84. And when they hear what has been revealed to this Messenger, thou seest their eyes overflow with tears, because of the truth which they have recognized. They say, "Our Lord, we believe, so write us down among those who bear witness."

85. And why should we not believe in Allah and in the truth which has come to us, while we earnestly wish that our Lord should include us among the righteous people?" 

the epistles of the Holy Prophet were treated by the King of Persia, who was a heathen, and by Heraclius, Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, who was a Christian. The former tore the letter to pieces, while the latter received it respectfully and even evinced some inclination towards Islam.

So long as the above qualities formed distinctive features of the Christian character, Muslims generally met with fairer treatment at their hands. But as time passed, these qualities gradually took leave of them and now there are very few among Christian divines and religious leaders who are engaged in real and honest religious research, withdrawing from the cares of the world and taking an active and living interest in spiritual matters. Christian scholars began to meddle in politics in the 13th or 14th century, with the result that they became hostile to Islam.

714. Commentary:

The description given in this verse of some of the Christians of the time of the Holy Prophet applies to all those who have a real hankering after truth and are ready to accept it wherever they find it. The verse has also been applied to Najāshī in particular. When Ja'far, a cousin of the Holy Prophet and the spokesman of Muslim refugees to Abyssinia, tried to make clear their attitude towards Jesus and to dispel the suspicion caused by the Mecean emissaries about the alleged derogatory language used by the Quran concerning Jesus and read to Najāshī the opening verses of the chapter Maryam, the latter, along with such of his companions as feared God, was visibly moved and tears rolled down his cheeks and he said in a voice full of pathos that that exactly was his belief about Jesus, and that he did not look upon him by even a twig more than that (Hīshām, i. 305, 306).

715. Commentary:

The verse may be regarded as constituting the substance of the words, referred to in the preceding verse, which Najāshī spoke to those of his courtiers who remonstrated with him, saying that Jesus was God, and not a human being as represented in the Quran, and urged him to deliver the Muslim refugees to the Meccans. At this Najāshī is reported to have said that nothing could prevent him from accepting the truth.
86. So Allah rewarded them, for what they said, with gardens beneath which streams flow. Therein shall they abide; and that is the reward of those who do good.

87. And those who have disbelieved and rejected Our Signs, these are they who are the inmates of Hell.

88. O ye who believe! make not unlawful the good things which Allah has made lawful for you, and do not transgress. Surely, Allah loves not the transgressors. 

89. And eat of that which Allah has provided for you of what is lawful and good. And fear Allah in whom you believe.

90. Allah will not call you to account for such of your oaths as are vain, but He will call you to account for the oaths which you take in earnest. Its expiation, then, is the feeding of ten poor persons with such average food as you feed your families with, or the clothing of them or the freeing of a neck. But whoso finds not the means shall fast for three days. That is the expiation of your oaths when you have sworn them. And do keep your oaths. Thus does Allah explain to you His Signs that you may be grateful.


716. Commentary:
Just as the making of a forbidden thing lawful is an act of excess and transgression, similarly the declaring of a good and lawful thing to be unlawful, or practically treating it as such, is an act of sin. Both these acts are acts of transgression. The verse may have a figurative sense also. In this case the expression, make not unlawful the good things which Allah has made lawful for you, would mean “do not shut the door of God’s favours on yourselves by rejecting the Prophet of Islam.”

717. Commentary:
The verb قَالَ (qaid) is the intensive form of قَالَ (qalā) for which see 5:2. It conveys
91. O ye who believe! wine and the game of hazard and idols and divining arrows are only an abomination of Satan’s handiwork. So shun each one of them that you may prosper.

The idea of greater deliberation and solemnity. Hence the expression (oaths which you take in earnest) would really mean, oaths which you swear solemnly and deliberately.

The use of the word (average) means both ‘middle’ (i.e. average) and ‘best’ (see 2:144) and is thus meant to imply that an oath may be regarded as expiated if ten poor men are fed with food the expiator ordinarily provides for his family, but that it is better to feed them with the best food with which he feeds his own family.

The pronoun (their) in (their clothing) may refer either to families or to poor persons. In the former case, the sentence would read, “the clothing of ten poor men with the average kind of clothing which you provide for your families.” In the latter case, it would simply mean, “the clothing of ten poor men.”

The verse should not be taken as describing three different ways by which a person can expiate a broken oath. The different ways are intended to represent three progressive stages of expiation, the third alternative being better than the second, and the second better than the first.

The injunction to expiate oaths does not mean that they may be broken with impunity and then expiated. The prescription of penalties is merely meant to meet a possible eventuality.

But oaths contrary to Islamic Law are no oaths. They must be broken. Then there are oaths that pertain to the rights of individuals. These cannot be expiated even by adopting any of the above-mentioned three courses. If, for instance, a man promises on oath to give to a person a certain sum of money, and then breaks his oath, and makes the prescribed expiation, the expiation will not absolve him from his obligation to make the promised payment. He must pay the man the promised sum, notwithstanding the expiation. The expiation will only atone for the sin he committed against God by breaking his oath.

718. Important Words:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ (wine and games of hazard).

See note on 2:220.

إِنَّ الْإِنْدُرَةَ وَالْإِسْكَانَةَ (idols and divining arrows).

See note on 5:4.

جُنُسُ (abomination) is derived from which means, it was or became unclean or dirty or filthy or disliked or hated; he performed a bad or evil or abominable action. جُنُس means, it made a sound or noise. جُنُس means, dirt or filth; or a dirty or filthy thing; anything or any action that is disliked or hated for its uncleanness or filthiness; a sin or crime; an action that leads to punishment; punishment; unbelief and infidelity; suggestion of the devil (Lane & Aqrah).

Commentary:

See 2:220 & 5:4. Almost all the meanings of جُنُس are applicable here.
92. Satan desires only to create enmity and hatred among you by means of wine and the game of hazard, and to keep you back from the remembrance of Allah and from Prayer. But will you keep back? 719

93. And “obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and be on your guard. But if you turn away, then know that Our Messenger lies only the clear conveyance of the message. 720

719. Commentary:
After stating that the four things mentioned in the previous verse are all ḍhirm (abomination) in one sense or another, the present verse confines itself to two of the four mentioned things—wine and games of hazard—and gives additional reasons against them. These reasons are, as stated in the verse, four in number and rest on political, social, spiritual and socio-religious grounds, this being hinted in the words “enmity and hatred and keeping back from the remembrance of Allah and from Prayer.” The interrogation in the clause, But will you keep back?, embodies a strong admonition not to do the thing, the use of the interrogative form being the most effective form of exhortation. See also 2:220.

720. Commentary:
The words, be on your guard, may either mean, “you should be on your guard against evils” or they may signify that if you obey Allah and obey the Prophet, the result will be that you will be able to guard yourselves against evil.

The concluding part of the verse means that the duty of a Messenger of God is only to convey to men His commandments. It forms no part of his work to force them to follow Him. This exposes the absurdity of the objection that Islam enjoins the use of force for its propagation. Elsewhere the Quran says: There should be no compulsion in religion (2:257). Both these verses and many similar others were revealed at Medina when a state of war existed between disbelievers and believers, which clearly shows that the Holy Prophet took up arms only to defend himself and his followers and not to propagate his religion at the point of the sword, as is often maliciously alleged by the opponents of Islam.
94. On those who believe and do good works there shall be no sin for what they eat, provided they fear God and believe and do good works, and again fear God and believe, yet again fear God and do good. And Allah loves those who do good.

721. Commentary:

Moreover, the verse lays down three stages of spiritual progress for believers. In the first stage, believers fear God and believe and do good works, while in the second stage they fear God and believe, their belief being at this stage so strong as to become a natural and constant source of good works which become as it were part and parcel of their belief, and in the third and final stage they fear God and do good to others which is not possible without perfect belief and good works, the mention of both of which has consequently been here left out as being understood. Thus the words "and do good works" have been omitted in the description of the second stage, while the words "and believe" have been replaced with the words "and do good" in the description of the third stage.

Two important principles emerge from this verse: (a) that the things of this world having been made for the use and benefit of man are, as a rule, pure and clean; the forbidden things being only exceptions; (b) that clean and pure food exercises a beneficial influence on man's spiritual development, while unclean and impure food produces an adverse effect upon it.
95. O ye who believe! Allah will surely try you in a little matter: the game which your hands and your lances can reach, so that Allah may distinguish those who fear Him in secret. Whoso, therefore, will transgress after this shall have a grievous punishment.\textsuperscript{722}

96. O ye who believe!\textsuperscript{b} Kill not game while you are in a state of pilgrimage. And whoso amongst you kills it intentionally, its compensation is a quadruped like unto that which he has killed, as determined by two just men among you, the same to be brought as an offering to the Ka'ba; or as an expiation he shall have to feed a number of poor persons, or fast an equivalent number of days, so that he may taste the penalty of his deed. \textsuperscript{A}As for the past, Allah forgives it; but whoso reverts to it, Allah will punish him for his offence. And Allah is Mighty, Lord of retribution.\textsuperscript{723}

\textsuperscript{a}57:26. \textsuperscript{b}5:2, 97. \textsuperscript{c}2:276.

722. Commentary:

As hunting is ordinarily done in a jungle where one is generally alone and where there is none beside God to observe one's breaking divine commandments, the verse fittingly mentions hunting to illustrate خری or God-fearingness. While engaged in hunting, man's abstention from violating divine commandments would show that he has really done so out of the fear of God. It is thus that, by an outward act, the inner condition of a man's heart may become revealed.

The verse also serves as an introduction to the commandment that follows in the next verse and prepares believers for the acceptance of an injunction which ran counter to the prevalent practice.

723. Important Words:

\textsuperscript{a}\textit{نقم} (retribution) is derived from \textit{نقم}. They say \textit{نقم عليه}, i.e., he exacted vengeance upon him; he punished him. \textit{نقم} thus means, I took vengeance on him; I inflicted penal retribution on him or I punished him.

\textsuperscript{b}\textit{نقم} thus means, vengeance, punishment or penal retribution (Lane & Aqrab). See also 3:5 and 5:60.

Commentary:

If a man kills game, when he is in the state of \textit{حرمز} (pilgrimage), he should give as compensation a like animal to be taken to Mecca for sacrifice. For instance, if the game killed by him is a deer, he should offer a goat. If the like of the game killed cannot be found
97. The game of the sea and the eating thereof have been made lawful for you as a provision for you and the travellers; but forbidden to you is the game of the land as long as you are in a state of pilgrimage. And fear Allah to whom you shall be gathered.\textsuperscript{224}

98. Allah has made the Ka'ba, the inviolable House, as a means of support and uplift for mankind, as also the Sacred Month and the offerings and the animals with collars. That is so that you may know that Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, and that Allah knows all things well.\textsuperscript{225}

then an animal costing approximately as much as the game killed should be offered, or failing that, the pilgrim should spend the estimated price of the game in feeding the poor, which is two \textsuperscript{2} per head according to some theologians and one \textsuperscript{3} according to others, a \textsuperscript{1} being roughly two handfuls of corn while a \textsuperscript{3} is four times as much as a \textsuperscript{1}. If, however, the pilgrim is unable to do even that, he should fast for as many days as the number of the poor he could feed with the estimated price of the game killed. The fasting and the feeding of the poor, as the case may be, should preferably be done at Mecca.

724. \textbf{Commentary :}

The word \textsuperscript{18} (sea) here includes rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, etc. See 7:139.

As, during the time of Pilgrimage, hunting on land is likely to prove inconvenient and even dangerous to pilgrims visiting the Ka'ba, whereas the catching of sea-game does not interfere with traffic, so the former has been prohibited and the latter allowed.

725. \textbf{Important Words :}

\textsuperscript{18} (means of support and uplift) is the noun-infinitive from \textsuperscript{25} meaning, he stood up, or he stood still. They say i.e. he (the husband) supported or maintained the woman. \textsuperscript{25} means, he managed it (an affair, etc.) perfectly. \textsuperscript{25} therefore signifies, means of support and uplift (Lane, Aqrab \& Zamakhshari). See also 4:6.

\textbf{Commentary :}

God has made Pilgrimage to the Ka'ba a sign for the progress and prosperity of Muslims. So long as they will continue to perform Pilgrimage, God's grace will continue to attend them. But it is regrettable that wealthy Muslims have now generally grown negligent in this respect, with the result that their glory has departed.

Pilgrimage is a means of support for men in a material sense also. Muslims from all parts of the world visit the Ka'ba and this serves as a means of support for the people of Mecca. Abraham left his wife Hagar and his son
99. aKnow that Allah is severe in punishment and that Allah is also Most Forgiving and Merciful.726

100. bOn the Messenger lies only the conveying of the message. And cAllah knows what you reveal and what you hide.727

Ishmael in the wilderness of Paran near Mecca, apparently to die from starvation. But God made provision not only for Hagar and Ishmael in that barren and bleak desert but also for their posterity for all time to come. See also ch. 106. But to say that the promise that the Pilgrimage will continue to prove a means of subsistence for Meccans only is to limit its vast scope and application. It certainly is not confined to the people of Mecca but encompasses all mankind. It is clear from the verse that not only will the Pilgrimage to Mecca with its attendant rites continue till the end of time, but that the world itself will last only so long as the Pilgrimage to the Ka'ba continues and that it will come to an end when the Pilgrimage ceases to be performed. This is indeed a great prophecy; for there have been many places in the world which were the resorts of pilgrims in their own time but which have long ceased to be so and are now deserted and forgotten. But the Ka'ba is meant to remain for all time “an inviolable house and a means of support and uplift for mankind.”

726. Commentary:
The divine attributes of Forgiveness and Mercy are given great prominence in the Quran. My mercy encompasses all things, says the Hol Book (7: 157). Therefore, whenever God warns people of His punishment in the Quran He makes it a point to remind them of His attributes of Forgiveness and Mercy also, thus showing that these attributes predominate over His other attributes and only await a gesture of goodness on the part of man to show themselves.

727. Commentary:
This verse sheds some light on the responsibility and duty of a Prophet. With the deliverance of the message entrusted to Prophet his duty ends, and he is not responsible if, in spite of his clear warnings, the people reject his mission. He has not been given the power to force them to believe. In fact, each divine message serves as a guidance for the people to whom it is given. If they live up to it and repent of their evil way: they find God Forgiving and Merciful; but if they persist in their wicked practices, they are punished and God makes another people take their place.
101. Say, "The bad and the good are not alike", even though the abundance of the bad may cause thee to wonder. So fear Allah, O men of understanding, that you may prosper. 728

102. O ye who believe! ask not about things which, if revealed to you, would cause you trouble; though if you ask about them while the Quran is being sent down, they will be revealed to you. Allah has left them out. And Allah is Most Forgiving and Forbearing. 729

728. Commentary:
Being naturally influenced by his environment, man is prone to follow and imitate what others do, particularly when they happen to be in the majority. This verse, however, is a warning against unthinking and blind following of the majority. The real criterion by which the worth of a thing is to be judged is not how many people do it but what good it contains; and, God being the source of all good, the only true and unfailling test is, as the verse puts it, تره or God-fearingness.

729. Commentary:
The verse is important, as it sheds light on the principle underlying the Shari'at i.e. the code of divine laws. The bases of the Islamic Shari'at are threefold: (1) the Law embodied in the Quran, (2) Sunnah or the practice of the Holy Prophet, and (3) the injunctions and precepts contained in his sayings. These three sources of Islamic Law deal with all the fundamental problems of man, but minor details are left to be thought out by man himself in the light of the above three torch-bearers of guidance, aided and assisted by his own God-given intellectual powers and faculties. It is to matters relating to minor details that the present verse refers and God warns the Faithful that the habit of asking questions about such matters will do them more harm than good.

As a matter of fact, God, in His infinite wisdom, leaves sufficient room for individuals to exercise and develop their power of judgement and their reasoning faculty. When man is confronted with situations and circumstances about which he finds no definite and clear-cut guidance in the Quran, or in the practice or sayings of the Holy Prophet, he has to find a way for himself in order to meet them as best he can, keeping always in view the guiding and unalterable principle that nothing is to be done which runs counter to any Quranic injunction or to the established practice and the authentic sayings of the Holy Prophet. Islam is thus not a hard and fast code of laws, for it does not lay down rigid injunctions regarding minor and ever-changing details. On the contrary, it affords sufficient scope for individuals to exercise their judgement in order to adapt an injunction of
103. "A people before you asked about such things, but then they became disbelievers therein."

104. Allah has not ordained any 'Bahîra' or 'Sâ'ibâ' or 'Wâsîla' or 'Hâmi'; but those who disbelieve forge a lie against Allah, and most of them do not make use of their understanding.

---

The reader will see that this verse also incidentally refutes the allegations of those who say that the laws of Islam, being rigid and unchangeable, afford no room for the exercise of individual judgement, and that they fetter humanity for all time to hard and fast rules and are thus calculated to impede the intellectual advancement of man rather than help it.

The expression, which if revealed to you would cause you trouble, means that if God or His Prophet had legislated about minor details and had not left such matters to individual discretion so that people might formulate laws concerning them according to their own judgement and their own circumstances, they would have found it troublesome and the development of man's intellect would have become seriously hampered.

---

730. Commentary:

Unnecessary questioning about minor details and seeking legislation on them is always to the detriment of the questioner himself. It limits his discretion and fetters his judgement besides binding him and his co-religionists to unnecessary and irksome legislation. The Israelites are reported in the Quran to have put unnecessary questions to Moses in regard to minor details with the result that they created difficulties for themselves and became more and more perplexed and confounded and ended with breaking the commandment of God and drawing His displeasure upon themselves (e.g. 2:109).

731. Important Words:

Bahîra is derived from which means, he cut or slit lengthwise; he split a slave. Bahîra was a name given by th
pagan Arabs to a camel (or a goat) which they let loose to feed, after slitting its ears. The word may be applied both to males and females, but in practice it was only the females that were thus let loose to pasture where they liked. They were dedicated to some god and their milk was not used, nor their back. The description of Baḥira varied among different tribes.

Babira (Ṣaʾiba) is derived from سب which means, it or he went away at random or went wherever it or he liked. سب was a name given to a she-camel set free to go wherever she pleased. She was generally let loose as an offering to the gods when one recovered from a sickness or returned safe from a journey. Often a she-camel having given birth to 10 female young ones was let loose to pasture where she would, and she was not ridden nor was her milk drunk except by her young.

Wasila (Waṣila) is derived from وصل which means, he connected or joined. وصل was the name given to a she-camel that was let loose in the name of a god after she had given birth to seven female young ones consecutively. If, at the seventh birth, she bore a pair, male and female, each of the latter was also let loose.

Hami (Ḥami) is derived from حمى i.e. he prohibited the thing; or he protected it; or defended it against encroachment, invasion or attack. حمى which is really حم therefore, means a stallion camel that has his back prohibited or interdicted to be used for bearing a rider or carrying a burden; such camel was neither ridden nor shorn of his fur; he was left at liberty and was not debarred from pasturage or from water. The word is also used about a stallion camel whose offspring's offspring has conceived (Lane).

Commentary:

After having said that minor matters and details should be left to man to legislate as he thinks proper, the Quran, in the present verse, fittingly draws our attention to the fact that such freedom and discretion cannot be allowed to man in fundamentals and things of importance, because in such matters unanimity is essential and divergence of opinion may prove immensely harmful. The verse under comment gives an illustration to show that human intellect cannot be trusted with the making of laws on fundamental matters, for, if left to itself, it is likely to make laws that would lead man to perdition. An instance of such laws is given in this verse. It is really Christians for whom the address in this verse is meant; but instead of drawing attention to the laws devised and invented by Christians, the Quran very wisely refers here to certain practices of the pagan Arabs, for one can more easily see a mote in another man's eye than a beam in one's own. The Arabs used to let loose the animals mentioned in the verse in honour of their idols. Besides being based on disbelief and superstition, the practice was also highly foolish. The animals thus let loose wrought great havoc wherever they went. They devastated field crops and gardens and killed children. The Quran refers to the letting loose of these animals as an example of man-made laws and warns Christians who question the wisdom and blessing of a revealed Law to learn a lesson from the degrading practices to which the pagan Arabs had fallen victim because they had no revealed Law to guide them.
105. And when it is said to them, 'Come to what Allah has revealed, and to the Messenger,' they say, 'Sufficient for us is that wherein we found our fathers.' What! even though their fathers had no knowledge and no guidance? 732

106. O ye who believe! be heedful of your own selves. He who goes astray cannot harm you when you yourselves are rightly guided. To Allah will you all return; then will He disclose to you what you used to do. 733

732. Commentary:

It is indeed strange that when science and knowledge advance and new discoveries and new inventions are made, people are quick to throw overboard worn-out ideas and theories tenaciously held by their forefathers and hasten to accept and benefit by the new inventions and discoveries; but when a Prophet brings to them a new guidance from God, they refuse to accept it on the ground that it does not agree with the beliefs and ideas held by their ancestors and with their own time-honoured notions and theories. How foolish is this attitude and how lame and absurd the excuse for the rejection of divine truths! This is how the Quran exposes the untenability of the position of the rejectors of truth.

733. Commentary:

This verse tells us that though man can sacrifice his worldly interests for the sake of others, yet he cannot so sacrifice his beliefs and religious principles. In religious matters our duty is only to show people the right path and exhort them to follow it; but we should not ruin or wrong our souls for their sake. It cannot profit mankind nor ourselves if we lose our own soul in trying to save others. The body may be sacrificed but not the soul. Christians abandoned some of the fundamental principles of their religion, hoping to win over certain heathen nations to Christianity. But in doing so they lost the truth and struck a very bad bargain.

The verse, however, should not be understood to mean that we should not preach the truth to others, and should confine our attention to saving our own souls only and have no thought for others. In fact, the Quran enjoins upon every Muslim to try his utmost to make others see the truth, because firstly, it is our duty to propagate the truth; and secondly, placed as we are, we cannot properly save ourselves unless we also save those among whom we live. What the verse, therefore, means is that our duty is only to preach the truth to others. If they accept it, well and good; but if in spite of our efforts, they refuse to be weaned from their evil course, their rejection of the truth will do us no harm. But in no circumstances should we compromise our principles in order to win others over to our way of thinking. That would be ruining our own souls to save others.

There is an hadith to the effect that once the
107. O ye who believe! the right evidence among you, when death presents itself to one of you, at the time of making a bequest, is of two just men from among you; or of two others not from among you, if you be journeying in the land and the calamity of death befall you. You shall detain them both after Prayer for giving evidence; and, if you doubt, they shall both swear by Allah, saying: 'We take not in exchange for this any price, even though he be a near relation, and we conceal not the testimony enjoined by Allah; surely, in that case, we shall be among the sinners.'

Holy Prophet explained this verse as meaning that you should preach the truth under all circumstances but when you see that the person to whom you preach the truth persists in following his own evil inclinations and does not listen to you, then your duty will have ended by your having duly preached to him the truth, and in this case his evil practices would do you no harm, if only you yourselves scrupulously follow the truth (Tirmidhi, ch. on Tafsir).

The words, He who goes astray cannot harm you when you yourselves are rightly guided, may also mean that if you do the right sort of preaching and try to find the right way of approach to a person and even then he does not accept the truth, then his going astray will not harm you and you will not be held responsible for it. In this case the words, when you yourselves are rightly guided, would mean, "if you succeed in finding out the right way of preaching and put in the right sort of effort."

734. Commentary:

See collective note on 5:109 below.
108. But if it be discovered that the two witnesses are guilty of sin, then two others shall take their place from among those against whom the former two witnesses—who were in a better position to give true evidence—sinfully deposed, and the two latter witnesses shall swear by Allah, saying, 'Surely, our testimony is truer than the testimony of the former two, and we have not been unfair in any way; for then, indeed, we should be of the unjust.'

109. Thus it is more likely that they will give evidence according to facts or that they will fear that other oaths will be taken after their oaths. And fear Allah and hearken. And Allah guides not the disobedient people.

735. Important Words:

أول (the two who were in a better position) is derived from أول being the dual of أول which means, one more worthy or more competent or more entitled or more deserving or better fitted or having a better claim to do a thing, etc. (Lane). See also 4:136.

استحق علیهم (the two are guilty of sin) and استحق علیهم (against whom they sinfully deposed). The word استحق is derived from حق which means, it was or became suitable to the requirements of wisdom, justice, right and truth; it was or became right, proper, correct or true; it became established as a truth. استحق means, he demanded it as his right or due; he had a right or title or claim to it; he deserved or merited it. They say استحق ائما i.e. he did what necessitated sin; or he was guilty of a sin and deserved it being said of him that he was a sinner. The expression استحق علیهم added to the word استحق Unmeans “against them,” the particle علیه sometimes meaning “against.” استحق علیهم استحق علیهم afterwards, they (the two witnesses who were in a better position to give true evidence) gave false evidence against their just rights, seeking to deprive them (heirs of the deceased) of their rights by giving false evidence against them.

Commentary:

See collective note on 5:109 below.

736. Commentary:

The Arabic words ترد إبان بعد إبان them rendered as “other oaths will be taken after their oaths” literally mean: (1) “oaths will be repeated i.e. taken again, after their oaths”; or (2) “their oaths will be rejected after their (other witnesses’) oaths,” the significance in both cases being practically the same, i.e., the oaths of the first two
witnesses will be rejected and two other witnesses called in to give true evidence on oath.

The purport of this and the preceding two verses is that when a person is about to make his will at the time of his death, he should have as witnesses to his statement two just men, who should testify to the validity of his will after his death. But if death comes upon a person suddenly when he is away from home and no Muslim witnesses are at hand, then two trustworthy non-Muslims may be asked to serve as witnesses. If, however, the veracity of the witnesses is called into question by the heirs of the deceased, the former should be asked to prove their truthfulness by a statement on oath made after the time of Prayer. But if the persons in whose favour the will was made have good reason to believe that the witnesses have been guilty of perjury, then they can state on oath that their statement is truer than that of the two witnesses, and in that case the Qādi or judge, if satisfied, will give his decree in their favour.

An incident is reported to have occurred in the days of the Holy Prophet which throws some light on the verses under comment. A Muslim who died away from home entrusted his goods to two men before his death and asked them to deliver the same to his heirs at Medina. On receiving the goods the heirs found that a silver bowl was missing. The two men were thereupon called upon to explain the loss of the bowl, but they denied all knowledge of it on oath. Later, the heirs of the deceased person happened to see the bowl with some persons at Mecca who told them that it had been sold to them by the two men to whom the deceased had entrusted his property. Thereupon the two men were again summoned, and in their presence the heirs of the deceased stated on oath that the bowl was theirs, whereupon it was handed over to them (Manthūr).

The Prayer mentioned in 5:107 above may be any Prayer but preferably it should be the ‘Asr or late afternoon Prayer, because it was after this Prayer that the Holy Prophet summoned the two witnesses to whom reference has been made above and who were believed to have stolen the silver bowl. The time after Prayer has been chosen with a view to inspiring witnesses with ideas of piety and God-fearfulness and inclining their minds to truthfulness. If the witnesses be non-Muslims, then they may be called upon to swear after the time of their own worship, so that the solemnity of the hour may incline them to make a true statement, because the worship of God is calculated to exercise a purifying influence on the human mind and men fresh from Prayer are expected to fear God and make a true statement.

The word علما (the two who were in a better position) occurring in 5:108 above is the dual of علم which means more competent or more worthy. It refers to the first two witnesses and signifies that these two were in a better position to give true evidence, being the persons who were with the deceased at the time of his death and in whose presence the will was made and to whom the property was entrusted to be handed over to the heirs of the deceased. The expression also serves as a sort of veiled reproach to them that, in spite of being in a better position and more competent to give true evidence, they stumbled and drifted away from truth.

The second two witnesses should be from among the deceased person's heirs whom the first two witnesses deprived of their right by bearing false witness regarding the will of the deceased.
Think of the day when Allah will assemble the Messengers and say, ‘What reply was made to you?’ They will say, ‘We have no knowledge, it is only Thou Who art the Knower of hidden things’.  

737. Commentary:

The words, We have no knowledge; it is only Thou Who art the Knower of hidden things, constitute both a sort of veiled recommendation and a glorification of God. The Prophets will, in effect, say, “The people did indeed reject us; but Thou art the Knower of secrets. We do not know what was in their minds and whether they rejected us from their hearts or only expressed disbelief out of the fear of others. It is, therefore, for Thee to decide what their real attitude was and what treatment should be meted out to them.” This recommendation seems to run counter to 4:42, which shows that the Prophets will bear witness against their people. The study of the relevant verses, however, shows that the occasions are different. The above-mentioned reply of the Prophets will be made when in the beginning God will question them in a general way; whereas the tendering of evidence will come at a later stage when God will call upon them definitely to come forward and give the required evidence about those who rejected them. There is, thus, no real conflict between the two verses.

The answer given by the Prophets is also in harmony with the dignity of God and constitutes an act of His glorification on the part of the Prophets. God perfectly knows what reply the people made to the Prophets, but, in spite of this, He will ask the Prophets to say what answer they were given by the people, as if He Himself was not aware of that answer. The Prophets, therefore, will very appropriately remove this apparent implication of ignorance on the part of God, by attributing all knowledge to Him.

The answer of the Prophets also implies that the object of God’s question was not to elicit information from them or to supplement His own knowledge, for He knew what answer they were given. In fact, there was some other purpose behind His question which was that they should give their testimony against the disbelievers, as is clear from 4:42, and thus carry out the divine command referred to in the latter verse.
111. When Allah will say, “O Jesus, son of Mary, remember My favour upon thee and upon thy mother; when I strengthened thee with the spirit of holiness so that thou didst speak to the people in the cradle and when of middle age; and when I taught thee the Book and Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel; and when thou didst fashion out a creation out of clay, in the likeness of a bird, by My command; then thou didst breathe into it a new spirit and it became a soaring being by My command; and thou didst heal the night-blind and the leprous by My command; and when I restrained the children of Israel from putting thee to death when thou didst come to them with clear Signs; and those who disbelieved from among them said, ‘This is nothing but clear deception;’”.

738. Commentary:

In the clause, thou didst speak to the people in the cradle and when of middle age, the act of speaking in the cradle signifies speaking words of wisdom and piety in childhood. This sort of speaking on the part of Jesus reflected great credit on his mother, who, herself being wise and pious, brought him up as a wise and pious child. And the speaking of good words in middle age shows that not only was Mary a pious woman, but Jesus too was a righteous man so that even when he was of middle age and was no longer under the direct influence of his mother, he spoke words of piety and wisdom to men. See also 3:47 & 3:49, 50, where similar works of Jesus, i.e., the creation of birds and the quickening of the dead, etc., have been discussed.

Protection similar to that alluded to in the latter part of this verse in the words, I restrained the children of Israel from putting thee to death, was promised to the Holy Prophet as well (5:68). This promise met with a remarkable fulfilment. Though even at Mecca his life was in constant danger, at Medina that danger very much increased. The Holy Prophet led many expeditions in person and several attempts were made on his life. At Uhud he was severely wounded and at Hunain he was left alone among a large host of blood-thirsty archers. Yet amidst all these dangers he remained safe, and after having triumphed over his enemies passed away peacefully in his house at Medina. The reference in the present verse is to the attempts of the Jews to kill Jesus on the Cross, from which accursed death God delivered him. The words, I restrained the children of Israel,
112. And when I inspired the disciples of Jesus to believe in Me and in My Messenger, they said, 'We believe and bear Thou witness that we have submitted.'

113. When the disciples said, 'O Jesus, son of Mary, is thy Lord able to send down to us a table spread with food from heaven?', he said, 'Fear Allah, if you are believers'.

114. They said, 'We desire that we may eat of it, and that our hearts be at rest and that we may know that thou hast spoken truth to us, and that we may be witnesses thereto.'

739. Important Words:
The verb اذب (inspired) does not always mean verbal revelation. It sometimes simply means to inspire a person with an idea, or to suggest it to him; and it is in this sense that the word is used here. The word has also been used with reference to the bee (16: 89).


740. Commentary:
The words, send down to us a table spread with food from heaven, show that it was not a single meal that the disciples of Jesus asked for, but a permanent provision of sustenance which might be had without any trouble or hardship. The words "from heaven" denote a thing that is obtained without trouble and is sure and lasting.

741. Commentary:
The disciples of Jesus have, in this verse, mentioned four objects which the fulfilment of the prayer of Jesus about the food asked for was meant to serve: (1) that they might eat thereof and their hunger might be satisfied; (2) that their minds might be at rest. This also shows that they desired a permanent provision of sustenance because a single meal could not put their minds at rest or relieve them of anxiety about their livelihood in future so that they might be able to preach the message of God free from all care and devote themselves fully to the service of religion; (3) that the prophecy of Jesus contained in 3: 50 might be fulfilled; and (4) that they might become witnesses to the fulfilment of his prayer and of the truth of their religion, and people might know that God helps and favours those who
115. Said Jesus, son of Mary, ‘O Allah, our Lord, send down to us a table from heaven spread with food that it may be to us a festival, to the first of us and to the last of us, and a Sign from Thee; and provide sustenance for us, for Thou art the best of sustainers.’

Allah said, ‘Surely, I will send it down to you; but whosoever of you disbelieves afterwards—I will surely punish them with a punishment wherewith I will not punish any other of the peoples.’

742. Commentary:
This verse shows that Jesus approved of the wish of his disciples and therefore, while praying, he included himself among them.

The words, that it may be to us a festival, to the first of us and to the last of us, embody a great prophecy. There were to be two periods of prosperity and progress for the Christian peoples, as the word فِي (festival) literally meaning “a way which returns,” shows. The first was to be in the time immediately after Jesus, while the second was to be in the Latter Days; and the period between these two was to be marked by decay and decline. And this is exactly what is more clearly referred to in the words, to the first of us and to the last of us. Christian peoples were granted worldly good in abundance in the early ages i.e. before the rise of Islam, and now in the Latter Days i.e. after the decline of Islam, they have had material prosperity and grandeur in such measure as has no parallel in the history of any other religion. But with the advent of the like of Jesus in the person of Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, in Islam, the sun is indeed nearing its setting on the last of the Christians, who can now save themselves only by identifying themselves with him who has come in the spirit and power of their Master.

743. Commentary:
This verse also makes it clear that the table spread with food (the table spread with food) did not mean a meal that was actually to descend from heaven, for such miracles are never shown, it being impossible to disbelieve after one has witnessed the wonderful phenomenon of a table set out with food actually descending from on high. The punishment referred to in the verse is the same as is mentioned in 19:91.

Christians did “disbelieve afterwards” and the threatened punishment has already made its appearance. The last and the present World War, along with their repercussions, constitute one phase of the fulfilment of this prophecy, and God knows what dreadful forms the fulfilment of this great prophecy is decreed to take in future and what dire visitations are yet in store for Christians in this world and in the next.
And when Allah will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, 'Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah,'" he will answer, "Holy art Thou. I could never say that to which I had no right. If I had said it, Thou wouldst have surely known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. It is only Thou Who art the Knower of hidden things."

**744. Important Words:**

The words َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ (I could not) may be interpreted in various ways, such as, it was not fitting or proper for me to do so; or it did not behove me; or it was beyond my power or position; or it was impossible for me; or I had no right to do so, etc. See also 3:80.

ْتَسْ (mind) means, among other things, knowledge; purpose or intention (Lane). See also 3:29.

**Commentary:**

The expression, ُهَلَنَأ ُنَأَ، besides hinting that it is only God Who is free from error, embodies a beautiful reply on the part of Jesus to the question put to him by God in the words, َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ، َلا ِيُؤِنِ لِ ِبِلْ ِكْبَرْ ِوَ َلا ِيُؤِنِ L
118. "I said nothing to them except that which Thou didst command me—"Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord." And I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but since bThou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the watcher over them; and Thou art witness over all things. 745

119. "If Thou punish them, they are Thy servants; and if Thou forgive them, Thou surely art the Mighty, the Wise." 746

745. Important Words:

 Thou didst cause me to die). See 2:235 & 3:56.

Commentary:

For the corroboration of the first sentence of this verse i.e. the teaching of Jesus about the worship of God alone see Matt. 4:10 & Luke 4:8.

The latter portion of the verse conclusively proves two things: (1) that Jesus is dead and not alive, as supposed by most of present-day Muslims; (2) that he is not to return to this earth a second time in his own person. The inference is beyond any shadow of doubt. From the verse it is clear that no interval intervened between Jesus' life on this earth and his death. As long as he was alive, he kept a careful watch over his followers and saw to it that they did not deviate from the right path, but he did not know what occurred to them after his death. This shows: (1) that it was by death and not by his supposed ascension to heaven that Jesus became separated from his people, and (2) that it was only after his death that his people deified him. Now, as his followers have already gone astray, it definitely follows that Jesus is dead, for, as the verse points out, it was after his death that he began to be worshipped as God.

Similarly, the fact that this verse speaks of Jesus as expressing ignorance of his followers having taken him and his mother for gods after he had left them, proves that he is not to come back to this earth. For, if he were to come back to this earth and see with his own eyes the corruption of his followers, he could not express ignorance of his deification by his people. In that case the answer of Jesus pleading his ignorance would amount to a veritable lie. Thus the verse definitely and clearly proves that Jesus is dead and that he will never come back to this world. For detailed discussion of the question of the death of Jesus and his non-ascension to heavens with his physical body see 3:56 & 4:159.

746. Commentary:

This verse constitutes a most pathetic appeal by Jesus to God on behalf of his followers; and the succeeding verse provides the divine answer to that appeal.
120. Allah will say, 'This is a day when only the truthful shall profit by their truthfulness. For them are Gardens beneath which streams flow; therein shall they abide for ever. Allah is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him; that indeed is the great triumph.'

121. To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and whatever is in them; and He has power over all things.

747. Commentary:
The words, This is a day, refer to the Day of Judgement, which shows that the question mentioned in 5:117 above will be put to Jesus on the Day of Judgement i.e. after he will have paid his supposed second visit to the earth, as is alleged by those who believe in his ascension to, and descent from, heaven.

The word "truthful" used in the verse hints that as the followers of Jesus did not prove truthful they could not hope to benefit by divine mercy. The word really refers to Muslims, who were true to the teachings of their Prophet. They believed as he taught them to believe, and acted as he taught them to act, and were true to their God. The word may also refer to the followers of Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, who was raised as the or like of Jesus. God, as it were, says, "We sent two Messiahs, the followers of the one drifted away from his teachings and began to look upon him as God, but the followers of the other Messiah were true to his teachings. So this day only the truth of the truthful shall profit them."

748. Commentary:
The verse forms a fitting sequel to a Surah in which the errors of the Christian people are effectively exposed and demolished. It also contains a veiled declaration that as Christians will set a very bad example of "belief" and "action," so their glory will not last and God will finally transfer His "kingdom" to those who are more deserving of it.
CHAPTER 6
AL-AN‘ĀM
(Revealed before Hijra)

Title and Date of Revelation

This Sūra belongs to the Meccan period. According to most accounts, the whole of it was revealed in one portion; and as reported by some traditionists, as many as 70,000 angels stood guard when it was being revealed, which points to the high position it holds among the Quranic Sūras and the special protection which was afforded to its subject-matter. The Sūra probably derives its title from the subject dealt with in vv. 137—139 where cattle (the word An‘ām meaning cattle) have been condemned as one of the main causes of idolatry. At another place the Quran says that idolatry makes idolaters sink so low as to render them, as it were, like mere cattle (25 : 45).

Subject-Matter

In this Sūra there is a change in the treatment of the subject-matter from that of the previous Sūras. It contains a refutation of religions other than the Israelite. It starts with the refutation of the Zoroastrian faith, which believes in the duality of godhead—in two separate gods of good and evil. The Quran exposes this doctrine by declaring that both the powers of doing good and evil are in reality two links of the same chain, one remaining incomplete without the other; so they cannot be said to have been created by two different gods. Light and darkness are indeed the creation of the same God and, instead of pointing to the duality of the godhead, they really constitute a strong argument in favour of its oneness and possess a peculiar affinity with the creation of man and his natural powers and faculties.

The Sūra proceeds to discuss the important subject that evil is born of the wrong use of God-given faculties; and whenever men cease to make a right use of them, God raises a Prophet to teach them their right use. But, instead of receiving a patient and reverent hearing, he receives mockery and derision, in spite of the fact that such mockery has always led to disastrous results.

Further on, in the second section (Rukū‘), the Sūra says that delay in divine punishment overtaking disbelievers often makes them all the more intrepid, though this delay is always due to God’s mercy and not to His inability to call them to account as and when He likes. Then it proceeds to say that the severe persecution to which the Prophet and his followers are subjected can never result in a weakening of their connection with God, because their belief in God is based on true realization of His attributes which they impart to others by means of the Signs that God shows at their hands. In view of these Signs, how can those gifted with sight follow those who are deprived of it? In the third Rukū‘ it is said that disbelievers should not worry as to whether the Prophet is true or false, because God has taken it upon Himself to destroy a false prophet. The patent fact, however, is that whereas the faith of believers is
unflinching and steadfast, disbelievers never hesitate to disown their idolatrous beliefs whenever they are overtaken by misfortunes. The absurdity of their position is further exposed when it is noticed that while they say to the Prophet that they cannot give up the ways and usages of their forefathers, they base their own rejection of the Prophets on the plea that the latter merely imitate their forefathers, forgetting the plain logic that if idolatry is the result of following in the footsteps of forefathers, belief in the Oneness of God cannot be the result of similar imitation.

In the fourth Rukū', light is thrown on the subject that irreligiousness is born of lack of faith in life after death or in the possibility of the establishment of real connection with God. This dual lack of faith makes the disbeliever bold in his rejection of truth. But believers are admonished not to be disheartened by this attitude of disbelievers, because all Prophets of God have been treated like that. The opposition to the Prophets on the part of disbelievers is in fact but natural, because only those people seek God who possess some natural kinship with spiritual matters, for the deaf in spirit cannot hear the voice of God. These people witness Sign after Sign and yet disbelieve and reject them and continue to repeat, parrot-like, that no Sign has been shown to them. Such disbelievers are warned that now only the Sign of punishment remains for them to witness and when that Sign comes, they will forget all their boastful rejection of truth. In the fifth Rukū', it is stated that in the time of the former Prophets disbelievers adopted a similar attitude till punishment overtook them. But God is not quick in sending punishment. Disbelievers were granted respite in the past; similarly respite is being granted to them now. Messengers of God are both bearers of glad tidings and warners. They first seek to bring the people to the right path by giving them glad tidings. It is only when the latter wilfully shut the door of guidance upon themselves that warning comes into operation.

The Sūra further proceeds to say in the 6th Rukū' that only those who have fear of God in their hearts can accept the truth, and the Prophet is told to address his appeal to them. For the others, it is necessary that fear of God be first created in their hearts so that arguments and reasons may benefit them. Further, it is most essential for the progress of Islam that special attention be paid to the spiritual training of believers, whether rich or poor, because since the Prophet is mortal and must die, only the community of the believers remains behind to preach and propagate the divine message. In the 7th and 8th Rukū's the Holy Prophet is asked to tell disbelievers that they are foolish to find fault with him merely because the promised punishment does not speedily overtake them. The sending of punishment is outside his province and lies entirely in the hand of God Who sends it whenever He thinks fit and opportune. Moreover, the sender of the punishment should also be the knower of the unseen. He should know fully the future of man, because he who does not possess the knowledge of what the future holds in its bosom is likely to punish a person who, being at present the enemy of truth, may be deserving of punishment today, but may be destined to effect a true reformation in himself tomorrow. So the sending of the punishment or the deferring thereof is God's own work. Towards the end of the Rukū' it is stated that when God alone knows the unseen, it is unwise not to preach the truth to a person who may appear to be an enemy of truth, because in the unlimited knowledge of God he may be destined to accept the truth at some future time.
In the ninth Rukū the falsity of ploytheistic doctrines has been exposed by means of an argument which the Patriarch Abraham had with his people and which has been dealt with at some length in this Rukū. The next two sections describe how God bestowed favours and blessings on Abraham and his descendants because they believed in God's Oneness and strove hard to establish it in the world. In the twelfth Rukū we are told that the mission of God's Messengers never fails. Like rain-water, it gives fertility and freshness to a soil spiritually bleak and barren. The thirteenth Rukū deals with the supreme subject that it is impossible to attain to God and have His true realization unless He reveals Himself to men. It is therefore necessary that divine Messengers should appear time after time, because it is through them that God reveals Himself to the world. Believers are further admonished that though the beliefs and ideals of idolaters are false, they should have due regard for their susceptibilities when holding a discourse with them about their beliefs and doctrines. In the 14th Rukū, however, we are told that for the attainment of true faith, a corresponding wholesome change of heart is a sine qua non. Without such a change, even Signs and miracles prove of no avail. In this connection some objections of disbelievers have been mentioned and refuted. The same subject is continued and developed in the next four sections (15—18) and the attention of believers is drawn to yet more foolish objections of disbelievers. In the 19th section a contrast is drawn between Islamic teaching, which answers and satisfies the demands of reason and justice, and the doctrines and practices of idolaters, which are based on neither reason nor argument. The latter are told that, in view of this contrast, they cannot legitimately deny the necessity of divine revelation.

In the last section we are told that the Quran has been revealed to raise and honour even those nations to whom no revealed Book has so far been sent so that they may not feel low and debased before the People of the Book. The Message of the Quran, unlike that of former revealed Scriptures, is for the whole of mankind and it seeks to establish a real and permanent peace between different sections of humanity as well as between man and his Creator.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful." 749

2. All praise belongs to Allah Who created the heavens and the earth and brought into being darkness and light; yet those who disbelieve set up equals to their Lord. 749A

749. Commentary:
See under 1:1.

749A. Important Words:
الجال (brought into being) is sometimes used synonymously with خلق i.e. he created, but whereas خلق gives the sense of creating a thing after measuring and designing it, جعل signifies the making of a thing in a particular state or condition, or constituting or appointing it for a definite purpose (Lane).

Commentary:
The practice of attributing co-partners to God is based on two different theories. One class of people hold that God has delegated His powers to certain beings. Among the people of this class the most prominent are the Hindus. Another class of men who ascribe co-partners to God think that evil cannot proceed from God and, therefore, there must be some other source of evil. So they seek a separate god whom they look upon as a source of evil or of darkness. This class of people is represented by Zoroastrians, who believe in a spirit of evil or darkness called Ahriman, a deity regarded as the equal of the creator Ormuzd, the spirit of good or light. The verse refutes both these doctrines.

By saying, All praise belongs to Allah Who created the heavens and the earth, the Quran refutes the first-mentioned class of men. When God has created all things and when He Himself can do everything and to Him belongs all praise, what need is there for Him to entrust part of His work to other beings? One entrusts one's work to others when one cannot do it single-handed or when one desires to pass one's time in idleness, which is an act of dispraise. But God, being above all this, has no need of transferring His powers to other beings. These words also refute the Christian doctrine of Trinity; for if each of the three persons of Trinity is equally omnipotent and worthy of perfect praise, what need is there for the other two? On the contrary, if only all the three combined can do the work and none can do it singly, God cannot be considered to be worthy of all praise.

By saying, and brought into being darkness and light, the Quran refutes the second class of men. The words, All praise belongs to Allah, must be read with this part of the verse also, thus hinting that even "darkness," i.e., things which are generally looked upon as evil, such as death, disease, misery and affliction, are also things for which praise is due to God. In fact, every kind of "darkness" has its uses. Directly or indirectly it is meant for the good of man and for his general advancement. Now when even apparently evil things are meant for the
3. "He it is Who created you from clay, and then He decreed a term. And there is another term fixed with Him. Yet you doubt!

4. And He is Allah, the God, both in the heavens and in the earth. He knows your inside and your outside. And He knows what you earn.

750. Commentary:

The creation of man referred to in the words, "Who created you," is meant as an illustration of the light mentioned in the previous verse, while the decreeing of a term, i.e., the ordaining of death, is meant as an illustration of "darkness." The verse ascribes both these acts to God, as acts of mercy, thus refuting those who believe in two separate gods, one of evil and the other of good.

The words, "there is another term fixed with Him," refer to the Day of Judgement or of Resurrection when men, after passing through the gate of death, will receive their rewards from their Lord.

751. Commentary:

The words, "both in the heavens and in the earth," do not mean that God's person pervades the heavens and the earth. What is meant is that the knowledge and power of God comprehend the entire universe. The Quran itself explains this by the words that follow, i.e., "He knows your inside and your outside.

The latter part of the verse points out that a being cannot be looked upon as perfect if his knowledge or power is defective. But such is not the case with God. Both His knowledge and power are perfect. This is what is hinted in the words, "He knows what you earn," which convey a twofold idea: (i) that God is All-Knowing, and (2) that He will requite men according to their deeds which, in other words, means that He is All-Powerful. Hence, as both the knowledge and power of God are perfect, it follows that God is perfect, knowing everything and possessing the power of doing everything. So He does not stand in need of entrusting any part of His work to other beings and taking them as His helpers or co-partners.

Again, the above-quoted words also show that it is God Who punishes evil. Now, when the punishment of evil is from God, it is foolish to
5. And there comes not to them any Sign of the Signs of their Lord, but they turn away from it.\(^{752}\)

6. So they rejected the truth when it came to them; but soon shall come to them the tidings of that at which they mocked.\(^{753}\)

7. See they not how many a generation We have destroyed before them? We had established them in the earth as We have established you not, and We sent the clouds over them, pouring down abundant rain; and We caused streams to flow beneath them; then did We destroy them because of their sins and raised up after them another generation.\(^{754}\)

\(^{752}\) Commentary:

An important evidence of the knowledge and power of God are the prophecies which He reveals to His Messengers and the aid and help which He vouchsafes them against overwhelming odds. These are called Signs here. Thus, in order to prove the perfect knowledge and power of God, the verse refers to the powerful Signs which God was showing to demonstrate the truth of the Holy Prophet and the wonderful way in which He was helping him.

\(^{753}\) Important Words:

\(^{754}\) Important Words:
8. And if We had sent down to thee a writing upon parchment and they had felt it with their hands, even then the disbelievers would have surely said, 'This is nothing but manifest sorcery.'

9. And they say, 'Why has not an angel been sent down to him?' And if We had sent down an angel, the matter would have been settled, and then they would not have been granted a respite.

Commentary:

The verse predicts that the enemies of the Holy Prophet shall be destroyed like the enemies of the former Prophets. Even within the confines of Arabia there had been people who were visited with divine punishment in consequence of their opposition to their respective Prophets who appeared in by-gone times. Among them were the tribes, Tubba', 'Ad, Thamūd and others whose stories were current among the Arabs.

The words, as We have established you not, do not mean that the world is retrogressing. The fact is that although the world is progressing as a whole, yet some of the older nations which rose to the heights of civilization in their time were so advanced in certain branches of art and science that in these specific branches they have so far not been equalled by the generations that followed. Take, for instance, the ancient Egyptians. The modern age, in spite of the marvels it has wrought in the domain of science, still gazes with wonder at some of the works of ancient Egyptian civilization. Similarly, there were people among the Arabs who carved wonderful fortresses out of rocks. Thus every people that ever attained to the heights of civilization enjoyed a certain distinction which is not shared by other nations. By using this expression, the Quran means to say: When these powerful people were destroyed in spite of their mastery of certain branches of knowledge, how can your arts save you from destruction?

755. Important Words:

قلم (parchment) means, paper; a roll or scroll of paper; anything one writes upon; a writing or book; a butt or target (Lane).

Commentary:

The words, and they had felt it with their hands, mean, "and they had made sure that it was a heavenly thing and not an earthly one." The words also embody a beautiful allusion to the spiritual blindness of the people. Being blind, they cannot see; so they have to feel with their hands.

The verse signifies that when a man gives himself up to doubting, nothing, however clear and manifest, can convince him.
10. And if We had appointed as Messenger an angel, We would have made him appear as a man; and thus We would have made confused to them that which they are themselves making confused.757

11. And surely have the Messengers been mocked at before thee, but that which they mocked at encompassed those of them who scoffed.758

R. 2 12. Say, "Go about in the earth, and see what was the end of those who treated the Prophets as liars."759

disbelievers to be visited by an angel whom they might see and be thus convinced of the divine mission of the Prophet. The Quran exposes their folly by replying that although the angels of God do come to the Prophet, yet when they visit disbelievers and are seen by them, they invariably come with divine punishment. Such angels appeared at the Battle of Badr, when, to quote the expression of the Quran, the matter was decided (2:211). See also the succeeding verse.

757. Commentary:

Another possible form of the appearance of an angel is that he be sent to this world as a Messenger. But this could not improve things; for in that case, to make his mission to mankind worth anything, he should appear in the form of a man; but if he were to appear to them in the form of a man, then the people would entertain the same doubts about his heavenly mission as they were now doing about that of the Holy Prophet.

758. Commentary:

The words, And surely have the Messengers been mocked at before thee, imply a hint that the demand of disbelievers regarding the coming of an angel is really nothing but a mockery. The verse also contains a prophecy about the destruction of the enemies of the Holy Prophet. The enemies of the former Prophets laughed them to scorn and were consequently punished by God, the very object of their mockery becoming the means of their destruction. The enemies of the Holy Prophet were also scoffing at him and so they too would meet with the same fate which befell their predecessors.

759. Commentary:

When the disbelievers were told, in reply to their demand for the coming of an angel, that disbelievers saw angels only when they came with punishment from God, the disbelievers arrogantly said, "Let them come with it then." The verse tells them that such foolhardy demands were made by their predecessors also; so let them go about in the land and see what was the end of such people.
13. Say, 'To whom belongs what is in the heavens and the earth?' Say, 'To Allah.' aHe has taken upon Himself to show mercy. bHe will certainly continue to assemble you till the Day of Resurrection. There is no doubt in it. Those who ruin their souls will not believe.760

14. To Him belongs whatever dwells in the night and the day. And He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.761

760. Important Words:

خسروا الأفسهم (who ruin their souls). خسروا is derived from خسر which means, he lost; he suffered a loss; he went astray; he became lost; he perished (Lane). From the above it is clear that the word خسر is really intransitive. The transitive use of the word in the verse is merely apparent. In fact when the Quran says خسروا الأفسهم it does not mean, they made their souls suffer, but, that they suffered with regard to themselves, i.e., themselves suffered. The correct transitive form of the word is خسر (khasara), i.e., he caused to perish, and not خسر (khasira), i.e., he suffered or he was lost, which the Quran has used. This peculiar use of the word is intended to intensify the meaning. Thus the words الذين خسروا الأفسهم would really read الذين خسروا و خسروا الأفسهم, i.e., those who suffered a loss and caused their souls to perish. For the sake of convenience, however, the expression has been rendered in the text as, those who ruin their souls. For a somewhat similar expression, i.e., فِيْهِمْ خُسْرَانًا, see Lisan where that expression has been fully dealt with.

Commentary:

Here God first puts a question, and then Himself answers it. This form has also been employed elsewhere in the Quran. It is meant to bring out the disbelievers' extreme weakness of faith and make them realize it.

All that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah; so the enemies of Faith also belong to God. No one would like to destroy that which belongs to him, much less would God like to do so, for He is Merciful and has made mercy binding on Himself. So He is giving the enemies of the Holy Prophet time to repent. He is putting off punishment so that they may turn to Him and repent of their sins. Hence, instead of demanding punishment, let them ask forgiveness and benefit by His mercy.

It should be noted that disbelief alone does not bring punishment upon men in this life. So far as simple disbelief is concerned, the case of the believers and the disbelievers will be decided on the Day of Judgement when all will be assembled together and God's judgement will be pronounced. It is only the extreme wickedness of men and their active opposition to the Prophets of God that hastens punishment for them in this life. So the verse exhorts disbelievers not to demand punishment but rather to repent, so that God may have mercy on them.

761. Commentary:

Not only have darkness and light been made
15. Say, 'Shall I take any protector other than Allah, \( \text{the Maker of the heavens and the earth,} \) \( \text{Who feeds and is not fed?} \) Say, 'I have been commanded to be the first of those who submit'. And be thou not of those who associate partners with God.\(^{\text{762}}\)

16. Say, 'Of a truth, \( \text{I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the punishment of an awful day.} \)\(^{\text{763}}\)

---

762. Important Words:

- \( \text{Maker (C̄aler):} \) is derived from \( \text{C̄aler}. \) They say, \( \text{i.e., he clove or split or rent it;} \) he created it or brought it into existence; or he originated it.
- \( \text{C̄aler:} \) means, he made the dough into bread without leavening it.
- \( \text{C̄aler:} \) means, he broke the fast.
- \( \text{C̄aler:} \) means, it became cleft or split or rent.
- \( \text{C̄aler:} \) means, the natural constitution with which a child is created.
- \( \text{C̄aler, when used about God, means the Originator or the Creator or the Maker (Tāj).} \)

Commentary:

The question in the first part of the verse implies that, as God alone is the Maker of the heavens and the earth and as it is He alone Who feeds all without being fed by anybody, therefore there is none worthy of being taken as protector but He. None else is worthy of being worshipped as God.

The words, \( \text{Who feeds,} \) refute the godhead of those lifeless objects which men have taken for gods. They admittedly feed none, but God feeds all; hence these objects are not worthy of being taken as gods.

The words, \( \text{is not fed,} \) negative the godhead of those living beings who have been deified by men. They stand in need of food, but God needs no food; hence they cannot be gods.

763. Commentary:

This verse is an expression of the supreme independence of God. The Holy Prophet is made to say, "O men, it is indeed strange that you should not fear the punishment of God while I, who am a Prophet of God, fear His punishment if I disobey Him." This is an emphatic way of exhorting men to avoid
17. He from whom it is averted on that day, God indeed has had mercy on him. And that indeed is a manifest triumph. 764

18. And if Allah touch thee with affliction, there is none that can remove it but He; and if He touch thee with happiness, then He has power to do all that He wills. 765

19. And He is Supreme over His servants; and He is the Wise, the All-Aware. 766

764. Commentary:
The word ذَلِكَ (that) may either refer to the “averting of punishment” or to “mercy”, for both “mercy” and the “averting of punishment” are manifest triumphs.

765. Commentary:
It is his own actions that are the cause of all harm that befalls a man. The words, if Allah touch thee with affliction, therefore do not mean that God is the cause of affliction. They are meant to convey the idea that God being the first cause of all things, everything that happens in the universe is in a way attributable to Him. The expression is also intended to hint that it is God alone Who can remove man’s afflictions.

Happiness indeed comes from God, Who is the real source of all good. This is why, when speaking of happiness coming to man, the Quran uses the expression, He has power to
do all that He wills.

766. Important Words:
قَامِرٌ (Supreme) is derived from نَمَى (to grow, to increase). They say نَمَىٰ, i.e., he overcame, conquered or subjected him; or he became superior in power or force to him. It also means, he oppressed him; or he forced or compelled him. So قَامِرٌ means, one who overcomes, conquers or subdues. القُهْر (to subdue) and التَثْرِير (to liberate) are attributes of God, meaning, the Subduer of His creatures by His sovereign authority and power, and the Disposer of them as He pleases (Lane).

Commentary:
The attribute قَامِرٌ (Supreme) does not imply any injustice on the part of God. All things being His servants, He does not subdue anything which does not belong to Him and is not His creation. This refutes those who allege that matter and soul are co-existent with God and are not His creation. If they were not the creation of God, He had no right to subdue or rule over them. Hence, those who allege that matter and soul are not the creation of God, attribute to Him an act of injustice; for in that case we would have to assume that God has subdued such things as are not His creation.

679
20. Say, 'What thing is most weighty as a witness?' Say, "Allah is a witness between me and you. And this Quran has been revealed to me so that with it I may warn you and whomsoever it reaches. What! do you really bear witness that there are other gods beside Allah?' Say, 'I bear not witness thereto.' Say, 'He is the One God, and certainly I am far removed from that which you associate with Him.'

21. "Those to whom We gave the Book recognize him as they recognize their sons. But those who ruin their souls will not believe."

767. Commentary:

God Himself answers the question which He has put in the beginning of the verse; for the disbelievers did not know how to answer. They could not think that God also could bear witness. The answer has been given by God in order to instruct and teach believers.

Now the question is, how does God bear witness? This verse and the next two mention three ways by which God bears witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet. The first is by means of the Quran. This Quran has been revealed to me, the verse calls upon the Holy Prophet to say, so that with it I may warn you and whomsoever it reaches. These words signify that whosoever opposes the Quran and obstructs it will be visited by divine punishment. This punishment will constitute God's testimony to the truth of the Holy Prophet. The second and the third ways by which God bears witness are mentioned in the verses that follow.

768. Commentary:

This verse describes the second way by which God bears testimony to the truth of the Holy Prophet, i.e., through the previous Scriptures. The previous Books contain prophecies which clearly apply to the Holy Prophet and definitely point him out as the Promised One, and it is by means of these prophecies that God bears witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet. It may be asked, if the People of the Book recognize the Holy Prophet as having come in fulfilment of the prophecies contained in their Scriptures, why do they not accept him? This question the Quran answers in the words, But those who ruin their souls will not believe, meaning that the People of the Book will not believe because their souls are lost and they have no sense of honesty and faith left in them.

The words, Those to whom We gave the Book recognize him as they recognize their sons, are based on a very deep spiritual truth. A Prophet, or for that matter any object of faith, is not recognized in the beginning, as one recognizes the sun or the moon. He is recognized only as a father recognizes his son—with great probability but not with dead
22. And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah or gives the lie to His Signs? Surely the unjust shall not prosper.\(^\text{769}\)

23. And think of the day when We shall gather them all together; then shall We say to those who associated partners with God, 'Where are the partners you spoke of, those whom you used to assert?'\(^\text{770}\)

24. Then the end of their mischief will be naught save that they shall say, 'By Allah, our Lord, we were not idolaters.'\(^\text{771}\)

\(^{66}:94;\ 7:38;\ 10:18;\ 11:19;\ 61:8.\ 10:29.\)

certainty. Faith must always begin in the region of the unseen.

769. Commentary:

This verse mentions the third way by means of which God bears witness. This kind of testimony is based on human reason. Every sane man will testify that if a person claims to speak in the name of God while God has not spoken to him, and he forges lies against Him, such a person is one of the greatest culprits and God must bring him to naught; for if impostors are allowed to prosper like true Prophets, there will remain no criterion to distinguish the true from the false, and the truth will be lost. So, in order to distinguish between the true and the false, God must bring to naught the false claimant. Thus the hard fact that God is helping the Prophet of Islam and causing him to prosper in the teeth of all opposition and against heavy odds is a clear testimony from God to his being a true Prophet.

On the other hand, those who reject true Prophets and treat them as impostors are also among the greatest culprits who, by reason of their opposing God's Messengers and leaving no stone unturned to bring to naught the movement set on foot by them, must incur God's anger; and, instead of being permitted to destroy the heavenly movement, must themselves be destroyed. Thus, not only by granting success to the Holy Prophet but also by bringing about the destruction of his enemies God is bearing witness to his truth.

770. Commentary:

The verb تزعمون (you used to assert) has always been used in the Quran with regard to falsehood. It signifies an assertion of which one is not sure. Thus كم تزعمون (you used to assert) would mean, "you asserted with your tongues, while you had doubts in your minds."

771. Commentary:

The verse means that on the Day of Judgement all the mischief which disbelievers worked in their life on earth will end and nothing will be left to them save to deny their having ever attributed partners to God. This denial will really be a confession of their helplessness and a form of petition for divine mercy.
25. See how they lie against themselves. And that which they fabricated has failed them.\footnote{Commentary: The words, they lie against themselves, mean that by denying that they ascribed co-partners to God they will utter a lie which will prove their guilt. By making this statement they will, in other words, admit that ascribing co-partners to God is an evil deed. Thus their very denial will be a confession of their guilt. The words, see how, express astonishment at the way in which they, while trying to deny the charge, will be led into a confession of guilt.}

26. And among them are some\footnote{Commentary: The order in which the words have been put in this verse is worth noting. Disbelievers forbidding others to listen to the Quran or to the words of the Holy Prophet implied that they too were keeping away from the Holy Prophet and the Quran. In spite of this, their own keeping away has been expressly and separately mentioned in the verse in order to show that they were afraid of being influenced by the words of the Quran or the discourses of the Holy Prophet. So great was their fear that they not only forbade others to go near the Holy Prophet but themselves took special care to remain aloof from him, lest his words should captivate their hearts. This shows that they were aware of the great influence which the Quran are not meant as "tales" or "stories" but as "Signs," being prophecies of future events which, when fulfilled, will serve as "Signs."} who give ear to thee; but\footnote{For an explanation of "veils" and "deafness" see 2:8.} We have put veils on their hearts, that they should not understand, and deafness in their ears. And even if they see every Sign, they would not believe therein, so much so that when they come to thee, disputing with thee, those who disbelieve say, "This is nothing but fables of the ancients."\footnote{Commentary: What the Quran calls "Signs" are described by disbelievers as mere "fables of the ancients," which saying of theirs is condemned by God. This shows that in the sight of God the stories of past Prophets and past nations given in the Quran are not meant as "tales" or "stories" but as "Signs," being prophecies of future events which, when fulfilled, will serve as "Signs."}

27. And they forbid others to believe it and themselves too they keep away from it. And they ruin none but their own selves; only they perceive not.\footnote{Commentary: For an explanation of "veils" and "deafness" see 2:8.}
28. And if thou couldst only see when they are made to stand before the Fire! They will say, 'Oh, would that we might be sent back! And then we would not treat the Signs of our Lord as lies and we would be of the believers.'

29. Nay, that which they used to conceal before has now become clear to them. And if they were sent back, they would surely return to that which they are forbidden. And they are certainly liars.

Quran and the discourses of the Holy Prophet exercised on the minds of hearers. No wonder that the disbelievers looked upon the Quran as a "manifest magic" (34:44.)

775. Important Words:
- وَقَامُوا (made to stand) is derived from which is both transitive and intransitive, meaning, he or it paused or stood still or became stationary; or he made him or it pause or stand still or become stationary.
- وَقَطَنَ مِنْ هُمْ (in the passive voice) means, he dedicated the house in the cause of Allah; or he set it apart inalienably for a definite purpose.
- وَقَطَنَ مِنْهُ (made to know or made him acquainted with his offence or sin) means, he comprehended or understood it. 
- وَقَطَنَ مَعَ ذِنْهُ means, I made him know or made him acquainted with his offence or sin.

776. Commentary:
The words, has now become clear to them, signify that even the enemies of God's Prophets have in their minds a certain consciousness of the truth of the divine Messengers; but owing to their bigotry, they try to suppress such thoughts and do not make them known to anyone. On the Day of Judgement, however, these latent thoughts which they tried to conceal would become apparent, and the truthfulness of the Prophets, of which they had dim consciousness, would become manifest.

The word "liars" at the end of the verse implies that, although disbelievers would desire to be sent back to this world so that they might believe in the Prophets and not reject them, yet if they were actually sent back to it, and the same circumstances in which they lived before were created again, even then they would again act as they had acted before, rejecting the Prophets as they had rejected them before.
30. And they say, "There is nothing except this our present life, and we shall not be raised again."  

31. And if thou couldst only see when they are made to stand before their Lord! He will say, "Is not this second life the truth?" They will say, 'Yea, by our Lord.' He will say, 'Then taste the punishment because you disbelieved.'  

32. Those indeed are the losers who deny the meeting with Allah, so much so, that when the Hour shall come on them unawares, they will say, "O our grief for our neglecting this Hour!" And they shall bear their burdens on their backs. Surely, evil is that which they bear.

---

777. Commentary:  
The things of this world and the enjoyments of the present life are, in the sight of most men, so engrossing that they never pause to think of death or of the Hereafter. Would that man could realize the object of his creation and see the everlasting life beyond the grave!

778. Commentary:  
The words يَا وَرَبَي (Yea, by our Lord) speak of deeply stirred feelings and embody a pathetic, though veiled, appeal for mercy. But the time for mercy is past and nothing but the grim reality of God's judgement awaits them.

779. Important Words:  
فيَرْحَطُ (our neglecting) is derived from فيَرْحَطُ (farrata) which again is derived from فيَرْحَطُ (farra) which means, he went before or preceded. فيَرْحَطُ للكلام means, the speech or the words issued from him hastily before reflection. فيَرْحَطُ عليه means, he acted hastily and unjustly towards him. فيَرْحَطُ (farrata-hū) means, he made him to precede; or he made him to be before, or beforehand or first or foremost. فيَرْحَطُ also means, he sent it before, himself remaining behind it. فيَرْحَطُ هُم means, he left or forsook him; or he abstained or desisted from it. فيَرْحَطُ به means, he neglected it or he was remiss with respect to it; or he preferred backwardness in it; or he failed to do, or fell short of doing, what he ought to have done with respect to it. فيَرْحَطُ في الام means, he exceeded due bounds or just limits in the matter. Thus فيَرْحَطُ (from فيَرْحَطُ) has generally come to mean, "falling short of" and فيَرْحَطُ (from فيَرْحَطُ) "exceeding proper limits" (Lane & Aqrab).

الألا (surely) originally denotes an interrogation respecting a negative, or a wish or reproof, or the asking for or requiring a thing. It is also used as an inceptive particle giving
33. And *worldly life is nothing but a sport and a pastime. And surely the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who are righteous. Will you not then understand?*

34. We know full well that verily what they say grieves thee; for surely it is not thee that they charge with falsehood but it is the Signs of Allah that the evil-doers reject.

---

**Commentary:**

The pronoun in *this* may refer to the "Hour" mentioned above. In that case "neglecting this Hour" would mean that disbelievers never believed that the Hour would come and never gave it a thought; or it may refer to *حياة الدنيا* (the earth) or to *حياة الدنيا* (our present life) occurring in 6:30 above. In this case the sentence would mean that they acted negligently during their life on this earth.

The words, *they shall bear their burdens on their backs*, are intended to hint that their burdens would be exceedingly heavy.

780. **Important Words:**

- **لعب** (sport). The verb form لعب means he played, sported or jested; or he did an act with the object of amusement or recreation or by way of jesting. It is often the opposite of جد which means, he was serious or in earnest. So لعب means, play, sport or jest; amusement or recreation (Aqrab & Lane).

- **مر** (pastime) is derived from ع. They say عا捧 i.e., he became diverted from it so as to forget it. ملت المر إل حديث الرجل means, the woman became cheered with, and was diverted by, the discourse of the man.

---

The words, *And worldly life is nothing but a sport and a pastime*, do not mean that life on this earth is only a sport. What is meant is that worldly life, i.e., life engrossed in the things of this world and passed in neglect of the Hereafter is nothing but a sport. Elsewhere (21:17, 18) the Quran says that God has not created this world as لعب (sport) or لعب (pastime). Both announcements are equally correct. The words, *And worldly life is nothing but a sport and a pastime*, may also mean that the environments of this world are such that, unless one is particularly watchful, one is liable to become negligent about the next world, just as sports and pastimes often make man negligent of his duties on earth.

781. **Commentary:**

The verse signifies that the Holy Prophet was grieved at the attitude of disbelievers, not because they accused him of falsehood but because their denial of him meant the denial of the Signs of God. Thus the grief of the Holy Prophet was not personal, the cause of his grief being that God was being denied. It
35. And Messengers indeed have been rejected before thee; but notwithstanding their rejection and persecution they remained patient until Our help came to them. There is none that can change the words of Allah. And there have already come to thee tidings of past Messengers.  

36. And if their aversion is grievous to thee, then, if thou art able to seek a passage into the earth or a ladder unto heaven and bring them a Sign, thou canst do so. And had Allah enforced His will, He could surely have brought them together into the guidance. So be thou not of those who lack knowledge.  

782. Commentary:  
In this verse God lovingly addresses the Holy Prophet with words of comfort and solace, as if saying: "We know that thou art indeed pained to see people denying God, but the law of God cannot be changed. We never compel men to become believers." The words, There is none that can change the words of Allah, refer to this very law of God, which is unalterable. The law is twofold: firstly, that whenever a Prophet of God appears, there are always men who deny and oppose him; secondly, that God never compels such men to accept the truth. See 2:257; 3:21; 36:31.

783. Important Words:  
(782) (passage), (passage), (ladder) is derived from (sallama). They say, i.e., he made him safe and secure. (Sulma) means, he gave or delivered it to him. (Sullam) means, a ladder or series of stairs or steps meant for ascending. It is so called because it delivers one to the place to which one desires to go. The word also signifies, a means to a thing (Lane).  

Commentary:  
The words, to seek a passage into the earth, signify using worldly means, i.e., preaching and propagating the truth in the earth in order to strengthen the Faith; and the words, a ladder unto heaven, imply using spiritual means, i.e., offering up prayers to God for the guidance of disbelievers, etc. Prayer is indeed the ladder by which a man can mount to heaven.  

The Holy Prophet has been told here that God is not going to compel men to embrace Islam; if he desires their wholesale conversion he should assiduously follow the two prescribed courses, one earthly and the other heavenly. He should, on the one hand, devote himself
37. Only those can accept who listen. And as for the dead, Allah will raise them to life, then to Him shall they be brought back. 784

38. And they say, ‘Why has not a Sign been sent down to him from his Lord?’ Say, ‘Surely, Allah has power to send down a Sign, but most of them do not know.’ 785

vigorously to preaching and propagating the truth; and, on the other, he should fervently pray to God that He may guide mankind and help the cause of Islam.

It goes without saying that the Holy Prophet acted upon both these methods to the fullest extent, as a result of which God helped the cause of Islam, so much so that within a small space of time the whole of Arabia was converted.

The word ـُمْثِل (one lacking knowledge) is here used only in the sense of one not knowing or unacquainted, and not in the stronger sense of ignorant. It has been used in this sense in other verses of the Qur'an also. For instance, we read in 2:274: “One who does not know them (the needy) thinks them to be free from want”, i.e., those who are unacquainted with the real condition of the poor think them to be well off. In the verse under comment the Holy Prophet has been exhorted not to remain unacquainted with the law of God in this respect.

It should also be noted that it was not by way of rebuke, as some have thought, that the Holy Prophet was asked to seek a passage into the earth or a ladder into the sky. The words become meaningless, if taken in that light. What is meant is simply the suggestion of two ways of success which, when acted upon, proved wonderfully effective.

784. Commentary:

The verse signifies that those who are good of heart and are willing to listen will readily accept the truth as the result of preaching. As for those who are potentially dead but are fit for rejuvenation, God will quicken them with a Sign and then they will listen and embrace Islam. Thus it was that when God showed His Sign at the fall of Mecca, the whole of Arabia embraced Islam, and the word of God was fulfilled.

785. Commentary:

The words, Allah has power to send down a Sign, do not mean that though God has the power to send down a Sign, yet He will not actually do so. The word قادر (having power) used as active participle is intended to denote readiness to show the required power and the closing words of the verse support that inference.

The word قادر also embodies the sense of measuring and determining (Lane). In this sense the clause would mean that God is devising means for the success of Islam, for people are already joining Islam and swelling the number of Muslims. This is a clear
39. *There is not an animal that crawls* in the earth, nor a bird that flies on its two wings, but they are communities like you. *We have left out nothing in the Book. Then to their Lord shall they be gathered together.*

indication of the will of God, but disbelievers would not ponder over it. The Quran makes this point clear by suitable illustrations in the following verse.

786. Important Words:

- ًءَمَه (communities), which is derived from ًءَمَه, i.e., he betook himself to or aimed at or sought, is the plural of ًءَمَه which means, a way, course or manner of acting or of conduct or of life; religion, which is a course that men follow; the followers of a religion; or a people to whom a Prophet is sent, whether unbelievers or believers; a generation; a nation, a people, a race, a tribe or a family; a collective body of men or of other living beings; a kind, genus or general class; creatures of God. It also means, a righteous man who is an object of imitation, being a model for others; or one who follows the true religion; or a learned man who has no equal in his time (Lane).

- ًءَلَل (like) is the plural of ًءَلَل (mathal) and ًءَلَل (mithl), both being derived from the verb ًءَلَل for which see 2:107. ًءَلَل (mathal) means, description, condition, state or case; a description by way of comparison; similitude; argument or sign, etc. The word is also used in the sense of ًءَلَل (mithl) which means, a like; one similar to; the thing itself i.e., the same as (Aqrab & Lane).

Commentary:

The Quran draws the attention of disbelievers to the animals that move on the earth and to the birds that fly in the air. Even animals and birds can understand by means of signs that a change has taken place in the season, but disbelievers are worse than these; for they do not see the signs which indicate that Islam is triumphing while disbelief is beating a retreat. Even a dog can see whether its master is angry or pleased; but disbelievers cannot see whether their Lord is displeased with them. Thus both the birds that fly in the air and the animals that move on the earth are in this respect better than disbelievers.

Incidentally, the verse also hints that even birds and animals will be resurrected and requited for their actions like men. The resemblance between the requital of men and animals may not be perfect, but it is still there. Some of the sayings of the Holy Prophet also lend support to this conclusion; for it is said in a hadith that the horned goat shall be made to pay penalty to the goat without horns which it kills or injures (Muslim, ch. on Tahrim al-zulm).

The last words of the verse i.e., *We have left out nothing in the Book. Then to their Lord shall they be gathered together,* may also refer to disbelievers. In that case, this part of the verse would mean that all the works of disbelievers will be preserved and nothing will be left out, and that they will finally be requited for their actions on the Day of Resurrection.
40. "Those who have rejected Our Signs are deaf and dumb, in utter darkness. Whom Allah wills He causes to perish and whom He wills He places on the right path.

41. Say, "What think ye? If the punishment of Allah come upon you or there come upon you the Hour, will you call upon any other than Allah, if you are truthful?" Then will He remove that which you call on Him to remove, if He please, and you will forget what you associate with Him.

42. Nay, "but on Him alone will you call; then will He remove that which you call on Him to remove, if He please, and you will forget what you associate with Him.

43. And indeed We sent Messengers to peoples before thee; then We afflicted them with poverty and adversity that they might humble themselves.

787. Commentary:
The word "Hour" refers to the Hour of the decisive victory of Islam, or, in other words, the fall of Mecca. Thus whereas "punishment" refers to ordinary afflictions, "Hour" refers to the final and decisive event of the struggle. The question put in this verse is answered in the next.

788. Commentary:
The opening words of the verse contain the answer to the question put in the previous verse. The words, then will He remove that which you call on Him to remove, were fulfilled by the general pardon which the Holy Prophet granted to disbelievers at the fall of Mecca. The memorable words spoken by him on that occasion were: "Go, I forgive you all. Go, you are free" (Zurqānī, ii. 328).

789. Commentary:
The previous verses referred to divine punishment in general. In this verse its various forms have been mentioned. Many have an erroneous idea of divine punishment, which not unoften comes veiled in the form of ordinary afflictions. In fact, all financial and bodily misfortunes, e.g., poverty, disease, etc. are in one sense or
44. Why, then, when Our punishment came upon them, did they not grow humble? But their hearts were hardened and Satan made all that they did seem fair to them.\(^{\text{790}}\)

45. Then, when they forgot that with which they had been admonished, We opened unto them the gates of all things, until, when they became exultant at what they were given, We seized them suddenly, and lo! they were plunged in despair.\(^{\text{791}}\)

46. So the last remnant of the people who did wrong was cut off; and all praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.\(^{\text{792}}\)

\(\text{a} 2:75; 57:17. \text{b} 6:123; 8:49; 16:64; 29:39. \text{c} 5:14; 7:166. \text{d} 7:96; 39:56. \text{e} 7:73; 15:67.\)

another, punishments from God. They are not generally meant to destroy men but to make them reform themselves and turn to God.

790. Commentary:

The words يا لِ (why not) are here used not to express mere interrogation but also to express feelings of pity. Thus the verse signifies, "They ought to have humbled themselves before God; but it is a pity that they did not."

The afflictions were really a mercy from God, but, instead of turning to God, the people became hard-hearted. When misfortunes befall them, they ascribed them not to their own iniquities but to the Prophets.

The words, all that they did, refer to the hostile activities of disbelievers.

791. Commentary:

When disbelievers became hardened and treated divine admonition as a thing forgotten, God let them wander in their blind transgression. The words, We opened unto them the gates of all things, signify that God let them stray away and advance further and further into the evil deeds in which they were engaged. Sometimes the afflictions were removed from them for a time and they rejoiced to think that they were right in thinking that the afflictions were not due to their sins. Then the punishment of God suddenly seized them, and they gave themselves up to despair. Thus there are two kinds of afflictions that visit disbelieving people in the days of divine Messengers: (1) temporary afflictions that come as warnings and then pass away; (2) general disaster which finally overtakes and destroys the wicked.

792. Important Words:

\(\text{د} \text{ر} \text{ا} \text{ل} \text{أ} \) (last remnant) is derived from دَرَ، \text{i.e., he followed behind his back}; or he followed him with respect to place, time or rank. دَرَ means, he went turning his back, or he turned back. دَرَ means, the back or the hinder part; latter or the last part.
47. Say, ‘What think ye? If Allah should take away your hearing and your sight, and seal up your hearts, who is the god other than Allah who could bring it back to you’? See how We vary the Signs, yet they turn away. 793

Commentary:

The words دار (the last remnant of the people was cut off) mean: (1) the people were cut off to the last man, i.e., the whole people were cut off; (2) the leaders of the people were cut off just as a tree is cut down to its roots, the leaders occupying the position of the roots; (3) the leaders’ followers were cut off, i.e., the leaders were deprived of their political power, for it is on the strength of their followers that the political power of the leaders depends.

Apparently, there is no occasion here for saying, All praise belongs to Allah, for these words are spoken on an occasion when one receives a favour from God and is thankful to Him. When, however, one is afflicted with a misfortune, then the words which suit the occasion and which Muslims are bidden to recite are إن آتياك راجعون i.e. Surely to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return (2: 157). The apparent incongruity is, however, easily explained. The words إن آتياك راجعون (all praise belongs to Allah) have been used here in order to point out that the cutting-off of what is injurious is in fact a thing to feel grateful for, and not a matter of regret. When a limb becomes diseased and is incurable, we get it amputated and cheerfully pay the fee to the surgeon for the operation, and also express our thanks to him. Just as a diseased limb is amputated to save the rest of the body, it sometimes becomes necessary to cut off that section of mankind which has become corrupt, so that the infection may not spoil entire humanity.

793. Commentary:

The preceding verse spoke of the punishment that cuts at the root. But there is a stage when only a part is affected, or even if the whole body is affected the disease is not deep-rooted and there is yet time to prevent the total loss of the body. In its early stages a disease is generally curable; but if it is not attended to in time, it may be aggravated and become incurable. It is against such negligence that men are warned in the present verse. Some men delay acceptance of divine Messengers. They wait for more and more Signs, and go on postponing the tendering of allegiance to the heavenly Messengers until it is too late. The punishment of God descends on the enemies of the Prophets; and those who do not make use of their inward light and prefer to wait for more and more evidence of the truth of the divine Messengers also perish with their enemies. So this verse warns those who are in the habit of delaying and postponing, and exhorts them to use their inward light for the recognition of the divine Messenger, and expedite their acceptance of him lest delay should result in the total extinction of their God-given faculties and they should perish with the rest. They should be prompt to make use of their hearing, and their eyes, and their hearts; for if they fail to
48. Say, 'What think ye? If the punishment of Allah come upon you suddenly or openly, will any be destroyed save the wrongdoing people?'

49. And We send not the Messengers but as bearers of glad tidings and as warners. So those who believe and reform themselves, on them shall come no fear nor shall they grieve.

50. And those who reject Our Signs, punishment will touch them, because they disobeyed.

make use of these faculties in time, they will gradually become impaired and will finally be lost; then no power will be able to restore these faculties to them after they have been completely lost.

The words, how We vary the Signs, signify that in order to make things perfectly clear, God brings the different aspects of Signs before the people, sometimes showing one kind of Sign and sometimes another, so that all kinds of people may be satisfied.

794. Commentary:
The word "suddenly" signifies the coming of the divine punishment without warning or previous indication. The fall of Mecca belonged to this class of Signs.

The word "openly" implies giving a warning beforehand so that such people as still retain inward light and have a desire to follow the guidance may become warned and may accept the truth without further delay, lest they should also perish along with the wrongdoers.

795. Commentary:
All divine Messengers have a sort of dual personality—a twofold mission. They bring glad tidings for one class of men and warnings for others. Those who accept them receive tidings of blessings and those who reject them receive warnings of punishments. Those who are weak should hasten to join the class of men for whom glad tidings are meant. They have no reason to fear; for, as the verse makes it clear, if they accept the Prophets, "no fear shall come on them, nor shall they grieve!"
51. Say: a "I do not say to you: 'I possess the treasures of Allah,' nor do I know the unseen; nor do I say to you: 'I am an angel,' b I follow only that which is revealed to me." Say: 'Can a blind man and one who sees be alike?' Will you not then reflect? 796

52. And warn thereby those who fear that they shall be gathered to their Lord that they shall have no friend nor intercessor beside Him, so that they may become righteous. 797

796. Commentary:

The words, I do not say to you, I possess the treasures of Allah, imply that when the Quran says that the Messengers of God are the announcers of glad tidings, this should not be construed to mean that as soon as a person believes in a Prophet of God, he acquires wealth. He will have to wait for the favours of God to come at their appointed time.

The words, nor do I say to you, I am an angel, here imply that it is not in the power of the Prophet to bring down punishment, for he is not "an angel of punishment."

After the above declarations it might be asked what good there was in following the Prophet when worldly favours took time in coming and when the Prophet was so powerless against his enemies. The Quran answers this implied question by saying that the getting of a treasure was not the only boon which one could desire. The perfect guidance which was received through the Prophet was a great blessing in itself; for those who accepted the guidance were like one who possessed eyes, while those who rejected it were like one who had no eyes and the blind and the seeing could never be alike. These are matters to be reflected upon and pondered over.

797. Commentary:

A warning can benefit only those who believe in the danger they are warned against. If a people do not believe in the existence of that which they are asked to guard against, the exhortation will do no good. Hence, in this verse, where the warning relates to the dangers of the Day of Resurrection, the Holy Prophet is bidden to warn not all mankind but only those who believe in Resurrection that they will have no friend or intercessor on that awful day. As for those who do not believe in Resurrection, the way of preaching will be different—they will be first convinced of Resurrection and then warned against its dangers. Thus incidentally the verse also teaches us how to preach. We should always base our arguments on things which the persons addressed believe to be true so that our preaching may have the desired effect,
53. And drive not away those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, seeking His countenance. Thou art not at all accountable for them nor are they at all accountable for thee, that thou shouldst drive them away and be of the unjust. 

798. Important Words:

الضوء (morning), which is often written as the letter (و) being silent, is derived from which means, he went forth or went away in the early part of the morning, i.e., between daybreak and sunrise. So. غذاء or غذاء or غذاء or غذاء means, early part of the morning; the period between daybreak and sunrise; morning; first part of the day; forenoon (Lane).

العش (evening) is derived from which means, he ate the evening meal; he repaired to (him, etc.) at night. غذاء means, late part of the evening; evening; afternoon; time between sunset and nightfall. It also means the time between the declining of the sun and sunset; also the time from the declining of the sun to morning; night (Lane).

وجه (His countenance). The word وجه also means i.e. the thing itself (see 2:113).

Commentary:

The words (morning and evening) taken in their wider significance cover, as shown under Important Words, practically all the 24 hours, excluding only the time in which the offering of Prayers is prohibited. Thus in one sense the two words taken together comprise both day and night, and in another they indicate only morning and evening.

The words (seeking His countenance) may also mean, "seeking God Himself," for the expression وجه also means, "the thing itself." In that case, the clause would mean "they seek nothing but God, i.e. they seek God alone."

The words, thou shouldst be of the unjust, hint that there are some men who look upon themselves as being too great and disdain to join a movement set on foot by a Prophet, because its adherents are mostly poor and do not belong to what is called higher society. They would join it only if the poorer adherents were expelled. So, in order to demolish such hopes on their part, God bids the Holy Prophet declare that he would not drive away his poor followers so that the so-called great might join his fold. The prohibition does not mean that the Holy Prophet actually used to drive away his poorer followers. It is only meant as a reply and a rebuff to the desires of the proud and the haughty. They are told that the humble followers of the Holy Prophet who remember God morning and evening or day and night cannot be turned out for their sake. The Quran has already made the Holy Prophet say, I follow only that which is revealed to me (6:51). So now when the prohibition, drive not away those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, has so forcibly been revealed, the so-called great should despair of the humble being driven away. So these words were revealed not as a reflection on the Holy Prophet whose kindness
54. And in like manner have We tried some of them by others, that they may say, "Is it these whom Allah has favoured from among us?" Does not Allah know best those who are grateful? 799

55. And when those who believe in Our Signs come to thee, say: 'Peace be unto you! bYour Lord has taken it upon Himself to show mercy, so that whoso among you does evil ignorantly, and repents thereafter and amends, then He is Most Forgiving and Merciful.' 800

799. Commentary:
The words, 'We have tried some of them by others,' refer to God's trying the rich and the great by admitting the poor and the humble into the society of the followers of the Holy Prophet. The presence of the poor in the community of the believers served as a stumbling-block in the way of the rich and hindered the more haughty among them from entering into the fellowship of Islam.

The rich and the great ask whether God had chosen those poor men for His favours, as if saying, "We are wealthy and rich, but God has preferred the poor to us and has bestowed His favour upon them rather than upon us." God answers the question by saying, "I gave them little but they have been thankful to Me even for that and have accepted My Messenger. I gave you much, but you have not been grateful and have rejected My Messenger. Do not the poor then deserve to be chosen for My favour in preference to you?" See also the preceding verse.

800. Commentary:
The message conveyed in the words, 'Peace be unto you,' is the message of God which the Holy Prophet is bidden to convey to believers; the "peace" spoken of is to come from God Himself. It is with reference to this "peace" promised to believers in the present verse that they are enjoined to greet one another with the words السلام عليكم i.e., "may the
56. And thus do We expound the Signs that you may seek forgiveness and that the way of the sinners may become manifest. 801

R. 7 57. Say: 'I am forbidden to worship those on whom you call beside Allah.' Say: 'I will not follow your evil inclinations. In that case, I shall become lost and I shall not be of the guided.' 802

58. Say: 'I take my stand on a clear evidence from my Lord and you reject it. That which you desire to be hastened is not in my power. The decision rests with none but Allah. He explains the truth, and He is Best of judges.' 804

(a promised) peace be on you." The reader will have noted that whereas the verse uses the word salām (peace), the word used in the formula of mutual greeting is al-salām (the peace). This is to point out that the greeting of peace offered is in conformity with the peace promised in the verse under comment.

801. Commentary:
There is an ellipsis here, the words اَن ضَلِّلْتُمْ اَن ضَلَّتْ اَلْقُرْآنَ (that you may seek forgiveness) or the words لَمْ تَحْذَرْنِي (that you may believe) may be taken to be understood before the words وَلَسْتُمْ (and may become manifest).

802. Commentary:
This verse is connected with 6:53 above. The Holy Prophet is here bidden to say to disbelievers what may be described as follows: "I have nothing to do with your gods and I therefore cannot, for your sake, drive away my poor followers. They believe in One God, while you are idolaters. How can I then drive away the believers in One God for the sake of those who disbelieve? You say that if you join Islam, it will receive strength and support from you. But the truth is that if I follow your wishes, the result will be that I shall become lost and my movement will be ruined rather than strengthened. Again, my mission is that men may accept and follow guidance; but if I act upon your wishes, the result will be that I myself will go astray. Then there will be no Islam and no guidance. What then shall I gain from your support?"

803. Commentary:
The verse calls upon the Holy Prophet to say to disbelievers what may be expressed as follows: "You are perversely sticking to your errors while I have clear evidence with me. You say, 'If we are in error, why does not God visit us with punishment?' You must remember that it does not lie in my power to bring down punishment. It is God alone Who sends down punishment on whomsoever and at whatever time He wills and He is the Best of judges. He will justly decide the matter between you and me."
59. Say: “If that which you desire to be hastened were in my power, surely the matter would be decided between me and you. And Allah knows best the unjust.”

60. And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them but He. And He knows whatsoever is in the land and in the sea. And there falls not a leaf but He knows it; nor is there a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything green or dry, but is recorded in a clear Book.

804. Commentary:
This verse gives one of the reasons why it has not been placed in the power of Prophets to bring down punishment. The reason lies in the fact that God alone knows who are just and who are unjust. Therefore, if the work of punishment were entrusted to human beings, who do not know the inner secrets of the heart, they may punish many who are not really unjust. ‘Umar, for instance, was in the beginning bitterly opposed to the Holy Prophet. But God knew that he would one day become a zealous champion of Islam, so much so that he would finally become the Second Successor of the Holy Prophet. Now, if the work of punishment had been entrusted to the Holy Prophet, he might have selected ‘Umar for punishment during the period of his bitter opposition to the new Faith, to the great loss to Islam. So only a Being Who knows the hidden secrets of man’s heart can award punishment, for He alone knows who is really deserving of punishment and who not. There are many men who are outwardly very meek, but in their hearts they are not better than ravenous wolves. Similarly, there are many who are outwardly very harsh and stubborn, but they are good at heart. If it had been left to the Prophets to punish their enemies, they might have punished them much sooner than God punishes them.

805. Commentary:
This verse gives a further reason why the work of punishment must remain in the hands of God; it is God alone with Whom are the keys of the unseen, i.e., it is He alone Who knows the unseen. None but He knows the secrets of men’s hearts and therefore He alone is in a position to punish.

The expressions “land,” “sea,” “falling of a leaf,” “grain in the darkness of the earth,” and “green or dry” are all descriptive of the various conditions of man. The “sea,” according to the Arab conception, is typical of hardships, whereas “land” symbolizes ease and comfort. Similarly, “the falling of a leaf” represents the actions of man that are rendered vain and fruitless; whereas the “grain in the darkness of the earth,” if left unprotected, may become lost just as virtue, if left uncared for, may become lost. Again, “the green or the dry” is also known to God. A tree appears to us to be dry, but when it is watered by rain, it becomes green.
61. And it is He who takes your souls by night and knows that which you do by day; then He raises you up again therein, that the appointed term may be completed. Then to Him is your return. Then will He inform you of what you used to do. 806

Similarly, a man sometimes appears to us to be devoid of all spirituality, but when he is watered with the water of divine mercy, he becomes full of spiritual life.

The word كتاب (Book) also signifies knowledge. Other instances of this use may be seen in 30: 57 and 68: 48 where the words كتاب (lit. book) and كتبون (lit. they write) respectively mean "knowledge" and "they know". The Holy Prophet is also reported to have written to the people of Yemen, saying, "I have sent to you a writer, i.e., a man of knowledge, from among my Companions" (Bihar, iii. 193). So the Arabic words rendered as "is recorded in a clear Book" may also be translated as "is preserved in sure divine knowledge."

Thus, as God alone possesses the keys of the unseen and as all the conditions and actions of man are known to Him alone, it is He only Who can punish him. No one who is devoid of perfect knowledge is qualified to punish. Again, God alone knows how far hardship or ease influences the actions of a man. He alone knows whether or not the good works done by a man have been rendered null and void through the operation of other causes. He alone knows the grains of virtue that lie embedded in the heart of man and whether or not these grains will sprout forth and grow and thrive and bring forth fruit. He alone can tell whether a person who, to all appearances, is "dry" and devoid of all spiritual life, will turn "green" when supplied with heavenly water or whether he is dead beyond revival. In short, God alone has true knowledge of all things and all conditions and all possibilities and all potentialities, and therefore He alone can say whether a man deserves to be punished or not.

806. Important Words:

- كتاب (who takes your souls). The learned author of the Al-Bahr al-Mu'hit says: "The word تابع (tawaff), as is well known, means, to cause to die,' but in this verse it has been metaphorically used in the sense of 'causing to sleep' on account of the close resemblance between sleep and death." See also 2: 235 & 3: 56.

- من وصل (you do) is derived from لسع. They say وصل, i.e. he wounded him. لسع also means, he acquired, earned, worked or did (Lane).

Commentary:

The subject that none but God is entitled to punish is continued in this verse, which says that God alone knows the condition of man by night and his actions by day, and all times are subject to His control, and therefore it is He alone Who knows the true character of the pious and the wicked, and consequently none but He is in a position to punish. Again, it is He alone Who knows the time most suited for the death of a person and therefore He has not entrusted the work of punishment to others.

The words, that the appointed term may be completed, do not refer to any term arbitrarily
62. And He is Supreme over His servants, and He sends guardians to watch over you, until, when death comes to anyone of you, Our messengers take his soul, and they fail not. 807

63. Then are they returned to Allah, their true Lord. Surely, His is the judgement. And He is the quickest of reckoners. 808

64. Say, "Who delivers you from the calamities of the land and the sea, when you call upon Him in humility and in secret, saying, 'If He deliver us from this, we will surely be of those who are grateful'?" 809

807. Commentary: This verse provides another reason why God alone is entitled to punish. He is Supreme, i.e., Powerful and Mighty over all, therefore He can punish any of His creatures whenever He thinks it proper. The powerful are never in a hurry to punish, for they know that they can punish whenever they will. Again, it is God Himself Who guards His creatures and supports them, and it is through His grace that they enjoy security. So destruction can befall them only when He withdraws His grace, and He does so when He thinks it proper.

The words, they fail not, signify that when God finally issues a decree, nothing can delay it or set it aside.

808. Commentary: The reader should note that when speaking of death, the Quran uses the expression "When death comes to anyone of you" (see the preceding verse which uses the singular number), while in the present verse it refers to the Resurrection of all men together by saying, "Then are they returned to Allah." This is because whereas death comes to men individually and not to all men together, the Resurrection of mankind will be simultaneous and universal.

809. Commentary: ضرع (in humility) is derived from which means, he was or became lowly, humble or submissive; or he lowered, humbled or abased himself and petitioned for a gift; or he was weak, slender or emaciated. ضرع also means, it (a kid, etc.) took with its mouth the teat or dug of its mother. ضرع means, he
65. Say, ‘Allah delivers you from them and from every distress, yet you associate partners with Him.’

66. Say, ‘He has power to send punishment upon you from above you or from beneath your feet, or to confound you by splitting you into sects and make you taste the violence of one another.’ See how We expound the Signs in various ways that they may understand!

lowered, humbled or abased himself; or he addressed himself with earnest or energetic supplication. It also means, he writhed and called for aid (Lane).

خفية (secretly) is derived from خفي which means, it was or became unperceived, concealed, hidden, low or faint. They say خفي i.e. he was slain secretly (Lane).

Commentary:

The word ظلالات (calamities), literally meaning “darkness,” here signifies afflictions, calamities and misfortunes; for, with the Arabs, darkness is a symbol of misfortune. Thus, a day of great misfortune is called “a starry day,” because it is considered so dark as to make even stars visible in the firmament.

The reader should note that instead of saying “openly” and “secretly”, the Quran here uses the words “humbly” and “secretly”, substituting the word “humbly” for “openly”, thus indicating that a prayer said openly is useful only when it is offered in humility. “Open” prayers may sometimes be offered from a motive of display and show. Such prayers are of no value. Prayers are efficacious only when offered with due humility.

810. Commentary:

The words, from every distress, signify that Allah may deliver you not only from the afflictions from which you pray to be rescued but also from other troubles for the removal of which you do not pray.

This and the preceding verse give the third reason why none beside God is in a position to send down punishment. We are told that none but God hears the prayers of men and delivers them from the afflictions which befall them. Now the Being Who hears prayers and removes afflictions should also be the Being Who can send down punishment; for if there be two different beings, then there is sure to be opposition and conflict between them.

811. Commentary:

This verse gives the fourth reason why no mortal possesses the power to bring down punishment upon men for their sins, and that it is God alone Who possesses that power. This reason consists in the fact that the punishments which mortals inflict upon others are merely external and are limited in their character; while the punishments that come from God are varied and far-extending. For instance, man can at most kill another man and end his life, but the punishment which God inflicts sometimes grows in the very heart of man and causes him great heart-burning and un easiness of
67. And a thy people have rejected it, though it is the truth. Say, I am not a guardian over you.\(^{812}\)

68. For every prophecy there is a fixed time; and soon will you come to know.\(^{813}\)

69. And when thou seest those who engage in \textit{vain discourse concerning} Our Signs, then turn thou away from them until they engage in a discourse other than that. And if Satan cause thee to forget, then sit not, after recollection, with the unjust people.\(^{814}\)

\(^{812}\) Commentary: The pronoun “it” in the words “rejected it” refers either (1) to the matter under discussion, i.e., it is God alone Who can send down punishment, or (2) to the Quran, or (3) to punishment. Taking the last meaning, the words “it is the truth” would mean that the promised punishment is sure to come.

The words, \textit{I am not a guardian over you}, imply that if now, when I have conveyed to you the divine Message, the punishment of God comes, I cannot help it. I will not be able to protect you from it. It is worthy of note that whereas disbelievers are demanding punishment, the Holy Prophet is expressing sympathy for them.

\(^{813}\) Commentary: The verse signifies that God, in His infinite wisdom, has fixed a time for the fulfilment of every prophecy. So the punishment that has been promised to the rejectors of truth will also come to pass in due time. Then will they know that it was not a false prophecy. Disbelievers demand that the divine punishment should come upon them at once. That cannot be; for nothing that has a fixed time can come before its time.

\(^{814}\) Important Words: \textit{ذكرى} (recollection) is the noun-infinitive
70. And **those who are righteous are not at all accountable for them**, but **their duty is to admonish them, that they may fear God.**

It has even been applied to “anger” and “jealousy” in some of the sayings of the Holy Prophet. Here also it is used in the sense of “anger” and the sentence would thus mean, “if anger or wrath should cause you to forget the injunction to leave the company of such persons and to quit the place...” This interpretation, however, will hold good only in the case of men who stand on a high level of righteousness. In the case of ordinary men, the word would be taken to mean “evil suggestion” or “negligence.”

The word ذكرٌ (recollection), as shown under Important Words, means both “recollection”, i.e. remembering, and “reminding.” Taking it in the intransitive sense, the sentence would mean that when you recollect the injunction to quit the place, you should do so forthwith. Taking the word ذكرٌ in the sense of “reminding,” the sentence would mean that before quitting the place, you should remind the scoffers of their mischievous conduct and tell them that it is an evil and dishonourable course which they follow and that it is calculated to excite against them the wrath of God.

It should also be remembered that really it is not the Holy Prophet but every believer that is addressed in this verse.

815. Important Words:

ذكرٌ (to admonish). See the preceding verse.
71. And let alone those who take their religion to be a sport and a pastime, and whom worldly life has beguiled. And admonish people thereby lest a soul be consigned to perdition for what it has wrought. It shall have no helper nor intercessor beside Allah; and even if it offer every ransom, it shall not be accepted from it. These are they who have been delivered over to destruction for their own acts. They will have a drink of boiling water and a grievous punishment, because they disbelieved.  

816. Important Words:

- تبليل (be consigned to perdition) is derived from سل i.e. he prevented or prohibited or debarred. أسل besides giving the above-mentioned meaning, also means, he gave in pledge; or gave in exchange. أبل also means, he gave him up to or he delivered him over to or he consigned him to destruction or perdition or punishment (Lane & Aqrab).

- شرب (drink) is derived from شرب i.e. he drank. شرب means, a drink or beverage; any liquid which is drunk and not eaten or chewed. This is the original significance. Post-classical writers, however, sometimes use the word in the sense of خمر (wine) also (Lane).

- حم (boiling water) is derived from حم i.e. it (water, etc.) became hot or very hot. The word is also used transitively, meaning, he heated water, etc., or he heated it fully. حم means, he melted the fat. حم means, he washed him with hot water or, conversely, with cold water. حم means, hot water or, conversely, cold water; sweat or perspiration. The word also means a friend or a beloved person (Lane). The last significance is probably based on warmth of feeling.

Commentary:

The context and the sense of the passage required the use of the words “thy religion,” but the Quran uses the words “their religion” instead of “thy religion”. This is to point out that it was for their own good that the religion of Islam had been sent and that they were injuring themselves by rejecting it.

The words, admonish people thereby, signify that if disbelievers are in a state of excitement and it is found that admonition will provoke them all the more, then one should “let them alone”; but if there is no fear of their being provoked, then one should first admonish them and then quit their company. The pronoun in ~ (thereby) refers to the Quran.

The verse also contains an exhortation to believers not to get enraged at the scornful remarks of disbelievers. As it is the duty of believers to admonish and warn disbelievers, therefore the former should patiently endure the taunts of the latter.

As shown under Important Words, the word تبليل (consigned to perdition) may also mean, “be given up or surrendered.”

Taking the word in the latter sense, the
72. Say: *"Shall we call, beside Allah, upon that which can neither profit us nor harm us, and shall we be turned back on our heels after Allah has guided us, like one whom the evil ones entice away leaving him bewildered in the land, and who has companions who call him to guidance, saying, 'Come to us'?"* Say: 'Surely, the guidance of Allah is the only guidance and we have been commanded to submit to the Lord of all the worlds.'

The verse is addressed to believers and points out to them the urgent need of preaching the truth to disbelievers. It calls upon believers to picture to themselves the dire consequences of their failure to preach the truth to disbelieving people. If they do not show disbelievers the right path, the result will be that the latter will continue in their error and will be delivered over to destruction on account of the evil deeds which they have wrought.

The "boiling water" mentioned in the verse will serve as a medicine to bring about a cure, while the "grievous punishment" will be in the nature of an operation.
73. “And we have been given the command: ‘Observe Prayer and fear Him,’ and He it is to Whom you shall be gathered.”

74. And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in accordance with the requirements of wisdom; and the day He says, ‘Be,’ it will be. His word is the truth, and His will be the kingdom on the day when the trumpet will be blown. He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen. And He is the Wise, the All-Aware.

Commentary:
The opening clause of the verse teaches by means of an example how to preach the truth. It points out that the best way to preach is to begin by exposing the errors of the opposing party as hinted in the words, ‘neither profit us nor harm us,’ and then to proceed to point out the truth as hinted in the words, ‘after Allah has guided us.’

The verse then gives an apt illustration to expose the futility of i.e. attributing co-partners to God. It compares the case of an idol-worshipper to that of a distracted person who has no fixed course to pursue. Such a person first goes to one idol or to the tomb of one saint and then to another and has no certainty or conviction. But a true believer has a fixed purpose and a fixed goal. He always prays to the One God with a deep-rooted conviction and does not wander about distracted like an idolater.

The reader will note that, true to its own principle, the verse first exposes the error of idolaters and then gives the teachings of Islam.

818. Commentary:
The concluding theme of the preceding verse has been continued in the present one.

819. Commentary:
The word (be) really denotes a simple command intended to bring about a change. When the word is used concerning a thing which does not exist, it naturally signifies the bringing into being something which God has willed. When, however, the word is used concerning a thing which already exists, then it generally means that the thing will come to nought when God so wills. Thus the sentence, ‘He it is Who created . . . . and the day He says, ‘Be,’ it will be,’ signifies that everything is in the power of God; so when God issues a command concerning the breaking-up of the power of disbelievers, it will surely come to nought.

The expression, His word is the truth, means that the prophecy mentioned above is a true one and must come to pass and nothing can stop it. See the meaning of under 2:148 & 3:4

The words, His will be the kingdom on the day when the trumpet will be blown, mean that the visible kingdom of God will be established when Islam triumphs and false and idolatrous
75. And remember the time when Abraham said to his father, Azar: 'Dost thou take idols for gods? Surely, I see thee and thy people in manifest error.'

beliefs and practices vanish. A Prophet of God is indeed a trumpet, through whom the voice of God is heard, and the sounding of the trumpet is a symbol for the wide publication and establishment of the teachings brought by him. Thus the verse means that when the teachings of the Holy Prophet are widely published and accepted in the world and when Islam flourishes and triumphs, then the kingdom of God will be visibly established on the earth and on that day will idols be broken to pieces.

820. Important Words:

اب (father) which is originally اب gives the following meanings: a father; an ancestor; a paternal uncle. اب 는 (father) means, the woman's husband. اب الماز (father) means, master or owner of the dwelling (Lane). See also 4:12.

آزار (Azar). For the discussion of the word and the relationship of Azar with Abraham see under Commentary below. The word is considered by some to be of non-Arabic origin, though in Arabic too it has a root. Thus آزار (Azar) means, the vegetation grew thick and strong. آزار (Azar) means, he strengthened such and such a person. آزار (Azar) means, he sympathized with and helped him (Aqrah). The name, which thus appears to be attributive, was given to Azar probably because he helped his people in establishing idol-worship. According to Mujahid, آزار (Azar) was originally the name of an idol (Qadir).

Commentary:

With this verse the Quran turns to an account of Abraham, which is given here for two reasons: Firstly, because it is the idolatrous Quraish that are chiefly addressed in these verses and they revered Abraham as their progenitor and patriarch. Hence, by giving an account of Abraham, God wants to tell the Quraish that their great ancestor Abraham was also, like the Holy Prophet, opposed to idolatry, which shows that idol-worship is a later innovation. Secondly, by means of this account, God wants to impress upon idolaters the hollow and unsound foundation on which stands the belief and practice of idol-worship and the absurd ideas which give rise to idolatry.

In the present verse Abraham is represented as arguing with his اب (father) on the subject of idolatry. This اب (father) is here named 阿zar. Now we have to see in what relation this man stood to Abraham and what was his true name. Christian writers have criticized the Quran on the ground that it calls Abraham's father by the name 阿zar while his true name was Terah. It is true that in Gen. 11:26 Abraham's father is named Terah. But it is equally true that in Luke 3:34 Abraham is called the son of Thara and not Terah. The reader should note the change not only in the first consonant but also in the vowel that follows. The Talmud also gives the name of Abraham's father as Thara. Eusebius, the great Church historian, who has been rightly styled the Father of Ecclesiastical History, gives, in spite of Gen. 11:26 and Luke: 3:34, which could not be unknown to him, Thabar as the name of Abraham's father (Sale). This clearly shows that even among the Jews there existed no unanimity as to the name of Abraham's father. The fact that Eusebius
76. And thus did We show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth that he might be rightly guided and that he might be of those who have certainty of faith. 821

followed neither Gen. 11:26, nor Luke 3:34 shows that he had strong reasons to differ from these two well-known sources. The correct form thus appears to be Athar, which later became changed into Thara or Terah. Now the form adopted by Eusebius is almost, if not exactly, the same as given by the Quran. If there is any difference, it is only that of pronunciation; otherwise both forms, i.e. Āzār and Athar, are identical. Christians have therefore no reason to quarrel with the Quran for calling Abraham's father by the name Āzār. It may also be noted that Abraham's father is also called Zarah in the Talmud (Sale) and Zarah is approximately the same as Āzār. All this goes to prove not only that the Quran is not wrong in calling the father of Abraham by the name Āzār but also that the Quranic version is much more reliable than that of the Bible.

The next question we have to consider is that of the relationship in which Āzār stood to Abraham. In the Quran he has been called Abraham's āb (ab), a word applied, as shown under Important Words, not only to father but also to uncle, grandfather, etc. who stand in the position of a father. From the Quran it appears that Āzār, though called the āb (ab) of Abraham, was not really his father. In 9:114 we are told that Abraham had made a promise to Āzār, his āb (ab), to pray to God for his forgiveness but when he came to know that he was an enemy of God, he abstained from praying for him and was actually forbidden to do so (see also 26:87 where again Āzār is spoken as the āb of Abraham). Elsewhere, however, the Quran itself records a prayer of Abraham which he offered in the last days of his life, after he had built the Ka'ba in company with his son, Ishmael. In this prayer, Abraham prays for his father and is not forbidden to pray for him; but here Abraham does not use for him the word āb (ab) but āb (14:42). Now, as has already been stated, the word āb may be applied to a person other than the real father, but the word āb (wālid) which means "the begetter" is applied to none but the actual father. This clearly shows that Āzār who has been called the āb (ab) of Abraham was a different person from the āb (wālid) of Abraham. He was probably his uncle.

Some passages of the Bible also support this conclusion. We are told that Abraham married Sarah, the daughter of Terah (Gen. 20:12). This shows that Terah was not his real father, for in that case he could not marry Terah's daughter, his own sister. It appears that his father being dead, he was brought up by his uncle, Āzār or Athar, who gave him his daughter Sarah in marriage. As Āzār brought up Abraham and was in the position of a father to him, the latter came to be ascribed to him as a son, and this led to the error of Āzār or Athar being taken as the real father of Abraham. Again, from the Talmud it appears that Āzār prosecuted Abraham and presented him before the king for the offence of breaking idols. If Āzār had been the real father of Abraham, he would not have followed such a course against his own son.

821. Important Words:

(kingdom) is derived from ملک i.e. he possessed complete ownership of, and power.
77. And when the night darkened upon him, he saw a star. He said: 'This is my Lord!' But when it set, he said: 'I like not those that set.'

78. And when he saw the moon rise with spreading light, he said, 'This is my Lord.' But when it set, he said, 'If my Lord guide me not, I shall surely be of the people who go astray.'

79. And when he saw the sun rise with spreading light, he said: 'This is my Lord, this is the greatest.' But when it set, he said, 'O my people, surely I am clear of that which you associate with God.'

---

over. ملكوت means, sovereignty; dominion; great kingdom; power to deal with a thing as one likes; the place of holy spirits in the heavens (Aqrab). The word ملكوت is specifically used about the kingdom or dominion of God (Mufradät). See also 1:4.

Commentary:
The word ملكوت (kingdom), as shown above, is peculiar to the dominion of God. Thus the words, And thus did We show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, mean, We showed Abraham the power and control which We exercise over every part of the universe. Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrwardī, a great Muslim divine, says in his famous work, the ‘Awārif al-Ma‘ārif, that when a spiritual wayfarer reaches this stage, i.e., when he is made to witness the sovereignty of God, he is, as it were, spiritually re-born and that no person can be admitted into the presence of God until he has attained this stage. When, however, a man has attained this stage of certainty and conviction, doubt cannot enter his mind, for then he lives in the very presence of God.

822. Important Words:

 đen (darkened) means, it covered up. They say بن الليل (in the night) or بن الليل الدني (i.e. the night covered the thing up); or the night threw its covering of darkness over the thing. بن الليل means, the night grew dark. See also 2:26 & 6:129.

Commentary:
See collective note under 6:80 below.

823. Commentary:
See collective note under 6:80 below.

824. Commentary:
See collective note under 6:80 below.
80. "I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth, being ever inclined to God, and I am not of those who associate gods with God." 825

825. Commentary:

Verses 77 to 80 contain an argument which Abraham employed to bring home to his idolatrous people the absurdity of their belief in the godhead of the sun, the moon and the stars, which they worshipped (Jew. Enc.). It is an error to infer from these verses that Abraham was himself groping in the dark and did not know who his God was, that he took the evening star, the moon, and the sun for God one after another and, when each of them set in its turn, he gave up his belief in their divinity and turned to the One God, the Creator of heavens and earth. The passage contains no less than eleven clear evidences to show that Abraham was not really taking these heavenly bodies for gods, but that his object was to demonstrate to his people the vanity of their beliefs, step by step. Some of these evidences may be summed up as below:

Firstly, the opening part of this passage, i.e. the first part of 6: 77 is connected with the previous verses with the double particle 
(and when) which denotes close sequence i.e. that which has been said in this passage is connected with, and occurred immediately after, what is related in the preceding verses. Now the preceding verses, i.e. vv. 75 and 76, clearly show Abraham as having attained certainty and conviction of faith and as being a firm believer in one God and being advanced in spirituality. Thus placed and protected, he cannot be considered as groping in the dark like a blind man and wandering from one deity to another.

Secondly, there is no sense in supposing Abraham to have seen the star or the moon for the first time that night. He belonged to a community which used to worship stars and he must have seen the stars many times before. If he was really a star-worshipper, he ought to have first imbibed the idea from what he had heard from his father and others and not by seeing a star himself, and reflecting over it. Star-worship was not at all a new idea discovered by him by looking at a star. Thus there is no doubt that Abraham's words, This is my Lord, were not meant as an expression of faith but simply as an argument against star-worship. He assumed the star he saw to be his Lord merely to expose its lordship afterwards on the basis of its setting and thereby to tell his people that they were wrong in taking the star for their Lord.

Thirdly, when the star disappeared, Abraham is reported to have said, I like not those that set. Now Abraham certainly knew already that the star must set; he must have already seen it disappear times without number. So the argument, I like not those that set, must have already been familiar to his mind and he could not take to worshipping the star in view of this argument. In fact, what he wanted was to use the argument against star-worshippers in a way that might prove effective. So he first assumed or supposed the star to be his Lord and, when it disappeared, he hastened to declare, I like not those that set. Similar was the case with the setting of the moon and the sun. Of the sun he spoke the word "greater" or "greatest" ironically in order to taunt his people for their folly. It should be incidentally
81. And his people argued with him. He said, ‘Do you argue with me concerning Allah when He has guided me aright? And I fear not that which you associate with Him, unless my Lord wills anything. ‘My Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge. Will you not then be admonished?’

82. ‘And why should I fear that which you associate with God, when you fear not to associate with Allah that for which He has sent down to you no authority? ’ Which, then, of the two parties has greater right to security, if indeed you know?

83. Those who believe and mix not up their belief with injustice—it is they who shall have peace, and who are rightly guided.

*noted here that Abraham did not use the word كَبِيرٌ (greater or greatest) for the moon which was also greater than the evening star. The omission is significant, as it clearly shows, that he was already intending to refer to the sun after disposing of the case of the moon.*

Fourthly, if Abraham was really searching for God and had sincerely taken the star, the moon and the sun, in turn, for his Lord, then the conclusion at which he ought to have naturally arrived, after gradually rejecting the godhead of these three heavenly bodies, should have been that there was no God at all, but instead of declaring that there was no God, Abraham forthwith turned to his people saying, *O my people, surely I am clear of that which you associate with God. I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth, being ever inclined to God. This shows that Abraham already knew the true God and believed in Him and was simply trying gradually to draw his people towards Him. Let the reader only read the whole reply of Abraham (vv. 81—83) and it will become crystal clear to him that Abraham was not only familiar with the name of Allah and believed in Him but also possessed a deep knowledge of His attributes.*

826. Commentary:

This and the following two verses definitely show that the incident related in vv. 77—80 above was purposely used by Abraham by way of argument; otherwise he himself was a staunch monotheist and had dived deep into the depths of divine love and knowledge.
84. And that is Our argument which We gave to Abraham against his people. We exalt in degrees of rank whomso We please. Thy Lord is indeed Wise, All-Knowing.827

85. And We gave him Isaac and Jacob; each did We guide aright, and Noah did We guide aright aforetime, and of his progeny, David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. Thus do We reward those who do good.828

827. Commentary:
This verse forms the concluding portion of the passage (beginning with 6:77 above) containing Abraham’s argument with his people. It definitely settles the question whether Abraham gradually came to have a faith in God by taking one heavenly body after another for his Lord or whether it was a skillfully graduated argument by means of which he sought to demonstrate the error of his people in worshipping these heavenly bodies as gods. Says God, That is Our argument which We gave to Abraham against his people. Thus, the Quran refers to what has gone above as an “argument” which God Himself taught Abraham and which Abraham used with such great effect against his people. This declaration by the Quran leaves not the slightest doubt that Abraham was not wandering about after false gods but was trying to convince his people of their error by means of a very effective process of reasoning. This is why it is referred to in the present verse in the light of a favour by the Wise and All-knowing God.

This verse, though put in Rukū’ 10, really forms part of the preceding passage. It must be remembered that the division of the Quran into 30 Paras (parts) and the division of the Sūras (Chapters) into Rukū’s (sections) was not made by the Holy Prophet nor by his Companions, but was effected long afterwards by Muslim scribes for providing facility in reading, and for the convenience of reference. In the time of the Holy Prophet there were only Sūras and verses and nothing else.

828. Important Words:
Ayyūb (Job), who is the hero of the Book of Job, is mentioned in the Bible as living in the land of Uz. Some authorities say that this is Idumea or Arabia Deserta; others fix Mesopotamia as his country. It appears that Uz was somewhere in the north of Arabia. It is said that Job lived there before the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. He thus lived before Moses or, as some say, he was a compatriot of Moses, having received his prophetic mission about 20 years before him. Job was not an Israelite, having been descended from Esau, the elder brother of Israel. He had a very chequered career, being “tried” by God in diverse ways; but he proved most faithful and righteous and was patient and steadfast in the extreme. He still lives in the memory of mankind as a paragon of patience.
David (David or Dāwūd) has been taken to mean: (1) beloved or friend; or (2) paternal uncle; or (3) best of all. King of Judah and Israel, David, who was of Israelite origin being from the tribe of Judah, was founder of the Judean dynasty at Jerusalem. The date of his reign is generally fixed at about 1010-970 B.C. He was a great warrior and a great statesman. His importance as the real builder of the Hebrew Kingdom can hardly be over-estimated. Through him all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba became united and organized into a powerful nation whose kingdom extended from the Euphrates to the Nile. Towards the end of his life David had to suffer much at the hands of scheming slanderers, which deeply grieved him. He has poured out his grief in his celebrated Psalms (Enc. Brit. & Enc. Bib.). The Quran, however, absolves him from the charges imputed to him in the Bible (2:19-26).

Solomon was the second son of David & Bath-Sheba and the third king of Israel. He reigned from about 971 to 931 B.C. He was called Jedidiah (beloved of Jehovah) by Nathan, the Prophet. But David was told by Jehovah that his son's name should be Solomon (peaceful). These two names are predictive of the character of his reign, which was both highly prosperous and peaceful. Besides his principal names, Jedidiah and Solomon, various others are assigned to him such as Agur (he who girt his loins), Bin (he who built the temple), Jakeh (he who reigned over the world), Ithiel (he who understood the signs of God), and Ucal (he who could withstand them). The word Solomon may have been derived from the root سلم which means, he was or became safe, secure or in peace, or free from evils of any kind. The fact that he ruled for the long period of forty years shows that he must have consolidated firmly the kingdom he inherited from his father. He was a great monarch and a wise judge. He greatly extended and developed the trade and commerce of his country and contracted friendly alliances with foreign rulers. He was the master-builder among the Israelite kings and is best known for his building of the Temple at Jerusalem, which is known as the Temple of Solomon and which became the Qibla of the Israelites for all time. In spite of the prosperity of his kingdom, Solomon's reign was not altogether happy. Plots were hatched against him by secret societies to bring about his downfall. The Society of the Free Masons is also believed to have dated from his reign. He was followed by a worthless son (Enc. Bri.; Enc. Bib. & Jew. Enc.). Like his father, David, Solomon was the victim of much calumny and slander from which the Quran has exonerated him (2:103).

Aaron who belonged to the tribe of Levi, was the son of Amram and the elder brother of Moses, who was three years younger than him, their sister Miriam being the eldest of the three. Aaron was the traditional founder and head of the Jewish priesthood and, in company with Moses, he led the Israelites out of Egypt. Aaron and Moses were jointly commissioned to deliver the Israelites from the clutches of Pharaoh and to preach to them the message of the Oneness of God, though Moses was the senior Prophet and Aaron subordinate to him. While Moses was both the religious and secular head, Aaron represented only the priestly functions of his tribe. His duties were generally ministerial and not directive. Aaron was known for his eloquence and persuasive speech and was of a mild, amiable disposition (Enc. Bri.; Enc. Bri. & Jew. Enc.).

Commentary:
This and the succeeding verses tell us that not
86. And We guided Zachariah and John and Jesus and Elias; each one of them was of the virtuous. 829

only Abraham but other Prophets also preached against i.e. setting up associates with God.

The present verse mentions the descendants of Abraham to the second generation, naming a son (Isaac) and a grandson (Jacob or Israel). The name of Ishmael, the eldest son of Abraham, has been included in a separate group (6:87 below), and not in a subordinate position under Abraham.

The reader should note that the Prophets descended from Noah have been divided in the present and the succeeding two verses into three different groups and to each group has been added a separate description. The first group referred to in the present verse comprises David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron—Prophets who were given power and prosperity, and who consequently were able to do good to human beings. Hence members of this group have been designated as or doers of good, for through their temporal power and prosperity they were able to do material good to humanity. David and Solomon were kings; Joseph and Job were blessed with prosperity after they had been tried with afflictions which they both bore with extraordinary patience. Moses and Aaron enjoyed supreme authority among their people.

The second group (for which see 6:86) consists of Zachariah, John, Jesus and Elias. None of these possessed temporal power or worldly goods; each lived a humble and lowly life, so much so that of Elias it is said that he was rarely seen and generally lived in the woods. Hence they have been differentiated in 6:86 as i.e. virtuous. The first three comprising the second group were contemporaries; while Elias, though not a contemporary, bore a striking resemblance to John, who came in his spirit and power; so he also has been classed with this group.

The third group (mentioned in 6:87) consists of Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah and Lot. They had no worldly power, but God granted them grace and excellence. It has been alleged about them that they coveted power and riches. Of Ishmael, we read in the Bible: “He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him” (Gen. 16:12). In the Talmud, Ishmael is represented as having followed his father Abraham when the latter took Isaac out for sacrifice, rejoicing at the thought that he would inherit all the lands and herds. Of Elisha it is said that he caused a king, who did not obey him, to be slain so that he might thus gain political power. Jonah was displeased with God, because he was disgraced by the non-fulfilment of his prophecy, which, it is alleged, showed that he sought power for himself. Of Lot it is alleged that he coveted fertile pasture-lands and was always quarrelling with his kinsman, Abraham. Thus all these Prophets have been accused of coveting wealth and power. But the Quran declares all these charges to be false. These Prophets were a group of heavenly people enjoying spiritual communion with God. They had no need to be covetous or seekers of power; for, as stated in 6:87, God had “exalted” them above the people.

829. Important Words:

Elijah (Elias or Elijah) who lived about 900 B.C. was a native of Gilead, a country on the eastern bank of the Jordan. According to the Bible,
87. And We also guided Ishmael and Elisha and Jonah and Lot: and each one did We exalt above the people. 830

88. And We exalted some of their fathers and their children and their brethren, and We chose them and We guided them in the straight path.

Commentary:
See 6:85 above.

830. Important Words:
الإله (Elisha) was the son of Shaphat, the disciple and successor of Elijah. He was a native of Abelmeholah, a village in Galilee. He was taken from the plough and anointed by Elijah to be his successor. Directed by God, Elijah found him in the field and threw his mantle over him. Many miracles are attributed to Elisha. But neither the sanctity of his life nor the miracles he wrought had the effect of reforming the nation at large. At length, worn out by his public and private labour, he breathed his last at the age of ninety in 838 B.C.

Jonah, son of Amittai, was born in Gath-hepher, in the tribe of Zebulun. He lived either before or during the reign of Jeroboam II or in the reign of Jehoahaz about 850 B.C. He was an Israelite Prophet with a mission to the people of Nineveh. Jonah prophesied the destruction of his people within 40 days. But they repented and turned to God with humble supplication, whereupon they were saved. This, however, upset Jonah who, being ashamed to face his people, ran away and, while crossing a sea, was thrown into the water and swallowed by a fish (Jonah 1:17). Jonah remained in the belly of the fish for three days and was then disgorged by it and saved. It is to this incident that Jesus referred when he said that no miracle would be shown to his people except that of Jonah (Matt. 16:4), meaning that he would be put on the Cross but would be taken down alive and would then be placed in the womb of the earth for three days after which he would escape therefrom, just as Jonah had escaped from the belly of the fish.

Commentary:
See 6:85 above. The verse speaks of Lot as being “exalted above the people.” Now if the word الأهل (lit. the peoples) be taken to signify “all the peoples,” it would be evidently wrong; for Lot lived in the time of Abraham and was admittedly not superior to the Patriarch. Thus the word الأهل cannot here signify even “the people of the age” as
89. That is the guidance of Allah. He guides thereby those of His servants whom He pleases. And if they had worshipped aught beside Him, surely all they did would have been of no avail to them.\(^{831}\)

90. It is these to whom We gave the Book and dominion and prophethood. But if these people are ungrateful for them, it matters not, for We have now entrusted them to a people who are not ungrateful for them.\(^{832}\)

\(^{831}\) Commentary:
The verse signifies that real and true guidance is that which was given to the Prophets named in the above verses; they all preached against idol-worship. The latter part of the verse hints that these Prophets did not associate anything with God even before they were sent as Prophets; otherwise they would not have been raised to that high spiritual rank.

\(^{832}\) Commentary:
The giving of a Book by God generally occurs in two ways: Firstly, directly, as in the case of Moses and the Holy Prophet of Islam. Secondly, indirectly, as in the case of those Prophets to whom no new Book was revealed and who only followed a Book that had been revealed to a previous Prophet. Thus of the Torah we are told in the Quran, Surely, We sent down the Torah wherein was guidance and light. By it did the Prophets who were obedient to Us judge for the Jews (5:45). The above quoted verse proves that there appeared many Prophets among the Israelites to whom no new Book was revealed and who only followed the Torah. This statement of the Quran is also borne out by history, which tells us that there were many Prophets among the Israelites to whom no Book was revealed. Hence, when the verse under comment says: It is these to whom We gave the Book, it does not mean that a Book was given to every Prophet separately but only that every Prophet received knowledge of the divine Book. Another consideration which lends support to the above conclusion is that the word "these" put in the beginning of the verse not only refers to the Prophets named in the foregoing verses, but also to some of their fathers and their children and their brethren (6:88), and it is evident that the latter did not receive any new Book.

There are also other verses of the Quran in which the expression, "We gave the Book" has been used in the sense of giving the Book indirectly. Among others the reader is referred to 2:122; 2:147; 29:48 & 45:17. It is of interest that in the last-mentioned verse, i.e. 45:17, not only the Book but all the three things mentioned in the verse under comment have been spoken of as having been given to
91. These it is whom Allah guided aright, so follow thou their guidance. Say: 'I ask not of you any reward for it. This is naught but an admonition for all mankind.'

92. And they do not make a just estimate of Allah, when they say: 'Allah has not revealed anything to any man.' Say: 'Who revealed the Book which Moses brought, a light and guidance for the people—though you treat it as scraps of paper which you show while you conceal much; and you have been taught that which neither you nor your fathers knew?'—Say: 'Allah.' Then leave them to amuse themselves with their vain discourse.

In short, when on the one hand we learn not only from the Quran but also from history that there have been many Prophets who did not receive any new Book directly, and on the other hand, we see that the expression, "We gave the Book" has also been used in the Quran in the sense of giving a Book indirectly, the verse under comment cannot be interpreted to mean that every Prophet was given a Book directly from God. Muslim Commentators are agreed in holding that every Prophet was not given a Book directly by God, and that in the case of those Prophets to whom no Book was given directly, the words, "We gave the Book", simply mean, "We gave them knowledge or understanding of the Book", or "We made them inherit the Book."

Commentary:
The words, so follow thou their guidance, may be taken to be addressed either to the Holy Prophet or to every Muslim. The fundamental teaching of all Prophets is the same.

The word "people" in the latter portion of the verse refers to Muslims; and the pronoun "them" at the end refers to the Book, dominion and prophethood mentioned in the opening clause of the verse.

Commentary:
In this verse the Quran gives the reason why there are differences in religion. Differences spring from ignorance, from a lack of true estimation or true understanding, as indicated by the words, they do not make a just estimate of Allah. Indeed, those who say that Allah has not revealed anything to any man make a very poor estimate of His attributes. To hold such a view about God is highly derogatory to His glory and most inconsistent with His attributes.
93. And this is a Book which We have revealed, full of blessings, to fulfil that which preceded it, and to enable thee to warn the Mother of towns and those around her. And those who believe in the Hereafter believe therein and they strictly observe their Prayers.  

As regards religious beliefs, there were two classes of men in the days of the Holy Prophet. Firstly, there were those who denied revelation in toto. According to them, there had never been any revelation in any age. Secondly, there were those who believed that there had been revelation in the past, but that God had sent no revelation in their own age. To the first-mentioned class belonged the (Idolaters) i.e. those who ascribed co-partners to God and worshipped idols. To the second class belonged the People of the Book. As the words, Allah has not revealed anything to any man, may mean, (1) that God has never revealed anything to any man; or (2) that He has not revealed anything to any man in the present age, so they may be ascribed to both idol-worshippers and the People of the Book. In the foregoing verses only the former were addressed, but now the latter have also been included in the address.

As regards the People of the Book, the Quran specifically states: Say, Who revealed the Book which Moses brought, a light and guidance for the people, though you treat it as scraps of paper which you show while you conceal much, i.e., you have split up the Book of Moses into parts, disclosing one part and concealing the other which contains prophecies and signs of the advent of the Holy Prophet. You deny the Quranic revelation, but your own Book contains evidence of its truth which you suppress.

The above reply, however, could not satisfy the idol-worshippers who did not believe in the Book of Moses or, for that matter, in any revealed Book. The Quran, therefore, gives them a rational answer. It says, And you have been taught that which neither you nor your fathers knew. This is an argument which is meant to prove the divine origin of the Quran rationally and is meant not merely for the People of the Book but also for idol-worshippers. The argument may be put thus: "If this Book (the Quran) has not been revealed by God, then who embodied in it such wise and comprehensive teachings as were known neither to you nor to your forefathers—teachings which it was beyond your power to produce? Such teachings could not proceed from a man. Only God could give such teachings."

The last words of the verse, i.e., leave them to amuse themselves with their vain discourse, do not mean that you should abandon preaching to disbelievers. The meaning is, "Tell them and make clear to them that the Quran is the word of God, for it is superhuman and full of wisdom; but if they still persist in ridiculing it, then leave them alone while they thus amuse themselves." This injunction is similar to the one given in 6:69 above.

835. Important Words:

full of blessings) is derived from They say i.e. the camel kneeled and lay down on his chest with his legs folded.
steal, or steadfast. (barraka) means, he prayed that such a one might be blessed. (barak) means, he kept or applied himself constantly to it. (barak) means, may God bless thee and make thee prosperous, or may He continue to shower blessings on thee. (barak) means, blessed is God; or hallowed is He; or far removed is He from every imperfection; or highly exalted is He. (barakat) means, a blessing; any good bestowed by God, particularly that which continues and goes on increasing. It also means, increase, abundance or plenty. (birka) means, a tank dug in the ground; a lake or pond; a place where water remains and collects. (birka) means, blessed; gifted with blessing; abounding in good (Lane).

(أم) (mother), apart from its primary meaning, also signifies: source, origin, foundation or basis; support or cause of subsistence; the main or chief part of a thing; anything to which other things are collected together or joined; place of collection or comprehension or combination of a thing. The word is also applied to inanimate things, as the Arabs say (أم البصرى) i.e. the mother of the tree; or (أم الفجر) i.e. the Milky Way, viz. the place where the stars are collected together in a great multitude. (أم القرى) signifies, the mother of the towns; the metropolis; Mecca, because, being the Qibla, it is the gathering-place of men, or because of all towns it possesses the greatest dignity. In fact, every city is the (أم القرى) of the smaller towns around it (Lane). Mecca is called (أم القرى) also because it is the source of spiritual food for mankind.

Commentary:

This verse further explains the rational argument contained in the words, you have been taught that which neither you nor your fathers knew (see note on the preceding verse), and makes it clear that it is the Quran that the words quoted above refer to. The present verse mentions four features of the Quran: (1) it has been sent by God; (2) it is full of blessings as the word (مارك) indicates, i.e., it is a Book in which, like a (birka) (a place where water collects), are collected all the blessings of God; (3) it fulfils that which preceded it, i.e., it fulfils the prophecies contained in the previous Scriptures; and (4) it has been revealed so that the Holy Prophet may warn thereby the Mother of towns and those around her. The place where a Prophet of God appears is called "the mother of towns," for it is out of it that men drink spiritual milk, even as a child sucks milk from the breast of its mother. The words, (those around her), are intended to include the whole earth. The earth being round, all parts of it lie around the place where the Holy Prophet made his appearance i.e. Mecca. Thus this verse also proves the universal mission of the Holy Prophet.

The words, (those who believe in the Hereafter believe therein), signify that a true believer in the life to come cannot but believe in the Quranic teaching. In fact, he who has real faith in the life to come will always be anxious to find out the truth in order to ensure his salvation, and he who earnestly seeks after truth will necessarily be led to believe in the Quran, for as the Quran says: (those who strive in Our cause—We will surely guide them in Our ways) (29:70). Thus belief in the Quran is really a criterion of true faith in the Day of Resurrection. Again, when a man comes to have faith in the Quran, he will naturally try to mould his actions according to its teachings and will be constant in his Prayers.
94. And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah, or says, 'It has been revealed to me,' while nothing has been revealed to him; and who says, 'I will send down the like of that which Allah has sent down?' And if thou couldst only see, when the wrongdoers are in the agonies of death, and the angels stretch forth their hands, saying, 'Yield up your souls.' This day shall you be awarded the punishment of disgrace, because of that which you spoke against Allah falsely and because you turned away from His Signs with disdain.  

836. **Commentary:**

This verse gives another reason of the fact that the Quran is the revealed word of God. If this Book, says the verse, is not the word of God, then he who has forged this lie against God is the most guilty of men and cannot escape divine punishment. But the verse also reminds deniers or rejectors that if the Quran is not a forged Book but the word of God, as it actually is, then they are as great offenders as the one who forges a lie against God. In this case, it will be they who will be visited with divine punishment.

The second sentence, i.e., or says, *It has been revealed to me while nothing has been revealed to him,* may be taken as an explanation or elaboration of the first sentence, i.e. *who forges a lie against Allah;* or the first sentence is general, while the second is particular. For instance, falsely to ascribe any teaching to God will come under the first category, and to claim falsely that God has spoken to him particular words will come under the second.

By saying, *I will send down the like of that which Allah has sent down,* a disbeliever only borrows the phraseology of those whom he addresses, viz., believers. Being a disbeliever in divine revelation, he does not believe that God sends down anything, so he only quotes the expression made use of by believers concerning divine revelation. Another instance of such usage is to be met with in 5:44.

The words, *if thou couldst only see,* signify that if anyone should witness the torment which the deniers of Prophets undergo when their souls leave their bodies, he would at once realize how severe is the torment of those who reject a divine Messenger. This torment is not to be identified with the ordinary agonies of death, which are shared, under the general law of nature, by righteous and unrighteous alike, but to the specific punishment that clings to the rejecters of Prophets from the very moment of their death. The "punishment of disgrace" mentioned in the latter part of the verse refers, as the words "this day" indicate, not to the punishment of Hell but to the punishment which sinners begin to undergo immediately after death and before the Day of Resurrection. This is known as "Adhab al-Qabr" i.e. punishment in the grave, in Islamic religious terminology,
95. And now you come to Us one by one even as We created you at first, and you have left behind you that which We bestowed upon you, and We see not with you your intercessors of whom you asserted that they were partners with God in your affairs. Now you have been cut off from one another and that which you presumed has failed you.  

R. 12. 96. Verily, it is Allah Who causes the grain and the date-stones to sprout. He brings forth the living from the dead, and He is the bringer forth of the dead from the living. That is Allah; wherefore, then, are you turned back?  


837. Important Words:
خَرَاءُ كَم (bestowed on you) is derived from خَلَاء which means, he became possessed of servants, slaves and other dependents as well as gifts, after having been without them. خَلَاءُ الشَّيْتَانَ means, God conferred upon him property as a favour. The noun خَلَاء means, slaves, servants and other dependents, or cattle, camels, etc. given to one by God; a gift or gifts (Lane). The word signifies the bestowal of things meant for the betterment and progress of the person receiving them (Mufradat).

Commentary:
As shown under Important Words, خَلَاء (bestowal) implies the giving of a thing for the purpose of setting things right or bettering the condition of the recipient. Thus, the sentence, you have left behind you that which We bestowed upon you, means, “We gave you certain things so that you might thereby improve your spiritual condition, but you have left them behind, i.e. you made no use of them, and now the time for their use has passed away.”

The words, We see not with you your intercessors, imply that your hope lay in your mediators, whom you supposed to be co-partners with God and who, you imagined, would help you; but your connection with them is now completely cut off and they are not here with you to render you any help; they have failed you and become entirely lost to you.

838. Commentary:
The Quran now proceeds to give arguments from nature to prove the need of revelation and divine guidance. Firstly, the attention of man is drawn to the seeds and stones from which trees sprout. How insignificant is the seed, but how it grows and develops...
97. *He causes the break of day; and He made the night for rest and the sun and the moon for reckoning time.* That is the decree of the Mighty, the Wise. ⁸³⁹

98. And He it is Who has made the stars for you that you may follow the right direction with their help amid the darknesses of the land and the sea. We have explained the Signs in detail for a people who possess knowledge. ⁸⁴⁰

into a big tree. Similarly, you look upon man as a contemptible thing and say, *Allah has not revealed anything to any man* (6:92). But man also, whom you imagine to be so despicable, is like a seed and is capable of growing into something great.

The words, *He brings forth the living from the dead*, signify that not unoften noble and great men are born of low and ill-bred parents. Why then do you wonder and think it impossible that a righteous man should rise spiritually and become recipient of divine favours? Your God has made man after the manner of a seed. He has endowed him with many faculties and has made him capable of great progress. Why do you not then understand and see the truth?

839. **Important Words:**

*حَسَابَة* (reckoning) is the noun-infinitive from حَسَبٌ. They say حَسَبَ i.e. he numbered or counted or reckoned it. حَسَابٌ means, numbering, counting or reckoning; also punishment, calamity or affliction with which a man is tried; the revolving firmament (Lane).

**Commentary:**

The words, *He causes the break of day*, signify that just as God causes the dawn to break i.e. the night to change into day, similarly He brings men from spiritual darkness into light. He takes them out of the darkness of disbelief and sin into the light of faith and virtue.

The words, *He made the night for rest*, signify that just as a man who works during the day gets tired and goes to sleep at night and then gets refreshed, similarly the people among whom the Holy Prophet made his appearance had had a long light of rest, and so their powers had been renewed. The Holy Prophet had made his appearance when the time was ripe for it and when the people, with their powers refreshed, were best fitted for work and could benefit most by his advent. They were now full of energy and well able to ascend the heights of spirituality under his lead; and so it actually happened.

By referring to the sun and the moon in this verse, the Quran draws the attention of the deniers of revelation to the fact that, just as in the physical world the sun and the moon are indispensable, being measures of time and sources of light, so are the Prophets of God indispensable in the spiritual world.

840. **Commentary:**

The argument embodied in this verse runs like this: "When God has made stars for guidance during the hours of night in the
99. And He it is Who has produced you from a single person and there is for you a home and a lodging. We have explained the Signs in detail for a people who understand. 

Commentary:

The expressions متستر (home) and مستودع (lodging) besides giving distinct and independent meanings are also sometimes used to give identical meanings, being interchangeable. The Quran says: "And We cause what We will to remain in the wombs (22:6). Again it says: i.e. and for you there is an abode in the earth (2:37)." From these two verses it appears that according to the Quran, "the womb" of the mother and "the earth," though places of temporary residence, are each a متستر i.e. a resting-place or a home for men. Corresponding to these, "the womb" may be called a مستودع i.e. a lodging or a depository. The next world is truly a متستر i.e. a home for man. In fact these are really relative terms, the same place being both a متستر and a مستودع in reference to different things. Again, a place may be called a متستر (home) because one stays therein, and it may be called a مستودع (lodging) because it provides security.

The verse signifies that when God has multiplied humanity out of one individual, it could not be without a purpose. The great object for which He has created and multiplied human beings is that He has appointed for them not only a period of residence on this earth but also an everlasting life beyond the grave where the righteous will meet the Lord—a lofty goal to which they can rise under the guidance of divine Messengers.
100. And it is He Who sends down water from the cloud; and We bring forth therewith every kind of growth; then We bring forth with that green foliage wherefrom We produce clustered grain. And from the date-palm out of its sheaths, come forth bunches hanging low. And We produce therewith gardens of grapes and the olive and the pomegranate—similar and dissimilar. Look at the fruit thereof when it bears fruit, and the ripening thereof. Surely, in this are Signs for a people who believe.842

842. Important Words:

- تراکا (clustered) is derived from گرب. They say گرب i.e. he rode it or mounted it; it got upon it or it became superincumbent upon it. تراکا means, it lay one part upon another; it was or became heaped or piled up. So تراکا means, piled or clustered together one above another (Aqrab).

- طلل (sheaths) is from the verb طلل (تانا) i.e. he or it rose or appeared or came forth. طلل is what comes forth from the palm tree and becomes dates; the spathe or flowers of the palm tree (Lane).

- قر (bunches) is the plural of قر which is derived from گار. They say گار i.e. he acquired and amassed property for himself. قر means, a bunch of dates (Aqrab).

- ين (the ripening thereof). ين is from the verb ين (يالا) They say ين i.e. the fruit became ripened and fit for gathering; it (fruit, etc.) became red. ين means, the ripe fruit. ين is both the noun-infinitive from the verb ين (يالا) in which case it means the ripening of a fruit, and the plural of ين in which case it means the ripe fruits (Aqrab).

Commentary:

In this verse revelation is likened to rain-water, and the verse answers the question why there is discord and strife at the advent of Prophets, if revelation is indeed a blessing. The verse says that just as by rain-water all kinds of vegetation grow up, both bad and good, according to the seeds lying concealed in the earth, similarly at the advent of divine revelation, men, so far remaining mixed up, become divided into good and bad. The good ones accept the Messenger of God, help him and become pious and holy, like trees which bear good fruit or like shrubs which bring forth beautiful flowers or like herbs which give out a sweet odour; but there are others—the bad ones—who oppose the Prophet, persecute his followers and act corruptly in the earth. These are like trees which bear bitter fruit or like flowerless and thorny bushes or like plants and herbs which give out a bad smell.

The words متشابه و غير متشابه (similar and dissimilar) imply that whereas some fruits resemble each other, some differ from others. This may apply either to fruits of different kinds, which resemble one another in certain respects and differ in others, or to fruits of the
101. And "they hold the Jinn to be partners with Allah, although He created them; and they falsely ascribe to Him sons and daughters without any knowledge. Holy is He and exalted far above what they attribute to Him!"  

same kind which, although resembling one another in the main points, differ from one another in minor details, some tasting sweeter than others and some varying in colour or size. The same is the case with those who believe in the Prophets and follow divine guidance. Although they bear great resemblance to one another, yet there are differences between them, some being morally and spiritually more advanced than others. Again, some are advanced in one phase of spiritual growth, while others are advanced in another. Among the Companions of the Holy Prophet, too, we see that one became an Abū Bakr, another an ‘Umar, and another an ‘Uthmān and yet another an ‘Alī and so on. They attained to different stages of spirituality and developed different phases, according to their respective natural capacities and dispositions.

The words, the ripening thereof, refer to an implied objection that might be raised by the deniers of revelation—namely, that even those who accept divine revelation do not all become pure and holy. The above-quoted words answer this objection by pointing to the analogy of the ripening of fruit. The people are asked first to note the condition of fruits when they are yet unripe and then see how sweet and delicious they become after becoming ripe. Just as it is unfair to judge a fruit by an unripe specimen, similarly, it is unfair to find fault with the fruits of revelation on the basis of such individuals as are yet in the process of development and have not attained to perfection. The verse points out that in the beginning there are bound to be weaknesses and shortcomings even in believers just as there is bound to be sourness in the taste of an unripe or undeveloped fruit. So it is not just to deny the usefulness of revelation on the basis of weaknesses that are to be met with in believers whose spiritual condition is not yet fully developed.

The verse most beautifully draws attention to three important points that can be deduced from the analogy of the various kinds of vegetation that grow as a result of rain: (1) that rain brings forth both good and bad vegetation (believers and disbelievers); (2) that even in good fruits (believers) some variety is to be found i.e. points of similarity and dis-similarity; and (3) that in the early stage of development even good fruits are not sweet and may even be sour.

843. Important Words:

الجَنَّ (the Jinn) is derived from the verb جَنَّ i.e. he covered up or concealed. The word signifies such beings as remain aloof from the people, as if remaining concealed, e.g., kings and other potentates. In its wider significance the word extends to angels and other hidden creatures. See also 2:26; 6:77 & 6:129.

الخَرَقَة (they falsely ascribe) is derived from خَرَقَ. They say خَرَقَة i.e. he made a hole in it, or he cut it or tore it. خَرَقَة الأَرْضَ means, he traversed or crossed the land by journeying so as to reach the furthest part thereof.
102. The Originator of the heavens and the earth! How can He have a son when He has no consort, and when He has created everything and has knowledge of all things?\(^{844}\)

103. Such is Allah, your Lord. There is no god but He, the Creator of all things, so worship Him. And He is Guardian over everything.\(^{845}\)

---

Commentary:

This verse draws attention to the way in which man stumbles when he rejects divine revelation and follows his own judgement and reason. It calls upon the reader to mark the difference between divine and man-made teachings. Men, unguided by divine light and following their own reason, have strayed so far away from the path of rectitude that some suppose the Jinn (kings, etc.) to be co-partners with God, as did the Egyptians in the time of Moses; while others attribute sons and daughters to Him, as do the Christians, who have deified Jesus and believe him to be the son of God. A comparison of these man-made teachings with those revealed by God definitely proves the need of divine revelation.

---

844. Important Words:

- \(\text{بُلْوِيَةُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ} \) means, he forged the lie. Sometimes the word \(\text{بُلْوِيَةُ} \) even when used without a qualifying word means, he forged a lie, or he lied, or he falsely ascribed something to somebody (Tāj).

---

845. Commentary:

After making a reference to man-made teachings, the Quran proceeds to give divine teachings.

There are only two ways by which one can have a son, either by a wife or by adoption. As for the first way, God has no spouse, so He cannot have a son. Christians call Jesus the son of God, but they do not call Mary the consort of God. If, however, Jesus was the son of God by adoption, then that does not entitle him to a higher spiritual status than other human beings, for any other man might as well have been adopted by God as His son. Again, as God is the Creator of everything and possesses perfect knowledge, He does not stand in need of a son.
104. Eyes can not reach Him but He reaches the eyes. And *He is the Incomprehensible, the All-Aware.*

846. Important Words:

- لَا كُرُك (cannot reach Him), كُرُك is derived from كَرَك which again is derived from كَرَك. They say كَرَك i.e. he or it attained, reached or overtook it. It also means, he perceived it; or he attained knowledge of it; or he attained perfect knowledge of it; or he comprehended it. The word also means, he or it attained puberty or maturity or ripeness (Lane).

- إِبِيْم (eyes) is the plural of إِبْيْم which means, eye or sight, or understanding or perspicacity (Aqrab).

- إِلْيِم (Incomprehensible) is derived from إِلْيِم. They say إِلْيِم (الطاُعَة) i.e., the thing was or became small, thin or fine. إِلْيِم (with different vowel point on the central letter) means, he was kind, gentle and affectionate to him. إِلْيِم means: (1) gentle, gracious, and kind; (2) subtle, abstruse or recondite; (3) knower of the subtleties and obscurities of things. It is one of the attributes of God (Taj, Lisân & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Some persons may claim that they can know or reach God by means of reason or understanding alone. The Quran forcefully refutes this idea by saying, *Eyes cannot reach Him,* i.e., human reason alone, unaided by divine help, is incapable of knowing or reaching God. It is God Himself Who reaches the eyes (vis. human understanding) and reveals Himself to man, i.e., God has, on the one hand, placed in human mind a power to search after and know Him, and, on the other, He sends down revelation to man, thereby making Himself known to him. Revelation also helps to kindle in human reason a light by means of which man is enabled to know God.

The two divine attributes إِلْيِم (Incomprehensible) and إِلْيِم (All-Aware) furnish in a most beautiful manner the reason of the two claims made in the opening words of the verse. The first claim is that *Eyes cannot reach Him,* the corresponding reason being stated to be that *He is Subtle and Incomprehensible* and, being so, He cannot be comprehended by human reason alone. The second claim is that *He reaches the eyes,* the corresponding reason being stated to be that *He is All-Aware* and, being so, He knows that mankind stands in need of knowing Him without which there can be no spiritual life, so He Himself approaches man and reveals Himself to him. The two claims have thus been followed, in a perfect natural order, by two corresponding reasons. The reader should note what wise order governs the arrangement of the words of the Quran. They have not been put together at random, but each word has been put in the most appropriate place and is meant to fulfil a great purpose.
105. Proofs have indeed come to you from your Lord; so whoever sees, it is for his own good; and whoever becomes blind, it is to his own harm. And I am not a guardian over you.847

106. And thus do We vary the Signs that the truth may become established, but the result is that they say, ‘Thou hast learnt well;’ and We vary the Signs that We may explain it to a people who have knowledge.818

107. Follow that which has been revealed to thee from thy Lord; there is no god but He; and turn aside from the idolaters.

847. Commentary:
The word براء (proofs) also helps to explain the words, He reaches the eyes, occurring in the preceding verse and signifies that God reveals proofs by means of which man becomes able to know Him. By “proofs” is here meant the divine Signs and evidences sent by God.

The words, whoever sees, mean, whoever makes use of his reason after proofs have been revealed to him by God. Similarly the words, whoever becomes blind, refer to such persons as shut their eyes to all truth and virtually make themselves blind.

The duty of the Holy Prophet described in the words, I am not a guardian over you, is only to convey what is revealed by God; it is not his business to compel people to believe in God. Thus the verse also provides a refutation of the baseless charge that Islam countenances compulsion in the propagation of religion.

848. Important Words:

درس (thou hast learnt well) is derived from درس which means, it became effaced, erased or obliterated; or transitively, it effaced, erased or obliterated. درس الثوب means, the cloth became old and worn out. Similarly, درس الثوب means, he rendered the cloth old and worn out. درس الكتاب means, he read the book or he read it repeatedly so as to remember it; or he made it easy to remember by much reading; or he learnt or studied it (Lane).

Commentary:
The verse purports to say, “We have explained Our teachings in various ways with the result that believers have acquired perfect belief in them, while disbelievers have rejected them, saying, ‘You have learnt these teachings from Jews and Christians and are now repeating them to us.’” The verb درست (thou hast learnt well) has thus been used here ironically. Taking the transitive meaning of درست the clause would mean that disbelievers reject the teachings, saying, “You have read or recited the Signs and teachings you claim to have brought to us and we have heard them. That is enough; do not bother us any more.”

In fact, whereas the teachings of the Quran benefit those who accept them, they serve
108. And if Allah had enforced His will, they would not have set up gods with God. And We have not made thee a keeper over them nor art thou over them a guardian.

849. Commentary:
The Arabic words rendered as, if Allah had enforced His will, they would not have set up gods with God, do not, and indeed cannot, mean, as some may suppose, that the idolaters commit sins because God so wills. They only mean that God has made man a free agent in matters of faith and has not forced His will on him. If He had enforced His will and compelled man to believe and act rightly, man could not have gone against His will. But in His infinite wisdom, He has made man a free agent in this respect. The verse thus makes it clear that Allah does not compel any person to accept the truth but leaves it to his option. If He had thought of compelling the people, He would certainly have compelled them to follow the truth; but in the interests of man himself it has not pleased God to use compulsion.

The concluding words, We have not made thee a keeper over them, nor art thou over them a guardian, are also intended to echo the same truth, i.e., just as God does not compel man to accept the truth, the Holy Prophet also cannot compel anybody, for he is only a Messenger of God. The words رکیل (keeper) and حفظ (guardian or disposer of affairs) are intended to signify that the Prophet is neither responsible for the actions of disbelievers nor is he the disposer of their affairs. For a fuller discussion of the words رکیل and حفظ see 3:174 & 11:58.

850. Commentary:
In the foregoing verses, the Quran has spoken rather contemptuously of the utter helplessness of the false deities whom people associate with God. This might lead some Muslims to revile the false deities of the polytheists; the present verse warns them against following such a course. God has denounced the idols in His capacity as a judge, and the denunciation of a judge is not considered as abuse, but as a necessary expression of opinion. This does not give others the right to abuse the persons condemned by the Heavenly Judge and thereby offend their feelings, or the feelings of those who love and respect them.

The verse provides yet another reason for this noble teaching. It purports to say, if you, O Muslims, revile disbelievers' false gods whom they treat with love and reverence, the result will be that they
110. And they swear their strongest oaths by Allah that if there came to them a Sign, they would surely believe therein. Say, 'Surely, Signs are with Allah. But what should make you understand that when the Signs come, they will not believe?'

111. And We shall confound their hearts and their eyes, as they believed not therein at the first time, and 'We shall leave them in their transgression to wander in distraction.'

Commentary:

The latter part of the verse may also be rendered thus: Say, "Surely, Signs are with Allah, and that (too is with Allah) which will make you know that when it comes, they will not believe." In this rendering, the particle to rendered in the text as "what" would be taken as a relative pronoun, in the sense of i.e. "that" and not as an interrogative pronoun. According to this rendering, the words "and that (too is with Allah) which will make you know that when it comes, they will not believe" would refer to the punishment of God and the clause would mean that not only are other Signs with God, but the Sign of punishment is also with Him and that when that Sign comes, you will see that it will do them no good.

851. Important Words:

اذا (surely) is considered to be a compound of ان and ل. It imports restriction of that which it precedes to that which follows it, giving the sense of "only." The Quran says: انا الافضل للقراء. i.e. the َُصَدْقَة (the alms) are meant only for the poor, etc. But the word does not always import restriction but sometimes only corroboration of an affirmation, giving the sense of "verily" or "surely," as in the tradition انا ايا (i.e. verily, (one form of) usury is in the delay of payment (Lane & Aqrab).

852. Commentary:

The verse signifies that when the Signs of God come, they will do the disbelievers no good; God will turn away their hearts and their eyes from the Signs so that they will not believe. This turning away of their hearts and their eyes from the Signs of God will be the result of their hasty denial of the Signs of God at the very outset, which will have hardened their hearts and deprived them of the power...