angels. The difference in the number of angels—in the preceding verse the number mentioned being 3,000—was due to the difference in the condition of the Muslims. They were at that time exhausted and wounded and, therefore, needed greater help than they would have needed, if the enemy attack had been delayed.

The enemy did indeed think of returning, but God prevented them from doing so. Briefly stated, the facts are that when the Quraish were retracing their steps towards Mecca, members of the Arab tribes living in the vicinity of Medina asked them about the result of the battle, and when they declared that they were victorious, these men put them to shame by saying, "If you have been really
127. And Allah has made it only as glad tidings for you and to put your hearts at rest thereby; and help comes from Allah alone, the Mighty, the Wise.\(^411\)

128. God will do so that He might cut off a part of the disbelievers or abase them so that they might go back frustrated.\(^412\)

\(^{a8:11}\).

victorious, where are the spoils? What have you brought from the battlefield?" Touched to the quick by this taunt, the Quraysh decided to retrieve their shame by attacking the Muslims once more. When the Holy Prophet came to know of this, on the day following the battle, he gave immediate orders to march and directed that only those of his followers who had taken part in the Battle of Uhud should join him. The Muslims went as far as Hāmrah al-Asad, a place about eight miles from Medina. The Meccans were, however, so overawed by this unexpectedly bold and prompt appearance of the Holy Prophet and his followers that they decided to retreat hastily to Mecca. This was due to the fear which the angels had inspired in their hearts. Otherwise there was no reason for them to flee from an enemy upon whom they had inflicted so heavy a loss only a day before and who, besides being very much reduced in number, were utterly exhausted and were suffering from grievous wounds as a result of the previous day's fighting.

A recent Commentator, having translated the words, جَعَلَهُمْ نَفْرًةً فَمَا فِي هَذَا as "in a headlong manner," has applied them to the Battle of Ahzāb. This is not right. The fact is that verses 125 and 126, as already explained, are both connected with the Battle of Uhud and relate to the time immediately following it. The word يَعِبَت (yes) occurring in the beginning of the verse also denotes a connection between the verses and supplies the answer to the question in 3:125, viz: will it not suffice you? Thus the word اَنْشَأً would here mean "yes, it will suffice, and so will suffice a force of 5,000 angels if the enemy were to return to the attack at this very moment."

411. Commentary:
The verse is intended to warn Muslims against treating angels as gods or even as an independent source of help. Help comes from Allah alone; angels are entirely subservient to Him and do nothing by their own will. They come only by the command of God and do only what God commands them. The way in which angels help men is that they strengthen their hearts and fill their enemies with awe and fear. If God had so willed, a single angel would have been enough to help the Muslims, but He promised to send as many as five thousand angels in order to cheer and strengthen their hearts and to hint that a very large number of the hidden forces of nature were working in their favour. For the work and duties of angels see 2:31.

It may incidentally be noted here that some believers, and even some disbelievers, are reported to have actually seen the angels at the Battle of Badr. (Jarir, iv. 47). See also 8:11.

412. Important Words:

\(^{بَعْثُت\) (abase) is derived from بَعْثَت. They
129. Thou hast no concern in the matter: He may turn to them in mercy or punish them, for they are wrongdoers.\footnote{413}

say \( \text{kibah} \) i.e. (1) he overthrew or prostrated him; (2) he humbled or abased him; (3) he turned him away; (4) he turned him back with his fury; (5) he destroyed him or caused him to perish (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The words, or abase them, mean that if the disbelievers attacked the Muslims, they would be punished and a part of them killed, and if they did not attack the Muslims, they would retreat in abasement and disgrace. Actually, it was the lesser of the two alternatives that came to pass; for when the Holy Prophet, learning that the Meccans were contemplating an immediate attack on Medina marched out with his followers, the Meccans fled in disgrace and abasement (see note on 3:126).

The verse also shows that God sometimes makes conditional prophecies i.e. He predicts two alternative events of which only one is to occur, according as circumstances demand. In the present case, God knew that only the latter alternative would come to pass, yet He did not foretell it definitely. The coming of the angels, it may be noted further, was meant as a guarantee of the punishment or disgrace of the enemy, as the case might be.

413. Commentary:

This verse is erroneously supposed to contain a sort of admonition or warning to the Holy Prophet for his having prayed to God for the destruction of the Meccans. There is no mention of any such prayer here, nor was there any occasion for such a prayer. In fact, a Prophet never prays for the destruction of any people without the permission of God.

The words are meant only as an answer to those who attributed the reverse of the Muslims at Uhud to the alleged error of their leaving the city against the advice of experienced men. The Quran says that the result was brought about by the supreme wisdom of God and that the Holy Prophet had nothing to do with the matter. One good result of this verse was that many were guided to acceptance of Islam, seeing how God helped the Holy Prophet and how He afforded him protection although he was left alone in the battle.

The verse also contains a reply to the hypocrites, ‘Abdullah bin Ubayy and his followers, who had deserted the Holy Prophet at Uhud, saying that he had not followed their advice. It tells them that it was God Who was helping the Prophet, and Who, even after the reverse at Uhud, had fulfilled His promise regarding the ignominious retreat of the Meccans referred to in the preceding verse.

The words, that He might cut off a part of the disbelievers, and, or abase them, occurring in the preceding verse correspond to the words He may turn to them in mercy, and, or punish them, occurring in the present verse in the reverse order, the suggestion being that the part that will be cut off will be those who are to be punished by God, while those whom God will temporarily abase and who will return unsuccessful will be those to whom God is finally to turn in mercy; i.e. by returning safe, though unsuccessful, they will be afforded an opportunity to repent. Accordingly, we find that many of those who escaped alive were afterwards converted to Islam, and among them were men like Khâlid, son of Wâlîd; ‘Ikrîma, son of Abû Jahl; ‘Abd al-Rahmân, son of Abû Bakr, and many others who later made a name in the history of Islam. Abû Sufyân, Commander
130. "And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. He forgives whomsoever He pleases and punishes whomsoever He pleases, and Allah is most Forgiving, Merciful."

131. O ye who believe! "devour not interest involving diverse additions; and fear Allah that you may prosper."

Commentary:

The verse also throws light on the general nature of prophecies made by the Prophets of God. There is often an element of contingency or uncertainty in them; sometimes it is hidden and sometimes expressed as in the present verse. A clear alternative is put forward here in the form of mercy and punishment to be shown according to the will of God. The reason for this is that prophecies do not proceed from a mechanical or rigid source which is arbitrary and inflexible, but from God, Who possesses both the quality of mercy and the power to punish, which He exercises, according as circumstances demand. In keeping with this principle, the Prophets of God hold out the hope of salvation on condition of genuine repentance, even when they utter unqualified predictions about the doom of their enemies.

414. Commentary:

As Master and Owner, Allah is more inclined to forgiveness and mercy than to punishment, although He has sometimes to resort to the latter for the ultimate good of mankind.

415. Important Words:


اضافه ميتاء (involving diverse additions). اضافه is the plural of which originally means, the like of a thing. In its wider significance, the word means the like of a thing or more than that indefinitely. So اضافه means, manifold or simply a great addition, the addition being unlimited. ميتاء is the infinitive of اضافه. They say ميتاء i.e. he doubled it, or trebled it, or redoubled it, or, simply increased it indefinitely (Aqrab & Taj). The expression اضافه ميتاء would mean, increased manifold; or increased indefinitely. It should be noted that the words اضافه ميتاء are not used here as a qualifying phrase to restrict the meaning of ميتاء (interest) so as to confine it to a particular kind of interest. They are used as a descriptive clause to point to the inherent nature of ميتاء (interest) which involves a continual increase that never ends.

Commentary:

The charging of interest, although now legalized by Christian nations, was prohibited by Moses (see Exod. 22.25; Lev. 25:36, 37; Deut; 23:19).

The verse does not mean that usury is permissible at a moderate rate, only a high rate being disallowed. All interest is prohibited, whether moderate or excessive; and the words اضافه ميتاء rendered as, involving diverse additions, have been added only to point to the practice that was actually in vogue in
132. And afear the Fire prepared for the disbelievers.416

133. And obey Allah and the Messenger that you be shown mercy.

134. And vie with one another in asking for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Paradise whose price is the heavens and the earth, prepared for the God-fearing—417

The mention of the prohibition of interest while dealing with the subject of war is significant. We find that in 2:276-281 also the prohibition of interest has been mentioned in connection with the question of war. This shows that war and interest are closely related to one another—a fact amply borne out by the history of modern times. As a matter of fact, interest is one of the causes of war, and it also helps to prolong it. If there were no lending and borrowing at interest, wars could not be prolonged. If it is asked how the expenses of war are to be met in Islam, if money is not to be borrowed on interest, the answer is that when an aggressive war is forced upon Muslims, they are required to make free contributions for the sake of their religion and country. Suitable taxes also provide a fair means to meet the expenses of war, and taxes automatically prove a check on the undue prolongation of hostilities. See also 2:276, 277; 2:279, 280.

The mention of the prohibition of interest in connection with wars also shows that the verses of the Quran have not been thrown together at random but that there runs a wise and natural order through them.

416. Commentary:

In 2:276 also the prohibition of interest has been followed by a warning against fire. Evidently it is the fire of war that is primarily meant here. The word "disbelievers" besides being general may also here mean those who disobey the divine commandment relating to interest.

417. Important Words:

عرش (price). The verb عرض gives a number of meanings. They say عرض الشيء عليه i.e. he showed him the thing. عرض ل عرض means, some difficulty confronted him, or came across his way, or some accident happened to him. عرض means: (1) price of a thing in a form other than money; (2) breadth or width; (3) vastness; (4) goods; (5) a valley; (6) side of a mountain (Aqrab).

Commentary:

This verse is an answer to those who, obsessed by their present environments, think that commerce and other affairs of the world cannot be carried on without interest. God says that by following the teachings of Islam Muslims can and will enjoy all sorts of benefits.

The verse is an invitation to follow the commandments of Islam, which has been
135. Those who spend in prosperity and adversity, and those who suppress anger and pardon men; and Allah loves those who do good:

A man is said to exercise the quality of عفو when he obliterates from his mind, or totally forgets, the sins or mistakes committed against him by others. Where used with reference to God, the word signifies not only obliteration of sins but also obliteration of all traces thereof.

**Commentary:**

The verse describes three stages of dealing with other people. In the first stage, a spiritual wayfarer, when offended against, restrains or suppresses his anger. In the second stage, he goes a step further and grants forgiveness and free pardon to the offender. In the third stage, he not only grants the offender complete pardon, but also does a suitable act of kindness to him and bestows some favour upon him.

There is a tradition to the effect that once certain Companions asked the Holy Prophet, “If Paradise encompasses the heavens and the earth, where is Hell?” To this the Prophet replied: “Where is the night when the day comes?” (Kathir). This reply throws very interesting light on the nature of Heaven and Hell. The Holy Prophet has also said that the smallest reward of the inmates of Paradise will be as immense as the space between heaven and earth.

418. **Important Words.**

(those who pardon) is derived from which means, to obliterate or remove traces of a thing (Aqrab). See also 2:188.
136. And those who, when they commit a foul deed or wrong themselves, remember Allah and implore forgiveness for their sins,—and who can forgive sins except Allah?—and do not persist knowingly in what they have done,  

137. It is these whose reward is forgiveness from their Lord, and gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they shall abide; and how good is the reward of those who work!

419. Commentary:
This verse embodies a refutation of the Christian doctrine of Atonement. The words, remember Allah, mean that righteous persons are at once reminded of Allah whenever they happen to commit a sin. As a matter of fact, though even good men may occasionally fall into sin, their hearts are not dead and they are always ready to repent. So if they happen to commit a sin, it is due only to a temporary lapse, and not because they love to indulge in sin. Thus so long as a man "remembers God" immediately after he commits a sin and feels sincere remorse and compunction at his evil deed, there is always time for his repentance to be accepted. But when he goes on sinning until he loses all sense of sin and ceases to feel compunction and remorse at his evil deeds, he loses the power to repent and is doomed, unless God should work some special change in him.

The words, and who can forgive sins except Allah? have been introduced as a parenthetical clause to exhort sinners to repent. They are not made to repent through fear, but by being reminded of divine forgiveness. When God is Gracious and Forgiving, why should not man repent?

The words, do not persist knowingly, imply that whenever good men happen to commit an error, they do not try to justify their conduct, but frankly admit their mistake and then reform themselves. The verse does not, however, mean that a man should confess his sins to others. What is meant is that one should confess one's guilt to oneself i.e. one should feel that one has been in the wrong and should not proceed to defend one's conduct when some one else, or, for that matter, when one's own conscience reproaches one for one's misdeeds. Those truly righteous never try to deceive themselves.

420. Commentary:
When a man truly turns to God, after committing a sin, and sincerely repents of his misdeeds, he is forgiven by God. The verse makes it further clear that forgiveness is only the first stage. God leads those who repent to higher stages of spiritual progress and promises them Heaven.
138. Surely, "there have been many dispensations before you; so travel through the earth and see how evil was the end of those who treated the Prophets as liars."

139. This, the Quran, is a clear demonstration to men, and a guidance and an admonition to the God-fearing.

140. "Slacken not, nor grieve; and you shall certainly have the upper hand, if you are believers.

421. Important Words:
- سنه (dispensations) is the plural of سن which is derived from سن. They say i.e. he whetted or sharpened it (knife, appetite, etc.).
- سم (means) means, he made known or manifested the matter or the affair or the case.
- متى (means) means, he shaped or formed or fashioned the thing.
- سنعلوم (means) means, he established or instituted or prescribed for them a law or custom or mode of conduct.
- سن (means) means, (1) face or form; (2) way or course or rule of conduct; (3) way of acting instituted or pursued by a people and followed by others after them; (4) character or conduct or nature or disposition; (5) law or religious law or dispensation (Aqrab & Tāj).

Commentary:
The clause, there have been many dispensations before you, means that there have gone before you many nations following different systems or laws. So you should journey in the earth and see what class of men were saved and who perished and what was the end of those who persisted in evil.

422. Commentary:
The pronoun ها (this) may be taken to refer to (1) the Quran, or (2) the verse immediately preceding, or (3) the subject of repentance discussed in the foregoing verses.

The word متن (God-fearing or righteous) does not here necessarily apply to Muslims only. It extends to all persons who earnestly desire to guard against things that are fraught with danger to their souls and who take heed of their spiritual good. It is only such persons as are likely to benefit by admonition.

423. Important Words:
- ان (if) is a common Arabic word giving a number of meanings: (1) if, (2) not, (3) verily, (4) because, (5) when, etc. (Lane).

Commentary:
The expression, Slacken not, nor grieve, embodies a very important principle of national or, for that matter, personal strength, the words
141. "If you have received an injury, surely the disbelieving people have already received a similar injury. And such days We cause to alternate among men that they may be admonished, and that Allah may distinguish those who believe and may take witnesses from among you; and Allah loves not the unjust;[424]

"slacken not" pertaining to future dangers and the words "grieve not" to past errors and misfortunes. Nations fall only when, either through lack of true realization of their responsibilities they begin to slacken, or through brooding over the past, they give way to despair. The words warn against both these dangers.

The clause, you shall certainly have the upper hand, means that if Muslims follow the above advice, they will certainly be victorious in the end. Intervening failures are indeed no failures if the final triumph is assured. Muslims had apparently met with a reverse at Uhud, so God exhorts the Faithful to let no sort of weakness get hold of them on account of that reverse, either in body or in actions or in faith.

The Arabic clause rendered as, if you are believers, may also be rendered as "because you are believers". In this case the verse would embody a more positive promise of victory.

424. Important Words:

(derivative from which ordinarily means, he knew, but is also used in the sense of distinguishing. Ibn Jarir says under this verse that the expression لا علم لا علم من عرب, i.e. that I may distinguish 'Abdullah from 'Umar. The word is used in this sense in 2:144 and 2:221 also. In fact, God, being Omniscient, does not stand in need of knowing a thing, for everything is ever known to Him. It is only distinguishing between two things that is meant. Even, however, if علم is taken here in the sense of knowing, the expression may be explained by the fact that knowledge is of two kinds. One kind of knowledge consists of knowing a thing before it comes into existence; and the other kind consists of knowing it when, and as, it actually comes into existence. Here it is the latter kind of knowledge that is meant.

Commentary:

Elsewhere (in 3:166 below) it is said that Muslims inflicted upon disbelievers an injury double of what they themselves suffered. This refers to the Battle of Badr, when seventy Meccans were killed and seventy were taken prisoner, thus making a total of 140. In the Battle of Uhud, on the other hand, seventy Muslims were killed, but none of them were taken prisoner. Thus Muslims had inflicted on the disbelievers a double injury in the Battle of Badr compared with what they themselves suffered in the Battle of Uhud. Counting, however, only those killed in the two battles, the loss to Muslims and disbelievers has been spoken of in the present verse as similar. Or the verse might be taken to refer to the nature or quality of the misfortune, which was alike in both cases. In that case verse 166 below might be taken to refer to quantity and the present verse to quality.
142. And that Allah may purify those who believe, and destroy the disbelievers.\textsuperscript{425}

143. *Do you suppose that you will enter Heaven while Allah has not yet distinguished those of you that strive in the way of Allah and has not yet distinguished the steadfast?*\textsuperscript{426}

\textsuperscript{425} The word “days” is used both for the “days of success” and the “days of misfortune”. Here either of these may be taken, but preferably the latter.

The words, \textit{And such days We cause to alternate}, mean that even believers sometimes suffer reverses. If it were not so, then there would be little credit in being a believer. No effort is required to find or see the sun, and so one deserves no reward for it. In matters of faith, therefore, there is always present an element of secrecy, and only those who are seriously and earnestly desirous of knowing the truth can discern and accept it. Hence, they become deserving of reward in the sight of God. The words also implied a prophecy that the reverse at Uhud was to be followed by victory for the Muslims; and so it actually came to pass.

The words, \textit{Allah may distinguish those who believe}, signify that misfortunes are also intended to make the faith of true believers evident to all. When believers endure trials with patience and steadfastness and do not swerve from the path of faith, their sincerity becomes evident. Trials also serve to distinguish true believers from hypocrites. If there had been no trials, the hypocrisy of men like ‘Abdullah bin Ubayy and his associates would have remained undetected and unknown.

The word \textit{شهداء} (witnesses) does not here mean martyrs, for a true Muslim is always a martyr if killed in the cause of God. Moreover, there is no sense in saying that the reverse at Uhud was meant to take martyrs from among Muslims. Here, therefore, the word means witnesses. The Faithful bear witness to the truth of Islam by their steadfastness and by the noble example they set in times of misfortune. They are eloquent witnesses to the truth of Islam.

The word \textit{unjust} at the end of the verse signifies that in view of the facts stated above it is unjust to find fault with Islam on the basis of such reverses.

142. \textbf{Commentary}:

The reverse suffered at Uhud cleansed Muslims of their sins. It served as a sort of atonement for their sins. Moreover, the Battle of Uhud made some disbelievers realize that Islam was God’s religion. The very Meccans who took a leading part against the Muslims in that battle became ultimate converted to Islam. Their hearts were conquered and disbelief was thereby destroyed.

\textsuperscript{426} \textbf{Commentary}:

It is trials and afflictions which prove the worth of man; and there can be no advancement or spiritual purification without them.
144. And you used to wish for this death before you met it; now you have seen it while you were actually looking for it.\(^{427}\)

R. 15 145. And Muhammad is only a Messenger. Verily, all Messengers have passed away before him. If then he die or be slain, will you turn back on your heels? If he who turns back on his heels shall not harm Allah at all. And Allah will certainly reward the grateful.\(^{428}\)

427. Important Words:

\(\text{نظر} \) (looking for) is derived from \(\text{نظر} \), which ordinarily means, he saw or he looked. \(\text{نظر} \) or \(\text{نظر} \) means, he looked at, or he looked towards, him in order to see him; or he extended or stretched his sight towards him whether he saw him or not. \(\text{نظر} \) also means, he waited for him or it. \(\text{داري نظر داره} \) means, my house faces his house (Aqrab & Lane).

Commentary:

The word موت (death) here stands for war, for the result of war is death. War was death particularly for the Muslims, who were extremely weak, both in equipment and numbers compared with their powerful enemy. In Zurqānī we read that when before the Battle of Uhud the Holy Prophet proposed to fight the enemy from inside Medina, some of his Companions, particularly those who had not taken part in the Battle of Badr, said, “We had longed for this day. So go out with us to our enemies, so that they may not think that we have played the coward” (Zurqānī, i. 22). It is to this longing of the Muslims that reference is made in the words, you used to wish for this death. This longing meant that the Muslims wished to achieve something in the way of God, but God here reprimands them by saying that now they have seen that they could do nothing by themselves. This is why Islam teaches that one should never desire encounter with the enemy; but that if and when the occasion actually comes, one should be brave and steadfast. The Holy Prophet says: “Do not desire encounter with the enemy; rather ask for peace and security from Allah. But when you meet the enemy, then be steadfast and patient and know that Paradise lies under the shadow of the swords i.e. if you die fighting in the cause of God, He will surely grant you bliss and happiness in the life to come (Muslim, ch. on Jihad).

The pronoun in the words, seen it, refers to fighting. It signifies that you have now seen fighting and have, as a result of that, realized that without the help of God you possess no power to fight the enemy and can achieve nothing. The closing words, while you were actually looking for it, are intended to cheer up the spirits of believers. The reverse only brought them the thing they were actually looking for.

428. Commentary:

As already mentioned (3:122), the false report
was spread at Uhud that the Holy Prophet was killed. The verse refers to this incident and purports to say that although the report about the death of the Prophet was untrue, yet even if it had been true, that should not have made the faithful waver in their faith. Muhammad was only a Prophet; and as other Prophets before him had died, so would be. But the God of Islam ever lives.

It is also on record that when, seven years later, the Holy Prophet died, `Umar stood up in the Mosque at Medina with a drawn sword in his hand, and said, “Whoever will say that the Prophet of God is dead, I will cut off his head. He is not dead, but has gone to his Lord (i.e. he has ascended to heaven) even as Moses had gone to his Lord, and he would come back and punish the hypocrites.” At this stage, Abu Bakr, who happened to be away at the time of the Prophet’s death, hurriedly came back, went straight into the Prophet’s chamber and, seeing that he was really dead, kissed his forehead, saying, “Sweet art thou in death as thou wert in life, and surely God will not bring on thee two deaths.” Then he came out, strong and firm, asked `Umar to sit down and, addressing the Companions, who were gathered in the Mosque, recited to them this very verse i.e. Muhammad is only a Messenger; verily all Messengers have passed away before him; if then he die or be slain, will you turn back on your heels? meaning, that in the circumstances it was no wonder that the Holy Prophet also had passed away. Hearing this timely recital, `Umar, and all others, were convinced of the death of the Holy Prophet and were overpowered with grief. Thus the verse incidentally proves that the Prophets that lived before the Holy Prophet had all died; for if any of them had been alive, the verse could not have been quoted as proof of the Holy Prophet’s death.

The verse also negatives the idea that any Prophet has risen to heaven; for it was used to falsify `Umar’s contention to the effect that the Holy Prophet was not dead but had risen to heaven. The verse thus proves, without a shadow of doubt, that Jesus too, who was one of the Prophets that had appeared before the Holy Prophet, is not physically alive in the heavens, as some present-day Muslims, following the Christian belief, erroneously think. He is certainly dead, as proved by this verse and the consensus of the Companions’ opinion on the occasion of the death of the Holy Prophet.

In fact, religion does not depend on any personality. It belongs to God alone. That is why the Quran says that if the Holy Prophet dies or is killed, it will be no ground for Muslims to turn away from Islam; for the Prophet is only a Messenger and the religion is God’s. Elsewhere, however, the Quran clearly says: And Allah will protect thee from men (5: 68). These two verses are not at variance with each other. What the Quran intends to emphasize in the present verse is the fundamental truth of Islamic teachings. Muslims had seen how pure and true these teachings were. Their truth was evident and they could not have become false even if the Holy Prophet had been slain. For instance, the fundamental teaching of Islam is the Unity of God. Now, this truth could not become an untruth if the Prophet were killed. But apart from this announcement in principle, the Prophet could not be killed, for God had definitely promised to protect him.

It should also be remembered that immunity from being murdered is not given in the Quran as a criterion of a Prophet’s truth. People are required to accept a Prophet in his lifetime, and therefore they must have proofs of his truth in his lifetime, so that, by witnessing them, they may believe in him. They cannot wait till the time of his death in order to know whether he is a true or a false claimant.
146. And no soul can die except by Allah's leave,—a decree with a fixed term. And whoever desires the reward of the present world, We will give him thereof; and whoever desires the reward of the life to come, We will give him thereof; and We will surely reward the grateful. ¹⁴²⁹

147. And many a Prophet there has been beside whom fought numerous companies of their followers. They slackened not for aught that befell them in the way of Allah, nor did they weaken, nor did they humiliate themselves before the enemy. And Allah loves the steadfast. ¹⁴³⁰

Once a Prophet has furnished clear proofs of his truth in his lifetime, his claim is established and nothing can undo those proofs. Only if a Prophet were murdered before he had been able to give any proof of his truth could we conclude that he had proved a failure and was not a true claimant. But such a thing has never happened.

The enemy rejoiced when the report went round that the Prophet had been slain, but that supposed death of the Prophet turned out to be the veritable “life” of Islam. It fulfilled a great purpose. It prepared Muslims for the actual passing of the Holy Prophet. If this event had not occurred, the death of the Holy Prophet would have proved an unbearable trial for Muslims. In fact this painful experience brought in disguise many blessings for Islam. At the Battle of Uhud, it brought to light the unshakable faith of the believers; at the time of his death it served to save Islam from going to pieces; and now that Islam is to all appearances dead, it is serving as a means of breathing new life into it, by proving that Jesus, whom Christians have deified, is dead, like all other Prophets that lived before Islam.

429. Commentary:
The preceding verse spoke of the possible death of the Holy Prophet. But that was mentioned only as a matter of principle. Otherwise, how could the Holy Prophet, whom God had promised to protect, die except by His leave? Whenever death comes, it comes with the permission of God; but that permission could not be yet given in the case of the Holy Prophet. There is a fixed time for it and the enmity or the secret machinations of disbelievers could not hasten that time.

430. Important Words:
companies of followers is the plural of ribbi which is derived from رب for which see 1:2. i.e. a company or a large company or a numerous company. Thus ربو (Rbbo) means, those forming a large company or a large body of persons...
148. And they uttered not a word except that they said: "Our Lord, forgive us our errors and our excesses in our conduct, and make firm our steps and help us against the disbelieving people."  

149. So Allah gave them the reward of this world, as also an excellent reward of the next; and Allah loves those who do good.

150. O ye who believe! if you obey those who have disbelieved, they will cause you to turn back on your heels, and you will become losers.

---

"He was or became lowly, humble, humiliated, or in a state of abasement (Aqrab)."

Commentary:
The verse exhorts believers to profit by the good example set by their righteous predecessors. The latter were not found lacking in preparations for fighting in the cause of Allah nor were they slack in actual fighting or wanting in steadfastness.

431. Commentary:
Each part of the prayer contained in this verse corresponds to the points mentioned in the previous one. In fact, success comes only by the help and grace of God. Human effort alone is not enough.

432. Commentary:
The rewards of the next life are of various degrees, and such believers as have been described above will get the best of them. The word "excellent" does not necessarily indicate superlative degree but is also used to express an intensified sense absolutely.

433. Commentary:
It should be noted that Muslims are not enjoined here to have no dealings with non-Muslims; they are only warned against following such disbelievers as are enemies of Islam. They should remain on the alert against these, though they need not fear them, because God is on their side, as pointed out in the next verse.
151. Nay, Allah is your Protector, and He is the best of helpers.

152. We shall strike terror into the hearts of those that have disbelieved because they associate partners with Allah, for which He has sent down no authority. Their abode is the Fire; and evil is the habitation of the wrongdoers.\(^ {434} \)

153. And Allah had surely made good to you His promise when you were slaying and destroying them by His leave, until, when you became lax and disagreed among yourselves concerning the order and you disobeyed after He had shown you that which you loved, He withdrew His help. Among you were those who desired the present world, and among you were those who desired the next. Then He turned you away from them, that He might try you—and He has surely pardoned you, and Allah is Gracious to the believers—\(^ {435} \)

---

434. Commentary:

The words, because they associate partners with Allah, signify that he who associates gods with God can never be truly brave, for he lacks complete devotion to any one. It is only complete devotion that can inspire a person to make sacrifices. As a believer is completely devoted to the One God, therefore, he is ever ready to make every kind of sacrifice in His cause.

Moreover, it is through lack of perseverance that idolaters go from one god to another, and perseverance is an essential concomitant of bravery. Where there is no perseverance, there is no bravery. Again, idolaters are rebels in setting up gods with God, and a rebel's heart is never at rest; and a heart that is not at ease cannot be brave. Yet again, polytheism springs from superstitious fear and one possessed of that sort of fear can never be truly brave.

It should, however, be remembered that it is only relative bravery that is meant here; otherwise even among idolaters and polytheists, there are men who possess bravery and courage, but their courage and bravery is inferior to that of true believers who put faith in One God and believe in His great powers and in the life after death.

435. Commentary:

The word "promise" occurring in the verse refers to the general promise of victory
154. When you were running away and looked not back at anyone while the Messenger was calling out to you from your rear, then He gave you a sorrow in recompense for a sorrow, that you might not grieve for what escaped you, nor for what befell you. And Allah is well aware of what you do.

The clause, when you became lax, refers to the party of archers posted at the rear of the Muslim army at Uhud, and signifies that they could not resist the temptation of taking part in the actual fighting and in collecting the booty, and their failure to control that desire was an act of cowardice on their part. It is indeed the heart which is the seat of true bravery and courage. Says the Holy Prophet: “Strong is not he who overthrows his rival in a wrestling match, but strong is he who controls himself in times of anger” (Bukhari ch. on Adab).

The word, order, in the clause, you disagreed among yourselves concerning the order, may refer either to the order of the Holy Prophet given to the party of archers not to leave their station without his permission or to the import of the order i.e. whether the Holy Prophet really meant them to stay there even after the battle had been won, some saying that he did mean that and others alleging that he did not.

The words, you disobeyed, signify that they paid no heed to their leader, ‘Abdullah bin Jubair, who, in compliance with the order of the Prophet, directed them not to quit the place, in spite of the fact that victory was within sight. They could not control themselves and so brought misfortune on the Muslims.

The words, those who desired the present world etc., refer to the party that quitted the place at which they had been stationed. The Arabic clause may also be rendered as meaning that some members of the party desired the nearer thing i.e. taking part in fighting and collecting the booty, while others (viz. ‘Abdullah bin Jubair and those of his comrades who did not quit their post) desired what was farther off i.e. they thought of the ultimate consequence of disobeying the command of the Holy Prophet. Some were short-sighted, while others were far-sighted.

The words, He turned you away from them, signify that God imposed the reverse in order to make this incident a lesson for the future.

436. Important Words:

- 1548 (you were running away) is derived from سلم which again is derived from سلم means, he ascended or climbed a height, etc. سلم means, he went from a low piece of land to one that is high, both physically and figuratively; or adversely, he descended or went down into the land.
- لمع means, he exerted himself in running. سلم also means, he went forth or went away in any direction (Lane).
- 372 (gave in recompense) is from the same root as 372 , and means, he gave in reward or recompense or return; or he gave as a substitute (Aqrab). See also 2: 104 and 2: 126.
Commentary:

The words, *When you were running away and looked not back at anyone*, refer to the incident which happened when in the Battle of Uhud the Muslims were attacked from both the rear and the front and their ranks were broken and many of them were fleeing in different directions. At first, when the Muslims heard that the enemy was coming from behind, they turned back to attack the enemy, but it so happened that a large body of Muslims was also coming from the rear at that time. In the confusion of the hour, these were mistaken for the enemy and attacked. Such was the confusion and the panic that even the voice of the Holy Prophet was not heeded.

The words, *gave you a sorrow in recompense for a sorrow*, refer to the report of the Holy Prophet's death in the Battle of Uhud. Thus the first-mentioned "sorrow", which was later in occurring, refers to the false report of the Holy Prophet's death and the second-mentioned "sorrow", which was first in occurring, refers to the sorrow that the Companions of the Holy Prophet—the archers stationed at the back—caused him by having failed faithfully to follow his order. One sorrow came in recompense of the other. The report of the Holy Prophet's death referred to above spread when a Muslim, named Mus'ab bin 'Umair, the Companion who carried the flag, was killed, being mistaken for the Holy Prophet. The second-mentioned "sorrow" does not obviously refer to the wounds received by the Holy Prophet, for the wounds were received not before but after the archers left their station and after the above-mentioned erroneous report about the death of the Holy Prophet.

The sorrow which certain Muslims caused the Holy Prophet by paying no heed to his voice when at the ensuing disorder he called out to them from the rear, was also recompensed. When the Muslims did not pay heed to the call of the Prophet, God caused them to think for a while that he was dead, which was to them a punishment similar to their offence. If they did not pay heed to the voice of the divine Messenger, of what use to them was his existence in this world? Thus when they heard of the reported death of the Holy Prophet, their thoughts naturally and immediately turned to the great benefits which they had received and were receiving through him and they were at once made to realize not only the greatness of his rank but also the magnitude of their own mistake.

The Arabic words لفظة rendered as, *a sorrow in recompense for a sorrow*, may also be rendered as "a sorrow in addition to another sorrow" i.e. one sorrow coming after another. In that case, the words would mean that God so designed that the sorrow pertaining to the unfounded report of the Holy Prophet's death should come immediately after the sorrow of a reverse so that the latter sorrow, which later proved to be unfounded, should obliterate the effect of the former sorrow, thus effacing the harmful effects of the defeat.

The clause, *what escaped you*, refers to victory which the Muslims lost after they had almost gained it. So great was the joy of the Muslims at the safety of the Holy Prophet that they actually forgot their sorrow at the loss of victory. Similarly, the clause, *what befell you*, refers to the loss of their men in the battlefield. The Muslims lost 70 killed, while the Meccans lost only about 20. The words may also refer to the wounds received by the Muslims on that occasion.

The words, *that you might not grieve*, may also signify that, having received some punishment then and there for the offence committed, the Muslims might feel secure from punishment in the Hereafter.
155. Then after the sorrow, a slumber that overcame a party of you, while the other party was anxious concerning their own selves, thinking wrongly of Allah like unto the thought of ignorance. They said, ‘Is there for us any part in the government of affairs?’ Say, ‘All government belongs to Allah.’ They hide in their minds what they disclose not to thee. They say, ‘If we had any part in the government of affairs, we should not have been killed here.’ Say, ‘If you had remained in your homes, surely those on whom fighting had been enjoined would have gone forth to their death-beds, that Allah might bring about His decree and that Allah might test what was in your breasts and that He might purge what was in your hearts. And Allah knows well what is in the minds;’

437. Important Words:

Format (government) means: (1) order or command; (2) matter or affair; (3) state or condition; (4) authority, government or management.  $\begin{align*} \text{فَتَلَّتَ}. \end{align*}$ means, those who hold command or exercise authority (Aqrab). $\begin{align*} \text{فل} \end{align*}$ (fighting) being noun-infinite means both to kill and to be killed. Another reading of the word $\begin{align*} \text{قل} \end{align*}$ here is $\begin{align*} \text{كَل} \end{align*}$ (Muhit, iii. 90 & Kashshaif) which shows that the word $\begin{align*} \text{قل} \end{align*}$ (qatl) has been used here in the sense of fighting and not killing. The word $\begin{align*} \text{قل} \end{align*}$ has been used elsewhere also in the Quran in the sense of fighting (see 2:192). See also Jarir under 3:156.

Commentary:

The words, a slumber that overcame a party of you, refer to an incident connected with the Battle of Uhud. Abū Taḥta says, “I lifted my head on the day of Uhud and began to look about, and there was none among us on that day but was bending down his head with slumber.” This incident has been narrated by Tirmidhi, Nasai and others (see Kathir, ii. 303). As sleep or slumber is a symbol of peaceful condition, being a sign of hearts that are calm and at rest, the Quran refers to this incident as a sort of favour. The incident evidently occurred when the battle was practically over and the Muslims had returned to the neighbouring height.

The reference in the words, the other party, is to the hypocrites who were at Medina and who had not taken part in the battle. When they heard of the reverse which overtook the Muslims and of the reported death of the
Holy Prophet, they, in spite of rejoicing at the misfortune that had befallen the Muslims, became anxious about their own lives and feared what would happen to them in case the Meccans should attack Medina. The words cannot apply to the party of Muslims that took part in the battle, of whom the Quran says, *He has surely pardoned you and Allah is Gracious to the believers* (3: 153 above).

The words, *Is there for us any part in the government of affairs?*, uttered by the hypocrites mean, “nobody listens to our opinion in matters of administration; we had advised the Muslims not to go out of Medina to fight, but our advice was ignored, with the result that they were defeated”. The sentence might also mean, “now (i.e. after this reverse) real government and power have gone into the hands of the idolaters and nothing has been left for us.”

The words, *All government belongs to Allah*, signify that the decision in all matters rests with God; or that whatever might happen in the intervening period God has ordained that eventually power and government shall be vouchsafed to Muslims, who will have dominion in the land.

The words, *we should not have been killed here*, mean, “If we had any voice in the management of affairs and if our advice had been accepted, our brethren would not have been killed in battle,” it being insinuated that while they were wise, the Muslims were simply foolish. The words may also be understood to mean, “if we were to have any government (as the Prophet had promised), we should not have been defeated in the battle.” By saying so the hypocrites hinted that the prophecies of the Holy Prophet regarding the triumph of Islam had turned out to be false.

It may be noted here that by saying, *we should not have been killed here*, the hypocrites did not evidently mean that they themselves would not have been killed. What they meant was that their brethren or comrades who were killed would not have been killed. This shows that by the slaying of one’s self is sometimes meant the slaying of one’s brethren or companions. This explains the words in 2: 55, and in 2: 86. See also note on 2: 55.

The divine words, *If you had remained in your homes*, refer to the hypocrites; and by the words, *those on whom fighting had been enjoined*, are meant the true believers. The injunction referred to is contained in 2: 191.

In the clause, *would have gone forth to their death-beds*, the word مصايع (death-beds) has been used in order to point to the abject cowardice of the hypocrites on the one hand, and the steadfast devotion of the true believers on the other. It reminds the hypocrites that whereas they returned to Medina, thinking that fighting in the existing circumstances was sure death, such was the faith of the true believers that even if the hypocrites had kept back from the very beginning they would have cheerfully gone forth to the battle-field, or the place of death, as it was commonly thought to be. All this happened that God might purify and ennoble the Faithful.
156. Those of you who turned their backs on the day when the two hosts met, surely it was Satan who sought to make them slip because of certain doings of theirs. But certainly Allah has already pardoned them. Verily Allah is Most Forgiving, Forbearing.

157. O ye who believe! be not like those who have disbelieved, and who say of their brethren when they travel in the land or go forth to war: 'Had they been with us, they would not have died or been slain.' This is so, that Allah may make it a cause of regret in their hearts. And Allah gives life and causes death and Allah is Mindful of what you do.

438. Commentary:

The "slipping" spoken of in the verse refers to the disobeying of the order given to the party stationed on the hill at the back of the main body of the Faithful. It may also refer to the running away of some Muslims from the battle-field. But God, out of His great mercy, and considering all the attending circumstances, pardoned them all.

The words, because of certain doings of theirs, contain an implied praise. These men were truly righteous people. It was only "some" of their misdeeds that brought them this temporary disgrace. All their doings were not bad; only some were bad. The words also embody a warning that a true believer should not rest satisfied even if most of his deeds are righteous. He is never quite out of danger unless all of his deeds are good. He can, however, hope for forgiveness, if he manages to make the majority of his deeds good.

439. Commentary:

The expression, when they travel in the land, means, when they travel in the land in the cause of God. This meaning is supported by the context.

The idea contained in the words, so that Allah may make it a cause of regret in their hearts, is that when Muslims refused to act upon the advice of disbelievers not to fight, and instead, came forth in large numbers to fight in the way of God, the disbelievers were naturally grieved at their failure to win them over to their way of thinking.

The interpretation of the clause, and Allah gives life and causes death, would vary according to the different meanings of the words موت (death) and حياة (life) occurring in it. If the death referred to in the verse is taken in the sense of destruction, the clause would mean that with the death of a few Muslims, Islam would not go to ruin. God has decreed to vouchsafe victory to Muslims and the death in fighting of a number of the victorious army cannot possibly result in their destruction. If, however, death
158. And if you are slain in the cause of Allah or you die, *surely forgiveness from Allah and mercy shall be better than what they hoard.\(^\text{440}\)

159. And if you die or be slain, *surely unto Allah shall you be gathered together.\(^\text{441}\)

160. And it is by the great mercy of Allah that thou art kind towards them, and if thou hadst been rough and hard-hearted, they would surely have dispersed from around thee. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them, and “consult them in matters of administration; and when thou art determined, then put thy trust in Allah. Surely, Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.\(^\text{442}\)

\(^{a}10:59; 43:33.\) \(^{b}5:97; 6:73; 8:25; 23:80.\) \(^{e}42:39.\)

is here taken to mean “disgrace” then the clause would mean that God’s votaries and true servants never meet with disgrace, because all honour is in His hands and He gives it to whomsoever He pleases. Truly speaking, he who fights and lays down his life in the cause of truth can in no sense be regarded as dead, because such a one gives his life for the sake of Him Who is the controller of all life and death. Such a person can never die; for though physically he may die, spiritually he lives for ever. In this connection see also 2:155.

440. Commentary:

The words, *forgiveness from Allah and mercy shall be better than what they hoard*, mean that hypocrites are afraid of death because of the wealth and property which they have to leave behind; whereas, if believers are killed in the cause of Allah, they will get what is incomparably greater than what hypocrites are greedily hoarding up, or what Muslims themselves may have collected in the form of wealth and other worldly things. There is thus no reason for true believers to be afraid of death.

441. Commentary:

The pronoun “you” includes both hypocrites and believers; for all will be gathered unto God for reward or punishment, as the case may be.

442. Important Words:

شَأَرَ (consult) is derived from شَأَرَة which means, he gathered or extracted honey from the comb, and separated it from the wax. شَاوْرَة means, he rode the beast in order to ascertain its true worth. لَأَفْتَنَهُ تَأْكُولْهُ لَدَيْهِ شَأَوْرَهُ means, he gave him advice; he offered him counsel. شَاوْرَهُ means, he consulted him he sought his opinion or advice; he discussed with him in order to find out his opinion. مَشْوَرَة means, good counsel o
consultation. *means, mutual consultation (Aqrab).

(then put thy trust). For the meaning of * see 3: 123.

**Commentary:**

The verse gives an insight into the beautiful character of the Holy Prophet, of which the most effable and prominent trait was his all-comprehensive mercy. He was full of the milk of human kindness and was not only kind towards his Companions and followers but was also full of mercy for his enemies who were always on the look-out to stab him in the back. It is on record that he took no action even against those treacherous hypocrites who had deserted him in the Battle of Uhud. He even consulted them in affairs of State.

The verse also constitutes an effective answer to the charge of the hypocrites that the Holy Prophet attached no importance to their advice and did what he liked. The Quran refutes this charge by saying that if the Holy Prophet had not been kind and gentle towards them, they would have left him long ago. Thus their continuing to remain with him falsified their accusation and proved that the Prophet's treatment of them was very kind and that in conformity with the divine command (see also 42: 39) he used to consult them regarding affairs of State, with the result that many of them afterwards repented of their deeds and became sincere Muslims. The injunction about consultation contained in the present verse, although general in application, refers to the hypocrites of Medina in particular.

It may be noted that Islam stands alone in including the institution of * (consultation) among its fundamental principles. It lays down as a rule that both the Prophet and his Successors should, whenever necessary, consult their followers in important affairs of State. A religion claiming to be universal is bound to contain such a teaching; for persons of different classes and different communities continue to enter its fold, and if these are consulted in matters of moment, it is calculated not only to add to their experience and practical wisdom, but also to increase and keep alive their interest in affairs of State. This is why the Holy Prophet used to consult his followers in all important matters, as he did before the Battles of Badr, Uhud, and Ahzab, and also when a false accusation was brought against his wife, 'Ā'isha. Baihaqi reports: "Certainly Allah and His Messenger did not stand in need of the advice of anybody, but God has made it (the seeking of advice) a source of mercy for men. Those who hold consultation will not stray away from the path of rectitude, while those who do not are liable to do so." Abū Huraira says: "The Holy Prophet was most solicitous in consulting others in all matters of importance" (Manthūr, ii. 90).

'Umar, the Second Successor of the Holy Prophet, is reported to have said: *i.e. "There is no Khalifah without consultation"* (Izālat al-Khīfa 'an Khilāfat al-Khulafā). Thus the holding of consultation in matters of consequence is an important injunction of Islam and is binding on both spiritual and temporal Chiefs, though they are not bound to accept that consultation, as the words, * show. The Khalīfa must seek the advice of leading Muslims, but the final decision always rests with him. He is not bound to accept in full or in part the advice tendered to him by a majority of them. This view has ever been held by the main body of Muslims throughout the centuries and finds ample support in the sayings of the Holy Prophet as well as in his practice and in that of his Rightly-guided Successors.

The objection, that if the Khalīfa is not
bound to act upon the advice of the majority, what is the use of his seeking advice, or of others offering it, is unwise and beside the point. The verse gives to the Khalifa the right to reject advice if he is convinced that it is in the interest of religion or the community to do so. Normally, he respects the views of the majority, but the Islamic شورى or مشاورة (Shūra or Mushāwarat) is not a parliament in the sense in which the word is generally understood in the West. Islam enjoins only consultation and not decision by votes, which are two different things. Consultation is meant to help the Khalīfa to know the views of his followers and to enable him to respect them as far as possible. It is not at all intended to tie his hands. It is on record that the Holy Prophet rejected the advice of the majority of his followers on certain occasions, and on others he even refused to accept their unanimous opinion. For instance, regarding the treatment of the prisoners of Badr he accepted the advice of Abū Bakr and rejected that of ‘Umar, ‘Abdullah bin Rawāha and Sa’d bin Mu‘ādh (Musnad, i. 283). At Hudaibiya, he signed the treaty in clear opposition to the advice of his Companions (Bukhārī, ch. on Shurā). Similarly, Abū Bakr discarded the almost unanimous advice of the Muslims by sending the expedition to Syria under Usāma, immediately after the death of the Holy Prophet (Athīr, ii. 139). In contrast to this, it is also on record that the Holy Prophet sometimes sacrificed his own view to that of his followers as he did in marching out of Medina for the Battle of Uḥud.

The context of the verse, however, shows that here the injunction was primarily meant with regard to the hypocrites, and nobody could say that the Holy Prophet was bound to do what the hypocrites advised him.

The advantages of consultation are: (1) The Khalīfa or the Amir comes to know the views of his followers. (2) He is helped in arriving at a correct decision. (3) Representative Muslims get an opportunity to think about, and take personal interest in, important State affairs, thus receiving most useful training in matters of administration. (4) The Khalīfa is enabled to judge the mental and administrative capabilities of different individuals, which help him to assign the right work to the right man. (5) It enables him to know the aptitudes, aspirations and tendencies as well as the moral and spiritual condition of the different members of his community, and thus he becomes able to effect an improvement, wherever necessary, in his people.

The meaning of expressions like, put thy trust in Allah, is generally misunderstood. In the language of the Quran قنوك (trusting in God) does not consist in disregarding the material means of doing a thing. On the contrary, قنوك as taught by Islam means that a person should first make use of all the resources at his command and then place his trust in God to bless his efforts with success, believing all the time that the means can be successful only if and when God wills it and that the true cause and the real source of all success is God alone.

The words, put thy trust in Allah, as used in the present context, also hint that if the Prophet or the Khalīfa were to be bound to accept the counsel of his followers, it would be against the spirit of قنوك (trusting in God). In fact, one who is bound to act in accordance with the advice of another cannot be said to be trusting in God so far as acting on that advice is concerned.
161. If Allah help you, none shall overcome you; but if He forsake you, then who is there that can help you beside Him? In Allah, then, let the believers put their trust.\footnote{a3 : 26 ; 14 : 52 ; 40 : 18.}

162. And it is not possible for a Prophet to act dishonestly, and whoever acts dishonestly shall bring with him that about which he has been dishonest on the Day of Resurrection. Then shall every soul be fully paid what it has earned; and they shall not be wronged.\footnote{444. Commentary: The verse can be interpreted in two ways. The archers stationed by the Holy Prophet at the mount of Uhud to protect the rear of the Muslim army left their post when they saw the Meccan army in full flight. They thought that by leaving the mount at that stage they would not be contravening the spirit of the Prophet’s orders, which were to the effect that they were not to leave their post in any circumstances. They further thought that as, according to Arab custom, a soldier was entitled to the possession of the booty he laid his hand on during the fight, they might be deprived of their share of the spoils of war if they stuck to their post. This precipitate action of the archers implied an apprehension on their part that the Prophet might ignore their right to the booty and might thus prove faithless to them. It is this apprehension that the verse condemns in the words, And it is not possible for a Prophet to act dishonestly. But no imputation of actual faithlessness to the Holy Prophet is implied. The verse simply purports to say that it was far from the Prophet to ignore the rights to the booty of those whom he himself had stationed at a certain place.}

\footnote{443. Commentary: The words ٌبَعْدُ ٍمِنْ يَدُهُ translated as, beside Him, literally mean “after Him” and may also be rendered as “in opposition to Him”. The verse throws further light on the philosophy of ٌتَوْكَلُّ (trusting in God). In spite of making use of the necessary means, a true believer should, and in fact does, put his trust in God alone.}

444. Commentary: The verse can be interpreted in two ways. The archers stationed by the Holy Prophet at the mount of Uhud to protect the rear of the Muslim army left their post when they saw the Meccan army in full flight. They thought that by leaving the mount at that stage they would not be contravening the spirit of the Prophet’s orders, which were to the effect that they were not to leave their post in any circumstances. They further thought that as, according to Arab custom, a soldier was entitled to the possession of the booty he laid his hand on during the fight, they might be deprived of their share of the spoils of war if they stuck to their post. This precipitate action of the archers implied an apprehension on their part that the Prophet might ignore their right to the booty and might thus prove faithless to them. It is this apprehension that the verse condemns in the words, And it is not possible for a Prophet to act dishonestly. But no imputation of actual faithlessness to the Holy Prophet is implied. The verse simply purports to say that it was far from the Prophet to ignore the rights to the booty of those whom he himself had stationed at a certain place.

The verse may also be taken as a rebuke to the hypocrites who deserted the Holy Prophet in the Battle of Uhud. In this case, the implication would be that while the hypocrites had proved faithless to the Prophet by leaving him in the lurch, the Prophet would not prove faithless to God by refusing to fight in His cause even when weak and deserted. This meaning is also supported by the context.
163. Is he who follows the pleasure of Allah like him who draws on himself the wrath of Allah and whose abode is Hell? And an evil retreat it is!\textsuperscript{445}

164. They have different grades of grace with Allah; and Allah sees what they do.\textsuperscript{446}

165. Verily, Allah has conferred a favour on the believers by raising among them a Messenger from among themselves who recites to them His Signs, and purifies them and teaches them the Book and Wisdom; and, before that, they were surely in manifest error.\textsuperscript{447}

\textsuperscript{445} Commentary:

The words, who follows the pleasure of Allah, apply to the Holy Prophet and his true followers who, undaunted by the defection of the hypocrites at U\=hud, which considerably weakened their ranks, proceeded to fight the enemies of Islam. The hypocrites, on the other hand, by their act of desertion, drew upon themselves the wrath of God. They turned away from the fire of war, but a much worse fire awaited them in Hell. They retreated from the battle-field in order to seek security, but their retreat proved to be the gate of Gehenna for them.

The expression... rendered as, like him who draws on himself the wrath of Allah, may also be translated as “like him who turns (or returns) with the wrath of Allah.” The latter rendering would help further to clarify the explanation given above.

\textsuperscript{446} Commentary:

The words... literally mean, they are different grades. Actually, however, they mean, they are the possessors of different grades of grace, the word اولرا (possessors) being understood before the word درجات. The word اولرا has been dropped to intensify the meaning, as if the holders of these grades of grace were the very grades personified.

\textsuperscript{447} Commentary:

The expression,... a Messenger from among themselves, is intended to awaken in the hearts of Muslims a desire to follow the example of the Holy Prophet, who was like them and one of them. The Prophet was not only a man like them but was actually one of them. If he could rise to such spiritual heights, why could not they?

All Messengers of God are raised from among human beings and they possess the same faculties and are actuated by the same desires and aspirations as other human beings, and therefore they can serve as true models for their fellow-beings. But a so-called “son of
166. What! when a misfortune befalls you—and you had inflicted the double of that—you say, whence is this? Say, It is from your own selves. Surely, Allah has power over all things.448

The expression, It is from your own selves, seems to contradict the succeeding verse where it is said, And that which befell you on the day when two parties met was by Allah’s command, and also 4:79, 80 where it is said: And if some good befalls them, they say, ‘this is from Allah’ and if evil befall them, they say, ‘this is from thee’. Say, All is from Allah. What has happened to these people that they come not near understanding anything? Whatever of good comes to thee is from Allah, and whatever of evil befalls thee is from thyself. On a deeper reflection, however, no conflict or contradiction is found to exist; for the different statements, apparently contradictory, have been made from different viewpoints. As for the real cause of man’s actions, both the good and evil actions are said to emanate from him, because he is their doer; but as it is God Who, as the final Judge, brings about the results of man’s actions, whether good or bad, they can equally be said to proceed from Him. In this sense, both the good and evil results of man’s actions would be attributed to God. Again, as God has created all things for our good and it is through their misuse that we suffer, therefore the evil that befalls us can legitimately be said to proceed from our own selves. But when that evil is removed by the right use of the things provided by God and good results ensue, then that good must be attributed to God, for it is He Who has endowed things with the properties by the right use of which we benefit. In this sense good results will be attributed to God and
167. And that which befell you, on the day when the two parties met, was by Allah's command; and this was so that He might distinguish the believers; 449

168. And that He might distinguish the hypocrites. And it was said to them, 'Come ye, fight in the cause of Allah and repel the attack of the enemy;' they said, 'If we knew how to fight, we would surely follow you.' They were, that day, nearer to disbelief than to belief. "They say with their mouths what is not in their hearts. And Allah knows well what they conceal. 450

449. Commentary:

The "meeting of the parties" refers to the Battle of Uḥud which is under review here. The clause "that He might distinguish the believers", does not mean, "that He might know the believers", as generally translated. According to Quranic idiom, the expression simply means that Allah might mark out, or make known, or distinguish believers from disbelievers. See also note on 3:141.

450. Commentary:

Trials come to bring about a distinction between true believers and those weak of faith or insincere. In this way, the sufferings of the Muslims at Uḥud proved a blessing in disguise. They served to distinguish the true believers from the hypocrites who had so far remained intermixed with the true believers. While professing to be true Muslims, they were, at heart, enemies of Islam; and their passing for Muslims was injurious to the Muslim community. The believers, taking them for true Muslims, remained unaware of the secret machinations by which they sought to injure the cause of Islam. So it was in the interests of Islam that their hypocrisy became unmasked and the Muslims became on their guard against them. On the other hand, just as the exposure of the hypocrites proved beneficial to the believers, similarly the coming to light of their own sincerity and devotion served a most useful purpose. It served not only to disappoint the enemies of Islam who came to realize that with such devoted followers they could make no headway against Islam, but it also opened their eyes to its truth; for it became clear to them that a religion which could inspire its votaries with such selfless zeal and steadfast devotion could not but be true.

The particle 'a rendered as "and" in the clause, fight in the cause of Allah and repel the attack of the enemy, literally means "or" and is equivalent to "in other words", or "what is the same thing" etc. It is used here: (1) to explain the meaning of the
169. *It is these* who said of their brethren, while they *themselves* remained behind, ‘If they had obeyed us, they would not have been slain.’ Say, ‘*Then avert death from yourselves, if you are truthful.*’

The expression ❧translated in the text as, *If we knew how to fight,* may have three meanings: (1) If we knew that there would be fighting i.e. we thought there would be no fighting. By using this expression the hypocrites meant that seeing the strength of the enemy, the Muslims would at once run away and there will be no fighting. (2) If we knew it to be a fight i.e. it was no fight in which the Muslims were going to be engaged, but certain destruction in view of the appalling difference between the numbers and equipment of the opposing forces. (3) Or, as rendered in the text, the expression may mean, if we knew how to fight. In this case, it must be taken to have been used ironically, signifying: “We are unaware of the art of war; if we had been acquainted with it, we would have fought along with you.”

The allusion in the verse is obviously to the defection at Uhud of a party of 300 hypocrites under their leader ‘Abdullah bin Ubayy, who, at a crucial moment, deserted the Muslims and went back to Medina, saying, “He (the Prophet) has disregarded my advice and has followed the advice of mere lads.” Seeing this, ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr, father of Jābir, approached him and asked him not to desert the Prophet in that manner, upon which ‘Abdullah replied in the very words quoted by the Quran i.e. ❧meaning, “If we knew there would be fighting, we would have surely followed you.” At this ‘Abdullah b. ‘Amr exclaimed, saying: “God’s curse be upon you. Surely, He Himself will help His Messenger” (Jarir, iii. 104.).

451. Commentary:

The word ❧(brethren) may refer to both the Muslims and the hypocrites. If taken to refer to the Muslims, the expression ❧(said of their brethren) would either mean, “said concerning their brethren, the Muslims”, or it would mean “said to their brethren, the Muslims”. If, however, it is taken to refer to the hypocrites, the expression would mean,
170. "Think not of those, who have been slain in the cause of Allah, as dead. Nay, they are living, in the presence of their Lord, and are granted gifts from Him.\textsuperscript{452}

171. Jubilant because of that which Allah has given them of His bounty; and rejoicing for those who have not yet joined them from behind them, because on them shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve.\textsuperscript{453}

\textsuperscript{452} Important Words:

\textsuperscript{453} Important Words:
172. They rejoice at the favour of Allah and His bounty, and at the fact that "Allah suffers not the reward of the believers to be lost."  

173. As to those who answered the call of Allah and the Messenger after they had received an injury—such of them as do good and act righteousness—shall have a great reward.

in store for Muslims. According to the second signification of the word, the verse would mean, they give good tidings to their brethren by appearing to them in dreams. The verse may also mean, they receive good tidings concerning their brethren, i.e. the angels of God keep them informed of the later successes and victories of Islam.

454. Commentary:

The expression, Allah suffers not the reward of the believers to be lost, means that the works of the believers will not go in vain. They will certainly bring their due reward.

455. Commentary:

The reference in this and the next verse is to the two expeditions led by the Holy Prophet against the Meccans as a result of the Battle of Uḥud. The first was undertaken on the day immediately following that battle. When the Meccans withdrew from Uḥud, and took their way back to Mecca, they were, as narrated above, taunted by the Arab tribes for having brought no booty and no prisoners of war from a battle in which they claimed to have won a victory. The Meccans, thereupon, thought of returning to Medina with a view to re-attacking the Muslims and completing their victory. The Holy Prophet, who had also anticipated the return of the Meccans, at once called upon his Companions to join him in the pursuit of the enemy and most wisely restricted the call to only such able-bodied Muslims as had taken part in the Battle of Uḥud. So on the following day, he left Medina with 250 men. When the Meccans heard of the Muslims advancing towards them, they lost heart and fled. The Holy Prophet went as far as Ḥamrā‘ al-Asad, a distance of about eight miles from Medina on the route to Mecca, and seeing that the enemy had fled, returned to Medina.

The second expedition came a year later. Before leaving the battle-field of Uḥud, Abū Sufyān, commander of the Meccan army, had promised the Muslims another engagement next year at Badr. But the ensuing year being a year of famine, he could not keep his appointment. So he sent Nu‘aim b. Mas‘ūd to Medina to terrify the Muslims by spreading false rumours of great preparations having been made by the Meccans. This clumsy ruse completely failed to frighten the Muslims, who came to Badr at the appointed time only to find that the Meccans had not appeared. The Muslims profited by this opportunity by taking part in trafficking at the great annual fair that used to be held there every year and returned prosperous as well as triumphant to Medina. This expedition is known in history as the expedition of Badr al-Ṣughrā, (i.e. the smaller Badr), to distinguish it from the great Battle of Badr which had taken place about two years earlier.
174. Those to whom men said, 'People have mustered against you, therefore fear them,' but this only increased their faith and they said, 'Sufficient for us is Allah, and an excellent guardian is He.'

175. So they returned with a mighty favour from Allah and a great bounty, while no evil had touched them; and they followed the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is the Lord of great bounty.

176. It is Satan who only frightens his friends; so fear them not but fear Me, if you are believers.

456. Important Words:

- الوكيل (guardian): is derived from وكل, they say وكل العهد i.e. he left the matter to him and did not interfere in it. وكل is one of the names of God meaning, Guardian; One Who watches or looks after the affairs of the Faithful; One sufficing for His servants (Aqrab & Lane).

457. Commentary:

As stated above, the Muslims returned from Badr al-Ṣughrā after having made great profit by trading at the annual fair held there. This is hinted in the word "bounty." The words, no evil had touched them, mean that there was no fighting, the Meccans having failed to appear.

458. Commentary:

The expression Satan only frightens his friends, rendered in the text as, Satan only frightens his friends, may mean: (1) Satan tries to make believers fear disbelievers, who are his friends; (2) he frightens disbelievers themselves i.e. he becomes the cause of their fear, for the friends of Satan can never be brave. In the latter case the pronoun "them" in, so fear them not, would refer to the noun سل (people) in 3:174 above.
177. "And let not those who hastily fall into disbelief grieve thee; surely, they cannot harm Allah in any way. Allah desires not to assign any portion for them in the life to come; and they shall have a severe punishment." 459

178. Surely, "those who have purchased disbelief at the price of faith cannot harm Allah at all; and they shall have a grievous punishment." 460

179. And let not the disbelievers think that "Our granting them respite is good for them; the result of Our granting them respite will only be that they will increase in sin; and they shall have an humiliating punishment." 461

459. Commentary:
The clause, who hastily fall into disbelief, refers to the hypocrites and the weak in faith whom the slightest trial throws into disbelief. The word "portion" means "portion of grace and God’s mercy."

460. Commentary:
As in the preceding verse, the word Allah in the clause, cannot harm Allah, stands either for the cause of Allah or for the Holy Prophet and the believers, because God is evidently above being harmed. The expression has been used to show that those who try to do harm to Islam or to the Holy Prophet and his followers, really try to do harm to God Himself, for the obvious reason that the cause of the Holy Prophet or that of Islam is the cause of God Himself.

461. Important Words:
The particle ل (lām) in the expression لازدادوا لا يtrzymaćن in the verse here denotes not purpose but result or consequence: as in the well-known Arabic couplet:

لا تكلمونا بالخرب فكلكم يسير إلى تباب
i.e. Bear children that they should die and build houses that they should fall into ruins, for all of you are marching towards destruction. Thus the verse would mean: We grant them respite that they should mend their ways, but the result is that they increase in sin. Such ل (lām) is known as لام مانيت in Arabic.

The particle ل may, in one sense, also denote cause, as an Arab would say خرجت من البلد لمخافة شر i.e. I left the town because of the fear of evil. In this sense, the clause would mean, We grant them respite because they have increased in evil, i.e., their increasing in evil has been the cause of Our granting them respite so that they may have an opportunity to mend their ways and reform themselves.
180. Allah would not leave the believers as you are, until He separated
the wicked from the good. Nor would Allah reveal to you the unseen. But
Allah chooses of His Messengers whom He pleases. Believe, therefore, in
Allah and His Messengers. If you believe and be righteous, you shall
have a great reward.462

462. Important Words:

العلم (would reveal to you). علم is derived from علم which means, he appeared;
he rose; he ascended. علم عليه means, he revealed it to him or he made him
acquainted with it; or lifted him high up so that he might have a clear view of it. The
expression علم على الْعِيْب therefore, would mean, that He should cause you to ascend
the unseen; or lift you high up to have a clear view of the unseen i.e. cause you to
obtain mastery of the unseen; or in other words, reveal to you the secrets of the unseen
in abundance.. Elsewhere the Quran says
لا يظهر على فيه احدا i.e. God discloses not the
unseen to any one in abundance (72 : 27). Here too the word used i.e. يظهر points to
mastery of a thing or having a thing in abundance.

Commentary:

The sentence, Allah would not leave the believers as you are, signifies that the trials and
tribulations through which Muslims have so far passed would not soon end. There are yet
many more in store for them, and they will continue to come till true believers are
discriminated from hypocrites and those weak in faith.

The expression, Allah chooses of His Messengers whom He pleases, does not mean that some of
the Messengers are chosen and others not, but that of the persons whom He has ordained
to be sent as His Messengers, He chooses the one suited for the particular age in which
he is sent. Or the particle من (of) may be taken to give the sense of intensification or
emphasis without restricting the sense to a specified section of the class. In that case
the sentence will read as, Allah does choose as His Messengers whom He pleases. It must
be remembered that all Messengers are raised under a special divine decree.

When it was stated that God intended to separate the wicked from the good by revealing
His will to His Messengers, the question was asked by disbelievers, why did not God reveal
Himself to them? To this question God has given the answer that He reveals His will
only to His Messengers and the Elect. All are not pure or ennobled enough to receive
His revelation.
181. And let not those, who are niggardly with respect to what Allah has given them of His bounty, think that it is good for them; nay, it is evil for them. That with respect to which they were niggardly shall be put as a collar round their necks on the Day of Resurrection. And to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is well aware of what you do. 463

182. And surely Allah has heard the utterance of those who said, 'Allah is poor and we are rich'—We shall record what they have said, and their attempts to kill the Prophets unjustly; and We shall say, 'Taste ye the punishment of burning.' 464

463. Important Words:

- **يرث** (heritage) is derived from **يرث**, i.e. he inherited. It means, he inherited the property of his father. They say **يرث** or **يرث** عمه, i.e. I inherited his glory. **يرث** من أبي or **يرث** من أبي, he inherited from his father, or he inherited part of the property of his father. **اورثت** the disease occasioned him, as its result, weakness. **وارث** and **ورث** and **ورث** all mean, what is inherited; an inheritance; a heritage whether property, rank, quality, nobility, etc. **وارث** means, an heir. **الوراثة** as an epithet applied to God means, He Who remains after the creatures have perished (Lane). Primarily it signifies the transfer of property, etc. from one to another without sale or gift. The Arabs say **ورث** عما من نفلان, i.e. I gained or acquired knowledge from such a one (Mufradât).

Commentary:

The chief obstacle in the way of the hypocrites to accept Islam was that constant calls were made on Muslims to spend money in the cause of God and make sacrifices for it. They are told in this verse that their unwillingness to spend would eventually do them no good nor would it save their possessions from destruction.

The sentence, *And to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth*, obviously does not mean that Allah will receive heavens and earth in inheritance from some one else. The word **يرث** rendered as heritage here signifies ownership. The word also means portion allotted to one, as in the verse الينِ بِثَورَانِ الفِرْدُوسِ, i.e. those who shall inherit Paradise (23:12). Now Paradise is not inherited by any one; it is only received as an allotted portion from God.

464. Commentary:

The words, *Allah has heard the utterance of those*, have been used by way of rebuke and warning, meaning that God is not unaware of these impudent utterances and that the
183. That is because of that which your hands have sent on before yourselves, and the truth is that Allah is not at all unjust to His Servants—\(^{465}\)

184. Those who say, 'Allah has charged us not to believe in any Messenger until he bring us an offering which fire devours.' Say, 'There have already come to you Messengers before me with clear Signs and with that which you speak of. Why, then, did you seek to kill them, if you are truthful?' \(^{466}\)

\(^{a8 : 52 ; 41 : 47 ; 50 : 30. \ b5 : 33 ; 14 : 10 ; 40 : 84.}\)

utterers will certainly have to answer for them.

The words, \textit{Allah is poor and we are rich}, were uttered by the Jews on behalf of the hypocrites and as an expression of their thoughts when the latter were called upon to spend their wealth in the cause of Allah (3:181). These words also express the thoughts of those niggardly persons and the weak of faith who join a new religion but find it hard to comply with its ever-growing monetary demands and sometimes cry out in impatience: 'Has Allah become poor that we are asked to spend our hard-earned money in His cause?' In fact, one of the principal causes of the opposition to a new religious movement is reluctance on the part of the people to undergo the sacrifices of money and comfort that the new faith demands.

The words, \textit{We shall record what they have said}, signify that God will not let such mischievous utterances go unpunished, implying that what is forgiven is, as it were, not recorded.

465. Commentary:
The expression, \textit{Allah is not at all unjust to His servants}, falsifies the inference to which the statement of the disbelievers mentioned in the previous verse gives rise. They seem to say that if Islam had been true, God Himself would have helped it and would not have asked others to help it with their money. To this objection the answer is given that if the Prophet is an impostor and yet God is helping him to thrive and prosper, it means that God is doing a great wrong to the people by granting respite to an impostor and by allowing the people to be led astray by helping a wrong cause. But as God cannot be unjust, so the cause of Islam must be, and is, a right cause.

466. Commentary:
The enemies of truth never admit their defeat. They continue to seek new pretexts for refusing to believe in it. When the Jews were told that they had opposed the Prophets of God through covetousness (3:181-182), they retorted by saying that they did not oppose Muslims through covetousness but because, unlike them, the Muslims devoured even the animals which they offered as sacrifices, instead of burning them at the altar according to the Jewish Law (Lev. 1:11-17). Thus it was not they but the Muslims who were greedy and
185. And if they accuse thee of lying, even so were accused of lying Messengers before thee who came with clear Signs and books of wisdom and the shining Book. 467

covetous and they could not, therefore, consistently with the Law of Moses, accept the Prophet who did not observe that Law.

The Quran answers this objection by saying that the observance of the law about burnt offerings was no criterion to test the truth of a Prophet, because that could easily be done by an impostor. It was سَبَل* (clear Signs) only that demonstrated and established the truth of a claimant. But even if observance of burnt offerings was the criterion of a true Prophet, the Jews had no right to raise an objection; for in that case the question arose, why did they reject those Prophets who strictly conformed to that law?

The fact that the Jewish demand referred to in the words, that which you speak of, has been mentioned in the verse separately from سَبَل* (clear Signs), shows that what the Jews spoke of was not a miracle, but that they were only referring to the law about burnt offerings, and not to the miracle of fire descending from heaven to consume a sacrifice, as is generally but wrongly believed.

467. Important Words:

زرِر* (books of wisdom) is the plural of زِبَر* which is derived from زِبَر. They say زِبَر* i.e. he cased or lined the well with stones or bricks, etc. زِبَر* means, he raised the wall by placing layers of stones or bricks on one another. زِبَر* means, he wrote the writing or the book.

زرِر* means, he chid or scolded the beggar. زِبَر* (زَبَر) means, a writing or a book; a book of wisdom and intellectual science, not containing legal statutes, ordinances or commandments. Based on its verbal senses, the word would also mean a book that protects and beautifies a source of knowledge just as a casing protects and beautifies a well; or a book that contains warnings. The word is particularly used about the Book of David containing the Psalms. زِبَر* (زَبَر) is the plural of زِبَر* (زَبَر) which means, a writing or a book; also wisdom and reason (Aqrab & Lane).

Commentary:

It is worthy of note that unlike its predecessor the present verse makes no reference to a burnt offering after the word سَبَل* (clear Signs) which shows that a burnt offering formed no proof of the truth of a claimant to prophethood.

It will be noted that whereas the words زِبَر* (books of wisdom) and سَبَل* (clear Signs) are both in the plural number, the word الكتاب المُنير* (the shining Book) has been put in the singular number, the reason being that all the Israelite Prophets followed one Book of Law only, viz., the Torah given to Moses, while each of them came with separate clear Signs as well as with separate Books or revelations containing things of wisdom and warnings.
186. *Every soul shall taste of death. And you shall be paid in full your rewards only on the Day of Resurrection. So whosoever is removed away from the Fire and is made to enter Heaven has indeed attained his goal. *And the life of this world is nothing but an illusory enjoyment.*468

187. *You shall surely be tried in your possessions and in your persons and you shall surely hear many hurtful things from those who were given the Book before you and from those who set up equals to God. But if you show fortitude and act righteously, that indeed is a matter of strong determination.*469

188. And remember when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Book, saying, 'You shall make this Book known to the people and not conceal it.' But they threw it away behind their backs, and bartered it for a paltry price. Evil is that which they have purchased.*470

468. *Commentary:*

Death is perhaps the most certain phenomenon in nature and yet man's attitude towards it is of disregard and indifference. The worldly life has been here called a vain and illusory thing, because on the face of it it appears to be a very attractive and sweet thing, but when one becomes engrossed in seeking its pleasures and profits, one finds it bitter and deceptive.

469. *Commentary:*

Tests and trials are necessary and serve a four-fold purpose: (1) They distinguish the wavers and the weak of faith from those sincere and steadfast votaries whose faith is strong and firm. (2) They become a means of spiritual advancement for those sincere in faith. (3) Those who are tried come to know of the strength or otherwise of their own faith and are thus enabled to shape their conduct accordingly. (4) Trials also establish the title to reward of those deserving it.

Indeed there never was a Prophet who, along with his followers, was not called upon to put up with abuse and hardships.

470. *Commentary:*

The reference here is to no particular covenant but to a general covenant taken from the followers of every Prophet that they would
189. Think not that those who exult in what they have done, and love to be praised for what they have not done—think not that they are secure from punishment. They shall suffer a grievous chastisement.  

190. And to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth; and Allah has power over all things.  

191. In the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of the night and the day there are indeed signs for men of understanding;  

471. Important Words:  

شامل (secure) is derived from شام which means, he was successful and gained what he desired. شام means, he escaped it (danger, etc.), or he became secure from it. So شامل means, a place or state of security or escape; a means of success and prosperity (Aqrab).  

Commentary:  
The expression "think not" mentioned twice in the verse not only makes the sentence more clear but also adds to it beauty and force. Such people as exult in evil deeds and have no anxiety and no desire for their spiritual welfare, being satisfied with false praise only, must not consider themselves secure from divine punishmentne.

472. Commentary:  
After having dealt, at some length, with the incidents connected with the Battle of Uhud and the hardships that the Muslims had to suffer as a result thereof, God comforts them with the declaration that their intervening sufferings are only a passing phase and the final victory will surely be theirs, because to God belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and He has graciously decreed to bestow both spiritual and temporal blessings on Muslims.

473. Commentary:  
The lesson implied in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of night and day is that man has been created both for spiritual and temporal progress, and that if he acts righteously, his period of darkness and affliction must needs be followed by one of sunshine and happiness. For further explanation of this verse see next verse.
192. \(a\) Those who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and ponder over the creation of the heavens and the earth. \(b\) Our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain; \(Nay,\) Holy art Thou; save us, then, from the punishment of the Fire.\(^{474}\)

\(^{474}\) Important Words:

البال (in vain) is derived from بال meaning, it was or became false or vain, or void or futile or devoid of virtue or of no account. They say بال دم meaning, his blood went for nothing i.e. went unretaliated. بال في حدته means, he jested or was not serious in his discourse. ببال therefore, means: false, spurious, vain, useless, void and of no account (Lane).

Commentary:

Such a grand system to which an allusion has been made in the previous verse could certainly not have been brought into being without a definite purpose. The phenomenon of day and night referred to in the preceding verse affords an illustration of how this purpose is served. With the rising of the sun the whole world is illuminated, and men begin to work. Then night falls and the light of the sun is hidden from our view and men go to sleep, but even then some heavenly bodies are busy doing their allotted work. Thus both during day and night heavenly bodies perform their appointed functions and loyally serve man. The whole universe having been created to serve man, the creation of man also must have a great purpose. Of men some are bright in themselves like the sun, and there are others who possess no intrinsic light of their own but borrow it from others. Such men as place themselves in right relation to the Sun of the spiritual realm get lighted, while those that keep away from it are left in the dark.

When man ponders over the spiritual implication of the physical phenomenon of the creation of heavens and earth, the alternation of day and night and the consummate order that pervades the universe, he is deeply impressed by the great wisdom of the Creator, and from the inmost depths of his being rises the cry: Our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain. Then apprehension takes hold of him lest he should become deprived of the light of the spiritual Sun and he cries out: Save us from the punishment of Fire, which is nothing but being overtaken by spiritual darkness and moral degradation.
193. "Our Lord, whomsoever Thou causest to enter the Fire, him Thou hast surely disgraced. And the wrong-doers shall have no helpers. 476

194. "Our Lord, we have heard a Crier calling unto faith, 'Believe ye in your Lord', and we have believed. Our Lord, forgive us, therefore, our errors and remove from us our evils and in death number us with the righteous. 476

195. "Our Lord, give us what Thou hast promised to us through Thy Messengers; and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection. Surely, Thou breakest not Thy promise."

475. Commentary:

A true believer dreads nothing so much as the displeasure of God which is like fire that burns up all traces of goodness, and this fire is the heritage of the wrongdoers only, whom nothing can save from punishment.

476. Important Words:

ذنوب (errors), which is of lighter significance and which generally refers to natural weaknesses and ordinary mistakes and omissions, may represent those dark recesses in us where the light of the sun does not properly reach; while سيات (evils) which is a comparatively stronger word, may mean the clouds of dust which hide the light of the sun from our view. See also 2:81 & 3:17.

Commentary:

In 3:191 above the word "day" in the expression, the alternation of the night and the day, is placed after the word "night," which points to the fact that the spiritual wayfarer, after having passed through the night of trials and sins, finally back in the light of the spiritual Sun by accepting and following the divine Crier. But, as the present verse points out, he is afraid lest his weaknesses should retard his progress or lest the dust of his sins and the clouds of his misdeeds should intervene and hide from him the light and warmth of the spiritual Sun, so he humbly prays God to disperse the dust of his sins and drive away the clouds of his misdeeds.

The expression تونا مع الأجرار rendered as, in death number us with the righteous, literally means, cause us to die with the righteous, meaning, cause us to die when we are righteous, or let not death come upon us except when we are righteous.
196. So their Lord answered their prayers, saying, "I will allow not the work of any worker from among you, whether male or female, to be lost. You are from one another. Those, therefore, who have emigrated, and have been driven out from their homes, and have been persecuted in My cause, and have fought and been killed, I will surely remove from them their evils and will cause them to enter gardens through which streams flow—a reward from Allah, and with Allah is the best of rewards." 

197. Let not the moving about of the disbelievers in the land deceive thee.

198. It is a small and brief advantage, then Hell shall be their abode. What an evil place of rest!

477. Commentary:
As this Surah mainly deals with Christian doctrines and ideals and their way of life, and as Christianity, in spite of its claims to the contrary, gives woman a status definitely inferior to that of man, the insistence on the equality of the status of woman with man in the spiritual sphere forms a fitting sequel to it. At several places in the Quran, believing men and believing women are addressed in the same language and are made equally subject to the same commandments and entitled to the same rights and privileges. Briefly, Islam recognizes the equality of the social and religious rights of man and woman. The words, you are from one another, are intended to emphasize the equality of status mentioned in the preceding part of the verse.

The verse also constitutes an effective refutation of the charges of the Shias against the Holy Prophet's Companions whose failings and shortcomings, if any, were all forgiven by God in view of the good works they performed.

478. Commentary:
The verse, besides relating to the time of the Holy Prophet, has also a most appropriate application to the present dazzling material progress of Christian nations in all departments of life, and warns Muslims not to be deceived or overawed by the glamour of this transitory and fleeting progress.

479. Commentary:
The prosperity of Christian nations is only temporary, and the verse hints at the dreadful punishment which is in store for them and which has now actually begun to overtake them.
199. But those who fear their Lord shall have gardens through which streams flow; therein shall they abide—an entertainment from Allah. And that which is with Allah is still better for the righteous.\(^{480}\)

200. And surely among the People of the Book there are some who believe in Allah and in what has been sent down to you and in what was sent down to them, humbling themselves before Allah. They barter not the Signs of Allah for a paltry price. It is these who shall have their reward with their Lord. Surely, Allah is swift in account.\(^{481}\)

---

\(^{480}\) Important Words:

- \(اللهَ خَيْرُ الْإِبْتِرَارِ\) (entertainment) is the noun-Infini-
tive from 
\(اللهَ خَيْرُ الْإِبْتِرَارِ\) (nazala) meaning, he alighted,
desended or came down; he lodged or settled
in a place. \(اللهَ خَيْرُ الْإِبْتِرَارِ\) means, guests; place where
guests are made to lodge; food prepared for
guests; a blessed food (Lane & Aqrab).

- \(إِيَّاكُمْ وَمَا آتَيْتُ الْيَهُودَ خَشَيْنَ يُلْهَمُونَهُمُ الْقُرْآنَ إِنَّهُ لاَ يُشَرَّتْ\) (the righteous) is the plural of 
\(إِيَّاكُمْ وَمَا آتَيْتُ الْيَهُودَ خَشَيْنَ يُلْهَمُونَهُمُ الْقُرْآنَ إِنَّهُ لاَ يُشَرَّتْ\) (a righteous person). Though for the sake
of brevity the word has been translated here
as “the righteous”, it really signifies “highly
righteous persons”. See also 2:45, 178.

Commentary:

Righteous people will be, as it were, the guests
of God, being housed and fed by Him with
blessed food. This, as the verse puts it, will
be an entertainment \textit{from} Allah; but what is
actually \textit{with} Allah for the particularly righteous
people is still better.

It must be noted that the verse mentions two
classes of good people: (1) \(اللهَ خَيْرُ الْإِبْتِرَارِ\) i.e.
those who fear God, \textit{viz.}, ordinarily righteous
persons; and (2) \(إِيَّاكُمْ وَمَا آتَيْتُ الْيَهُودَ خَشَيْنَ يُلْهَمُونَهُمُ الْقُرْآنَ إِنَّهُ لاَ يُشَرَّتْ\) i.e. those who are
highly righteous. For the former the words
used are \(اللهَ خَيْرُ الْإِبْتِرَارِ\) \textit{i.e.} they will have enter-
tainment \textit{from} God, whereas for the latter
the words used are \(إِيَّاكُمْ وَمَا آتَيْتُ الْيَهُودَ خَشَيْنَ يُلْهَمُونَهُمُ الْقُرْآنَ إِنَّهُ لاَ يُشَرَّتْ\) \textit{i.e.} the highly
righteous will, as it were, live \textit{with} God
Himself and enjoy His company.

\(^{481}\) Commentary:

The verse embodies a prophecy to the effect
that many Christians and Jews will finally
accept Islam.

The Arabic words rendered here as, \textit{Allah is
swift in account}, when used in regard to
disbelievers, would mean that God is swift at
taking account and dealing out punishment;
but when used about believers they would
mean that God is quick in settling accounts
and giving out rewards.
201. O ye who believe! be steadfast and strive to excel in steadfastness and be on your guard and fear Allah that you may prosper.\(^{482}\)

**Commentary:**

The verse, which is the last of the present \(\text{Süra}\), is important and mentions the essential means for the attainment of national goal. Taken in the physical sense, it signifies that in order to attain their goal, Muslims should not only be patient and steadfast and make greater sacrifices than their opponents but should always be on their guard and should particularly be watchful about strengthening their frontiers. Taken in the spiritual sense, the injunctions contained in the verse would mean that Muslims should not only hold fast to their religion and faithfully act upon its teachings but should also zealously carry the message of Islam to non-Muslims and establish missions in their countries, at the same time vigorously defending themselves against all their attacks. The reference particularly is to the Christian people who have proved to be the most bitter enemies of Islam.

The five requisites of success mentioned in the verse are: (1) exercise of patience and steadfastness absolutely; (2) showing greater patience and greater steadfastness than the enemy; (3) applying constantly and assiduously to the service of religion and community; (4) keeping vigilant watch at the frontiers, both for the purposes of defence and attack; and (5) leading lives of righteousness and fearing God. Ah, what a panacea for the ills of Islam but how woefully neglected!
CHAPTER 4
AL-NISA
(Revealed after Hijra)

Date and Place of Revelation.

This Sūra consists of 177 verses including Bismillah. 'A'isha is reported by Bukhārī to have said that this chapter was revealed when, after her marriage with the Holy Prophet, she had come into his house; and as 'A'isha came into the Holy Prophet's house some time after the Hijra, the chapter proves to be wholly of Medinite origin. Qurṭubī says that the verse, Verily Allah commands you to give over the trusts to those entitled to them (4: 58), belongs to Meccan revelations and was revealed at the time of the fall of Mecca. This is a case of faulty nomenclature, for everything revealed after Hijra is Medinite, even though it may have been revealed at Mecca. The Rev. E. M. Wherry, Noeldeke and some other European scholars are agreed on its being of the Medinite period and regard it as having been revealed between the fourth and fifth years of the Hijra. Noeldeke, however, is inclined to place some of its verses among the Meccan revelations because in them "Jews are referred to in a friendly spirit." Wherry thinks that the words "O people" occurring in verse 134 of this Sūra show that it was revealed at Mecca because this form of address has been exclusively used in the Meccan Sūras.

The fact, however, remains that this is a Medinite Sūra and some of its parts were revealed very late in the Holy Prophet's ministry. European scholars are wrong in inferring from the form of address, viz. "O people," used in this Sūra that some of its verses belong to the Meccan period. Similarly, their inference that, because in some of its verses Jews are referred to in a friendly spirit, therefore those verses must belong to the Meccan period, carries no weight. The inference that the above-mentioned form of address was used only at Mecca has no basis inasmuch as this form of address has also been used in Sūras which by the consensus of the opinion of scholars belong to the Medinite period, viz., chapters Al-Baqara and Al-Ḥajj, (e.g. 2: 22; 22: 2), though because this form of address has been used in these Sūras, these European scholars regard some of their verses also as having been revealed at Mecca. But to say that because a certain verse uses the expression "O people" it must, in spite of all contrary evidence, belong to the Meccan period is anything but reasonable.

The truth, however, is that as long as the Holy Prophet was at Mecca, very few of the commandments of the Sharī'at had been revealed and the people of Mecca were the principal addressees. Therefore in the Meccan Sūras the words "O people" were frequently employed as a form of address. But with the Holy Prophet's coming to Medina, Muslims became welded into an organised community, therefore at Medina the form of address "O people" generally became changed into "O ye who believe." This change was quite natural. But with the Prophet's advent to Medina, disbelievers were not altogether ignored. At Medina also they used to enquire of the Holy Prophet about many things and their questions were answered and those answers are recorded in the Quran. So whenever in Medina an answer to a certain question was revealed in which, along with Muslims, disbelievers were also addressed, the form of
address consisted of the words “O people.” But when the revealed answer or commandment concerned only Muslims, the words “O ye who believe” were used. So there was no reason for the words “O people” to be definitely given up at Medina; and to fix Mecca as the place of revelation of a specific Sūra because of these words having been used in it is simply arbitrary.

Similarly, the inference of Noeldeke that because Jews have been referred to in some of the verses of this Sūra in a friendly spirit, therefore these verses must belong to the Meccan period, is ill-based. In the verses which deal with Jews, the Quran maintains an attitude of uniform fairness to them whether those verses belong to the Meccan or the Medinite period. For instance, it is in a Medinite Sūra i.e. Al-Baqara, that occurs the verse, And the Jews say, ‘the Christians stand on nothing,’ and the Christians say, ‘the Jews stand on nothing’ while they both read the same Book (2:114). In this verse the Quran has been scrupulously fair towards both Jews and Christians. So the argument that because in a certain verse Jews have been referred to in a friendly spirit, therefore that verse must necessarily belong to the Meccan period, carries no weight.

Subject-Matter.

As in Al ‘Imrān, the Christian Faith constitutes the main theme of this Sūra. But in this Sūra greater space has been assigned to a comparison of the detailed teachings of the two religions, Islam and Christianity, with special reference to the progress and domination of Christianity in the Latter Days. As in the Latter Days, Christianity was loudly to profess and proclaim its superiority over Islam on the basis of its teachings regarding women, this chapter largely deals with them, and even a cursory glance over these teachings establishes the fact that even in this respect Islamic teachings are infinitely superior to those of Christianity. And as the subject of orphans is intimately connected with that of women, it has also received special mention here. The Sūra is the first among divine revelations to safeguard the rights of women. They are not only given the right of inheritance along with men but have also been declared to be the masters and arbiters of their property.

The second main topic dealt with in this chapter is that of hypocrisy. As in the Latter Days Christianity was to gain world-wide predominance and a large number of Muslims were to live under Christian governments and, as a result of their subservience to Christian rulers and their fear of Christian criticism of Islam, they were to adopt an hypocritical attitude towards their own faith, the subject of hypocrisy has been particularly treated in this chapter along with that of women, and light is thrown on the depths to which an hypocrite sinks spiritually and temporally. Pointed reference has also been made to the ultimate success of Islam, when shame and abasement will seize these weak-hearted and hypocritical Muslims who feared men more than their Creator.

Towards the end of the Sūra a somewhat detailed mention is made of the crucifixion of Jesus, and it is declared that the religious predominance of Christianity is due to the belief that Jesus is not dead but living. This belief is shown to be utterly unfounded because as Jesus is proved not to have died on the Cross, but to have died a natural death, the question of his resurrection simply does not arise. In the concluding verses of this Sūra it is declared that this false doctrine will in the end be obliterates and the doctrine of the Oneness of God will reign supreme in the world.
1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.  

2. O ye people! a fear your Lord, bWho created you from a single soul and created therefrom its mate, and from them twain spread many men and women; and fear Allah, in whose name you appeal to one another, and fear Him particularly respecting ties of relationship. Verily, Allah watches over you.

483. Important Words:

See under 1:1.

484. Important Words:

(Watcher) is derived from رَنِع. They say i.e. he watched him; or guarded him; or waited for him; or he kept or preserved it. رَنِع is one of God's attributes meaning, Watcher, Guardian, Keeper; One from Whom nothing is hidden. رَنِع also means, an observer; a spy (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The words غَيْبٌ واحِدة (single soul) may signify: (1) Adam; or (2) man and woman taken together, because when two things jointly perform one function, they may be spoken of as one. For instance, 2:62 speaks of one food, while it consisted of Manna and quails; or (3) man and woman taken individually, because mankind may be said to have been created from one “single soul” in the sense that each and every individual is created from the seed of man who is “one soul” and is also born of woman who is likewise “one soul.”

The expression, and created therefrom its mate, does not mean that woman was created out of the body of man but that she belonged to the same kind and species as man, having the same nature and the same propensities. The meaning of this expression becomes clear when elsewhere we read in the Quran: And Allah has made for you mates from among yourselves (16:73); and He has made for you pairs of your own selves, and of the cattle also pairs (42:12). This means that, like other human beings, a wife was provided for Adam from his own species. And just as other men's wives are not created from their ribs, so was the wife of Adam not created out of his ribs; and just as our wives have been made from ourselves in the sense that they are of the same kind as ourselves, so was the wife of Adam created from his rib in the sense that she belonged to the same race as Adam did. The preposition مِن (from) which has given rise to this misconception has been used in the Quran not only about Adam but about other men as well (e.g. 4:60; 9:128; 10:3; 62:3, 4.), and in both cases it should mean the same thing i.e. belonging to the same kind or species. The Quran
3. And give to the orphans their property and exchange not the bad for the good, and devour not their property with your own. Surely, it is a great sin.485

lends no support whatever to the view that Eve was actually created from the rib of Adam, as is clear from the following verses: We have created you in pairs (78 : 9); And of everything have We created pairs (51 : 50), which means that, just as God created a mate for every living thing, so did He make one for Adam. He did not need to depart from this law in respect of Adam and to create a female for him out of his own body.

The idea of Eve having been created out of the rib of Adam seems to have arisen from a saying of the Holy Prophet to the effect "Women have been created from a rib, and surely, the most crooked part of a rib is the highest part thereof. If you set yourself to straighten it, you will break it" (Bukhari, ch. on Nikab). This hadith is, however, an argument against the above view rather than in favour of it, for it makes no mention of Eve, and speaks of all women, and it is clear that every woman has not been created from a rib.

The expression “created from a rib” is evidently figurative and must not be taken literally. What it means is only that, like unto a rib, there is a sort of crookedness in the nature of woman and that this very crookedness lends charm to her. An analogous Quranic expression, viz. : "man is made of (lit. from) haste" (21 : 38) helps to illustrate the point. These words clearly do not mean that man has been created out of a substance called haste. They mean only that man is hasty by nature. The above view has been supported by Majma‘ al Bihar, Bahr al-Muhiß and Si‘aj al-Wahhaj, which all agree that in the above hadith the Arabic word -meaning a certain crookedness of manners, the word itself meaning crookedness.

In fact, this hadith refers to a certain peculiarity of woman, viz., her affectation of displeasure and coquetry. This “crookedness” has been spoken of in the hadith as the highest or the best trait in her character, and those who take affectation of anger on her part as an expression of her real anger and begin to deal harshly with her for that reason, in fact destroy woman’s most attractive and winning feature.

The verse places “the fear of God,” side by side with “respect for the ties of relationship”, thus emphasizing the importance of good treatment of relatives, on which the Quran lays so much stress. The Holy Prophet used to recite this verse when delivering a marriage sermon in order to remind the parties of their duties to one another.

485. Important Words:

– حَيْر (sin) is derived from حَبـَاب meaning, he sinned; he did what was unlawful. حَوب means: (1) a great sin or simply sin or crime; (2) wrong or injustice; (3) perdition, destruction or death; (4) disease; (5) a trial, trouble or affliction (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

After mentioning two favours of God in the previous verse, viz., the multiplying of many men and women from a “single soul,” and preserving them from destruction by instituting
4. And if you fear that you will not be fair in dealing with the orphans, then marry of women as may be agreeable to you, two or three or four; and if you fear you will not deal justly, then marry only one or what your right hands possess. That is the nearest way for you to avoid injustice.  


ties of relationship, the Quran proceeds to emphasize the need of protecting posterity by safeguarding the rights and interests of orphans.

The expression, and exchange not the bad for the good, means that if you do not give the orphans their property, the result will be that your own pure possessions will become impure and you yourselves will suffer in the long run.

The words, devour not their property with your own, contain a warning to guardians not to mix up the property of orphans with their own with the intention of misappropriating it. The clause also hints that if the guardian of an orphan possesses sufficient means of subsistence, he should not take anything out of the property of his ward as a compensation for his guardianship.

486. Important Words:
 طَابٌ (as may be agreeable). means, the thing was or became pleasing, delightful, agreeable or delicious. طَابَتْ بِخَيْرٍ means, my mind or my soul became pleased and satisfied with it. طَابَ فَقَلاً means, life became pleasant and free from cares for such a one طَابٌ مِمَّنْ فَقَلاً means, he willingly parted with the thing (Aqrab & Lane).

ثَنَى (two) is derived from ثَنَى. They say ثَنَى كَأَنْ, i.e. he doubled it or folded it; or he turned one part of it upon another. ثَنَى signifies the repetition of a thing, doing it one time after another, or a thing or affair done twice. ثَنَى اثْنَانْ means, i.e. two and two; two and two together; or two at a time and two at a time. Similarly, ثَلَاثَ means, three and three; three and three together; or three at a time and three at a time; and so is the meaning of رَاعِ (Lane & Aqrab). The expression ثَلَاثٌ رَاعٍ would thus mean, two at a time or three at time or four at a time.

تَمَعَّزَ (do injustice) is derived from تَمَعَّز. which means: (1) he had a family or a large family; (2) he sustained and supported the family; (3) he was or became poor; (4) he acted unjustly and wrongfully, or he deviated from the right course.

Commentary:
The verse is important inasmuch as it permits polygamy under special circumstances. Islam allows (though it certainly does not enjoin) a man to have more than one wife up to four at a time. As the permission concerning polygamy has been given in connection with the subject of orphans, it should be taken to be primarily based on the question of the care of that much-neglected class of society. There are cases when the interests of orphans can best be protected by marrying one or more wives from among the female wards or from other women as the exigencies of circumstances may require. This can generally happen in one of the following cases:
(1) A man has a number of orphans, including girls, to look after. He is unmarried and there is danger of his falling into temptation. In this case he should marry one or more girls, as the case may be, from among his wards and thus protect himself from falling into sin or from betraying his trust and acting wrongfully towards his wards.

(2) He is married, but his wife fails to treat the orphans properly. He may in such a case also marry one of his female wards so that they may have a good and separate home of their own.

(3) Some of his younger relations, e.g., brothers or sisters, become orphans and he finds that he or his existing wife cannot properly look after them. In such an eventuality, he may marry a suitable woman of mature age who may treat them like a mother. It is on record that in similar circumstances Jābir, a young man and one of the Holy Prophet's distinguished Companions, married a widow of mature age and when the Prophet asked him why he had not married a young girl, Jābir replied that he had done so that his wife might look after his brothers and sisters who were left orphans by the death of his father. The Holy Prophet was much pleased at this act of Jābir and prayed for him (Bukhāri, ch. on Buyū').

(4) If a person is afraid that the orphans under his care being strangers to him, he may not treat them as kindly as he should do, he may establish direct relationship with them by marrying one of the female wards.

(5) If a person has a large number of orphans under his care and he finds that he cannot do full justice to them without marrying more wives than one, he is permitted to do so to the limit of four.

The words, two or three or four, signify that the last number marks the utmost limit. It is related that after this verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet asked those of his Companions who had more than four wives to keep any four of them they liked and divorce the rest, so that the number might not exceed four (Tirmidhī, ch. on Nikāh).

A general note on polygamy is appropriate here. Though the verse mentions polygamy in connection with the subject of orphans, yet other situations may also arise in which polygamy may become a necessary remedy for many social or moral evils.

If only the objects of marriage itself be considered, the permission of the Quran to its followers to wed more wives than one, appears to be not only justifiable but in some cases desirable and even necessary; nay, in such cases it may become positively injurious to the best interests of individuals and of the community not to take advantage of this permission. According to the Quran, the objects of marriage are four, i.e., (1) protection against physical, moral and spiritual maladies; (2) peace of mind and the availability of a loving companion; (3) procreation of children; and (4) widening of the circle of relationship.

With respect to the first-mentioned object, the Quran says: "And allowed to you are those beyond that (i.e. the cases mentioned in the earlier verses) that you seek them by means of your property—marrying them properly (and guarding yourselves against animal passions) and not committing fornication (and not indulging in unrestricted gratification) (4:25). The word حاصان occurring in the verse quoted above is derived from حاصان which means, to seek protection from the attacks of an enemy by entering into a fort. Thus Islam regards marriage as a sort of fort, or a means of protection against moral and spiritual diseases. With respect to this object the Quran further says: They (your wives) are a garment for you and you are a garment for them (2:188).

Now the dress of a person serves a three-fold purpose: (1) It protects him against the
inclemency of weather; (2) it serves as an embellishment and adornment; and (3) it covers one's private parts and any defects that may be in one's physical formation. With respect to the second object the Quran says: *And of His Signs is this, that He has created wives for you from among yourselves that you may find peace of mind in them and He has engendered love and tenderness between you* (30:22). About the third object it says: *Your wives are a tilth for you; so approach your tilth when and how you like* (2:224).

Now everyone can easily conceive that one or all of the above-mentioned four objects of marriage, i.e., (1) protection against physical, moral and spiritual diseases; (2) procreation and propagation of the human race; (3) company of a life-long and loving companion and (4) widening of the circle of relationship are, sometimes, not realized in the case of one wife only. It is a hard fact which cannot be denied that there are persons whose sexual instinct is too strong to be satisfied with one wife. This is a physical necessity inherent in man and it is playing with fire to make light of this, the most powerful of all physical instincts. The only sane and proper course open to a man whose sexual powers are abnormally strong is to marry another, if one wife does not satisfy him. Such cases may be rare but you cannot ignore their existence altogether. And a perfect religious system, as Islam claims to be, has to provide for the physical and spiritual requirements of all sorts of people. Again, if the wife of a person becomes a permanent invalid or suffers from a contagious disease, the object of marriage is certainly defeated if such a person does not marry another wife. Indeed, no course is left to him but either to contract another lawful marriage or, failing successfully to combat the attacks of his passions, to lead a dissolute life. And an ailing wife cannot make a good companion either, because however worthy of regard and com-passion she may be, her company cannot give peace of mind to her husband in all respects. In the third instance, if the wife of a person happens to be barren, the natural and perfectly legitimate desire of the husband to have an issue to succeed him and perpetuate his name remains unfulfilled in the absence of a polygamous marriage. It is to meet the requirements of all such persons that Islam has allowed the contraction of plural matrimonial relations.

If, however, in any of these cases a husband divorces his first wife, it would be a shame and disgrace for him. For instance, in the case of an invalid wife it would mean that he lived with her as long as she was whole and deserted her at a time when she most needed his protection. The only honourable course in such a case would be to look after the diseased wife tenderly and marry another woman who may fulfil the functions of a wife.

It will thus be seen that the objects of a polygamous marriage are, to a certain extent, the same as those of a monogamous marriage. When one or all of those objects are not realized by a monogamous marriage, a polygamous marriage becomes a necessity and is allowed. There are, however, other reasons also which may render it necessary for a person to have one or more wives in addition to the one whom he dearly loves and who also fulfils the objects of marriage. Those reasons are: (a) to protect orphans; (b) to provide husbands for marriageable widows and (c) to supplement the decreasing manhood of a family or community.

It is manifestly clear from the verse under comment in which permission is given to marry more wives than one that polygamy is resorted to particularly with a view to taking under one's protection orphans left unprotected. The verse clearly states: *If you fear that you will not be fair in dealing with orphans (under your protection), then marry of women, as may be agreeable to you, two or three or four;*
And give the women their dowries willingly. But if they, of their own pleasure, remit to you a part thereof, then enjoy it as something pleasant and wholesome.\textsuperscript{487}

and if you fear you will not deal justly (between your wives) then marry only one. The words hint that the mother of such orphans as are left in the guardianship of a person should preferably be married by him so that he should become directly related to, and more intimately connected with, them and thus become more interested in their welfare than he otherwise could be.

Again, the Quran says: And marry widows from among you (24:33). To provide husbands for widows is thus another object which the institution of polygamy fulfils. Muslims were perpetually engaged in fighting in the time of the Holy Prophet. Many fell in wars and left behind widows and orphans without near relations to look after them. The preponderance of women over men and an exceptionally large number of orphans with no one to look after them, which is the inevitable result of war, necessitated that, to save the Muslim society from moral degeneration, polygamous marriages should be encouraged. The last World War also vindicated this useful institution of Islam. It left an abnormally large number of young women without husbands. Indeed, the great preponderance of females over males in the West, due to the appalling loss of manhood caused by the War, is responsible for the present awful laxity of morals which is eating into the vitals of Western society. Young girls fail to get suitable husbands. But natural passions must be satisfied. The result is dissolution and depravity. In view of the moral depravity prevailing in many countries, who has the hardihood to deny the wisdom of the Islamic institution of polygamy? Many indescribable moral and physical evils have arisen in the West as the result of this preponderance of women over men, the only proper remedy for which is polygamy.

The institution of polygamy is also intended to meet the serious situation that follows in the wake of a war, when, besides other aspects of decline, the manhood of a nation becomes so depleted as to threaten national destruction. The fall of birth-rate, which is a potent cause of the decay of a people and from which some Western countries are badly suffering, can be effectively remedied only by resorting to polygamy. The West will never recover from the terrible moral and social diseases from which it is suffering as well as from the appalling numerical decline facing certain countries and communities, unless, setting aside all false notions and false sentiments, it submits to the Islamic injunctions about polygamy. It is a sacrifice demanded of men and women alike—a sacrifice in which personal and passing sentiments are required to be partly ignored for the wider and permanent interests of whole communities and countries.

\textsuperscript{487} Important Words:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{madāqa} (dowries) which is the plural of \textit{madâqa} and not \textit{madâqa}, as might be wrongly supposed, is derived from \textit{madâq}.
  \item \textit{madâq} (truth) i.e. he was true in his speech, or he spoke the truth, or he spoke truthfully.
  \item \textit{madâq} (hardihood) means, he fought well; he gave a good account of himself in the fight; he was true to his duty in the fight.
\end{itemize}
means, he was truthful in his promise. The expression means, he was sincere to bid in his advice and brotherly affection. See also 2:32. صادق (sadaqo) of which the plural is صدقات (sadaqāt) means, anything given to win the pleasure of God and a good reward from Him; alms and charity; Zakāt, i.e., the prescribed tax of Islam for helping the poor, etc. صدقة (sudqā) of which the plural is صدقات (sudqāt) as in the present verse, means, dowry or nuptial gift i.e. a gift that is given to or for a bride (Lane & Aqrab). Another word for it is هبة (or مهر) which Islam prescribes for every marriage tie, making it binding on the husband to pay to his wife. It is so called because it is a symbol of truthfulness and sincerity on the part of the husband.

حلأ (willingly) is derived from حلأ. The expression حلأ للمرأة مهر or الدُّرוי means, he gave his wife her dowry willingly and cheerfully without expecting a return. صلة means, giving a thing willingly and cheerfully without expecting a return; payment of the dowry to a wife; a free gift. حلأ is distinguishable from هبة (a free gift) in that every هبة is not حلأ (Aqrab & Mufradāt).

Commentary:
The verse may be taken to be addressed to both the husband and the relations of the wife. In the latter case, it would mean that the relations of a woman should not spend her dowry received from the husband to meet their own needs, but should faithfully hand it over to her. Some persons receive the dowry of their female wards from their husbands and then, instead of giving it to them, keep it for themselves. Primarily, however, the verse is addressed to the husband whom it requires to pay the agreed dowry to his wife willingly, cheerfully and without demur. Some people fix dowries for their wives and then hesitate or even refuse to pay them, expecting them and even urging them to forego the right. The verse condemns this evil practice.

The word حلأ (paying the dowry willingly and cheerfully) also points to the amount of the dowry being reasonable i.e. it should be well within the means of the husband so that its payment may not be a painful burden to him. He should be in a position to pay it willingly and cheerfully.

The clause, if they, of their own pleasure, remit to you a part thereof, applies to those wives who voluntarily and willingly give up or pay back anything out of the agreed dowry. It does not apply to a case in which the wife is asked or made to relinquish the whole or part of the dowry before it has been actually paid to her. According to 'Umar, a woman might claim back her dowry even after she has given it up, if she has done so under any vestige of pressure.

The words, then enjoy it as something pleasant and wholesome, imply a compliment to such husbands as evoke a willing and voluntary response from their wives owing to their kind and loving treatment of them. In such cases the wives are so pleased with their husbands that they offer to them a part of their dowry out of their own free will, as a token of the true love that exists between them.
6. And give not to the foolish your property which Allah has made for you a means of support; but feed them therewith and clothe them and speak to them words of kind advice.\footnote{488}

488. \textbf{Important Words}:

- نَمَال意味着 "support" is derived from نَمَال i.e. he stood up.
- تَأَم means, he undertook or managed the affair.
- تَأَم مَهْيَه means, he took care of him or it.
- تَأَم بَيِّنَة means, he supported or maintained the orphan (Lane). So نَمَال would mean, the act or state of standing; a means of support or sustenance.

\textbf{Commentary}:

The verse speaks of the property of the orphans as "your property," hinting thereby that the guardians of orphans should be very careful about spending the orphans' property and should in this respect treat it as their own. The expression "your property" may also signify "the property of the orphans which is in your custody." It is also possible that the expression has been used here to include all property whether belonging to the orphans or to their guardians.

As special emphasis was laid in the preceding verses on the care and good treatment of orphans, there was a likelihood that some Muslims might too readily give orphans their money on demand from them. This verse cautions guardians against such a hasty step, because, being young and inexperienced, orphans might waste their money and might also thereby spoil their character. Muslims are, therefore, bidden to meet the legitimate needs of orphans but not to squander away their money, which is a means of their support and maintenance. The same injunction applies to the children or persons of weak understanding in general, the reason being the same in both cases.

The word سُفِهاء translated as "foolish" but properly meaning, "those who cannot take proper care of their possessions", has been substituted for the word "orphans" in the present verse to supply the needed reason for the injunction, as well as to make it of general application, including in its scope all such persons as are unable to take care of their possessions.

In the case of grown-up imbeciles, the verse would be taken to be addressed to the State which should take effective steps to set up institutions like Courts of Wards to look after the property of such persons as cannot manage it themselves.
7. And prove the orphans until they attain the age of marriage; then, if you find in them sound judgement, deliver to them their property; and devour it not in extravagance and haste against their growing up. And whoso is rich, let him abstain; and whoso is poor, let him eat thereof with equity. And when you deliver to them their property, then take witnesses in their presence. And Allah is sufficient as a Reckoner. 489

489. Commentary:

Guardians of orphans are enjoined to continue to test them so that if, after having reached the age of puberty, which according to some authorities is 18 years and according to others 21, they are found to be capable of taking charge of their property, it should be handed over to them. But in no circumstances is it to be made over to them before puberty is attained and before they are so mature of intellect as to take care of and manage their property. If even at the mature age of 18 or 21, they are found to be incapable of managing their property, it may be withheld from them for a further period, with the sanction of the State.

The verse also warns guardians not to squander away in haste the money of their wards before they are old enough to take charge of it. The guardian is, however, allowed a reasonable wage, if he is poor, which should be in proportion to the amount of work he does and to the value of the ward's property.

But if the guardian is a person of ample means, he should take nothing out of the orphan's property. In that case, his should be a labour of love, done in hope of reward from God. This verse is not a repetition but an explanation of 4:3 which contains a prohibitory injunction for such guardians as possess sufficient income, with the addition that it allows a certain remuneration for guardians of meagre means.

The words, when you deliver to them their property, then take witnesses in their presence, have been added as a safeguard against all possible frauds as well as misunderstandings. The property should be handed over to the wards in the presence of reliable witnesses when both the wards and the witnesses are present as the word "presence" hints.

The verse ends with a stern warning in the words, Allah is sufficient as a Reckoner. So all concerned should fear the All-Seeing and All-Knowing God. Indeed, the fear of being called to account before God is the only true basis of all righteousness and the real and most effective preventive against sin and iniquity. One should fear not only the punishment of God but also losing His love and mercy.
8. For men is a share of that which parents and near relations leave; and for women is a share of that which parents and near relations leave, whether it be little or much—a determined share.⁴⁹⁰

9. And when other relations and orphans and the poor are present at the division of heritage, give them something therefrom and speak to them words of kindness.⁴⁹¹

10. And let those fear God who, if they should leave behind them their own weak offspring, would be anxious for them. Let them, therefore, fear Allah and let them say the right word.⁴⁹²

⁴⁹⁰. Commentary:
This verse, without giving the details, forms the basis of the Islamic law of inheritance. Detailed rules are given in the succeeding verses. The verse lays down the general principle of the social equality of man and woman. Both are entitled to a suitable share in the property.

⁴⁹¹. Commentary:
The Sūra began by enjoining men and women to treat one another with kindness. Next, it exhorted believers to take care of orphans, for these matters have an important bearing upon social order. The present verse treats of yet another social subject of importance.

By the words, relations and orphans and the poor, are here meant those distant relatives, and those orphans and poor persons who, being not among the testator's lawful heirs, are not entitled to receive any part of his property as of right. The verse, though not giving a legal right of inheritance to them, exhorts all true Muslims, while making a will about the division of their property, to set apart a portion of it for orphans and the poor and such distant relatives as are entitled to no legal share. A testator, however, can leave by will not more than one-third of his property to other than his lawful heirs (Bukhārī, ch. on Waqīya).

According to Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn Musayyib, Ibn Sa'īd and Abū Ja'far, the time referred to in the verse is when a person is about to make his will regarding the division of his property (Muhīṭ). If nothing can be spared out of the property for this class of people, the testator should at least state in the will that they should be treated with kindness and he himself should also say kind words to them. The injunction laid down in the verse does not concern orphans particularly, but forms a part of the law of inheritance in general. As death leaves behind orphans, therefore injunctions pertaining to orphans have been coupled with those pertaining to the disposal of a deceased person's property.

⁴⁹². Commentary:
The verse contains a strong and highly forcful appeal in favour of orphans. Those to
11. Surely, "they who devour the property of orphans unjustly, only swallow fire into their bellies, and they shall burn in a blazing fire."  

2 12. Allah commands you concerning your children: a male shall have as much as the share of two females; but if there be females only, numbering more than two, then they shall have two-thirds of what the deceased leaves; and if there be one, she shall have the half. And his parents shall have each of them a sixth of the inheritance, if he have a child; but if he have no child and his parents be his heirs, then his mother shall have a third; and if he have brothers and sisters, then his mother shall have a sixth, after the payment of any bequests he may have bequeathed or of debt. Your fathers and your children: you know not which of them is nearest to you in benefit. This fixing of portions is from Allah. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.

493. Important Words:

\( \\text{صلل} \) (burn) is derived from \( \\text{صلل} \). They say \( \\text{صلل} \) "he roasted the meat." \( \\text{صلل} \\text{صلل} \) means, he threw the thing into the fire to be burned. \( \\text{صلل} \) means, he felt the burning heat of the fire, or he entered the fire and was burnt (Aqrab).

494. Important Words:

\( \\text{ابن} \) (his parents) is really \( \\text{ابن} \), the letter \( \\text{ن} \) being dropped owing to \( \\text{ابن} \). The word \( \\text{ابن} \) is the genitive of \( \\text{ابن} \) which is the dual form of \( \\text{ابن} \) which is originally meaning, father or grandfather or any male ancestor or paternal uncle. \( \\text{ابن} \) literally...
meaning "two fathers" signifies "father and mother" (Lane).

J, (child) is very general in its significance meaning: (1) a child, son, daughter or a young one; (2) children, sons, daughters, offspring or young ones. Thus the word is used both as singular and plural, feminine and masculine (Lane).

Commentary:

This and the succeeding verse combined with the last verse of the Sūra give the Islamic law of inheritance in a nutshell.

Islam prescribes suitable shares for all near relatives in the property of a deceased person without distinction of sex or order of birth. Children, parents, husbands and wives are the principal heirs who, if alive, get suitable shares in all circumstances, other relations having a title only in special cases. A male has been given double the share of a female because he has been made responsible for the maintenance of the family (Ma'ānī, ii. 32).

The Islamic law of inheritance is perfect and it safeguards against all evils that result from laws prescribed by, or in vogue in, other faiths and communities. It aims at a fair distribution of wealth and equal chances of progress for all. To give the property of a deceased parent to the first-born son only or to exclude the female members from inheritance or to disinherit parents in the presence of children has proved a veritable curse for society in many ways—moral, social and economic. The Islamic law of inheritance, reinforced by the system of Zakāt (prescribed alms) and by the injunction prohibiting the giving and taking of interest, provides a golden mean between capitalism and communism—the two evil extremes of present-day economic system.

The verse begins by laying down a general rule as to the proportion of shares between sons and daughters. A son is to have as much as two daughters. So wherever there are both sons and daughters, this rule will come into force. When, however, there are only daughters and no son, the verse allotted two-thirds of the legacy to the daughters, if there are more than two of them, and one-half if there is only one. The share of daughters in case there are two, is not expressly stated. But the use of the conjunction ḃut in the clause, but if there be females only, numbering more than two, clearly points to the fact that the share of two females has been referred to in the preceding words "two females." Moreover, the share of two females can be gathered from what has already been said in the beginning of the verse about the ratio between the shares of the males and the females. According to that ratio, a son is to get as much as two daughters. Thus, if there be one son and one daughter, the son will have two-thirds. But as the share of one son has been made equal to that of "two daughters," the latter, in case there is no son, will have two-thirds, viz., the same share as has been expressly fixed for three daughters. Thus, the very construction of the verse shows that if there be two daughters and no son, they too, as in the case of three daughters, will get two-thirds. If it had not been the object of the Quran to point to the share of two daughters in the clause, it would have been something like this, "a male shall have twice as much as a female," and not as it is now.

The above meaning is corroborated by a saying of the Holy Prophet himself. It is related that when a Companion of the Holy Prophet named Sa'd bin Rabi'a died in the Battle of Uhud, leaving two daughters and one widow, his brother took away the whole property, leaving nothing for the two daughters. Thereupon the widow of Sa'd went to the Holy Prophet and said, "Here are the two daughters of Sa'd. Their uncle has taken the whole of his property and has left nothing for them." The Holy Prophet told her to wait till God should decide
13. And you shall have half of that which your wives leave, if they have no child; but if they have a child, then you shall have a fourth of that which they leave, after the payment of any bequests they may have bequeathed or of debt. And they shall have a fourth of that which you leave, if you have no child; but if you have a child, then they shall have an eighth of that which you leave, after the payment of any bequests you may have bequeathed or of debt. If there be a man or a woman whose heritage is to be divided and he or she has neither parent nor child, and he or she has a brother and a sister, then each one of them shall have a sixth. But if they be more than that, then they shall be equal sharers in one-third, after the payment of any bequests which may have been bequeathed or of debt, without prejudice to the debt. This is an injunction from Allah and Allah is Wise, Forbearing.

The matter. Then this verse was revealed and the Prophet called upon Sa’d’s brother to give two-thirds of Sa’d’s property to his two daughters and one-eighth to their mother and keep the rest for himself (Tirmidhi & Dāwūd).

The verse speaks of three cases as regards the share of the parents: (1) If a person dies leaving one or more children, then each of his parents shall have one-sixth; (2) If a person dies issueless and his parents are the sole heirs (there being no wife or husband of the deceased person), then the mother will have one-third of the property and the remaining two-thirds will go to the father; (3) There is a third case, which is really an exception to the second case. A man dies without issue and his parents are his sole heirs, but he has brothers or sisters. Then, although his brothers or sisters will not inherit from him, yet their presence will affect the share of the parents, for, in this case, the mother will have one-sixth (instead of one-third, as in the second case) and the remaining five-sixths will go to the father. The reason why the father is awarded a larger share in this case is that the father has also to support the brothers or sisters of the deceased. The subject of inheritance is continued in the succeeding verse.

495. Important Words:

كلالة (one who has neither parent nor child) is derived from كل i.e. he was or became fatigued, tired or wearied and could proceed no further; he was or became one having no
child and no parent, the latter meaning being based on the former, as a person having no child or parent becomes, as it were, too fatigued for the racial march. "Kalāla" is (1) a person who leaves behind neither father nor child, male or female; or (2) a person who leaves behind neither father nor son. According to Ibn ‘Abbās "Kalāla" is a person who leaves no son irrespective of the fact whether his father is living or not. This would thus be the third meaning of "Kalāla" (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

Commentary:

The first part of this verse determines the share of the husband and the wife in inheritance and needs no comment. The latter part deals with the case of a Kalāla i.e. one who leaves neither parent nor child and whose property is inherited by his or her brother and sister. Now, if there is only one brother and one sister, each of them will get one-sixth. But if they are more than that, they will be sharers in one-third.

It should, however, be noted that in this respect brothers and sisters fall under three heads; firstly, real brothers or sisters, offspring of the same parents (such brothers or sisters are technically known as āyānī, 'āyānī); secondly, brothers and sisters on the side of the father only (these are technically known as 'āli, 'ullā).; thirdly, brothers and sisters on the side of the mother only, their father being not the same as that of the deceased (such brothers and sisters being technically called ākhyāfī). It is to the last-mentioned class that the commandment given in the present verse pertains; the law with regard to the first two classes of brothers and sisters being given in the last verse of this Sūra.

The reader will further note that the shares allotted to the brothers and sisters of the last-mentioned class are smaller than those allotted to the brothers and sisters of the first two classes, the reason being that the brothers and sisters of this class are on the side of the mother only, while the brothers and the sisters of the other two classes are the children of the same father as the deceased.

It is also noteworthy that in the property of a person who dies as a Kalāla, as mentioned in the present verse, both brothers and sisters have equal shares, the usual ratio of two to one being not observed in their case.

The words, "without prejudice to the debt," are important. They mean that the payment of debts should not suffer by the payment of bequests. In other words, debts are to be paid prior to the payment of bequests. It was in compliance with this Quranic injunction that the Holy Prophet used to have the debts paid before the payment of bequests. The rights of other people must be safeguarded before any bequest made by the deceased is complied with. So strict was the Holy Prophet in these matters that he refused to perform the funeral service of the man whose debts were likely to remain unpaid.

It may incidentally be noted here that heirs are divided into two main groups:

1. Dhawūl-Farā'id i.e. persons to whom Islam allots a fixed and definite share (¼, ⅓, ⅓, ⅓ or ⅓) in the estate of a deceased person.

2. 'Asābāt i.e. the heirs who receive the residue after the Dhawūl Farā'id have received their allotted shares.

It is, however, not necessary that a member of the first group should always remain a Dhūl Farīḍa. In certain cases, he may be both a Dhūl Farīḍa (sharer) and an 'Asāba (residuary) and in other cases he may be simply an 'Asāba.

The Dhawūl-Farā'id (sharers) are 12 in number, four males and eight females. The males are 1. father, 2. paternal grandfather, 3. husband and 4. half-brother on the maternal side. The females are (1) daughter, (2) son's daughter,
14. These are the limits set by Allah; and whoso obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will make him enter gardens through which streams flow; therein shall they abide; and that is a great triumph.

15. And whoso disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses His commandments, He will make him enter into Fire; therein he shall abide; and he shall have an humiliating punishment.

16. And those of your women who are guilty of lewdness—call to witness four of you against them; and if they bear witness, then confine them to the houses until death overtake them or Allah open for them a way.

(3) mother, (4) wife, (5) full sister, (6) half-sister on paternal side, (7) half-sister on maternal side, and (8) grandmother whether paternal or maternal.

The 'Asabāt (residuaries) are of four kinds, (1) ascendants of the deceased i.e. father, paternal grandfather, etc. (2) descendants of the deceased i.e. son, son's son, etc. (3) descendants of the father of the deceased i.e. full brother, brother's son, etc. (4) descendants of the grandfather i.e. full paternal uncle, paternal uncle's son, etc.

496. Important Words:

قَحَّة (lewdness) is derived from قَحَّ (lewd). They say قَحَّ الْأَمَر i.e. the matter or the affair or the thing was or became foul, evil, immoral, lewd or obscene; or it became excessively foul, etc. قَحَّة the woman became foul or ugly. تَحَلَّم means, he vied with him or strove to surpass him in foul or obscene speech or language, etc. تَحَلَّم therefore means, an excess or enormity or anything exceeding the bounds of rectitude; or a thing excessively and enormously foul, evil, immoral, lewd or obscene; a sin or crime which is excessively foul; adultery or fornication. تَحَلَّم besides giving the same meaning as قَحَّة also signifies avarice or niggardliness in the payment of Zakāt or the poor-rate (Lane).

Commentary:

The women referred to in this verse are those guilty of foul or immoral conduct short of adultery. Abū Muslim and Mujāhid, among others, have also held this view.

The words, confine them to the houses until death overtake them or Allah open for them a way, mean that they should be prevented from
17. And if two men from among you are guilty of it, punish them both. And if they repent and amend, then leave them alone; surely, Allah is Oft-Returning with compassion and Merciful. 497

mixing with other women until they reform themselves or get married, marriage being an effective means of weaning people from immoral practices. As the offence mentioned is a serious one, four witnesses are considered necessary in order to prevent injustice being done to women.

Some scholars have sought to interpret the verse in the light of a saying of the Holy Prophet which runs as follows: "Learn from me, Allah has indeed opened for them a way, which is that if an unmarried couple commit fornication with each other, they should receive a hundred stripes and should be banished for one year. But if a married man commits adultery with a married woman, then they should receive a hundred stripes each and be stoned to death" (Jarir, iv. 182). These scholars hold that the word ḥāḍa (fāhisha) mentioned in the verse means "adultery" and that this verse prescribed that the women who committed adultery were to be detained in their houses till their death or till the time when God should open a way for them i.e, reveal the law concerning them; and that the law which was afterwards revealed was to the effect that an unmarried woman committing fornication should receive a hundred stripes and one year's banishment, while a married woman guilty of adultery should be stoned to death after she had received a hundred stripes. This interpretation, however, is open to many objections:

1. If the words, confine them to the houses until death overtake them or Allah open for them a way, mean that they were to be detained in their houses until God gave His law concerning them, the question is, what hindered God from giving His law at the very time of the revelation of the verse under comment? There is no hint here that the time was not yet ripe for such a law to be revealed. In this case, the only inference will be that God hesitated to give the necessary law at the time when this verse was revealed because He was not yet decided, the matter being still under His consideration. Such a supposition cannot be made about God.

2. The law mentioned in the above-quoted hadith is not found in the Quran.

3. The Holy Prophet's own practice was against this hadith. No less than four persons were stoned to death for adultery in his lifetime, but none of them was given the punishment of a hundred stripes before being stoned as the above-mentioned hadith prescribes.

It may also be pointed out here that according to the usage of the Quran, the word ḥāḍa (fāhisha) does not always mean "adultery" but as shown under Important Words above it is also applied to all sorts of excesses or sins or crimes or acts exceeding the bounds of rectitude. For this meaning of the word the reader is referred to 33:31 which says: O wives of the Prophet, if any of you be guilty of (manifestly dishonourable conduct); and 65:2 which says: unless they commit (an act which is manifestly foul); and 7:29 which says: and when they commit (a foul deed). In none of these verses does the word ḥāḍa mean adultery.

497. Commentary:

The verse refers to two males who are guilty
18. Verily, "Allah undertakes to accept the repentance of only those who do evil ignorantly and then repent soon after. These are they to whom Allah turns with mercy; and Allah is All-Knowing, Wise."

19. There is no acceptance of repentance for those who continue to do evil until, when death faces one of them, he says, 'I do repent now;' nor for those who die disbelievers. It is these for whom We have prepared a painful punishment.

of an unnatural offence or something approaching it. What particular form the punishment mentioned here should take has been left to the discretion of the authorities concerned.

Both this verse and the preceding one refer to offences for which no punishment definitely fixed by the Law has been prescribed, the matter having been left to the discretion of the authorities to be decided according to circumstances.

498. Commentary:

The expression 'ignorantly' does not mean that the offenders do evil without knowing that it is evil. In fact, every evil deed which a man does is an act of ignorance, born of lack of true knowledge. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said, "There are some kinds of 'knowledge' which are really 'ignorance','' i.e. the learning of which is injurious to man (Bihār). So the expression 'ignorantly' has been added to point to the philosophy of sin and to exhort people to acquire true knowledge with a view to avoiding sin.

The words 'soon after' here mean "before death" which may come at any time and is thus always near. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "Allah accepts the repentance of man till the agonies of death" (Muslim, ch. on Tauba). This explanation is corroborated by what is said in the next verse (4:19), viz., who continue to do evil until when death faces one of them, he says, I do repent now. This shows that repentance may be accepted of any person, if he sincerely repents before death actually overtakes him.
20. O ye who believe, it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will; nor should you detain them wrongfully that you may take away part of that which you have given them, except that they be guilty of a flagrant evil; and consort with them in kindness; and if you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing wherein Allah has placed much good.  

499. Commentary:  
Men become heirs of women against their will in various ways: (1) A man does not like his wife and does not treat her well, yet he does not divorce her, hoping to possess her property after her death; (2) He treats his wife harshly and compels her by ill-treatment to obtain separation (Khul') from him by giving him a part or whole of her property, or by surrendering her dowry; (3) The relations of the deceased husband of a widow prevent her from marrying another husband in order to get possession of her property after her death; (4) They force her to marry some one from among themselves against her will, treating her virtually as a part of the property left by her dead husband; (5) The husband takes by force the property of his wife, as if it were his by legal right; (6) The relatives of the deceased husband take away by force the property of his widow, depriving her of her right of inheritance.  

The deceased person's relatives cannot prevent his widow from contracting a new marriage so that they may get hold of her property; but they can prevent her from doing so, if she intends to marry a person of manifestly objectionable character.  

If the address is to the husbands, the verse would mean that if the wives do not want to live with their husbands and seek separation from them, which they can do by means of Khul', the husbands should not prevent them from doing so out of greed for their money. But they can do so, if the wives are going to be guilty of a manifestly foul act.  

The words, consort with them in kindness, embody the pith of the Islamic teachings about the treatment of wives. They are not to be treated in a dry, business-like way but with love and kindness. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "the best among you is he who is best in his treatment of his wife" (Tirmidhi). But as a one-sided affair can never be truly successful, the Quran uses the expression (consort with them) which being of the measure denotes reciprocity. So husbands and wives are both enjoined to live amicably with each other and reciprocate each other's love and kindness.  

Woman cannot adequately appreciate and acknowledge the great debt she owes to the Quran. No other scripture has given to her the high status that the Quran gives her. It not only lays down her inalienable rights but also exhorts men to overlook the weaknesses and shortcomings of their wives and treat them with kindness and benevolence, even if they do not like them. The memorable words
21. And if you desire to take one wife in place of another and you have given one of them a treasure, take not aught therefrom. Will you take it by lying and with manifest sinfulness?

22. And how can you take it when one of you has been alone with the other, and they (the women) have taken from you a strong covenant.

of the Holy Prophet quoted above i.e. "the best of you is he who is best in his treatment of his wife" (Tirmidhi), are only an echo of the noble teachings of the Quran with regard to women.

500. Important Words:

lying (lying) is the noun-infinitive from ُلُغَت. They say ُلُغَت i.e. he slandered him or accused him falsely; or he did so in such a manner as to make him confounded at the falsity of the charge. ُلُغَت therefore means, a calumny, slander or false accusation; falsehood by reason of which one is perplexed or confused and is rendered unable to see his right course; a false accusation of adultery against a woman (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
The verse does not mean that man can divorce his wife at will. Anas, a Companion of the Holy Prophet, relates that once Abū Ayyūb and Abū Talḥa wanted to divorce their wives (without valid reason) and asked the Holy Prophet about it. He counselled them not to do so, characterizing their act as an act of injustice. Thereupon, they abandoned their intention of divorcing their wives and retained them. This does not mean that a husband cannot divorce his wife without obtaining the permission of the authorities; he can do so, if he so desires; but he will certainly be accountable before God if he does so without valid reason. Elsewhere the Holy Prophet is reported to have said, "Surely of the things sanctioned by the Law of Islam the most hateful in the sight of God is divorce" (Dāwūd ch. on Ṭalāq).

If for some special reason a man wishes to divorce one wife and marry another, he is not allowed to take back from the former what he has already given her, no matter however big the sum may be. If he does so, he will be guilty of infidelity and sin.

501. Important Words:

has been alone (has been alone) is formed from ُلُغَت. It means, I came to or reached a thing. ُلُغَت means, he went in unto his wife; or he came in contact with his wife, skin to skin; he was with her alone in private (Lane).

Commentary:
The words, one of you has been alone with the other, do not necessarily imply sexual intercourse. They only mean living with each other and meeting each other in private on terms of extreme intimacy. According to this verse, a man cannot take back from his wife any property or sum of money he may have given her, even though he may not have gone in unto her.

The expression, and they (the women) have
23. And marry not those women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed. It is a thing foul and hateful, and an evil way.\\n
R. 4 24. Forbidden to you are your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters, and your fathers' sisters, and your mothers' sisters, and brother's daughters, and sister's daughters, and your foster-mothers that have given you suck, and your foster-sisters, and the mothers of your wives, and your step-daughters, who are your wards, by your wives to whom you have gone in—but if you have not gone in unto them, there shall be no sin upon you—and the wives of your sons that are from your loins; and it is forbidden to you to have two sisters together in marriage, except what has already passed; surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.\\n
Commentary: The clause, except what has already passed, does not mean that step-mothers taken as wives before this verse was revealed could be retained. What the words mean is, simply, that if such men repent and amend, no harm will come to them for what unlawful acts they might have committed in the past. The past will certainly be forgiven but the women whom it was unlawful to marry were to be divorced at once after this verse was revealed. In fact, the position of women in pre-Islamic Arabia was so degraded that men looked upon their step-mothers as part of the chattels, left by their fathers, with whom they did what they liked. Islam accorded to women inviolable rights which could not be infringed with impunity.

502. Important Words:

\textit{تا} (hateful). means, he hated him on account of a foul or evil action committed by him; he hated him with a violent hatred on account of a foul or evil action. therefore, means, violent hatred based on some foul or evil action; contracting marriage with the former wife of one's father which is considered to be a most hateful act (Agrab).

503. Important Words:

\textit{راب} (step-daughters) is derived from...
and is the plural of ريبة meaning, the daughter of a woman's husband by another wife or the daughter of a man's wife by another husband, because he or she rears her in spite of her being not a real daughter; or it means the wife of a man having child by another wife; also a woman who has the charge of a child, who rears or fosters it (Lane & Aqrab).

(warde) is the plural of حجر meaning, he prevented or hindered it. حجر means, bosom or breast or the part beneath the armpit; custody, care or guardianship. They say, نما زيدا حجر عمو i.e. Zaid grew up in the care and protection of ‘Amr. The expression جبر رکم would, therefore, mean, those who are under your care or guardianship i.e. your wards (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradat).

(wives) is the plural of حلة which are both derived from حلة i.e. he alighted or took up his abode; or he or it became lawful; or he untied a knot, etc. حلة means, husband and wife. حلة also means, a fellow-lodger or fellow-resident of another in one house (Aqrab). It also means a neighbour and a guest (Lane).

ارضعتمكم (have given you suck) is derived from رضع ام i.e. he sucked the breast of his mother. هذا اعنى من الرضاعة means, he is my foster-brother, we both having sucked the breast of the same woman. ارضعته ام means, his mother sucked him; and استرضعت المرآة ولدى means, I sought or demanded of the woman that she should suckle my child (Lane).

Commentary:

The prohibition about marrying mothers, sisters and daughters may look superfluous; but there are certain people (e.g. certain sects among the Hindus) who regard such marriages as not only permissible but even meritorious. The Quran, being a perfect code of Law, contains everything essential for man's physical, moral and spiritual well-being. The Quranic laws are in perfect harmony with human nature; in fact, they only remind us of what is writ large on the book of human nature by God's own hand. Human nature responds to what is taught by the Quran and the Quran commands that which human nature demands, and it prohibits what human nature revolts against.

The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that the relatives of foster-mothers are as forbidden as those within prohibited degree of relationship of real mothers. It is not lawful to marry foster-sisters and foster-daughters and so on. There exists, however, a difference of opinion among Muslim theologians as to what amount of suckling makes the marriage of foster-mothers and foster-sisters and their relations (within prohibited degree of marriage) unlawful. Some hold the view that the prohibition comes into operation in all cases even when a woman has given suck to a child only once. According to others who derive their authority from a saying of the Holy Prophet reported by ‘A’isha, viz. لا أحكم بالعمر ولا العلمان i.e. "a suck or two do not make marriage unlawful" (Tirmidhi, ch. on ريدا’), the least number of sucks to render marriage unlawful is three. But there is yet another saying of the Holy Prophet, also reported by ‘A’isha, that mentions خمس رضات سلالات (five distinctly known sucks) as necessary to make marriage unlawful (Muslim), and this appears to be the correct view. One suck amounts to the quantity taken by a child at one stretch i.e. when for the time being it should leave off sucking of its own accord and before returning to it. The age of the child must be within two years at the time of sucking.

The qualifying clause, who are your wards, is only added to draw our attention to the fact that we should bring up our wards with the same care and tenderness that we bestow upon our own children; otherwise marriage with the daughters of women with whom conjugal