R. 14 112. And even if We send down unto them angels, and the dead speak to them, and We gather to them all things face to face, they would not believe, unless God enforced His will. But most of them behave ignorantly.\(^{853}\)

\(^{a13} : 32.\)

of benefiting by the Signs of God. It is a law of God that those who deny His Prophets at the very outset, without pausing to think over their claims and without pondering over the signs and evidences of their truth, deprive themselves of the blessings of being rightly guided; but those who do not hasten to deny them and are ready to think over their claims with an open mind and in the fear of God and entertain a genuine desire to know the truth are ultimately guided to it.

853. Commentary:

The subject of the previous verse is continued in this one. One of the functions of the angels is to suggest good ideas to men and to invite them to virtue (2: 32). They sometimes perform this function through the medium of dreams and visions. The opening words of the verse refer to this very function.

The words, the dead speak to them, refer to the testimony of pious men of the past to the truth of a divine Messenger either by means of prophecies which are handed down to posterity in writing or orally, or by their appearing to men in dreams and visions.

There is another way also in which the dead may speak to men. This happens when a person who is spiritually dead or a nation which is devoid of spiritual life is quickened to life by seeing the truth of their Prophet and then testifies to his truth before other persons or nations.

The words, and We gather to them all things face to face, refer to the testimony of the different objects of nature to the truth of a Prophet before his enemies. The different objects of nature bear testimony in the form of earthquakes, pestilences, storms, floods, famines and other visitations. These things come upon the enemies of a Prophet as punishments from heaven. Nature itself appears to be angry with them; the very elements are up in arms against them. All things that are God's (and what is there that is not God's?) stand up in opposition to the enemies of a divine Messenger. Thus it is that both heaven and earth bear testimony to a Prophet's truth.

It should be noted that all these Signs were actually shown in the time of the Holy Prophet. As for the angels, they appeared at the Battle of Badr and were even seen by some of the disbelievers (Jarir, iv. 47), but those who were hard-hearted did not believe. They knew the Holy Prophet to be a truthful and upright man but, surrounded by evil associates and swayed by evil passions, they denied his claims. In the beginning even men like Abū Jahl were impressed by the truth and honesty of the Holy Prophet; for it is recorded that when the verses of the Quran were recited to Abū Jahl for the first time, he admitted that it was the truth. In spite of this, however, he exclaimed, "When did we follow the children of 'Abd Manāf?" (an ancestor of the Holy Prophet), meaning that he could not accept the leadership of the Prophet. Thereafter he gradually increased in perversity,
113. And in like manner have We made for every Prophet an enemy, evil ones from among men and Jinn. They suggest one to another gilded speech in order to deceive—and if thy Lord had enforced His will, they would not have done it; so leave them alone with that which they fabricate—\(^{854}\)

so much so that at the Battle of Badr he actually prayed to God to destroy whichever of them (meaning himself and the Holy Prophet) had created mischief and discord among his people. The prayer was heard, but he himself was its victim. His case is a typical instance of how the hearts of men were hardened because they rejected the Holy Prophet at the very outset, in spite of knowing him to be sincere and truthful.

The words, most of them behave ignorantly, imply that they will not believe unless God forces His will on them and compels them to accept the truth; but God will not do that, and these people are so foolhardy that they would not change their hostile attitude unless compelled to do so.

854. Important Words:

\(\text{زخرف الفن} (\text{gilded})\). They say \(\text{زخرف الكنم}\) i.e., he adorned, decorated or embellished the house. \(\text{زخرف الكلام}\) means, he arranged or put into a right state the speech or language; he embellished it with lies, etc. \(\text{زخرف}\) means, gold; any ornament or decoration or embellishment; also anything adorned, decorated or embellished; anything embellished with false colouring or with lies (Aqrab).

For \(\text{غورا} \) (in order to deceive) see 4: 121.

Commentary:

The words, men and Jinn, which occur in many verses of the Quran do not refer to two different species of God's creatures, but only to two classes of human beings i.e. “men” denoting the masses or the common folk, and Jinn standing for the big people who often remain aloof from the common people and do not mix with them, practically remaining concealed from public gaze. See also 6: 101.

Those of the common people and the big people who lead the opposition to the Prophets of God have been styled \(\text{شاياتين} \) (evil ones), for an explanation of which see note on 2: 15. This word shows that those who lead lives of sin before the advent of a Prophet generally increase in sinfulness as a punishment for their evil deeds, so that when a Prophet makes his appearance, they assume the role of arch-enemies to him and become leaders of opposition. It is a law of God, in both the physical and spiritual worlds, that the powers of man develop in the direction in which they are exercised. So, as such men employ their powers in the wrong way, the result is that at the advent of a Prophet they become still greater sinners and become leaders of men in opposing the truth. Again, in order to augment their mischief, these leaders suggest, as hinted in the words, gilded speech, such arguments to one another as appear to be sound and true but are really false and hollow, and their object in suggesting such things is to deceive the weak-minded.
114. And in order that the hearts of those who believe not in the Hereafter may incline thereto and that they may be pleased therewith and that they may continue to earn what they are earning.855

115. Shall I seek for judge other than Allah, when a He it is Who has sent down to you the Book, clearly explained? And b those to whom We gave the Book know that it has been sent down from thy Lord with truth; so be thou not of those who doubt.856

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855. Important Words:

- انترف (they may earn) is derived from انترف which again is derived from انترف. They say لیام i.e. he earned for his family.
- منقل means, he transgressed against the people and lied. انترف الرجل means, the man lied and mixed truth with falsehood.
- انترف الین means, he peeled the skin or bark (of a tree, etc.). انترف الین means, the man earned, especially an evil.
- انترف الین means, he committed the sin (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The subject of the previous verse is continued here. Wicked leaders from among the common people and from among the big people suggest to one another gilded speech and fallacious reasoning in order to deceive the weak-minded and in order to attract towards themselves the hearts of disbelievers with a view to winning their applause and making them persist in their evil course against the Prophets.

856. Commentary:

The words, Shall I seek for judge other than Allah, illustrate how wicked leaders bring forward gilded speech and fallacious reasoning against the Prophets. They try to turn away the attention of men from the revealed Scriptures which bear testimony to the truth of a Prophet and bring forward doubtful traditions and quotations from religious writings of human authors in support of their false notions. Or, as sometimes happens, they propose the names of certain persons to act as judges and to give their verdict after hearing the arguments of both sides. As the Prophets of God have to expose the errors of all parties, therefore wicked leaders are sure that the judges, influenced by the general opposition to the Prophets, will give their verdict against them. So the Quran makes the Holy Prophet emphatically declare, Shall I seek for judge other than Allah? i.e. in religious matters none beside Allah can be taken as judge. The writings of theologians cannot make us dispense with the revealed word of God, nor can any human being act as judge in matters pertaining to faith. Allah alone can act as judge and His word alone can guide to the truth.

Now the question arises, How does Allah or His word act as judge? This question is answered by the verse in the words: And those to whom We gave the Book know that it has been
116. And the word of thy Lord has been fulfilled in truth and justice.

"None can change His words; and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing."

sent down from thy Lord with truth. This means that the Quran has come in accordance with, and in fulfilment of the prophecies contained in the previous Scriptures and, as none knows the secrets of the future save God, so the Quran must be accepted as proceeding from Him. The previous Scriptures contain clear prophecies concerning the Holy Prophet and these prophecies bear testimony to his truth and the truth of the Quran; hence, those who have been given a knowledge of the Book and consequently of the prophecies contained therein should know that the Holy Prophet of Islam is a true Prophet and that the revelation that has been sent down to him is a true revelation. It is thus that God acts as judge.

The word “Book” in the clause, those to whom We gave the Book, may also refer to the Quran; for not only the previous word of God, but also the Quran itself, bears testimony to the Holy Prophet. The Quran contains teachings which run counter to the views and beliefs current among the nations of the world; yet every opponent before whom these teachings are rehearsed and explained is compelled to acknowledge their great reasonableness and superiority. Again, not only were these teachings accepted by thousands in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet but those who believed in them were so convinced of their truth that they were prepared to lay down their lives rather than give up these teachings. So the very lives of the Companions of the Holy Prophet bore witness to the truth of the Quran. A Book which is possessed of such spiritual power cannot be rejected as false.

The last words of the verse i.e. be thou not of those who doubt, refer to the reader, and not to the Holy Prophet. When the previous Scriptures as well as the Quran bear unmistakable testimony to the truth of the Holy Prophet and of the revelation that has been sent down to him, then no one is justified in entertaining doubt concerning them.

857. Commentary:

The verb كتم (has been fulfilled) though grammatically in the past tense is here used in the future tense, meaning, shall be fulfilled, for in prophecies often a preterite is used to express the future tense. This is done in order to show that the event predicted is, in the sight of God, as good as fulfilled. The words thus contain a prophecy and mean that what God has said about the future triumph of Islam shall certainly come to pass. It is reported that when Mecca fell and the Holy Prophet entered the Ka'ba, which was at that time full of idols, and struck the idols one after another with his stick, he recited the very words of this prophecy: the word of thy Lord has been fulfilled in truth and justice, in allusion to the fact that with the fall of Mecca the word of God had indeed been fulfilled (Manthür, under 6:116).

The words, None can change His words, refer to the prophecies or to the ways or usage of God. With regard to the ṣuna or usage of God, it must be remembered that it is not for us to determine what the usage or the law of God is. Generally speaking, it is that which has been expressly mentioned as such
117. And if thou obey the majority of those on earth, they will lead thee astray from Allah's way. They follow nothing but *mere* conjecture, and they do nothing but *lie*.

118. Surely, *thy* Lord knows best those who go astray from His way; and He knows best those who are rightly guided.

in the Quran. Thus, one of the laws of God specified in the Quran is that His Messengers triumph and their enemies are brought to naught. Such laws have been spoken of as (the ways or usages of God) and are not to be confounded with the laws of nature.

By the words, *the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing*, is meant that God hears not only the prayers of believers but also what the enemies of the Holy Prophet say against him. Similarly, He knows not only the sufferings and sacrifices of believers but also what the enemies of Islam are doing to harm and ruin it. So He will decide between the two parties.

858. Important Words:

ا*حِرَّمْ* (lie) is derived from which means, he computed the quantity or number of a thing by conjecture; he conjectured; he opined while he was not certain. It also means, he spoke falsely, or he lied, or he said what was untrue. *خَرَاس* means, a liar; or one who only conjectures or opines and does not make sure of a thing by ascertaining the truth (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse purports to say that the question of the truth or otherwise of Islam should not be decided according to the verdict of the majority, for the majority of mankind are ignorant. Therefore matters of faith cannot be decided by the verdict of the majority. There has never been a people the majority of whom are wise or learned. Even in worldly legislatures, it is only a limited number of persons whose opinion matters. Again, even in so-called advanced countries the masses have their leaders, and it is these leaders whose opinion they follow. Thus in reality it is always a limited number whose opinion matters.

The verse refers particularly to the people of Arabia in the time of the Holy Prophet, the majority of whom were undoubtedly ignorant.

859. Commentary:

The verse signifies that, apart from the fact stated in the preceding verse that the majority of men often possess less knowledge than the minority, neither the majority nor the minority can be trusted in matters of faith. Sometimes the minority are in the right and sometimes the majority. Hence it is necessary that God should decide which party follows the right path. In fact, God alone can be the judge. He gives His decision by showing heavenly Signs and by helping the party which pursues the path of truth.
119. "Eat, then, of that over which the name of Allah has been pronounced, if you are believers in His Signs.  

860. Commentary:

The commandment to eat of that over which the name of Allah has been pronounced may appear to some to have no connection with the subject-matter of the previous verses. But it is really not so. The very fact that this verse is preceded by the particle \( \text{ب} \) (then) shows that this commandment has come as a sequence of what has gone before. Again, the verb كِرْ (eat) is plural and as this commandment is given in continuation of the preceding commandments, although given in the singular number, are general in their application and are not addressed to the Holy Prophet personally. Thus the commandment, \text{be thou not of those who doubt} (6:115 above), is also addressed to really each and every reader.

As regards the connection between the present commandment and the preceding ones, it may be noted that elsewhere the Quran says: \text{O ye who believe, eat of the good things We have provided for you, and render thanks to Allah} (2:173). Again, \text{O ye Messengers, eat of the things that are pure, and do good works} (23:52). These verses clearly show that the eating of good and pure things has a direct bearing on the actions of man, who is thereby enabled to feel grateful to God and do good works. As the weak among the Faithful sometimes gave way to doubt when they heard the objections of disbelievers referred to in the previous verses, the Quran here bids them to partake of pure and holy food. The result will be that they themselves will become pure and their faith will become strengthened and thus they will become proof against the doubts which disbelievers seek to create in their minds by raising objections.

It may be objected that present-day Muslims pronounce the name of God on the animals they slaughter, and yet their minds are not free from doubt. The reason is that they pronounce the name of God only as a cold formality without sincerity or earnestness.

It should also be remembered that the injunction to eat of that on which the name of God has been pronounced applies not only to the flesh of animals but to all kinds of food. The verse enjoins Muslims to pronounce the name of God on all food of which they partake so that they may be constantly reminded of God and their lives may be sanctified.

The verse also shows how those who follow reason only, independently of divine revelation, commit blunders. One of the objections raised by disbelievers against Muslims was that, although they professed to be devoted to God, yet they did not partake of the flesh of the animal that was killed by God (meaning the animal that died of itself), while they cheerfully partook of the flesh of animals which they themselves killed. This is the kind of objection which is sometimes raised by men who depend merely on reason and think themselves to be independent of divine revelation. The verse incidentally answers this objection by hinting that it is not a question of who kills the animal. The question is, who follows the commandment of God and who partakes of his food in His name. Certainly only he who acts upon the commandment of God and eats in His name will win His pleasure.
120. And what reason have you that you should not eat of that over which the name of Allah has been pronounced, when He has already explained to you that which He has forbidden unto you—save that which you are forced to? And surely many mislead others by their evil desires through lack of knowledge. Assuredly, thy Lord knows best the transgressors.

121. And besochew open sins as well as secret ones. Surely, those who earn sin will be rewarded for that which they have earned.

861. Commentary:
In this verse the objection of disbelievers has been answered in the very words in which it was made. Their objection was that Muslims profess to be devoted to the name of Allah, yet they do not eat of the flesh of the animal killed by God i.e. the animal that dies of itself. The answer given in the present verse is, “when we are devoted to Allah, why should we not eat of the food on which the name of our Lord is pronounced?” But the name of God is not pronounced on an animal that dies of itself. Its death takes place under the general law of nature.

The words, He has already explained, refer to 16:116, which was revealed earlier.

The word “mislead” signifies that man-made teachings, which are given by most men in opposition to the teachings of God, only lead people astray.

The word “transgressors” at the end of the verse indicates that the objections raised against the teachings of God have their source in malice and enmity and those who bring forward such objections are indeed transgressors.

862. Commentary:
There are certain things which are manifestly evil and there are others which appear to be good but are really evil; or even if they do not appear to be good, their evil nature lies concealed and is not apparent. The Quran enjoins Muslims here to abstain from both, for such is the requirement of true piety.

The verse beautifully explains why it is forbidden to eat such animals as die of themselves or such as are not duly slaughtered by pronouncing thereupon the name of God. The pronouncing of the name of God exercises only a subtle influence. It brings about no physical change in the flesh, but it does produce a sanctifying effect on the heart. The killing of an animal is likely to harden the heart. But when a man pronounces the name of God at the time of slaughter, he, as it were, says: “I have no right to kill this animal of my own accord, but Allah Whose creation and property it is has granted me permission to do so.” This mental attitude will insure the heart against becoming hardened. Moreover, the pronouncing of the name of God is meant to be a guarantee that the animal is being
122. And do not eat of that on which the name of Allah has not been pronounced, for surely that is disobedience. And certainly the evil ones inspire their friends that they may dispute with you. And if you obey them, you will indeed be setting up gods with God. 863

15. 123. Can he, who was dead and We gave him life and made for him a light whereby he walks among men, be like him whose condition is that he is in utter darkness whence he cannot come forth? Thus have the doings of the disbelievers been made to seem fair to them. 864

slaughtered in the name of the Lord and Master of the universe and not in that of any other.

It was on a similar principle that 'Umar, Second Successor of the Holy Prophet, acted when, while kissing the Blackstone at the time of performing the 'Umrah or circuit of the Ka'ba, he addressed it in the memorable words: "I know thou art only a stone, but I kiss thee because I saw the Prophet of God kiss thee" (Bukhari, ch. on Hajj). By so saying, he pointed to the great truth that devotion to God should make man averse from paying homage to anything beside Him and that all actions of man should be performed for God.

863. Commentary:
The verse points out that if believers eat of the flesh of those animals on which the name of God has not been pronounced, it will be an act of disobedience and transgression.

One sin leads to another. If a believer fails to pronounce the name of God on his food, his heart becomes devoid of reverence for Him and this gradually leads to associating partners with God.

864. Commentary:
In the foregoing verses it was pointed out that man-made teachings are always defective. Now the Quran proceeds to show that man-made teachings cannot stand against divine teachings.

The verse purports to put the question: "If there is a teaching which is really from God, will it not be better than that devised by man?"

Now, this is a question which every man, even a disbeliever, will have to reply in the affirmative. Indeed, human reason cannot have the boldness to deny it. The question has thus been put to make disbelievers conscious of a great truth.

The expression, he is in utter darkness whence he cannot come forth, refers to the man who devises laws with the aid of reason alone—reason that is fettered by numberless limitations to which man is subject. The laws made by men are always subject to change owing to their intrinsic defectiveness. A law
124. And thus have We made in every town the great ones from among its sinners such as are in utter darkness with the result that they plot therein; and they plot not except against their own souls; but they perceive not.866

125. And when there comes to them a Sign, they say, b"We will not believe until we are given the like of that which Allah's Messengers have been given." Allah knows best where to place His message. Surely, humiliation before Allah and a severe punishment shall smite the offenders because of their plotting.866

is made today but it has to be changed tomorrow on account of the defects which by experience are found in it. Then the new law is again changed for the same reason, and this process goes on indefinitely and sometimes even a sort of a circle comes into being. Thus the case of such men as devise their laws with the aid of human reason alone is like one who is in darkness from which he will never come out.

The words, made to seem fair, imply that Satan and his associates adorn the evil doings of men. In the beginning it is Satan who misleads men by inciting them to evil. But when a man goes on doing evil deeds, his evil deeds gradually begin to appear good to him. This is the law of God meant as a punishment. It is to this later adornment of deeds under the law of God that the Quran refers in 6:109 above.

865. Commentary:

The verse is rather difficult to translate. Some translators make the word ُكَبْرُ (great ones) the first object of the verb لَبِثْ (have We made) and the word ُعَلِيمَة (its sinners) the second object. But the better rendering and one more befitting the context is to treat the words ُكَبْرُ and ُعَلِيمَة as ُكَبْرُ الْعَلِيمَة and ُعَلِيمَة الْكَبْرُ making them jointly the first object of ُلَبِثْ and supplying the second object from the expression "in utter darkness" occurring in the preceding verse. Similarly the َلَامْ مَئْعَة is not لَامْ مَئْعَة but لَامْ مَئْعَة. We are told in 6:113 above that it is the law of God that wicked leaders from among the common people and from among the big ones are always hostile to the Prophets of God. It is to these wicked leaders that the verse under comment refers. They are surrounded by utter darkness from which they never emerge (see the preceding verse).

866. Commentary:

The verse embodies the last argument or the last excuse of disbelievers in the present discussion. They say, "We will never believe in divine revelation until we also receive revelation like unto the revelation of the Messengers of God. If God speaks to them, let Him speak to us also."

God answers this foolish objection by saying, "It is not to every man that God speaks; He
126. So, whomsoever Allah wishes to guide, He expands his bosom for the acceptance of Islam; and as to him whom He wishes to let go astray, He makes his bosom narrow and close, as though he were mounting up into the skies. Thus does "Allah inflict punishment on those who do not believe."

127. And this is the path of thy Lord leading straight to Him. We have, indeed, explained the Signs in detail for a people who would be admonished.

867. Important Words:
- حَرْصَة (close) means, close, strait or narrow (Lane). See also 4:66.

Commentary:
The desire of Allah mentioned in the words, "whomsoever Allah wishes to guide," follows the actions of man. It is the result of man's own good deeds, and not arbitrary.

The words, "He expands his bosom for the acceptance of Islam," signify that such a one is cheerfully willing to accept and obey every command of God. He feels pleasure in obeying God's behests. If a man is always ready and willing to obey the commandments of God, it shows that he is progressing spiritually. But if a man feels divine commandments to be a burden, it is an indication of the fact that he is spiritually retrogressing.

The "wish" of Allah to make a man go astray also comes as a sequence to man's own evil deeds. When a man becomes a sinner and does wicked deeds the result is that he is led astray from the right path. Such a one feels the commandments of God to be burdensome, and perceives difficulty and mental trouble in carrying them out. His bosom becomes narrow and close. His case is like that of a person who is asked to climb up a steep height.

It may be noted here in passing that the verse hints that to ascend into heaven with the physical body is a sort of punishment and not a boon.

The verse tells us that God helps those who practise virtue and willingly obey His commandments and He causes them to progress spiritually, while those who do not believe and lead sinful lives continue to advance in sin and wickedness.

The verse further teaches us that we cannot progress spiritually unless we render obedience to God with willing and cheerful hearts.

739
128. For them is the abode of peace with their Lord, and He is their Friend because of their works.  

129. And on the day when He will gather them all together, He will say, "O company of Jinn! you sought to make subservient to yourselves a great many from among men!" And their friends from among men will say, 'Our Lord! we profited from one another but now we have reached our term which Thou didst appoint for us.' He will say, 'The Fire is your abode, wherein you shall abide, save what Allah may will.' Surely, thy Lord is Wise, All-Knowing.

868. Commentary:
As سلام (peace) is also one of the names of God, the expression دار السلام may also be rendered as the abode of God i.e. the presence of God. The virtuous are thus promised the reward of God's nearness.

869. Important Words:
- ماعر (company) is derived from عشر. They say عشر المال, i.e., he took one tenth of the property. عشر means, he took one from among them, they being ten. عشر a company; a collective body; a community; a family. It is so called because a company or community consists of many individuals, the word عشر (ten) being that large and perfect number after which there is no number but what is composed of the units comprised in it (Lane).

- جنان (Jinn) is derived from جن (janna). They say جن, i.e. he veiled, concealed, hid, covered or protected him or it. That is the primary significance which is retained in all the derivations of the word. Thus a garden is known as جنة (jannat) because its trees cover or conceal the ground. A child in its mother's womb is known as جن because it lies concealed in the womb. The heart is known as جن because it lies concealed in the bosom. A grave is known as جن because it conceals the dead body. The piece of cloth worn by a woman is known as جنون (junna) because it covers her head and bosom. A shield is known as جن because it covers and protects the fighter. Madness or insanity is known as جن because it obscures and, as it were, veils the faculty of reason. A serpent is known as جن because it generally lies concealed in holes or dark corners. Similarly, جن (Jinn) are so called because they are considered to be invisible bodies concealed from human sight. جن also means the prime or first part of a thing, probably because it covers or conceals the main body that follows (Lisān & Tāj). For a fuller discussion of the word and an explanation of the جن see note on 15:28. See also 6:101.

(a10:26. (b7:39-40; 10:29; 34:32.)
which means, it was or became much or abundant or many or numerous. 

means, he desired or wished much of the thing; or he reckoned it much, abundant or many (Lane). 

signifies, you have misled many of them; or you have made many of them follow you; or you have made them subservient to yourselves (Kashshāf).

(abode) is derived from  جِنَّ بَلْدَة i.e. he remained, stayed, or abode in the place; or he stayed or dwelt long in it; he settled in the place; he alighted at the place. So  جِنَّ بَلْدَة means, a place where one remains, stays, dwells or abides; an abode or a dwelling; a place of alighting (Lane).

**Commentary:**

The verse definitely proves that at least here the Quran does not use the word Jinn to signify a species other than mankind. The very words and the only possible signification of the verse contradict that sense. The word as used in this verse, which thus holds a sort of key position, cannot but mean great and powerful men as opposed to the weak and poor classes. The word جَنَّ as shown under Important Words is derived from a root which means to hide or conceal. As the beings properly known as Jinn are hidden from the eyes of men, therefore they have been called جَنَّ. The great men have also been called Jinn because they very rarely mix with the general public and remain, as it were, hidden from them.

The sentence قد أَسْتَكْثَرَ مِن الْإِنسَ (you have sought to make subservient to yourselves a great many from among men) has two meanings: (1) you have taken to yourselves many from among the masses, i.e., you have won them over to your side and made them follow you and have thus misled them; (2) you have reckoned the masses to be many (as against God), i.e., you have attached more importance to the masses than to God; you did not accept the truth out of fear of the masses, lest they should desert you and cease to hold you in honour. It is indeed strange that just as the weak do not sometimes accept the truth out of fear of the great, lest they should inflict loss or pain on them, similarly the great are sometimes afraid of their humbler followers and do not accept the truth, fearing lest the latter should turn away from them and desert them. Heracles, for instance, was convinced of the truth of the Holy Prophet but did not openly acknowledge it out of the fear of his subjects who, he thought, were bitterly opposed to Islam and would rebel against him, if he declared his faith (Bukhārī).

The words, we profited from one another, imply that the friendships of disbelievers are also transitory and that they will fall out among themselves on the Day of Judgement. The poor will say: "We led lives of humiliation in subjection to the big ones who derived profit from us. So, O Lord, inflict upon them a double punishment." This also shows that the word Jinn, here, does not refer to any creatures separate from human beings, but to a special class of men; for if taken in that sense the above-quoted words cannot apply to them, for human beings do not profit from the genii nor the genii from human beings. It is only one class of man that profits by the other, i.e. the great profit by the poor and vice versa.

The words, The Fire is your abode, are addressed to the humble class of people who pleaded that they were merely tools in the hands of the great. They are told that no pleading can do them any good now, and that they must enter the Fire and remain there until God is pleased to deliver them therefrom. Both the big and the poor are alike guilty.
130. And in like manner do We set some of the wrongdoers over the others because of what they earned. 870

R. 16. 131. "O company of Jinn and men! did not Messengers come to you from among yourselves who related to you My Signs and who warned you of the meeting of this your day! They will say, ‘We bear witness against ourselves.' And the worldly life deceived them. And they will bear witness against themselves that they were disbelievers. 871

132. That is because thy Lord would not destroy the towns unjustly while their people were unwarned. 872

870. Commentary:
The verse signifies that actually both the poor and the great are wrongdoers and it is on account of their sins that the poor become tools in the hands of the great.

This verse provides another proof of the fact that by the word جَنْ (Jinn) is here meant only a class of human beings, viz., the great and the powerful, for it is only one class of men that is set over the other. Jinn as beings different from men have never been set over men, nor men over Jinn.

871. Commentary:
The words, Messengers from among yourselves, supply further evidence of the fact that the word جَنْ (Jinn) does not here refer to a separate creation but to only a section of human beings. We learn from the Quran that Moses and the Holy Prophet were sent as Messengers to Jinn also (46:30–33; 72:2–16) and we find no trace of any separate Messengers having ever been raised from among Jinn, which shows that the word Jinn here refers only to a special class of men. It may also be noted here that this word when applied to the great and powerful persons from among men is generally used in a bad sense, being applied to the wicked among them.

872. Commentary:
The word أَلْقَرَى (towns) refers to all those cities, towns and villages to which a Prophet of God is sent. As the Holy Prophet was raised for all mankind, the word would, in his case, apply to the whole world.

The expression ضَامِن (unjustly) also means, "by reason of their iniquity." The verse would then be translated: "That is because thy Lord would not destroy the towns on account of their iniquity, while their people were unwarned."

The verse gives an important law of God—that He never sends general calamities upon...
133. And for all are degrees of rank according to what they do, and thy Lord is not unmindful of what they do.

134. And thy Lord is Self-Sufficient, full of mercy. If He please, He can do away with you and cause to succeed you what He pleases, even as He raised you from the offspring of other people.

135. Surely, that which you are promised shall come to pass and you cannot frustrate it.

Commentary:

The divine attribute of SELF-SUFFICIENT (النافع) means, "one able to do without others" (see 2:264). As God is Self-Sufficient, He can punish rejectors as and when He desires; but He is also full of mercy, therefore He delays the hour of punishment.

The words II., (what He pleases) have been used in preference to II., (whom He pleases) in order to combine the idea of "any other people" with that of "in any other state or condition."

Important Words:

"frustrate" is derived from جعل which again is derived from جعل which means, he lacked strength, power or ability; he was or became powerless. "frustrate" means, he found him to be without strength, power or ability; or he made him to be without strength, power or ability; or he disabled or incapacitated him; or he rendered him unable to accomplish or attain his object; or he frustrated his endeavours; or he escaped him (Lane).
136. Say, "O my people, act as best you can. I, too, am acting. Soon will you know whose will be the ultimate reward of the abode." Surely, the wrongdoers shall not prosper. 875

Commentary:
The words, that which you are promised, refer to the promise of destruction contained in the previous verse. The chapter was revealed at Mecca, when Muslims were few and weak while their enemies were strong and numerous and were subjecting them to bitter persecution with a view to annihilating Islam. In these circumstances the prophecy relating to the destruction of the enemy in such forceful words and in such tones of certainty could not be made by the helpless man that the Holy Prophet at that time was. It could proceed from none but the Almighty God, Who alone could bring about its fulfilment; and it is writ large on the pages of history how the prophecy was fulfilled. The same prophecy or challenge is continued in the next verse in equally forceful words.

875. Important Words:

maalaka naka (as best you can). The word is considered by some to have been derived from kan which means, he or it was, or he or it came into existence. Malaka means, place of being or existence. Malakana means, place of being or existence; state or condition. The Arabs say malaka raziya i.e., keep where thou art and approach not Zaid (Lane & Aqrab). The expression a'lu malaka kum means, do what you can; or act as best you can; or remain where you are and do your worst (Kashshaf). Some authorities, however, consider the word to have been derived from malaka in which case it signifies greatness; or high rank or standing; or honourable place or position, especially with a king or potentate (Aqrab & Lane). In this sense the expression would mean, you look upon yourselves to be great or high in rank. Now come and exert your full power against Islam and then see what the result will be.

Commentary:
As explained under Important Words, the expression a'lu malaka kum means, you may do your worst and exert yourselves to the utmost of your power and resources to extirpate Islam and destroy the small Muslim community, but you will never succeed.

The words, Soon will you know whose will be the ultimate reward, signify, "you will soon see which of the two parties will succeed in the end." The word dar (abode) may refer either to this world or to the next. In both cases the ultimate reward is reserved for the truthful.
137. And they have assigned Allah a portion of the crops and cattle which He has produced, and they say, 'This is for Allah,' as they imagine, 'and this is for our idols.' But that which is for their idols reaches not Allah, while that which is for Allah reaches their idols. Evil is what they judge. 876

138. And in like manner have their associate-gods made the killing of their children appear beautiful to many of the idolaters that they may ruin them and cause them confusion in their religion. And if Allah had enforced His will, they would not have done this; so leave them alone with that which they invent. 877

876. Commentary:
Note the point and the force in the words, He has produced. By using these words, the Quran exposes the folly of disbelievers, who are presumptuous enough to divide the produce of the earth and cattle between their deities and God, as if they were the owners; while the fact is that God is the owner of all these things and it is He Who has brought them into existence. They are God's things, and it is strange that disbelievers should presume to divide God's things according to their own choice, setting apart only a portion for God, the true owner, and allotting the rest to their false deities.

Disbelievers gave two kinds of alms; firstly, in the name of God, and secondly, in the name of their deities. If the portion which they set apart for their deities was spent for other purposes, then the portion which they had reserved for God was also given away as charity in the name of their deities, but if the portion set apart for God was spent for other ends, then the portion set aside for the deities was not transferred to God. That is what is meant by the words, that which is for their idols reaches not Allah, while that which is for Allah reaches their idols. This is another instance of how men blunder, making laws with the sole aid of reason.

The expression, as they imagine, signifies that God does not accept a charity which false gods are made to share with Him. Disbelievers suppose that they have set apart a portion for God, but that is not really the portion of God, for the jealous God disdainfully rejects such allotment.

877. Commentary:
The "associate-gods" here referred to are diviners, soothsayers and others. The "killing of children" happened in three ways: (1) some of the Arabs killed their female children and preserved the male ones; (2) some took the vow that if they had a certain number of children, whether male or female, one of them would be slaughtered in the name of God or in
139. And they say, 'Such and such cattle and crops are forbidden. None shall eat thereof save whom we please'—so they allege—and there are cattle whose backs are forbidden, and there are cattle over which they pronounce not the name of Allah, forging a lie against Him. Soon will He requite them for that which they have fabricated.878

140. And they say, 'That which is in the wombs of such and such cattle is exclusively reserved for our males and is forbidden to our wives; but if it be born dead, then they are all partakers thereof. He will reward them for their assertion. Surely, He is Wise, All-Knowing.879

the name of one of their deities; and (3) sometimes they sacrificed their children to avert a calamity.

The word کبر (many) in the expression, to many of the idolaters, shows that all Arabs did not indulge in this practice, nor even most of them, but only a considerable number. But, whatever the number, the practice provides one more instance of how men go astray when they begin to make laws for themselves with the sole aid of reason.

The particle ل (that) in ليردهم (that they may ruin them) is here used to express the result and not the cause or motive. Thus the sentence would mean that the result of the action of the associate-gods was that men who followed them were spiritually ruined. When a man goes so far as even to sacrifice his son in obedience to another person's bidding, then he is entirely under the latter's control and is thus completely ruined in respect of religion.

878. Important Words:

حم (forbidden). حم (حبارا-حاب) means, he prevented or prohibited or forbade or interdicted him; or he deprived him. حم (bijr) means, forbidden or prohibited or unlawful; the faculty of reason or understanding, because it prevents one from doing improper acts. The word also means custody or guardianship (Aqrab).

Commentary:

This verse gives another instance of the absurdity of man-made laws.

By "forbidden crops" are meant such cultivated fields as were dedicated to idols. These could be used only by the priests that attended upon the idols. The cattle might eat of all crops except those that were dedicated to idols.

The cattle whose backs were forbidden are those mentioned in 5:104. Nobody was allowed to ride them or use them as beasts of burden.

The cattle over which they pronounce not the name of Allah are the cattle which they dedicated to their associate-gods. There is no reference here to the mentioning of God's name at the time of slaughtering.

879. Commentary:

The verse refers to another absurd custom
141. Losers indeed are they who kill their children foolishly for lack of knowledge, and make unlawful what Allah has provided for them, forging a lie against Allah. They have indeed gone astray and are not rightly guided.880

142. And He it is Who brings into being gardens, trellised and untrellised, and the date-palm and cornfields whose fruits are of diverse kinds, and the olive and the pomegranate, alike and unlike. Eat of the fruit of each when it bears fruit, but pay His due on the day of harvest and exceed not the bounds. Surely, Allah loves not those who exceed the bounds.881

880. Commentary:
This verse recapitulates what has been said above about man-made laws. For the killing of children see 6:138 above. The words, for lack of knowledge, signify that they do so because they do not possess revealed knowledge, which is the only source of true guidance.

881. Important Words:
سروئت (trellised) is the plural of سروة which means, he built or constructed a framework or a trellis for supporting grape-vines; or he built a shed or an enclosure, etc. So سروة means, furnished with or trained on trellises. They say كروم سروهات i.e., grape-vines furnished with or trained on trellises which are a framework for supporting the vines. عرش means, structure or trellis made for supporting grape-vines; an enclosure made for beasts to protect them from cold. عرش means, a shed or booth, etc. constructed for shade; a hut; a house or a dwelling; the roof of a house; a throne (Lane).

جات (harvest) is derived from جد i.e. he reaped or cut a seed-produce or herbage, etc. جد means, reaped produce. جات means time or season of reaping; also fruit or produce (Lane).

Commentary:
In the foregoing verses the Quran referred to some of the laws which pagan Arabs, unaided by divine revelation, had devised for themselves. Now the Quran proceeds to give some of its own laws, so that the reader may contrast them with the man-made laws alluded to above. One of the man-made laws pertained to the fruits of the earth (6:141 above); the Quran,
143. And of the cattle, He created some for burden and some for slaughter. Eat of that which Allah has provided for you, and follow not the footsteps of Satan. Surely, he is to you an open foe. 882

therefore, here gives its laws about these. It declares them to be lawful and pure, subject only to the condition that in eating them we should “not exceed the bounds” i.e. we should only eat as much of them as is not injurious to our health and morals.

The pronoun in the words مَالكُ (His due) may either refer to God, or to مَالكُ (fruit). In the former case, the sentence would mean that on the day of reaping we should give as alms what is due to God. In the latter case, it would mean that on the day of reaping we should give as charity a portion of the fruit which is in the nature of something due against it in order to make it pure.

It may be noted here that there are two kinds of charity in Islam—obligatory and optional. But as, according to the practice and sayings of the Holy Prophet, مالكُ i.e. obligatory charity or legal alms, is not due from all the fruits named in the verse but only from the fruit of the palm tree, so if it is the obligatory charity that is meant here, then the commandment to “pay His due” will apply only to the fruit of palm trees. It is, however, better to take the verse as referring to optional charity which may be given from all kinds of fruits. The use of the imperative mood in the words “pay His due” does not necessarily make it an obligatory command, for this form of the verb is also freely used in the Quran for the purpose of exhortation. This interpretation is in keeping with the practice of the Holy Prophet’s Companions who were in the habit of setting apart a portion of their produce for the poor, and such is also the practice of pious Muslims today.

882. Important Words:

فرش (for slaughter) is derived from فرش. They say فرش i.e. he spread it or expanded it; or he prostrated it; or he threw it down (for slaughter). فرش means, what is spread on the ground, etc.; a plain tract of land; a depressed tract of land; shrubs or small trees; such animals as are fit for slaughter, or such as are thrown down for slaughter (Lane).

Commentary:

Apart from its primary meaning the verse also hints that the eating of lawful things is a means of ensuring one against the attacks of Satan.
144. *And of the cattle He has created eight mates: of the sheep two, and of the goats two;*—say, *Is it the two males that He has forbidden or the two females or that which the wombs of the two females contain? Inform me with knowledge, if you are truthful.*

145. *And of the camels two, and of the oxen two.* Say, *Is it the two males that He has forbidden or the two females or that which the wombs of the two females contain? Were you present when Allah enjoined this on you? *Who is then more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah that he may lead men astray without knowledge. Surely Allah guides not the unjust people.*

883. **Important Words:**

- ازواج (mates) is the plural of زوج (a mate). The word is used to signify, one of the pair, whether male or female and whether among human beings or among animals, or whether among plants or among any class of things.

- اضان (sheep) is the plural of اضان (one sheep). The word is applied to all animals of the class of خمار (which covers both sheep and goats) having wool (Aqrab & Lane).

- عتوم (goats) is the generic plural of عتم (one goat). The word is applied to all animals of the class of خمار (for which see above) having hair (not wool) and small tails (Aqrab & Lane).

**Commentary:**

See note under the following verse.

884. **Commentary:**

Speaking of the laws devised by man, the Quran had referred to some pagan customs with regard to animals (6:140, 141). Now it gives its own laws with regard to them.

While speaking of sheep and goats in 6:144 above, the Holy Prophet is made here to ask the idolaters to inform him if these animals were unlawful i.e. not fit for eating, and to bring forward (as hinted in the words نبى علم to i.e. inform me with knowledge) some rational argument or scientific reason to show that they should not be eaten. When, however, it speaks of oxen and camels in the present verse, the Quran asks idolaters whether they were witnesses when Allah forbade the eating of these animals. In other words, the verse here calls upon them to produce a religious authority showing that the cow and the camel were really forbidden. This is so because the
R. 18 146. Say, α'I find not in what has been revealed to me aught forbidden to an eater who wishes to eat it, except it be that which dies of itself or blood poured forth, or the flesh of swine,—for all that is unclean—or what is profane, on which is invoked the name of other than Allah. But whoso is driven by necessity, being neither disobedient nor exceeding the limit, then surely thy Lord is Most Forgiving, Merciful.'

885. Commentary:
The verse points out that the laws made by pagan Arabs with regard to permissible and forbidden foods were arbitrary, without any wisdom underlying them; while the food-laws made by Islam were based on reason and deep wisdom. Fundamentally speaking, Islam forbids four things—three on the basis of their being unclean and impure, and one on the basis of its being profane and irreligious. The three first-mentioned things are (1) carrion, (2) the blood which pours out when an animal is slaughtered or wounded and (3) the flesh of swine. All these are, as the verse says, رجس i.e. unclean and impure, and one i.e. they are harmful to the physical and moral health of man. The word رجس it must be noted, is to be read with each of the three first-mentioned forbidden things.

The fourth thing forbidden is that on which the name of one other than Allah is pronounced. The reason for the prohibition of this kind of food lies in the fact that such food is, as the verse calls it, فِظْن i.e. profane, viz., a source of disobedience or rebellion against God. The eating of such food will injure the spiritual health of man and will crush his feelings of love and jealousy for God. See also 2:174.
147. And to those who are Jews We forbade all animals having claws; and of the oxen and the sheep and goats did We forbid them their fats, save that which their backs bear or the intestines, or that which is mixed with a bone. That is the reward We gave them for their rebellion. And most surely We are truthful.886

148. But if they accuse thee of falsehood, say, 'Your Lord is possessed of all-embracing mercy, and His wrath shall not be turned back from the guilty people.'887

886. Commentary:

The reader is referred to the Bible (Lev. 3:17) where it is said, "Ye eat neither fat nor blood." Again, in Lev. 7:23 it is said "Ye shall eat no manner of fat of ox or of sheep or of goat." In the Talmud exception is made of the fat that sticks to the ribs. Similarly, the Jews regard as lawful any fat that cannot be separated from the intestines and the flesh (Enc. Bib. cols. 1544-45). This corroborates the Quran which says, and of the oxen and the sheep and goats did We forbid them their fats, save that which their backs bear or the intestines, or that which is mixed with a bone.

It is declared in the previous verse that the only things forbidden in Islam are (1) carrion, (2) blood poured forth, (3) flesh of swine, and (4) the slaughtered animal on which the name of any one other than God is pronounced. The Jews might, however, say that there are other things beside the above which are also forbidden them by God. The Quran therefore adds that it is true that there are other foods which are forbidden to Jews, but they have not been included in the prohibited things here enumerated, for these things had been forbidden them not because they were unclean but as a punishment for their transgression. So the declaration of the previous verse still remains true.

887. Commentary:

The verse answers an implied objection of the Jews, viz, if God had forbidden them certain extra things, why was not the prohibition continued in Islam? The verse answers this objection by saying that whereas the divine law of punishment demanded that Jews should be punished, the law of mercy demanded that Muslims should be shown mercy. It was unfair to continue a special prohibition that had been imposed by way of punishment under a new dispensation.
149. Those who join gods with God will say, 'If Allah had pleased, we could not have joined gods with Him, nor could our fathers; nor could we have made anything unlawful.' In like manner did those who were before them accuse God's Messengers of falsehood, until they tasted of Our wrath. Say, 'Have you any knowledge? Then produce it for us. You follow nothing but mere conjecture. And you do nothing but lie.'

150. Say, 'Allah's is the argument that reaches home. If He had enforced His will, He could have surely guided you all.'

Commentary:

888. Being unable to answer the arguments given against idolatry and man-made laws in the foregoing passages, idolatrous Arabs had recourse to the trite plea in support of idol-worship: if Allah had pleased, we could not have joined gods with Him. From this they inferred that attributing co-partners to God was in accordance with God's will. The Quran gives four answers to this plea, two in the present verse and two in the next. The first answer is contained in the words: In like manner did those who were before them accuse God's Messengers of falsehood, until they tasted of Our wrath. These words signify that this plea of theirs is not a new one. The same plea was brought forward by those gone before. If this plea was true, and the act of setting up associates with God was in accordance with God's will, why should He have punished the previous peoples? The very fact that God punished them for their associating gods with Him shows that this act of theirs was not in accordance with His will. The second answer is contained in the words: Have you any knowledge? Then produce it for us. You follow nothing but mere conjecture. And you do nothing but lie.

889. The third answer to the objection mentioned in the preceding verse is given here. The words contained in the previous verse, i.e., If Allah had pleased, we could not have joined gods with Him (6:149), implied that it was under a sort of compulsion that they had set up associates with God; it was God's own will and they could not go against His will; they were helpless against Him. So in the present verse the Quran says that God has no need to resort to compulsion, for Allah's is the argument that reaches home. He has arguments which reach the hearts of men. He can bring home to men the wisdom of His commandments; so He is not under the necessity of forcing
151. Say, 'Bring forward your witnesses who testify that Allah has forbidden this.' If they bear witness, bear thou not witness with them, nor follow thou the evil inclinations of those who treat Our Signs as lies and those who believe not in the Hereafter and who set up equals to their Lord. 

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men to do His will. The fourth answer is contained in the words: if He had enforced His will, He could have surely guided you all. The words mean that if God had resorted to compulsion and had decided to force men to do His will, He would certainly have made them do things that are right and not the things that are wrong. But in His infinite wisdom He has made man a free agent. He has explained to him what is right and what is wrong, and then has left him free to follow whichever course he may choose; and everyone will reap as he sows.

890. Important Words:

**هم (bring forward)** is both intransitive and transitive, meaning (1) come; or (2) cause to come i.e. bring forth or produce (Lane). **هُم (halumma)** is, according to the people of the Hijāz, one of the words known as اسماء الفعل and is thus used by them in the fixed form whether the number is singular or plural and whether the gender is masculine or feminine; but others differ from this view (Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

The Quran now returns to the subject of man-made laws about prohibitions. The verse signifies that disbelievers should declare that they do not agree with the Quran and find its teachings inferior to their own and then God Himself will decide between the two parties. Indirectly the words also hint that everybody should express his opinion freely when he disagrees with others and should refrain from dissimulation.
R. 19 152. Say, ‘Come, I will rehearse to you what your Lord has forbidden:
that you associate not anything as partner with Him and that you do good to parents, and that you kill not your children for fear of poverty,—it is We Who provide for you and for them—and that you approach not foul deeds, whether open or secret; and that you kill not the life which Allah has made sacred, save by right. That is what He has enjoined upon you, that you may understand.’

891. Important Words:

الملاق (poverty) is derived from ماق حيثي. They say ماق حيثي, i.e. he erased the thing. ماق وقفا means, he beat him with a stick. ماق الرباء means, the child sucked from the breasts of his mother. ماق الرجل means, the man spent all his money and became poor. ماق means, poverty or destitution (Aqrab).

Commentary:

The Quran has already given the commandments and prohibitions of the Islamic Law with regard to the fruits of the earth and the flesh of animals, in opposition to the laws devised by men. Now it gives general commandments and prohibitions.

It should be noted that the injunctions which follow the word “forbidden” are what God requires us to do and not what He forbids us to do. Thus it is the contrary of the injunctions given in the verse that is forbidden. The injunctions have been expressly mentioned and the converse of them which is forbidden is implied. Thus, on the one hand, by using the word “forbidden” and, on the other, by following it up with positive commandments, the verse combines in itself both the direct injunctions and their converse, and the attention of the reader has been drawn to both.

The verse may be construed in another way also. The first sentence should be taken as having finished with the words أنيما إلى ما حرم عليك, i.e. what your Lord has forbidden, and the next sentence should be taken as beginning with the words أنك ما احترم, which would in this case mean, “it is enjoined upon you or it is incumbent on you.” The verse will then read as follows: “Come, I will rehearse to you what your Lord has forbidden. It is incumbent on you that you associate not anything as partner with Him.”

The order in which the injunctions are given in this verse is noteworthy. The injunctions begin with the words, Come, I will rehearse to you what your Lord has forbidden. The Arabic word for “Lord” is رب which means “Creator, Sustainer, and Nourisher” (see 1:2), and it is the very idea of “sustaining and nourishing” that governs the order of the injunctions here given. The first injunction i.e. associate not anything as partner with Him, pertains to the Great Nourisher, Allah. The second injunction pertains to the lesser nourishers, viz., parents. The word احترام...
(doing good) expresses the idea that the service of the parents enjoined in the words, do good to parents, is to be performed in the best way possible, for إحسان literally signifies "doing a thing very well." Next come those who are nourished and sustained by the "lesser nourishers", viz., children. Parents are bidden to nourish and bring up their children well, as implied in the words, kill not your children for fear of poverty. Indeed, he who neglects to bring up his children properly for fear of poverty virtually "kills" them. If it is the duty of the children to serve their parents well, it is equally the duty of the parents to bring up their children well.

The pronoun "you" in the clause, it is We Who provide for you and for them, refers to parents and the pronoun "them" refers to children, the former being put before the latter in order to draw our attention to the fact that God’s providing for the parents is a proof of the fact that He will provide for the children also.

The next injunction is contained in the words, approach not foul deeds. The word فواحة (foul deeds) is the plural of فاحة, one meaning of which is "fornication or adultery" (see 4:16), which is another form of killing one’s children; for the man who forms immoral connection with a woman other than his wife, not only destroys his seed but also neglects his own wife, which cannot but affect his begetting children in lawful wedlock. Similarly, illegitimate children born of a woman other than one’s wife are not one’s own children, nor are they properly looked after. The words, whether open or secret, used in connection with فواحة (foul deeds) refer respectively to openly going in to prostitutes and to forming secret connections with women other than one’s wife.

Next to the relations between parents and children come brotherly and friendly relations which are referred to in the words, kill not the life which Allah has made sacred. This injunction requires us to treat our brethren and friends as well as members of our society with fairness and justice. The word "killing", it will be noted, pertains not only to actually killing but to an attempt at killing as well as causing serious injury and boycotting, etc. (see meaning of فتيل i.e. killing under 2:62; 3:155 & 4:158). The expression, save by right, used with regard to "killing" means "except when a man has made himself deserving of the treatment to be meted out to him." For instance, in case of murder a person will be put to death only by order of proper authority. Similarly in case of "boycotting" a person will be boycotted only under the orders of the person or the body that possesses that power. It will not be right for any man to take the law in his own hands.
153. And approach not the property of the orphan, except in a way which is best, till he attains his maturity. And give full measure and weight with equity. We task not any soul except according to its capacity. And when you speak, observe justice, even if a relation be concerned, and fulfill the covenant of Allah. That is what He enjoins upon you, that you may remember.\(^\text{892}\)

\(^{892}\) Commentary:

Next to the injunction to protect the lives of our brethren (see preceding verse) comes the injunction to protect their property. Of these the Quran takes first those who cannot take care of their own property, viz., orphans. The verse says: And approach not the property of the orphan, except in a way which is best. In these words we are bidden to take due care of the property of those whose parents are dead and who are too young to take care of their property. We are to act as trustees for their property and we are strongly forbidden to misappropriate it. The injunction not to "approach" the property, however, does not mean that we should not even make such use of their property as may be to the advantage of the orphans themselves, e.g., investing it in some profitable business which may bring gain to our wards. The Quran allows such profitable investment by saying, except in a way which is best. Again by using the words, till he attains his maturity, the Quran reminds us that we are to be the custodians of the property of orphans not for a month or a year but until the time when they are old enough to take charge of it and look after their own affairs.

Next to orphans come those of our brethren who, though able to take care of their property, may sometimes become the dupes of others. So the next injunction is of general application and is to the effect: And give full measure and weight with equity. In these words we are bidden not to cheat or defraud others of their property in any way, even if the other party is not intelligent or watchful enough to look after his or her interests.

After the injunctions pertaining to the protecting of property, comes the injunction to guard our tongues. Says the Quran: And when you speak, observe justice even if a relation be concerned. This signifies that when we are called upon to bear witness, we should speak the truth, even if our testimony may prove harmful to one near and dear to us. On the other hand, we should not unjustly harm our relations either. We must be true to them also, for they too are our brethren and come under the general injunction.

After the injunction to guard the tongue comes the injunction to guard the heart. Says the verse, and fulfill the covenant of Allah. Obviously this injunction pertains to the heart, for whereas the previous injunctions pertained to the covenant with men, the present one relates to the covenant with God.

It should also be noted that the injunctions contained in 6:152 pertained to outward
154. And say, "this is My path leading straight. So follow it; and follow not other ways, lest they lead you away from His way. That is what He enjoins upon you, that you may become able to guard against evils.\(^{893}\)

155. Again, We gave Moses the Book—completing the favour upon him who did good, and an explanation of all necessary things, and a guidance and a mercy—that they might believe in the meeting with their Lord.\(^{894}\)

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\(^{893}\) Commentary:

All the above injunctions have been jointly referred to here and we are told that if we act upon these teachings, we shall come under the protection of God, Who will enable us to guard ourselves against all evil.

\(^{894}\) Important Words:

- (completing) is the noun-infinitive from endregion
156. And this is a Book which We have sent down; it is full of blessings. So follow it, and guard against sin that you may be shown mercy; 895

157. Lest you should say, 'The Book was sent down only to two peoples before us, and we were indeed unaware of their reading' 896

words meaning that the Book given to Moses fulfilled all the needs of the time.

The verse mentions four things as the objects of a revealed Book: (1) That God desires to complete His favour by means of it. (2) That it embodies all the commandments that are needed for the period of time for which it is meant. (3) That it contains the means for guiding men to the right path. (4) That it is a mercy i.e. those who follow it receive blessings from God.

895. Commentary:

The words, this is a Book, refer to the Quran. Before giving the command to follow the Quran, this verse gives the reasons thereof. The first reason is that it is a revealed Book, being sent down by God. The second reason is that it is مبارک (full of blessings) which, as the root meaning of the word implies, shows that it comprises in itself the blissful teachings of all the other Scriptures (for an explanation of the word مبارک see note on 6:93 above).

The verse purports to say (1) that as the Quran is a revealed Book, so you should accept it and thereby become recipients of all the favours attached to revealed Books; (2) that as it comprises in itself the teachings of all other revealed Scriptures, so you should leave all other Books and follow it alone.

896. Important Words:

غافل (unaware) is the plural of غفل which also means, wanting in requisite knowledge (Lane).

Commentary:

This and the succeeding verses are addressed to the pagan tribes of Arabia and give the reason why the Quran has been revealed to a Prophet of that country. If the Quran had not been sent down to the pagan Arabs, they might have justly offered the excuse that Books had been sent down to two other peoples (explained below) in tongues which the Arabs could not understand, and that if a Book had been sent down to them, they would have acted upon its teachings more faithfully. To meet this excuse the Quran has been revealed to a Prophet from among the Arabs in their own tongue; so now they cannot offer that excuse.

The "two peoples" mentioned in the verse are (1) the Jews to whom was given the Book of Moses and whose religion originated in the north of Arabia; and (2) the Zoroastrians to whom was given the Zend-Avesta and who lived on the east side of Arabia. The Christians were given no separate Law, for both Jesus and his disciples followed the Law of Moses; hence, so far as religious Laws are concerned, they do not form a separate people but must be classed with the Jews.
158. Or lest you should say, 'Had the Book been sent down to us, we should surely have been better guided than they.' There has now come to you a clear evidence from your Lord, and a guidance and a mercy. Who, then, is more unjust than he who rejects the Signs of Allah and turns away from them? We will requite those who turn away from Our Signs with an evil punishment because of their turning away. 897

159. Do they expect aught but that angels should come to them or that thy Lord should come or that some of the Signs of thy Lord should come? The day when some of the Signs of thy Lord shall come, to believe in them shall not profit a soul which believed not before, nor earned any good by its faith. Say, 'Wait ye, we too are waiting.' 898

897. Commentary:

The words, better guided, are either intended to express a possible idea on the part of the Arabs that the "two peoples" mentioned above did not faithfully act on divine teachings or they merely express a possible feeling of regret that whereas others were granted divine guidance, they were not. It must be said to the credit of the Arabs that when the Quran was revealed to the Holy Prophet, those of them that accepted it did follow it much more faithfully than the "two peoples" referred to above or for that matter any other people. Thus, when the Holy Prophet was attacked by the Quraish of Mecca at Badr and he summoned a council of his followers to consult them, the latter told him without demur that they would not, like the companions of Moses, say to him, Go thou and thy Lord and fight and here we sit (5:25), but would fight in his front and fight at his back and fight on his right and fight on his left, meaning that the enemy would not be permitted to reach him except over their dead bodies (Bukhari, ch. on Maghazi).

898. Commentary:

The "coming of angels" here refers to the punishment of the people through wars; for in the Quran the coming of angels has been mentioned in connection with the battles that took place between Muslims and their enemies (3:125, 126 & 8:10).

The term "coming of the Lord" with regard to disbelievers has been used in the Quran to express death and destruction (2:211).
160. As for those who split up their religion and became divided into sects, thou hast no concern at all with them. Surely their case will come before Allah, then shall He inform them of what they used to do.\textsuperscript{899}

161. Whoso does a good deed shall have ten times as much; but he who does an evil deed, shall have only a like reward; and they shall not be wronged.\textsuperscript{900}

\textsuperscript{899} Important Words:

\textit{شیعة} (sects) is the plural of \textit{شيعة} which means, a separate or distinct party or sect of men; any people that have combined in or for an affair. The word is derived from \textit{شاع}, which means, it became spread, published, divulged or made known; it became scattered or dispersed. 

\textit{كَانَ} also means, he or it followed (him). 

\textit{كَأَنَّهُ} means, he called out to his (straying or lingering) camels, whereupon they went along and followed one another. 

\textit{يَعْمَلُونَ} also means, he encouraged and strengthened him. 

\textit{كَثَّامَةَ الْجَرِّ} means, the camels became separate parties; or they went together (Lane).

\textbf{Commentary:}

The words, \textit{split up their religion}, signify that when all and sundry begin to follow their own judgement, there are sure to be differences among them and there remains no unity of opinion.

\textsuperscript{900} Commentary:

The verse beautifully illustrates how the mercy of God transcends and predominates over His wrath or punishment. A good deed is like a good seed that brings forth a produce ten times its number and even more (2:262; 4:41; 10:27, 28; also Tirmidhi, ch. on Fasting) whereas an evil deed is counted as only one deed. The verse also throws light on the fact that where there are to be rewards and punishments, there must be a law and a system. There can be no rewarding or punishing without a law.
162. Say, 'As for me, my Lord has guided me unto a straight path— a right religion, the religion of Abraham, the upright. And he was not of those who join gods with God.'

163. Say, 'My Prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of the worlds.'

**901. Important Words:**

- **قائم** (right) is derived from *قام* which means, he stood still or he stood up.
- **ثام الأمر** means, he undertook the affair; he managed or conducted it.
- **ثام الأمر** means, right, correct or true.
- **ثام الأمر** means, manager, conductor or superintendent of the affair (Lane).

**Commentary:**

The previous verse proved the need of a revealed religion. In the present verse we are told that now the revealed religion was the one which the Holy Prophet of Islam was following and which in principle was also the religion of Abraham, the upright. The word حقيف means (1) upright and (2) one who is ever inclined to God; and such a one can only be he who believes in all the Prophets of God.

**902. Important Words:**

- **ننك** (sacrifice) is derived from *نكي* which means, he washed the cloth and rendered it clear and pure.
- **ننك الثرب** means, he slaughtered and sacrificed the animal.
- **ننك البيت** means, he repaired to the Ka'ba for Pilgrimage.
- **ننك الرجل** means, the man worshipped God and devoted himself to His service.

**Commentary:**

This and the following verse beautifully describe the Holy Prophet's religion, to which reference was made in the preceding verse.

The two latter mentioned expressions, viz., "my life" and "my death" correspond respectively to the two former expressions viz. "my Prayer" and "my sacrifice." As Prayer imparts life to the worshipper, so it has been followed by the words, "my life." On the contrary, "sacrifice" kills the self of man, so it has been followed by the words, "my death." These four words i.e. Prayer, sacrifice, life and death, thus cover the entire field of man's actions, and the Holy Prophet has been asked to declare that all phases of his life were devoted to God alone. All his prayers were offered to God; all his sacrifices were made to Him; all his life was devoted to His service; and if in the cause of religion he sought death, that was also to win His pleasure. He lived for God and would not die but in harness.

With regard to Prayer particularly, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said *جلة نة عني ف الصلاة* i.e. "the coolness or delight of my eyes lies in Prayer" (Nasa'i).
164. "He has no partner. And so am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit." 903

165. Say, 'Shall I seek a lord other than Allah, while He is the Lord of all things?' And no soul acts but only against itself; nor does any bearer of burden bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord will be your return, and He will inform you of that wherein you used to differ. 904

166. And He it is Who has made you successors of others on the earth and has exalted some of you over the others in degrees of rank, that He may try you by that which He has given you. Surely, thy Lord is quick in punishment; and surely He is Most Forgiving, Merciful. 905

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903. Commentary:
Not only were all the energies of the Holy Prophet devoted to God, but he believed in no other deity and his eyes were shut to everything but his Lord and Maker, to Whom alone he submitted. The Holy Prophet was indeed the First Muslim.

904. Commentary:
The verse supplies the reason why one should be devoted to God, for He alone is "the Lord of all things." The verse also makes it clear that on the day when man will be presented before God and will render an account of his deeds, nobody will be able to take upon himself a part of his burden. The word "burden" here signifies "sin." In the words, bearer of burden, it is also hinted that this principle applies only to human beings who are the bearers of burdens; but that if God so willed, He could Himself remove the burden of a soul i.e. pardon it.

905. Commentary:
This Sura began with a reference to "darkness" and "light," and in its concluding verse also reference has been made to the same subject, though in different words. The verse purports to say that the people of darkness and the people of light will get their respective rewards at the hands of God. The words, quick in punishment, refer to the punishment of those who are in darkness, while the words, Most Forgiving, Merciful, refer to the good reward of those who are endowed with light. The words, that He may try you by that which He has given you, are intended to point to the great purpose for which "darkness" and "light" have been created, the expression, given you, hinting that both light and darkness have been created for the ultimate good of man. Indeed if there had been no darkness, there would have been no progress. See also 6:2.
CHAPTER 7
AL-A'RAF
(Revealed before Hijra)

Place of Revelation

According to Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn Zubair, Hasan, Mujāhid 'Ikrima, 'Aṭâ and Jābir bin Zaid, this Sūra belongs to the Meccan period with the exception of vv. 165-172. It has 207 verses including Bismillah. Qatāda says that v. 165 was revealed at Medina. The Rev. E. M. Wherry also considers this Sūra to be of Meccan origin with the exception of the above-mentioned eight verses, i.e., vv. 165-172 and also vv. 159-161. It is strange that the reverend gentleman has assigned the revelation of vv. 159-161 to Medina without valid reason or reliable historical evidence. No traditionist nor even any Orientalist supports him in his contention, which seems to be based on the verses which contain a reference to the Jews and to some of the prophecies of the Bible which were fulfilled in the person of the Holy Prophet. He seems to have apprehended lest a perusal of these prophecies might convince the reader of the truth of the Quran and the Holy Prophet. In order to obviate this possibility, he took it upon himself, against all historical evidence and against the considered opinion of the Orientalists, to assign these verses to the Medinitic period. He did so in the hope that in this way the Holy Prophet would be considered to have inserted the above-mentioned prophecies in the Quran after having heard them from the Jews. Blind prejudice alone can be held responsible for this baseless inference on his part. Even a person of ordinary intelligence can understand that the fact that a particular prophecy has been mentioned in a certain Book cannot bring about its fulfilment. If a particular prophecy truly applied to the Holy Prophet, how could it be said that he had copied it from some other Book? But if it did not apply to him, how could the mere fact that it has been inserted in the Quran at Mecca or after having been heard from the Jews at Medina, would have sufficed to establish the falsity of his claim. What is stranger still is the fact that Mr. Wherry, in his eagerness to show that the prophecy referred to has not been fulfilled in the person of the Holy Prophet, has consigned to oblivion all the rules and principles devised by himself and the Orientalists to determine whether a particular verse was revealed at Mecca or at Medina. Orientalists hold the view that all Quranic verses which contain the words سُلِّم١لا (O ye people) must belong to the Meccan period and that “the people” so addressed are the Meccans. This idea has taken such a strong hold of them that, without pausing to consider any other reason, the mere fact that a certain verse contains the words “O ye people” is a sufficient reason for them to ascribe that verse to the Meccan period. Sale is so obsessed with this view that, instead of translating the words سُلِّم١لا that occur in 2:22, as, “O ye
people," which is their correct rendering, he has translated them as "O ye people of Mecca." He has done this obviously to lend support and emphasis to his view that by the word ﴿لا ﷽﴾ in the Quranic expression ﴿لا ﷽﴾ is always meant the people of Mecca, in spite of the fact that the word ﴿لا ﷽﴾ is not to be found anywhere in the above expression. Wherry has based his Commentary of the Quran on Sale's translation. Not only has he found no fault with Sale for his taking such liberty with the text of the Quran, but even in his own Introduction to سورة Al-Baqara he has declared this verse to belong to the Meccan period. It is a pity that bias and prejudice render a person insensible to all dictates of justice and fairness, for these very Orientalists have declared vv. 159-161 of the present سورة as of Medinite period in spite of the fact that the words ﴿لا ﷽﴾ (O ye people) occur in them. This means that whenever there is the least likelihood of Islam being exposed to criticism if a particular verse of the Quran in which the expression ﴿لا ﷽﴾ (O ye people) occurs were proved to belong to the Meccan period, they will confidently declare it to belong to the Meccan period; but when Islam is considered to be open to attack by proving that another verse which comprises the same expression is of Medinite origin, these scholars complacently assign it to the Medinite period. May God open their hearts that they may see the truth, so that they may not make Jesus feel ashamed of them on the Day of Judgement.

Noeldeke, however, has refused to ascribe vv. 165-172 to the Medinite period. This refusal is based only on a mere conjecture, unsubstantiated by any reliable historical evidence, and therefore cannot be accepted. Historical evidence can be rejected only on the basis of established facts of history or irrefutable internal evidence.

Title of the Sûra

The سورة is known as Al-A'raf and this name is supposed to have been given to it on the basis of this word having occurred in its 47th verse. But the contention that the سورة has been given this name only because the word ﴿آراء﴾ (A'raf) has happened to occur in it is inadmissible unless this word is shown to possess some real connection with the subject-matter of the سورة itself. Orientalists and Commentators have not succeeded in finding out any such connection between this word and the subject-matter of the سورة. This is because they have assigned a wrong meaning to the word ﴿آراء﴾. They think that ﴿آراء﴾ is the name of an intervening spiritual stage between Paradise and Hell and that the dwellers in this stage will appear distinct from the inmates of Hell but will not as yet have entered Paradise. The Quran, however, rejects this meaning of the word because it mentions only two groups of people, viz., the dwellers of Paradise and the inmates of Hell. There is no mention of any third group or class of people. The Quran thus lends no support to the interpretation of the word ﴿آراء﴾ as the place for a people of a middling spiritual status, nor can any internal evidence of the verses in which this word occurs be adduced in support of this interpretation. The Quran depicts the people of ﴿آراء﴾ as at one time addressing the dwellers of Paradise and at another time talking to the inmates of Hell, and their spiritual knowledge has been declared to be so great that they can recognize the dwellers of Paradise by their special marks and also the inmates of Hell by the latter's particular signs. They
rebuke and upbraid the inmates of Hell and pray for the inmates of Paradise (7: 47, 49, 50). Can a person who himself is hanging, as it were, in a state of uncertainty between Paradise and Hell, be so presumptuous as to assume an air of superiority as the people of Al'Araf have been shown to do. The fact is that the people of Al'Araf (Al'Araf) are the Prophets of God, who will occupy a very high spiritual stage on the Day of Judgement and will pray for the dwellers of Paradise and rebuke and reprimand the inmates of Hell. And because the present Sura is the first among the Quranic Suras in which the life-stories of the Prophets have been dealt with at some length, it has been given the name Al'Araf in consideration of the very high spiritual station of God's Messengers.

Moreover, the very construction of the word supports this inference. Al'Araf is the plural of Alifwurf (Buruf) which means a high and elevated place (Lane). Similarly Alifwurf (Buruf) means that spiritual realization which a man has through his unsullied nature, acquiring it by the help of God-given intellect and the testimony of his inner self. So Alifwurf means those teachings of which the truth is established by rational arguments and the testimony of human nature; and, as the teachings of Prophets possess all these qualities, they (the Prophets) alone deserve this spiritually high position, and thus be rightly called Alifwurf (elevated places). Their high spiritual station signifies that, apart from the special favours of God, they take their stand on the solid rock of the testimony of human nature and intellect. Such a lofty position is indeed beyond the attainment of ordinary men.

In short, the Chapter Al'Araf is so called because in it illustrations have been given from the lives of those eminent men of very high spiritual status who in the past have taught mankind eternal truths in accordance with the demands of human nature and human intellect, whom the men of this world resisted and sought to bring low, but whom the jealous God did not allow to be debased but, on the contrary, raised to a very exalted position.

Subject-Matter

Spiritually this Sura serves as a kind of Alifzurah (intervening link) between the Suras that precede it and those that follow it, which means that the subject-matter of the preceding Suras has been developed into a new theme in this Sura. In the preceding Suras the main theme consisted of a refutation of Judaism and Christianity and also a refutation of other Faiths which profess to derive their authority mainly from Philosophy and reason. In the present Sura both these themes have been jointly treated and the falsity of the positions of both these sets of religions has been established and the truth of Islam demonstrated to their followers. First of all, it has been stated that since the Quran is the revealed word of God, there is no possibility of its meeting with destruction or failing to achieve its object. Then in vv. 4-10 the followers of the Holy Prophet are warned that they should not, in a fit of despondency, come to a hasty compromise with the followers of other religions, because the opponents of a true religion have always suffered disgrace and humiliation in the end. Verse 11 states that God has created man for the attainment of a most sublime object but most men forget this noble purpose of their life.

In vv. 12-27 the paradisical life of Adam and his expulsion from it have been cited as an
illustration of this subject and it is stated how, from the very beginning of the world, God created
man and provided the means necessary for his attainment of a high spiritual status; but he gave
no heed to God's plans for him and obeyed and followed Satan. In vv. 28-30 we are told that
Satan had made Adam spiritually naked and now God has sent the Holy Prophet of Islam to
clothe him with the raiment of righteousness and he is the Prophet who has come to deliver
man from the punishment of his sins and to make him regain that heavenly life of which he had
become deprived. So the Faithful should beware lest their deeds keep them deprived of that
heavenly life. In vv. 31-35 it has been hinted that, unlike former Faiths which aimed at
individual development, Islam seeks to bring about a reformation among whole communities.
Whereas former Prophets sought to make individuals enter Paradise, Islam aims that whole
communities and nations should attain bliss. But, as every effort at reformation has to encounter
many obstacles and vicissitudes before it reaches its consummation, vv. 36-38 tell us that when
the Muslim community deviates from Islamic principles and teachings, God will raise for their
reformation divinely-inspired Reformers from among the followers of the Holy Prophet so that
men may not lose this newly-gained Paradise by deviating from the path of national progress
and development. In vv. 39-48 rules and principles have been laid down for the recognition of
these promised Reformers and light has also been shed on the ultimate doom of their opponents.
In vv. 49-52 we are told that it is the Prophets of God who alone can arouse into action the latent
powers and qualities of human nature and can lead men to progress and prosperity. In the next
two verses the Meccans are exhorted to accept and benefit by the light of prophethood of which
they have had an ample share and not to make themselves the object of divine punishment by
rejecting it.

In vv. 55-59 it is said that all divine plans work gradually. As in the material world, so
in the realm of the spirit, all progress is subject to the law of evolution and it is by a process
of progressive evolution that the spiritual development of man has taken place from the time of
Adam to that of the Holy Prophet of Islam, and the new mission that has come into force
through the Holy Prophet, in which greater attention has been given to the betterment and
organization of the community than to that of the individual, will also find its consummation
after going through a process of evolution. Muslims should, therefore, conform to the divine
will and purpose and should strive to fulfil this great mission. They should always keep in mind
that from small seeds grow big trees and that even great objects seem very insignificant in the
beginning and remain hidden from the eyes of the people. So it behoves them to keep their eyes
open and not let this grand object remain hidden from their sight because, if once it were allowed
to become hidden, it would remain hidden for ever.

With v. 60 begins a brief account of the life-history of some Prophets of antiquity whose
mission it was to take man as an individual back to the blissful heavenly existence from which
he was expelled. This account extends to v. 172. In vv. 173-178 it is stated that good is
ingrained in human nature and constitutes an integral part of it while evil comes later and is the
result of external influences. In vv. 179-184 we are told that, in spite of the instinctive goodness
of man, he cannot attain perfection without the help of divine revelation. By rejecting
divine guidance he becomes deprived of his instinctive goodness and is ruined.
In vv. 185-187 reference has again been made to the mission of the Holy Prophet, and his opponents are admonished not to ignore the patent fact that his intellect is sound and motives pure and that his teachings are in perfect harmony with human nature and natural law and that the testimony of the time also is in his favour. In vv. 188-199 some misgivings and doubts of disbelievers have been removed, and it is stated that disbelievers will put up a very strong opposition to the Holy Prophet but God will protect him from all harm. The idols of idolaters will not be able to help them. In vv. 200-203, however, Muslims are admonished not only to endure patiently the opposition of disbelievers (because all this opposition is the result of lack of true knowledge) but also to pray for them. Then in v. 204 the Holy Prophet is told that, like the opponents of former Prophets, his opponents also will continue to demand Signs, but he should tell them that the showing of Signs lies entirely in God’s own hand. He will show them when in His infallible wisdom He thinks it opportune. But does not the Quran itself (the Prophet is enjoined to say to disbelievers) which fulfils the real object and purpose of prophethood, constitute a sufficient Sign? Towards the end of the Sūra Muslims are exhorted to give to the miracle of the Quran that great measure of true appreciation which it richly deserves, because the more heavenly light is vouchsafed to man, the truer should be his appreciation of it.

In his Introduction to this Sūra, Mr. Wherry has made, as is his wont, a fantastic charge against the Holy Prophet. He says that the accounts of the life-histories of former Prophets which this Sūra contains are only a reflection of the Holy Prophet’s own experiences in life. Here are his actual words:

"Even the most careless reader can hardly fail to see that all these Prophets are facsimiles of Muhammad himself. Their character and authority, their message and accompanying claims to inspiration, the incredulity and hardness of heart shown by the tribes to whom they were sent, the consequent rejection of the Prophets, and threatenings of the sudden and dreadful judgements of God upon unbelievers, all these correspond to the experience of Muhammad, and the inference suggested by each story is that the rejection of the Prophet of Makkah would bring with it judgements on the Quraish similar to and dreadful as those which befell those tribes who rejected the former Prophets.”

Mr. Wherry means to suggest that no incidents mentioned in this Sūra as having happened to the Prophets ever took place; the Holy Prophet has only ascribed his own experiences to them. But can the reverend gentleman have the courage to deny that the incidents, attributed in the Quran to former Prophets, are also mentioned in the Bible as having happened to them? Did there ever live a Prophet of whose life the Bible contains some account who did not claim to have received revelation from God? We find that every Prophet mentioned in the Bible definitely laid claim to divine revelation; and how can any intelligent man possibly conceive that any person could lay claim to prophethood without claiming at the same time that he received revelation from God. Moreover, there is no cause or occasion for surprise at the fact that the opposition and cruel treatment, which the Quran says former Prophets met at the hands of their opponents, resembled the treatment and opposition which the Holy Prophet received from his opponents. What is there in the mutual resemblance of the conditions and circumstances of the Holy Prophet and those of former Prophets which
can cause surprise? Every Prophet of God brings a new message which contradicts and

demolishes the accepted views of his people. They naturally oppose him. This was the experience

of every Prophet. They all resemble each other in this respect. If this resemblance seems

strange to Mr. Wherry, he alone must have known Prophets who did not receive cruel'
treatment from their people. If such is the case, then what would he say about him who

said: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the Prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto

her!” (Matt. 23:37). And, “That the blood of all the Prophets, which was shed from the foundation

of the world, may be required of this generation” (Luke 11:50). Would Mr. Wherry and those

who subscribe to his view tell us that the man who uttered the above words was also ascribing his

own experiences to former Prophets and that in reality they received no such treatment? Did

he (Jesus) tell a lie or is it a fact that the Prophets from the beginning of the world were really

rejected and opposed? If Mr. Wherry has the hardihood to accuse even Jesus of falsehood,

then we have no complaint against him. But if what Jesus said was true, and it was certainly

ture, then there is no denying the fact that the Prophets of God have always received opposition

and maltreatment from their opponents. Enmity and blind prejudice alone have impelled Mr.

Wherry to make this most unjust charge against the Holy Prophet.

Similarly, if the objection of Mr. Wherry is true that the claim of the Quran that the former

Prophets had warned their opponents of divine punishment was a reflection of the Holy

Prophet’s own mind and nothing of the kind ever happened, then what would he say about the

Bible, which is full of prophecies containing warnings for the Prophets’ opponents. Did not

Noah and Moses and Jeremiah and Hezekiah and Daniel warn their opponents of divine

punishment? Did not Jesus himself threaten his opponents with impending doom? If such

is the case, then is it not merely blind prejudice to take exception to the Quranic statement

that all the Prophets warned their opponents of their ultimate destruction and that destruction

actually befell them? Let Mr. Wherry and those of his way of thinking remember that all

Prophets of God bear a close resemblance to one another just as their opponents resemble each

other. This is why perhaps the objections of Mr. Wherry bear a striking resemblance to the

objections of the Scribes and the Pharisees; and the answers of the Holy Prophet resemble those

given by Moses and Jesus to their opponents.
1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.


3. This is a Book revealed unto thee—so let there be no straitness in thy bosom concerning it—that thou mayest warn thereby, and that it be an exhortation to the believers.

4. Follow that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, and follow no protectors other than Him. How little do you remember!

5. How many a town have We destroyed! and Our punishment came upon it by night or while they slept at noon.

906. Commentary:
See under 1:1.

906a. Commentary:
According to Ibn 'Abbās, the combined four letters are the abbreviations of the words اَلِّيَّـٰلَّهِ أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِ كَفَّارٌ I am Allah, I know and I explain.” The contents of this Sūra justify this interpretation, because the Sūra not only embodies divine knowledge but “explains” at greater length and with a greater wealth of illustrations the subject dealt with in the previous Sūra. See also note on م in 2:2.

907. Commentary:
This verse is addressed to each and every believer, and not to the Holy Prophet particularly. The believers are told that the Quran is God’s own revelation and not the outcome of the Prophet’s mind, and since it is the revealed word of the All-Knowing God, they should feel no straitness or hesitance in acting upon its injunctions and preaching them to others.

908. Commentary:
No patronage or help from any quarter can be of avail to a people in opposition to God and His Messengers. This is a lesson written large on the pages of history and is well worth remembering.

909. Important Words:
(بَلْ) بَلْ يَدَيْنَ (by night) is the noun-infinitive from بَلْ يَدَيْنَ i.e. he passed the night. It means, he did such a thing by or at night; or he passed the night doing such a thing; or he entered upon the night doing such a thing. ١٠١٤ (الْأَمْرِ النَّهَـٰرِ) means, the thing or event...
6. So when Our punishment came upon them, their cry was nothing but this that they said: "We were indeed wrongdoers!" 910

7. And We will certainly question those to whom the Messengers were sent, and We will certainly question the Messengers. 911

8. Then will We certainly relate to them their deeds with knowledge, for We were never absent. 912

910. Commentary:
The reason why even confirmed atheists have been found to cry to God for help when divine punishment overtakes them, is that at such a dreadful time, man becomes not only conscious of his own utter helplessness but also of the might and power of a Higher Being.

911. Commentary:
The verse embodies the important principle that in one way or another all are responsible to God. The people will be questioned as to how they received God's Messengers, and the Messengers will be questioned as to how they delivered the divine message and what response the people gave them.

912. Commentary:
God's purpose in questioning the Messengers and the people (7:7 above) would not be to gain information or supplement His knowledge,—for He is All-Knowing—but, on the contrary, to impress upon both parties the extent and perfection of His own knowledge. After the people and the Prophets will have said what they will have to say, God Himself will tell them in detail what they did and what they should have done but failed to do, and thus the all-comprehensiveness of God's knowledge will be fully brought home to them.
9. And the weighing on that day will be true. Then as for those whose scales are heavy, it is they who shall prosper.\textsuperscript{913}

10. And as for those whose scales are light, it is they who shall have ruined their souls because of their being unjust to Our Signs.\textsuperscript{914}

11. And We have established you in the earth and provided for you therein the means of subsistence. How little thanks you give!\textsuperscript{915}

\textsuperscript{913} Important Words:

\textbf{\textit{مزرين}} (whose scales). \textit{مزرين} is the plural of \textit{مزَن} which is derived from \textit{مزَن} i.e. he weighed the thing, or he determined or estimated the weight of the thing. \textit{مزَن} means, he composed verses according to the fixed measure. \textit{مزَن} (with different vowel point at the central root letter) means, the thing became heavy and weighty. \textit{وزن} which is noun-in infinitive means, the act of weighing; or the weight of a thing; or weightiness. \textit{وزن} means, he was a person of weighty opinion. \textit{وزن} means, a weighing instrument; a balance; a pair of scales; the weight of a thing; the measure of a verse (Lane & Aqrab).

\textbf{Commentary:}

The verse does not mean that pairs of scales will actually be set up and human actions and deeds weighed like material things. The language used is figurative. Material things are indeed weighed in scales made of metal or wood, but the weighing of things which are not material means determining their real value or worth or importance.

\textsuperscript{914} Commentary:

The words, \textit{whose scales are light}, mean, those whose good deeds are few and evil deeds many. The word \textit{ظلم} (rendered as being unjust to) literally means, to put a thing in the wrong place, and is here used to signify that the disbelievers did not treat the Signs of God in the manner in which they should have been treated. They were meant to instil fear of God and humility in the minds of the people; but, on the contrary, disbelievers became all the more arrogant and insolent and received the Signs of God with mockery and derision.

\textsuperscript{915} Commentary:

The verse purports to tell the people that in spite of the fact that God has given them
And We did create you and then

aWe gave you shape; then bsaid We to the angels, 'Submit to Adam'; and they all submitted. But Iblis did not; he would not be of those who submit.916

all necessary things, yet they are not grateful to Him. This is intended to warn men to be prepared to reap the fruits of their evil actions.

916. Commentary:

The story of Adam has already been partly related in 2:31—40. Another part of the same story with some additional details is given here with a different purpose. In the former Sūra, the narration was meant to show that God had been sending down revelation from the beginning of the world and so the revelation sent to the Holy Prophet of Islam was not an innovation. Here it is given to show that there have always been enemies of the Prophets of God and so the hostility of the people towards the Holy Prophet was in fact a sign of his truth. The story of Adam is incapable of being fully understood without our first being acquainted with the scene of its occurrence. Was Adam first placed in Paradise and was it in Paradise that the scene described in this and the following few verses was enacted? All doubts on this score are set at rest by the plain words of the Quran, I am about to place a vicegerent in the earth (2:31). It was indeed in this very earth that the creation of Adam and all that followed it took place. The Bible as well as Zoroastrian and Hindu religious writings also lend support to this view. The Holy Prophet is reported to have described the Nile and the Euphrates as the two rivers of Ḥaḍīr (the garden), referring to the place where Adam lived; (Muslim, ch. on Jannat); and the Hadith, too, places Adam in Mesopotamia which is watered by the waters of the Tigris and the Euphrates. It was, therefore, here that the garden of Adam was situated and all the different incidents mentioned about him in the Quran also took place here; and if there be any incident which cannot be proved to have literally occurred on this earth, then that incident will have to be taken in a figurative sense.

Another fact worth remembering is that 2:31, according to which Adam was created on this earth, also tells us that he was not the first man to live on this planet, and that other men lived even before he was brought into existence. In 2:31 Adam has been called Khalīfa which word, meaning a successor, shows that he had predecessors whom he succeeded. The verse under comment also clearly points to the same conclusion. Addressing the people, it says, And We did create you and then We gave you shape; then said We to the angels, Submit to Adam. The plural pronoun "you" in the clause, We did create you, having preceded the words containing the command to angels to submit to Adam, which is preceded by the conjunction "then" shows that it was after the creation of men, and not only Adam, that God ordered angels to submit to Adam and that therefore human beings were already living on this earth when angels received this command. It is, thus, wrong to conclude that the human race began with Adam, that its whole life is only a little more than six thousand years and that the different races now living on this earth are all necessarily descended from Adam.
The aborigines of Australia or the Red Indians of America or the Negroes of Africa may not be the descendants of the Adam about whom the Quran speaks in the verse under comment. See also 2: 31.

As already pointed out, events which cannot be literally shown to have occurred on this earth must be regarded as having taken place in a figurative sense. That figurative language has actually been used in this narrative is clear from the following facts:—

1. The angels were bidden to perform سجدة (falling prostrate before Adam) which is not permissible for any being other than God. So God could not command the angels to fall prostrate before Adam in the literal sense of the words. These words must therefore be taken only in the figurative sense i.e. that of submitting and rendering every kind of help. This is why the Arabic expression السجدة has here been translated as “submit to,” which is a perfectly correct rendering according to the figurative idiom of the Arabic language.

2. The command to fall prostrate before Adam was given to the angels only; but Iblis who is not an angel, is also apparently included in it; which proves this inclusion also to be a figurative one.

3. Iblis is represented in the Quran as having been created from fire (7:13), and he is also described as being one of the جن (Jinn) which signifies an invisible creation (18:51). So he must have been invisible to Adam who was in all respects like other human beings. But he is here represented as having appeared to Adam in a visible form and having talked to him face to face. This shows that the word شيطان (Satan) has been used in the following verses in a figurative sense, and that it does not refer to the Evil Spirit which tempts men.

4. It is said that when Adam and his wife tasted of the forbidden tree, their nakedness became manifest to them. But we know of no tree on this earth the tasting of which has the property of making a person realize his nakedness. So we will have to take 'the tree' and 'the nakedness' also in a figurative sense.

5. We are told in 20:119 that when God placed Adam in the garden, He told him that he would not become naked therein. But in 7:23 we are told that he did in fact become naked. So one of the two statements will have to be taken figuratively.

The straight and simple meaning of the verse is only this: the angels are bidden to submit to Adam and to help him in his work. This commandment was given to the angels when Adam was made a Prophet. As one of the functions of the angels is to exhort men to do virtuous deeds, they were commanded to help Adam by instilling good ideas into the minds of men and exhorting them to accept Adam as a Messenger of God. The chief angel is Gabriel. Similarly, there are evil spirits whose chief is Iblis. The evil spirits make evil suggestions to men and incite them to disobey God. So, while the angels in obedience to God's command submitted to Adam, Iblis, chief of the evil spirits, refused to submit to him and to help him in his work.

It should be remembered that the incident mentioned here is in no way connected with the first progenitor of the human race, who may be called the first Adam. It is only with the later Adam (who lived on this earth about six thousand years ago and from whom Noah and Abraham and their posterity were directly descended) that the present story is connected. See also notes on 2:31 & 2:35.
13. *God said, 'What prevented thee from submitting when I commanded thee?'* He said, 'I am better than he. Thou hast created me of fire while him hast Thou created of clay.'

14. *God said,* "Then go down hence; it is not for thee to be arrogant here. Get out; thou art certainly of those who are abased."

15. *He said,* "Grant me respite till the day when they will be raised up."

16. *God said,* "Thou shalt be of those who are given respite."

17. *He said:* "Now, since Thou hast adjudged me as lost, I will assuredly lie in wait for them on Thy straight path."

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917. **Commentary:**
What is represented in the present verse as a dialogue between God and Iblis does not necessarily show that an exchange of words actually took place between the two. The words may only depict a state of things, a picture of the conditions that came into existence as a result of the refusal of Iblis to submit to Adam. The verb قال (said) as shown under 2:31 and 2:34 does not always signify the actual uttering of words, being sometimes used to represent only a state of affairs.

For an explanation of the words "fire" and "clay" see 2:81 and 3:50.

918. **Commentary:**

There being no noun mentioned in the verse to which the pronoun مَهْ (it) implied in the expression مَهْ (hence) refers, it may be taken to denote the condition or state or position in which Iblis was, before he refused to submit to Adam. Thus the expression, go down hence, signifies, "be thou degraded from thy present position."

919. **Commentary:**

The resurrection to which the words, when they will be raised up, refer is not the general resurrection of mankind decreed for the Hereafter but the spiritual resurrection of man that comes into being whenever a Prophet is raised. Iblis can lead man astray only so long as he is not spiritually resurrected. But once a man attains the spiritual stage which is designated by the term صُرُفَ (rebirth), Iblis can do him no harm. It is indeed a similar spiritual stage which is mentioned in the words, As to My servants, thou (Satan) shalt certainly have no power over them (17:66).

920. **Important Words:**

اغري (Thou hast adjudged me as lost). اغري (which again is derived from غري which means, he erred;
18. 'Then will I surely come upon them from before them and from behind them and from their right and from their left, and Thou wilt not find most of them to be grateful.'

19. God said: 'Get out hence, despised and banished. Whosoever of them shall follow thee, I will surely fill Hell with you all.'

20. 'And o Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden and eat therefrom wherever you will, but approach not this tree lest you be among the wrongdoers.'

he deviated from the right way; he acted ignorantly; he failed in his object and was disappointed; he was lost; he perished; his life became unpleasant. It means, he caused him to err; or he caused him to deviate from the right course; he caused him to be disappointed, or to fail in attaining his desire; he seduced him, or misled him; or he caused him to be lost or to perish; he declared or adjudged him to be lost; he destroyed him; or he punished him for erring; or he called upon him to do a thing as a result of which he deviated from the right course and was lost (Lane, Lisân, Aqrab & Mufradât).

Commentary:
Iblîs here declares that as God had adjudged him as lost, he would now tempt and waylay men and cause them to be lost even as he himself was lost. This work becomes his life's function. See also 2:35.

The particle  إِنْ (since) in the clause فَإِنْ يَغِرُّونَ may also be taken in the sense of "swearing", in which case the clause would mean, "I swear by Thy having adjudged me as lost."

921. Commentary:
Note the network of seductions threatened by Satan. But the great truth still stands and shall ever stand: As to My servants, thou (Satan) shalt certainly have no power over them (17:66). The refuge certainly lies in God only, the Lord of man and the Lord of Satan and indeed the Lord of the worlds.

922. Commentary:
The verse makes it clear that Iblîs will not be allowed to waylay those chosen servants of God who would have attained to the exalted stage of spiritual re-birth. He will not also be able to force men to disobey God; for, as the verse clearly points out, only those will come under his influence who themselves choose to 'follow' him.

922a. Commentary:
See 2:36.
21. But *Satan whispered evil suggestions to them so that he might make known to them what was hidden from them of their shame, and said, 'Your Lord has only forbidden you this tree, lest you should become angels or such beings as live for ever.'

22. And He swore to them, saying, 'Surely I am a sincere counsellor unto you.'

923. Important Words:

"(whispered evil suggestions) literally means, he spoke in a low voice; he whispered. They say i.e. Satan spoke to him something evil in which there is no good. means, the man's reason was affected and he spoke in a disorderly manner. (waswās) means, the act of whispering; evil suggestion. (waswās) with different vowel point means, melancholia; Satan (Aqrab).

(their shame). is the plural of which is derived from which means, it was or became evil, foul or abominable. means, any evil, foul, unseemly or abominable saying or action or habit or practice; any saying or action of which one is ashamed when it appears, and which one would like to hide; any disgracing action or thing; the external portion of the organs of generation of a man or of a woman; the anus; corpse or dead body; nakedness (Lane & Aqrab). The word is also sometimes figuratively applied to such weaknesses of a man as lie concealed within him.

Commentary:

As the place where Adam was made to reside has been metaphorically described in the Quran as a garden, therefore in the description that follows the metaphor is continued and Adam is represented as forbidden to approach a certain 'tree', which was not a tree in its literal sense but a certain family or tribe from which he was bidden to keep aloof, because the members of that family were his enemies and they would have spared no pains to do him harm. For the meaning of the word (tree) see 2:36.

Another reading of the word i.e. two angels, is i.e. two kings or rulers. This reading is corroborated by 20:121 i.e. Shall I lead thee to the tree of eternity, and to a kingdom which shall never become decayed.

The wicked man who is here represented as Satan worked his mischievous plan as follows: He came to Adam and said that the reason why God had forbidden him to have anything to do with the family referred to was none other than this that its members were inimically disposed to him and that they would have conspired to bring about his downfall, if he had then contracted intimate relations with them. But as the family had subsequently become friendly towards him, the danger no longer existed; nay, the family would now even prove a source of strength for him. God's
23. So he caused them to fall into disobedience by deceit. And when they tasted of the tree, their shame became manifest to them and they began to stick the leaves of the Garden together over themselves. And their Lord called them, saying, 'Did I not forbid you that tree and tell you: verily Satan is to you an open foe.'

Every person has certain weaknesses which are hidden even from himself but which become exposed at a time of strain and stress or when he is tempted and tried. For instance, some men are cowardly, but they are not generally conscious of their cowardice. When, however, they encounter a danger, and their heart fails them, they realize their weakness. So it was when Adam was tempted and deceived by Satan that he became aware of his natural weaknesses. The Quran does not
24. They said, "Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; and if Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, we shall surely be of the lost."  

say that the weaknesses of Adam and his wife became known to other people, but that they became known to themselves.

The word سرّة (treated under 7:21 above) is not used here in the sense of "nakedness" but rather of "objects of shame" or "weakness," because no man's nakedness is hidden from him. Some of Adam's weaknesses were indeed hidden from him and he came to realize them when his enemy lured him away from his position of security. Before this he did his work, aided and helped by divine grace which kept covered his failings and weaknesses; but when he allied himself with the family against which he had been warned, he was exposed and he realized, to his sorrow, how weak he was.

As Satan had succeeded in causing a split in the community and some of the weaker members had gone out of its fold, Adam gathered together the اوراق (leaves) of the garden i.e. the youth of the community and began to re-unite and re-organize his people with their help. It is generally the young men who, being mostly free from bias and regardless of dangers, follow and help the Prophets of God. Speaking of Moses, the Quran says: And none obeyed Moses, save some youths from among his people, because of the fear of Pharaoh and their chiefs (10:84).

It must be noted here that the being whom the Quran has represented as having refused to submit to Adam is called Iblis, while the person who tempted him is called Satan. This distinction is observed not only in the verse under comment, but in all the relevant verses throughout the Quran. This shows that, so far as this narrative is concerned, Satan and Iblis were two different persons. In fact, the word Shaitān (Satan) is applied not only to evil spirits but to certain human beings also who, on account of their evil nature and wicked deeds, become, as it were, fiends incarnate. Just as a man can advance in virtue and piety so as to become like an angel, similarly he may become morally so depraved and degenerate as to be called a devil. Thus the Shaitān who tempted Adam and caused him to slip was not an invisible evil spirit but a wicked man of flesh and blood, a devil from among human beings, a manifestation of Satan, and an agent of Iblis. He was a member of the family which Adam had been bidden to avoid. The Holy Prophet tells us that his name was Ḥārith, literally meaning a farmer (Tirmidhī, ch. on Ṭafṣīr) which is further evidence of his being a human being and not an evil spirit. See also 2:15 & 2:37.

Adam's error lay in taking this man-devil for a well-wisher, although God had warned him against having anything to do with him.

925. Commentary:

Adam did not long remain in error. He soon realized his mistake and hastened to turn to God in repentance.
25. He said, "Go forth, some of you being enemies of others. And for you there is an abode on the earth and a provision for a time."

26. He said, "Therein shall you live, and therein shall you die, and therefrom shall you be brought forth."

27. O children of Adam, We have indeed sent down to you raiment to cover your shame, and to be an elegant dress; but the raiment of righteousness—that is the best. That is one of the Signs of Allah, that they may remember.

926. Commentary:
The verse shows that Adam was commanded to emigrate from the land of his birth because enmity and hatred had sprung up between different members of his community. This constitutes a further evidence of the fact that “the garden” which Adam was bidden to leave was not the Heaven or Paradise of the Quran, because, as the Quran itself tells us, Paradise is a place from which nobody is ever turned out (15: 49), nor can Satan deceive or even approach any one there. It appears that Adam emigrated from Mesopotamia, the land of his birth, to a neighbouring land. The emigration was perhaps a temporary one, and Adam may have returned to his native land not long after. Indeed, the words, a provision for a time, contain a veiled hint at the emigration being a temporary one.

927. Commentary:
Adam is warned in this verse to be careful in future; for it was in his native land that he was now to live for ever.

928. Important Words:
1. ريش (elegant dress) is the substantive from راشه. They say, i.e. he feathered it, namely an arrow; he fed him and gave him drink and clad him; he strengthened and aided him; he helped him to obtain his subsistence; He (God) restored him from a state of poverty to a state of wealth or competence; he did good to him. ريش means, feathers; plumage of birds; clothing; or superb or fine clothing; wealth; the means of subsistence; household goods or furniture (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
This verse mentions two objects which our dress is meant to serve, viz., (1) to cover our nakedness and (2) to serve as a decoration and embellishment and make us look elegant. With these two objects of clothing before us it is indeed regrettable that clothing has continued
28. O children of Adam, let not Satan seduce you, even as he turned your parents out of the Garden, stripping them of their raiment that he might show them their shame. Truly he sees you, he and his tribe, from where you see them not. Surely, "We have made satans friends for those who believe not."

29. And when they commit a foul deed, they say: 'We found our fathers doing it, and Allah has enjoined it upon us?' Say, 'Allah never enjoins foul deeds. Do you say of Allah that which you know not?'

929. Commentary:

The Evil Spirit called شيطان (Shaitan) and those of his kind, are generally invisible to the human eye. They exercise their influence imperceptibly and search for the hidden weaknesses of man in order to expose him and confirm him in his evil ways. Shaitan is a descriptive name, meaning "one who has become removed from God." It is only by being removed away from God that one perishes. For a detailed explanation of the word see 2:37.

The expression, We have made satans friends for those who believe not, shows that Satan and his associates exercise their pernicious influence only on those who are already evilly disposed.

930. Commentary:

This verse, applied generally, gives an apposite description of those who follow Satan as stated in the preceding verse. It may also particularly apply to Christians who allege that Adam sinned and that it is from him that sin came as a heritage to his posterity who, therefore,
30. Say, "My Lord has enjoined justice. And fix your attention aright at every time and place of worship, and call upon Him, making yourselves sincere towards Him in religion. As He brought you into being, so shall you return."

31. "Some has He guided, and as for others error has become their desert. They have taken evil ones for friends to the exclusion of Allah, and they think that they are rightly guided.

The words, "As He brought you into being, so shall you return," are important because they point to the great truth that just as our bodies gradually develop in the wombs of our mothers, so will our souls pass through a similar process of development after our death. We should, therefore, be very careful about our souls.
32. O children of Adam, look to your adornment at every time and place of worship, and eat and drink but "exceed not the bounds; surely, He does not love those who exceed the bounds.932

33. Say, 'Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has produced for His servants, and the good things of His providing?' Say, 'They are for the believers in the present life and exclusively for them on the Day of Resurrection. Thus do We explain the Signs for a people who have knowledge.'933

932. Commentary:
The adornment mentioned in the verse may either be physical or spiritual. Taking it in the physical sense, the verse enjoins believers to go to a place of worship, as far as possible, in a clean and decent dress, free from physical impurities and evil smell. The Holy Prophet is reported to have forbidden Muslims to go to a mosque after having eaten onions, garlic, etc., as the bad smell of these things causes discomfort to others. He is also reported to have enjoined the Faithful to take frequent baths, especially before the great congregational Prayer on Friday. Taken in the spiritual sense, the verse would mean that Prayers should be offered with a pure and sincere heart free from distracting thoughts.

The latter part of the verse embodies a basic commandment about eating and drinking. It has been joined to the commandment relating to "adornment at a place of worship," firstly because clothing and eating are allied subjects, and secondly to indicate that while issuing a commandment about Prayers, which is a spiritual matter, Islam does not overlook man's physical requirements.

The words, exceed not the bounds, signify: (1) that one should not over-eat oneself and (2) that one should not always use the same kind of food, but should vary it from time to time. Animal foods, vegetables, fruits, etc. should all be eaten in proper quantity and proper proportion. In this connection see The Teachings of Islam by Ahmad, the Promised Messiah.

933. Commentary:
Islam being not a religion of monasticism, the verse implies a rebuke for those who forbid the use of pure and good things.

The good and pure things of God's provision, which are really meant for, and deserved by, believers only are also shared by disbelievers in this life; but in the life to come they will be enjoyed by believers only, to the exclusion of disbelievers.
34. Say, "My Lord has only forbidden foul deeds, whether open or secret, and sin and wrongful transgression, and that you associate with Allah that for which He has sent down no authority, and that you say of Allah that of which you have no knowledge."\(^934\)

35. And for every people there is a term, and when their term is come, they cannot remain behind a single moment, nor can they get ahead of it.\(^935\)

\(^{934}\) Commentary:
The verse draws our attention to the purity of divine teachings by pointing out that all evil things are forbidden by Islam. But at the same time it reminds the reader that there are certain things the evil of which is generally hidden from men. These, too, are forbidden and most of them have been mentioned by the Holy Prophet.

The verse next proceeds to explain what it means by فواحش (foul deeds). It divides them into three classes: (1) اثم (the sin of disobedience or of falling short in the performance of a duty), and بغي (transgression i.e. exceeding the proper bounds). (2) مك (associating with God that for which He has sent down no authority). The فواحش (foul deeds) of this class mean idolatrous beliefs and polytheistic ideals. (3) "That you say against Allah what you do not know." By the فواحش of this class are meant the false and evil words we utter. Thus we are enjoined to be pure not only in thought but also in word and deed.

\(^{935}\) Important Words:

- **يسقط مون** (get ahead) is derived from i.e. he preceded; or he came before; or he headed (someone else). يسقط القروم also means, he preceded the people, or he went ahead of the people, or he went before them (Lane & Aqrab). As one who gets ahead of a thing virtually leaves it behind, therefore the idea in يسقط مون (get ahead) is that of escaping.

- **يساذارون** (remain behind) is derived from i.e. he remained behind the people. يساةق (remain behind) also means, he or it was put behind or put off or delayed (Lane & Aqrab). As one who remains behind a thing virtually puts the thing off, therefore the idea in يساةق (remain behind) is that of putting off.

**Commentary:**
The verse means that when the time fixed for the punishment of a people comes, it cannot be averted. Disbelievers, who have incurred it, can neither escape it nor put it off by a single moment.
36. O children of Adam, if Messengers come to you from among yourselves, rehearsing My Signs unto you, then whoso shall fear God and do good deeds, on them shall come no fear nor shall they grieve. 936

37. But those who reject Our Signs and turn away from them with disdain,—these shall be the inmates of the Fire; they shall abide therein. 937

936. Commentary:
The point is worthy of special note that, like some previous verses (e.g., 7:27, 28 & 32), the address in the words, O children of Adam, is here made to the people of the Holy Prophet's time and to the generations that are yet to be born and not to the people who lived in the distant past and followed Adam immediately. This form of address has been employed with a view to introducing an important subject which was to be conveyed to future generations of mankind. This is to the effect that Messengers of God will continue to appear as long as the children of Adam live upon this earth and that the opposition of the Holy Prophet’s enemies would not bring about his downfall nor the cessation of prophethood. The great promise which was held out to the progeny of Adam in the time of Adam (2:39) and according to which Messengers of God appeared among different peoples in different countries at different times will continue to be fulfilled till the end of time.

The words, if Messengers come to you from among yourselves, do not mean that Messengers of God may or may not come, just as the words, If there comes to you guidance from Me (2:39), do not mean that guidance might or might not come. Indeed, the word ل (if) is intended to mean that if you happen to live at a time when a Messenger of God appears, you should not fail to accept him. Thus the word is simply meant to leave the time unfixed; the Messenger of God may appear in one generation or another but whenever he appears, he must be accepted.

The words, rehearsing My Signs unto you, hint at the fact that the Messengers who were to come after the Holy Prophet were to bring no new Law but were to follow the Law of Islam; they were simply to “rehearse” or recite the verses already revealed in the Quran.

937. Commentary:
This verse serves as a particular warning for Muslims that they should not make light of the Messengers who would appear among them and should not reject them. The Law has indeed been made perfect in the Quran; but that does not mean that later Messengers of God may be rejected with impunity.
38. "Who is, then, more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah or gives the lie to His Signs? It is these who shall have their lot as ordained till when Our messengers shall visit them to take away their souls, they shall say, 'Where is that which you used to call upon beside Allah?' They will answer, 'We cannot find them;' and they will bear witness against themselves that they were disbelievers."

39. He will say, 'Enter ye into the Fire among the nations of Jinn and men who passed away before you.' Every time a people enters, it shall curse its sister (people) until, when they have all successively arrived therein, the last of them will say of the first of them, 'Our Lord, these led us astray, so give them a double punishment of the Fire.' He will say, 'For each preceding party there shall be double punishment, but you do not know.'

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938. **Commentary:**

The verse gives the reasons why the rejectors of divine Messengers deserve severe punishment. People incur the wrath of God because they treat His Messenger as a liar and reject the heavenly Signs he brings with him. Indeed, impostors and the rejectors of true Messengers are equally doomed and can never escape the punishment ordained for them.

The words, who shall have their lot as ordained, mean that the rejectors of God's Messengers will see before their very eyes the fulfilment of the prophecies foretelling their defeat and discomfiture and shall taste of the punishment promised to them for opposing God's Messengers.

939. **Important Words:**

اءادركوا (successively arrived) is derived from درك. They say درك (i.e. the rain dropped with close consecutiveness). إذا أداركوا means, he attained, reached or overtook him.

اءادركوا which is the same as اداركوا means, they attained, reached, overtook or came up with one another; or the last of them attained, reached, overtook or came up with the first of them. The expression حتى إذا اداركوا فيها جميعا means, until when they have overtaken one another; or until they have successively arrived therein all together (Lane).

**Commentary:**

The words, For each preceding party there
40. And the first of them will say to the last of them: 'You have then no superiority over us; taste therefore the punishment for all that you did.'

41. aThose who reject Our Signs and turn away from them with disdain, the gates of the spiritual firmament will not be opened for them, nor will they enter Heaven until a camel goes through the eye of a needle. And thus do We requite the offenders.940

shall be double punishment, are explained in a saying of the Holy Prophet which is to the effect that he who starts a good practice, i.e., he who does a good deed in such a manner that others copy and follow him, shall have a double reward, and he who starts a bad practice shall have a double punishment. In fact, a person who does a good or a bad deed not only benefits or suffers by it himself but leaves it as an example to follow for those who come after him. He, therefore, deserves a double reward or punishment as the case may be. The above-quoted words of the verse are also intended to point to the fact that each party that follows another also precedes the one that follows it. So there is no question of awarding double punishment to one and letting the other go with only single punishment.

940. Important Words:

 camel is the noun-infinitive from جمل. They say جمل الشيء i.e. he collected the thing. جمل الحبل means, he melted the fat. جملة or جماعة with different vowel points at the central root letter, means, he was or became beautiful, goodly or pleasing in person or behaviour. جمل means, a he-camel; a full grown he-camel; a camel; palm-trees as being likened to the he-camel in respect of their tallness and bigness; a large sea fish or whale (Lane.) It also means a cable or a ship's rope (Aqrab).

Commentary:

With this verse begins a description of the life after death, a brief reference to which was made in the three preceding verses.

Heaven is the lofty abode of true believers. The Holy Prophet used to say that it is the souls of the righteous that shall reside in the garden of Heaven, while those of the wicked shall descend into the pit of Hell.

The words, the gates of the spiritual firmament will not be opened for them, signify that rejectors of God's Signs are never vouchsafed the spiritual knowledge and the nearness of God granted to believers.

Though in the translation the word جمل has been rendered as 'camel' following a parallel expression in the New Testament (Matt. 19: 24), yet the Arabic sentence may be better explained by using the word 'rope', for a rope rather than a camel bears a resemblance to the thread which is passed through the eye of a needle. The expression, until a camel (or a rope) goes through the eye of a needle, signifies that it will be impossible for rejectors of God's Signs to enter Heaven.
42. aThey shall have a bed of Hell, and over them coverings of the same. And thus do We requite the unjust. 941

43. But as to those who believe and do good works,—and b We task not any soul beyond its capacity—these are the inmates of Heaven; they shall abide therein. 942

44. And c We shall remove whatever rancour may be in their hearts. d Beneath them shall flow rivers. And they shall say, e All praise belongs to Allah Who has guided us to this. And we could not have found guidance, if Allah had not guided us. The Messengers of our Lord did indeed bring the truth.' And it shall be proclaimed unto them: This is the Heaven which you have been given for an inheritance as a reward for what you used to do.' 943

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941. Important Words:

 غِرَاش (coverings) is the plural of غَنْطى which is derived from غَنِّي. They say غَنْطى i.e. it covered or concealed him; or it overcame or overwhelmed him. غَنْطى also means, he came to him. غَنْطى (of which غِرَاش is the plural) means, a covering; a calamity or misfortune; punishment; fire of Hell; a man’s resorters such as hangers-on, seekers of favours, servants and dependants; also visitors, guests and friends (Lane).

Commentary:

The word غِرَاش rendered as “coverings” also means “servants,” and “dependants.” Taking the word in the latter sense, the sentence may mean that disbelievers will have their believing “servants” and “dependants” above them on the Day of Judgement.

942. Commentary:

The parenthetical clause, We task not any soul beyond its capacity, contradicts the Christian dogma that sin being ingrained in human nature, it is beyond the power of man to get rid of it, and that this natural disability of man is remedied only by belief in the atonement of Jesus. The word ‘task’ shows that by ‘good works’ are meant such good works as are in the power of man to do.

943. Important Words:

 غَلْ (rancour) is from the verb غَل which means, it entered (into a thing) or it caused to enter. Thus it is both transitive and intransitive. غَل also means, it entered and became mixed up or confused with a thing. غَل فَلَان كـذا غَل means, such a one took that thing secretly and concealed it.
45. And the inmates of Heaven will call out to the inmates of Hell, saying: 'We have indeed found what our Lord promised us to be true. Have you too found what your Lord promised you to be true?' They shall say: 'Yes'. Then a proclaimer shall proclaim between them, saying, 'The curse of Allah is on the wrongdoers—

46. "Who turn men away from the path of Allah and seek to make it crooked, and who are disbelievers in the Hereafter." The word ٍٰٓ (this) in the clause, This is the Heaven, is used to point to a thing. Heaven is here pointed out to believers, as they have not yet entered it. But they have at the same time been declared to be "the inmates of Heaven," because they have already earned it by their good works. Moreover, true heavenly life begins in this very world, although the full manifestation thereof will be in the next. See 2:26 & 55:47.

944. Commentary:
A highly significant dialogue between the inmates of Heaven and of Hell begins from this verse.

The word ٍٰٓ (wrongdoers) may also be rendered as "idolaters" or "worshippers of false deities." See 31:14.

945. Commentary:
This verse defines and qualifies the "wrongdoers" mentioned in the preceding verse. The expression, and seek to make it crooked, means that the wrongdoers desire to corrupt true religion. They are not only themselves wicked but also try to make others so, and even seek to corrupt the religion sent for their good. They also disbelieve in the Hereafter.
47. And between the two there shall be a partition, and on the elevated places there shall be men who will know all by their marks. And they will call out to the people of Heaven. ‘Peace be on you.’ These will not have yet entered it although they will be hoping to do so.946

48. And when their eyes are turned towards the people of the Fire, they will say, ‘Our Lord, put us not with the unjust people.’ 947

946. Important Words:

عرف (elevated places) is the plural of ‘urf (an elevated place) which is substantive from عرف. They say عرف الشهود i.e. he knew the thing; he was or became acquainted with the thing; he knew it by means of the five senses; or he knew it by mental perception or reflection. They say عرف على القوم i.e. he was or became manager or superintendent of the affairs of the people, being acquainted with their circumstances. عرف (‘urf) means, goodness, favour, bounty and a thing freely given; good fellowship with others; an elevated place; an elevated or overtopping back of anything high (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

It is generally men of high dignity and distinguished position that are seated on elevated places. According to Ḥasan and Mujāhid, the men on the elevated places will be the elite among the believers or the most learned among them; according to Kirmānī, they will be the Martyrs. Some others think that they will be the Prophets and this appears to be the most correct view. The men seated on elevated places will not only command a better view, but, on account of their high rank and position, will also be better informed. They will know the rank and station of every person from his very appearance.

The words, These will not have yet entered it, refer to those would-be dwellers of Heaven who will not have yet entered it, but will be hoping to do so soon. The people on the elevated places will recognize them as dwellers of Heaven, even though they will not have yet entered it.

It is a commonly held, but nevertheless a wrong, view that the men on the A‘rāf (elevated places) will be those middling persons whose case will not have yet been decided, it being, as it were, still under consideration. But if such had been the case, they could not have rebuked the inmates of the Fire in the manner in which they are represented to be doing in 7:49 below. There is also no sense in placing middling persons on elevated places while the true believers, including Martyrs, Prophets, etc., occupy lower ones.

947. Commentary:

The passive voice used in the words, when their eyes are turned, shows that the eyes of the men on the elevated places will be made to turn towards the inmates of Hell by some higher power i.e. God, with some definite purpose which was to provide occasion for making certain announcements.
49. And the occupants of the elevated places will call out to men whom they will know by their marks, and say, "Your multitude availed you not, nor your arrogance."

50. "Are these the men about whom you swore that Allah would not extend mercy to them? To them it has been said, 'Enter Paradise; no fear shall come upon you, nor shall you grieve.'"

51. And the inmates of the Fire will call out to the inmates of Heaven, 'Pour out on us some water or some of that which Allah has provided for you.' They will say, 'Verily, Allah has forbidden them both to disbelievers—

The last sentence of the verse spoken by the men on the elevated places, i.e., Our Lord, put us not with the unjust people, does not show that those who will utter these words will yet be in a state of uncertainty and that their case will not yet have been decided. They are mere words of piety or of God-fearingness that even a Prophet would utter when he sees an object of God's punishment.

948. Commentary:
The occupants of the elevated places, i.e., the Prophets, shall call out to certain persons from among the people, to whom they had been sent and whom they will recognize by their marks, telling them to see the end of their opposition.

The particle ל (not) may also be taken in the interrogative sense, meaning "what". In that case the sentence would be rendered as "of what avail was your multitude to you and your arrogance?" In this sense the sentence would constitute a very pointed rebuke by the Prophets to the dwellers of Hell.

949. Commentary:
The reference in the word هؤلاء (these) is to the would-be inmates of Heaven. The Prophets will address the inmates of Hell, telling them to look at the inmates of Heaven and then will ask them, "Are these the men about whom you swore that Allah would not extend mercy to them?" And then without waiting for an answer the Prophets would turn to the would-be inmates of Heaven and ask them to come forward and enter Paradise.

The words, Enter Paradise, show that the would-be inmates of Heaven had not yet entered Paradise but hoped to do so soon.

950. Important Words:
 eléš (pour) is derived from eléš which again is derived from eléš which means, it (water, etc.) overflowed, or poured forth from fulness. eléš means, he filled (a vessel) so
52. "Those who took their religion for a pastime and a sport, and whom the life of the world beguiled." This day, then, shall We forget them as they forgot the meeting of this day of theirs, and as they used to deny Our Signs.\(^{951}\)

53. And surely We have brought them a Book which We have expounded with knowledge, a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe.\(^{952}\)

that it overflowed; he made it (water, etc.) to flow or run; he poured out water, etc. (Lane).

**Commentary:**

The use of the words اِنْضِرُوا عَلَيْنا (pour on us) by the inmates of Hell implies that they would in a way flatter the inmates of Heaven by saying to them that they had enjoyed God's blessings (which were virtually overflowing) to their heart's content, and would then beg of them to give them a little of the abundant good that God had bestowed upon them. This condition of the inmates of Hell is well illustrated by the parable of Abraham and Lazarus in Luke 16:23-24.

951. **Commentary:**

This verse qualifies the word "disbelievers" occurring in the preceding verse. The disbelievers spoken of at the end of that verse were convinced in their hearts of the truth of Islam but, as they took their religion as a pastime, they refused to listen to the dictates of reason and the voice of their conscience. So God forgot them even as they had forgotten the meeting of their Lord.

952. **Commentary:**

The Book referred to in this verse is the Quran. It embodies three distinct things:

1. "Knowledge" essential for recognizing and knowing God;
2. "Guidance" properly to discharge the duties due to God and to observe the rights of man; and
54. Do they wait only for the fulfilment of warnings thereof? On the day when the fulfilment thereof shall come, those who had forgotten it before shall say, \textit{The Messengers of our Lord did indeed bring the truth. Have we then any intercessors to intercede for us? Or could we be sent back so that we might do other than that which we used to do? They have indeed ruined their souls and that which they used to fabricate has failed.\footnote{53}}

55. Surely, your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days; then He settled Himself on the Throne.

\footnote{54} And He makes the night cover the day, which pursues it swiftly. \textit{And He created} the sun and the moon and the stars, \textit{all made subservient by His command. Verily, His is the creation and the command. Blessed is Allah, the Lord of the worlds.\footnote{55}}

\footnote{53} Important Words:

\textit{ت(alert) (fulfilment) means, revealing, disclosing, or expounding; interpretation; and issue, result or final sequel. The words} \textit{هل يُرُنون إلا تأويله} \textit{mean, do they wait for aught save the result to which their case will come by the appearance of the promises and threats which it (the Book) has foretold (Lane). See also 3:8. For the sake of convenience the word has been rendered here as “fulfilment of warnings.”}

\footnote{54} Important Words:

\textit{عرش (Throne) is substantive from the verb} \textit{عَرَس} \textit{which means, he constructed or built a shed or a building, etc.} \textit{عَرْش البَيْت} \textit{means, he built or constructed the house.} \textit{عَرَس بالمكان} \textit{means, he put up, or lodged, in the house. The saying} \textit{من العرش إلى الأرض} \textit{means, from the highest sphere to the lowness of the earth.} \textit{عرش} \textit{means, a shed or building constructed for shade; a house in an absolute sense; a dwelling or a place of abode; the wood upon which one stands when drawing water; the roof of a house and such a perfect exemplar as the Holy Prophet, except that God’s promised punishment should overtake them!}

Commentary:

The verse constitutes at once a rebuke and a warning to the disbelievers. What are they waiting for, asks the verse, after they have been given such a perfect Book as the Quran
or the like; the throne or the seat of a king; the means of support of a thing or an affair; might or power; regal power; sovereignty; dominion. The expression اسماء الزمن means, He (God) reigned as King; He settled Himself on the Throne; He was or became established on the Throne of Power and Majesty (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2:30 & 6:142.

**Commentary:**

The word يوم (day) also means “time” absolutely (1:4); and it is in this sense that the word has been used in the present verse. It is difficult to say how long these six periods of time were in which, according to this verse, the heavens and the earth were created. They may have extended over hundreds of thousands of years. The word أيام (days) evidently is not used here in the sense of ordinary days of 24 hours, because such days are determined by the rising and setting of the sun and the sun itself being a part of this universe came into existence simultaneously with it.

The word ثم (then) shows that after completing the creation of the heavens and the earth in six “days” or six “periods,” God settled Himself on the Throne on the seventh day. As the Arabic word سبع (seven) is generally used as a symbol of perfection, the expression would signify that on the seventh day when God became established on the Throne of His Power and Majesty, the universe became in perfect working order.

The “night and day” mentioned in the clause, He makes the night cover the day, have been mentioned here as symbolizing sin and virtue. In fact, the phenomenon of sin in a perfectly ordered universe is explainable only by the phenomenon of night. Just as that part of the earth which is hidden from the sun is covered by darkness; similarly when a man turns away from God, he becomes involved in the darkness of sin; but when he turns his face towards God, the day dawns for him and he basks in the light of truth and righteousness.

The words, He makes the night cover the day, which pursues it swiftly, are explained in 2:165 by the expression “the alternation of night and day.” The clause may also imply that it is God’s মনে or practice that after a period of darkness He brings a period of light so that mankind may not suffer.

By using the word مستخرات (all made subservient) with respect to the sun, the moon and the stars, the verse reminds us that it was not in the power of man to make all these planets serve him and that it is God alone Who has placed them at his service. Therefore if, in spite of these great favours, he would not listen to God’s voice, he would be marked as a transgressor and consequently merit His punishment.

The distinction between خلق (the creation) and أمر (the command) is that while the former generally means, the measuring out or evolving of a thing out of pre-existing matter, the latter means, bringing into being without matter by uttering the simple command “Be.” The clause, His is the creation and the command, may also mean that God has not only created the universe but also exercises authority and command over it.

For the words, He settled Himself on the Throne, see under 10:4 where the expressions “divine throne”, and “God’s settling on it” have been fully dealt with.
56. *Call upon your Lord in humility and in secret. Surely, He does not love the transgressors.*

57. And create not disorder in the earth after it has been set in order, and call upon Him in fear and hope. Surely, the mercy of Allah is nigh unto those who do good.

955. **Commentary:**
For an explanation of the words, *in humility and in secret,* see 6:64.

956. **Commentary:**
The expression, *after it has been set in order,* means that before the revelation of the Quran the disbelievers had some excuse for leading an unrighteous life; but now that a perfect guidance has come to them, they will not be allowed to go on making mischief and grovelling in sin and iniquity and leading unrighteous lives with impunity. The word *الغَيُّ (order)* refers to the good and ordered life that has come into being on account of the revelation of the Quran and the advent of the Holy Prophet.

The words, *call upon Him in fear and hope,* strike a golden mean. Some religions lay undue stress on fear, while others dangle before man the false hope of getting salvation and everlasting life through belief in a vicarious atonement. The Quran follows the middle course and teaches its followers to be both fearing and hopeful. A true Muslim is the most cautious and heedful of men. He walks in humility and constant fear of God, lest one false word, one irresponsible act should deprive him of God's mercy. But at the same time he is full of hope. He has faith in the all-embracing mercy of God. Thus it is a true Muslim alone who can keep the right balance between fear and hope which are the two important component parts of perfect faith necessary for perfect actions.

The words, *the mercy of Allah is nigh unto those who do good,* point out the way which leads to the acceptance of prayers. It is through the mercy of God that prayers are accepted, and the mercy of God comes only to the محسين (those who do good). A believer, therefore, should try to become a محسن in the true sense of the word, so that his prayers may be accepted. But it should be remembered that a محسن is not an ordinary doer of good. The word signifies "one who strives to be perfect in his deeds." A saying of the Holy Prophet describes a محسن as one who does a good deed as if he were actually seeing God or that at least God was seeing him.
58. And "He it is Who sends the winds as glad tidings before His mercy, till, when they bear a heavy cloud, We drive it to a dead land; then We send down water therefrom, and We bring forth therewith fruits of every kind. In like manner do We bring forth the dead that you may remember. 957

59. And as for the good land, its vegetation comes forth plentifully by the command of its Lord; and that which is bad, its vegetation does not come forth but scantily. In like manner do We vary the Signs for a people who are grateful. 958

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957. **Important Words:**

כבד (bear) is derived from קב ל . They say ה קב,i.e. the thing was or became few, small or scanty. קב ל means, he lifted, raised, bore or carried the thing (Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

The word רוח (mercy) in this verse refers to rain. Just as in the physical world rain is preceded by cool breezes which serve as its harbingers, similarly before a Prophet of God is to make his appearance, there is a sort of general religious awakening among men. This religious awakening was witnessed among the Arabs before the appearance of the Holy Prophet. There appeared among them certain individuals called Hanifs who rejected idolatry and believed in and preached the Oneness of God. In the present time also, the advent of Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, was preceded by a general religious awakening among the nations of the world.

The words, a dead land, literally mean, physically dead, but metaphorically the words also signify a spiritually dead land. Just as rain-water puts new life into a dead land and causes fruits, vegetables and corn to grow from it, similarly, the heavenly water of revelation breathes a new life into a people devoid of spiritual life. The verse thus holds out the promise that the bleak, arid and barren land of Arabia would soon blossom forth into a garden full of trees laden with fruit, and plants bearing fragrant flowers in consequence of the heavenly water that had descended on it. No wonder, indeed, that the Arabs, who had hitherto been regarded as the dregs and scum of humanity, suddenly emerged as teachers and leaders thereof.

958. **Commentary:**

Rain produces different effects upon different plots of land according to their nature and quality; so does divine revelation affect different men in different ways. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that there are three kinds of land: (a) the good level land which, when watered by rain, absorbs the rain water and yields good vegetation and brings forth abundant fruit; (b) the land which, being
60. We sent Noah to his people and he said, 'O my people, worship Allah, you have no other god but Him. Indeed, I fear for you the punishment of the great day.'

low-lying and rocky, only collects the water of rain but does not absorb it and so brings forth no vegetation but provides drinking water for man and beast; (c) the high stony ground which neither collects the water of rain nor absorbs it, being useless both for the purpose of vegetation and as a storage for rain-water. Similarly, men are of three kinds: (1) Those who not only accept but also profit by divine revelation. They are like the good level land which receives rain and yields good produce. (2) Those who do not themselves profit by the divine revelation, but receive it and keep it stored up for others to benefit thereby. They are like that piece of land which yields no produce, but from which men and beasts benefit by the water collected during the rain. (3) Those who neither derive any benefit from the divine revelation themselves nor keep it stored for the use of others. They are like that piece of land which neither yields any produce nor hoards up water so that men and beasts may drink from it.

959. Important Words:

Noah (Noah) a very ancient Prophet who, as the Bible tells us, lived nine generations after Adam and eleven generations before Abraham. (Gen. 5:3—32; Luke 3:34—38). His native land was Mesopotamia. He is believed to be the progenitor of the greater part of mankind. The word Noah (Noah) may, in Arabic, be considered to have been derived from نوح which means, he bewailed or mourned. They say نوحاً ملأ زوجها i.e. the woman bewailed or mourned over her dead husband.

The words, We sent Noah to his people, shows that the Deluge overtook only the people to whom Noah was sent. It was not a universal phenomenon, but the descendants of Noah may have carried the tale to distant lands.

The words نوح means, the pigeon cooed in a plaintive manner. The Prophet Noah is particularly known for the Flood that overtook his people as the result of his bewailings and lamentations before God for the persecution he had to suffer at the hands of his wicked people, most of whom perished in the Flood. His three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, are generally believed to be the ancestors of the three principal races of mankind. See also 11:26.

Commentary:

After having briefly described the great moral and spiritual reformation that the appearance of a Prophet brings about among a people, and the evil consequences to which opposition to him leads, the present verse proceeds to give illustrations of some of the nations of antiquity, beginning with the people of Noah, to show that those who oppose God's Prophets meet with nothing but destruction. Most of the different races now living on this earth are believed to be descended from Noah. His descendants seem to have spread in all directions, as may be seen from the story of the Deluge which is known to the people of Europe, Asia, Africa and even America.

The words, We sent Noah to his people, shows that the Deluge overtook only the people to whom Noah was sent. It was not a universal phenomenon, but the descendants of Noah may have carried the tale to distant lands.

The words نوح literally meaning “a great day,” have been used to signify a day of heavy punishment which was too dreadful to be forgotten.
61. "The chiefs of his people said: 'Surely, we see thee to be in manifest error.'

62. He said, 'O my people, there is no error in me, but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds.'

63. 'I deliver to you the messages of my Lord and give you sincere advice, and I know from Allah what you do not know.

64. 'Do you wonder that an exhortation has come to you from your Lord through a man from among yourselves, that he may warn you and that you may become righteous and that you may be shown mercy?'

960. Commentary:
It is worth noting that Noah's people do not here accuse him of imposture. They attribute to him merely an error of judgment and not fabrication or deliberate falsehood. This shows that they looked upon him as an upright man. Indeed, all Prophets, before they receive their mission from God, are looked upon as upright and virtuous men. It is only after they announce their heavenly mission that they are dubbed liars.

961. Commentary:
The words, 'but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds,' rebut the charge of error on Noah's part in a most beautiful and convincing manner. The rejectors of Noah claimed that he was in error or that he had lost his way. The argument given by Noah in refutation of this charge is to the effect that a person who is proceeding to a place may indeed be said to be unacquainted with the way or to have lost it owing to his having never trodden it before, but how can a person who is returning from a certain place be said not to know the way to that place and how can he possibly lose the way in leading others to it? So Noah could not be in error, for he was actually coming from God, and therefore there was no possibility of his wandering away from the path that leads to Him.

962. Commentary:
The reason why people so readily reject the Prophets of God is that they cannot persuade themselves to believe that divine revelation can come to a human being or that such an exalted spiritual rank as that of the bearer of a divine message can be conferred upon an ordinary person from among themselves. The verse under comment sets at rest this feeling of surprise and wonder in the disbelievers in a very appealing manner. It asks them, why do they wonder if an admonition has come to them from their Lord (Rabb), Who is not only their Creator but Who also nourishes
65. But they accused him of falsehood, so We saved him and those with him in the Ark, and We drowned those who rejected Our Signs. They were indeed a blind people.

66. And unto 'Ad We sent their brother Hüd. He said, 'O my people, worship Allah; you have no other deity but Him. Will you not then be God-fearing?'

Important Words:

"blind" or عين is the plural of عين meaning a blind man. The word is derived from عين meaning, he was or became blind in both eyes; or, figuratively, he was blind in respect of the mind; he erred and did not find the right way. عين means, blind in both eyes; blind in respect of the mind; erring (Lane).

Commentary:

In spite of all his arguments and appeals, the people rejected the Prophet Noah and began to treat him as a liar, for they were a "blind people" and could not see and understand the evidence and proofs of his truth. The Flood engulfed them all.

Important Words:

'Ad was the name of a tribe who lived in the distant past in a part of Arabia. In Arabic the verb عود means, he returned. For further description see 11:51.

Hüd was the name of the Prophet who was sent to 'Ad. He lived after Noah, being seventh in descent from him. In Arabic the word هود takes its derivation from هود i.e. he returned from evil to good; he repented and returned to truth; he became a Jew. The name هود is also applied to the Jewish people collectively in which case it is the plural of هو. See also 2:112.

Commentary:

After making mention of Noah, whose story is found in the lore of almost all nations, the Quran proceeds to deal with the Prophets that appeared in the Arabian peninsula particularly. These Prophets find mention in the Quran only. No reference to them is to be found in the Bible or in the general books of history, although they were well known to the Arabs through their national traditions.

The tribe of 'Ad, at one time, ruled over most of the fertile parts of greater Arabia, particularly Yemen, Syria and Mesopotamia. They were the first people to exercise dominion over practically the whole of Arabia. They are known as 'Adan or the former 'Ad.

The verse under comment shows that throughout the ages all the Prophets of God have brought identical teachings so far as the fundamental principles of religion are concerned.
67. The disbelieving chiefs of his people said, a We surely see thee lost in foolishness, and we surely think thee to be one of the liars.965

68. He replied, b O my people, there is no foolishness in me, but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds.966

69. c I deliver to you the messages of my Lord and I am to you a sincere and faithful counsellor.967

70. d Do you wonder that an exhortation has come to you from your Lord through a man from among yourselves that he may warn you? And remember the time when e He made you inheritors of His favours after the people of Noah, and increased you abundantly in constitution. Remember, then, the favours of Allah, that you may prosper.968

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965. Commentary:
By ascribing folly to Hūd, his people meant that he laboured under a misunderstanding as regards his mission. The word سفاهه (foolishness) is used to express almost the same idea as is expressed by the word خلافه (error) used in 7:61 above. It appears from this verse that the enemies of Hūd brought two charges against him, viz., of being in error and of lying.

966. Commentary:
The Prophet Hūd here refutes the charge of being in error by the same argument by which Noah refuted a similar charge (see 7:62 above). God being the fountain-head of all wisdom, he who comes from Him cannot be looked upon as foolish. The other charge is refuted in the next verse.

967. Commentary:
This verse contains the answer to the charge of lying brought against Hūd in 7:67 above. A person resorts to lying either because (1) he seeks thereby to gain some advantage, or (2) to do another person some harm or (3) because lying is a habit with him. Now Hūd refutes the charge by saying, I am to you a sincere and faithful counsellor, i.e. being sincere I have no selfish motive, nor do I wish evil to any one; on the contrary, I am solicitous of doing you good; and being faithful i.e., possessing faith, I am not in the habit of lying.

968. Important Words:
خليفه (inheritors of God's favours) is the plural of خليفة which is verbal adjective from خلف meaning, he came after, followed,
71. They said, "Hast thou come to us that we may worship Allah alone and forsake what our fathers used to worship. Bring us, then, that which thou threatenest us with, if thou art of the truthful." 969

72. He replied, "Indeed there have already fallen on you punishment and wrath from your Lord. Do you dispute with me about names which you have named,—you and your fathers,—for which Allah has sent down no authority? Wait then, "I am with you among those who wait." 970

Commentary:

See note on 7:64 above.

The 'Adites were a ruling nation. They were a mighty and powerful people. Their rule extended over vast territories. They were the first Arab nation to wield temporal power in Arabia.

969. Commentary:

Being unable to meet the arguments of Hūd, disbelievers took a new line and declared that they would rather die than give up the faith of their fathers. That it was the threatened punishment of God that they challenged Hūd to bring upon them is clear from the reply which he gave them and which is contained in the words: Indeed there have already fallen on you punishment and wrath from your Lord, occurring in the following verse.

970. Commentary:

This verse shows that one may follow one's fore-fathers only if one has the support of reason and not otherwise. Blind and unthinking following is condemned.
And We saved him and those who were with him, by Our mercy, and We cut off the last remnant of those who rejected Our Signs. And they were not believers.\(^{971}\)

And to Thamūd We sent their brother Ṣāliḥ. He said, 'O my people, worship Allah; you have no other deity but Him. Verily there has come to you a clear evidence from your Lord—this she-camel of Allah, a Sign for you. So leave her that she may feed in Allah’s earth, and do her no harm, lest a painful punishment seize you.'\(^{972}\)

Commentary:

The word ܠܢ (last remnant) also means “root” (see 6:46), in which case it may be taken to signify leaders of a community i.e. those who lead and organize opposition to a Prophet and devise plans to compass his ruin. The tribe of ‘Ād was destroyed by a furious wind, (see 69:7).

Important Words:

Thamūd was the name of a tribe that lived after ‘Ād. The name may have been derived from the Arabic root ܡܕ. They say ܕܢ i.e. he dug out a hole in the earth so that water might collect in it (Aqrab). The tribe Thamūd lived in the western parts of Arabia, having spread from Aden northward to Syria. They lived shortly before the time of Ishmael. Their territory was adjacent to that of ‘Ād, but they lived mostly in the hills. For a fuller note on the subject see 11:62.

Ṣāliḥ is an Arabic word being derived from سل ي i.e. he was or became good or righteous. سل ي means, a righteous person. See 2:12, 161. The Prophet Ṣāliḥ lived after Hūd and was probably a contemporary of Abraham.

Commentary:

The camel formed the chief means of conveyance in Arabia, and it was on his she-camel that the Prophet Ṣāliḥ used to travel from place to place to preach his message. So he told his people that placing obstruction in the way of the free movements of the she-camel or doing harm to it would be tantamount to obstructing the work with which God had entrusted him, and that if they did not stand out of her way, God’s punishment would surely descend upon them. Thus it was that the she-camel was meant as a Sign for the tribe of Thamūd. There was nothing unusual about the camel itself. It was an ordinary animal. The sanctity that attached to it was that God had declared it to be a sign and a symbol of the sanctity and inviolability of the person of the Prophet Ṣāliḥ, and doing an injury to it was declared to be tantamount to doing an injury to Ṣāliḥ himself and to hampering his work.

\(^{971}\) Commentary:

\(^{972}\) Important Words:
75. And remember the time when He made you inheritors of His favours after 'Ad, and assigned you an abode in the land; you build palaces in its plains, and you hew the mountains into houses. Remember, therefore, the favours of Allah and commit not iniquity in the earth causing disorder.  

76. The chief men of his people who were arrogant said to those who were reckoned weak—those among them who believed—'Do you know for certain that Šālih is one sent by his Lord?' They answered, 'Surely, we believe in that with which he has been sent.'

77. Those who were arrogant said, 'Verily, we do disbelieve in that in which you believe.'

The expression, and you hew the mountains into houses, allude to their summer residences in the hills. The tribe of Thamūd were a cultured people—industrious, wealthy and resourceful. Judged by the standards of that time, they led a luxurious and comfortable life, going up the hills in the hot season and spending their winters in the plains.

973. Important Words:

- (assigned you an abode). is derived from which means, he returned.
- means, he lodged him in an abode.
- means, he prepared for him an abode and assigned or gave him a place therein (Lane).

Commentary:
The words, leave her that she may feed in Allah's earth, do not mean that she was to be allowed to graze in any field she pleased. What is meant is only that no obstruction was to be put in her way, and that she was to be permitted to proceed to any place to which Šālih might choose to go. The declaration by Šālih about the free movement of his she-camel was also in harmony with a time-honoured Arab custom.

974. Important Words:


Commentary:
When the so-called leaders of his tribe found, to their mortification, that Šālih stood firm as a rock in his convictions and no amount of persuasion could make him swerve from his purpose, they began to harass his followers, but these too they found bold and firm.

975. Commentary:
The words, Verily, we do disbelieve in that in
78. Then they hamstrung the she-camel and rebelled against the command of their Lord, and said, 'O Šāliḥ, bring us that which thou threatenest us with, if thou art indeed one of the Messengers.'

79. So the earthquake seized them and in their homes they lay prostrate upon the ground.

which you believe, in popular parlance signify a typical form of arrogant but veiled threat generally held out by rich and powerful people to the weaker and poorer section of society. The words may be interpreted as: "How dare you, weak and poor as you are, accept a teaching which we, your betters and superiors, have thought fit to reject?"

976. Important Words:

حَمْضُ (hamstrung) is derived from حَمْض. They say حَمْض، i.e. he wounded him, or he wounded him much; he hacked or hamstrung it (a beast); he struck or cut its (an animal's) leg with a sword, etc.; he stabbed an animal, etc.; he killed, slew or destroyed. حَمْض means, he detained or restrained me. حَمْض and حَمْض mean, he or she was barren and produced no issue (Lane).

Commentary:
The reference in the pronoun "that" in the clause, bring us that, is to the punishment mentioned in 7:74 above. The she-camel was held out as a Sign, and that Sign was to be witnessed on her being obstructed by disbelievers. They not only hindered the free movement of the she-camel but even wounded and killed her which amounted to an open challenge to Šāliḥ to do his worst, —to call upon his God to send down the threatened punishment upon them.

977. Important Words:

الرِجَاح (earthquake) is derived from رِجَاح which means, it was or became in a state of motion, commotion, convulsion or disturbance; or in a state of violent motion, etc. رِجَاح means, commotion or convulsion, particularly an earthquake; a violent earthquake; a vehement cry from heaven; any punishment that befalls a people (Lane).

امِسْحَرَأ (lay) is derived from امِسْحَرَأ which again is derived from امِسْحَرَأ. They say امِسْحَرَأ، i.e. he came to the people in the morning. امِسْحَرَأ means: (1) he entered upon the time of morning; (2) he became; or he entered upon a certain state. امِسْحَرَأ is زاد. امِسْحَرَأ became learned. So امِسْحَرَأ became learned. So امِسْحَرَأ, they became prostrate i.e. they lay prostrate; or they entered upon the time of morning, while they lay prostrate (Lane & Aqrab).

ناَجَم (prostrate on the ground) is the plural of ناَجَم which is the active participle from نَاجَم which means, he cove to the ground, or he fell upon his breast; or he kept to his place, not quitting it. So ناَجَم means, one who, or that which, cleaves to the ground or falls upon his or its breast. It also means, motionless or dead (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
According to the different meanings of the word ناَجَم given under Important Words, the verse would mean that (1) they were
80. Then Ṣāliḥ turned away from them and said, "O my people, I did deliver the message of my Lord unto you and offered you sincere counsel, but you love not sincere counsellors."

81. And We sent Lot—when he said to his people, 'Do you commit an abomination such as no one in the world ever did before you?'

82. 'You approach men with lust instead of women. Nay, you are a people who exceed all bounds.'

978. Commentary:
Ṣāliḥ left the stricken city in grief, as he could no longer bear to see the appalling sight, uttering the pathetic words mentioned in the verse with a sad and sorrowful heart, as did the Holy Prophet of Islam at Badr.

979. Important Words:
Lot (Lot) was a nephew and contemporary of Abraham (Gen. 11:27, 31). See also 6:87.

Commentary:
This verse throws some light on the fact that the perfect Law could not be revealed in the beginning of the world, because laws are meant to meet and remedy evils, and so religious Laws were gradually revealed as evils grew and spread. If a perfect Law had been revealed in the very beginning, detailing all the evils, it would, in a way, have proved the means of teaching men evils of which they were yet ignorant. Hence, a perfect Law could be revealed only at a time when all or most of the evils, particularly those known as root evils, had made their appearance and become established. Such was the case when the Quran was revealed. To this fact the Quran alludes in the words, Corruption has appeared (and become established) on land and sea, (30:42), which means that at the advent of the Holy Prophet, all the diverse root evils had become manifest and established.

The "abomination" mentioned in the present verse is explained in the next. The words, as no one in the world ever did before you, imply that it was a new kind of evil which was unknown before, or that its present extent had had no parallel before.

980. Commentary:
Lot rebuked his people for having not only innovated the extremely foul practice of sodomy but for having also excelled in other evil practices.
83. And "the answer of his people was no other than that they said, 'Turn them out of your town, for they are men who would keep pure.'

84. And We saved him and his family, except his wife; she was of those who stayed behind.

85. And We rained upon them a rain. Now see, what was the end of the sinners.

981. Commentary:
The word (who would keep pure) may also signify "who affect to be pure"; because the (form) of is not unoften used to imply affectation. The word was used by the opponents of Lot about his followers by way of taunt, signifying that they posed and paraded as extra-righteous and holy persons.

982. Important Words:
(who stayed behind) is derived from i.e. he or it remained, lasted or continued; he stayed, tarried or waited; or contrarily, he or it passed away or went away; or it (a wound) was or became in a bad state, especially after once being healed; or it healed externally while it was in a withering state internally; he (a man) hid enmity or hatred in his heart. So is one who remains or stays or tarries behind or waits, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
The verse does not necessarily imply that the wife of Lot was a disbeliever. The fact that she tarried to inform her relatives of the impending punishment shows that she probably possessed some faith. As, however, she disregarded the command that no warning of the coming calamity was to be given to any disbeliever, she was punished. The word (who stayed behind) treated under Important Words above throws some interesting light on the real condition of Lot's wife. Most probably she outwardly believed in her husband but was like a withering wound within and stayed or lingered behind, while Lot and his companions hurriedly left the doomed place.

There exists some difference of opinion among students of history as to the situation of the place where the people of Lot lived. According to some the Dead Sea is the site of the ruined cities. The Quran, however, appears to place it on the route from Medina to Syria (15:80).

983. Commentary:
It appears that there was a violent eruption, and burning matter was thrown out of the ground and buried the disbelieving people underneath it.
And to Midian We sent their brother Shu'aib. He said, 'O my people, worship Allah; you have no other deity but Him. A clear Sign has indeed come to you from your Lord. So give full measure and full weight, and diminish not unto people their things, and create not disorder in the earth after it has been set in order. This is better for you, if you are believers.  

And sit not on every path, threatening and turning away from the path of Allah those who believe in Him, and seeking to make it crooked. And remember when you were few and He multiplied you. And behold, what was the end of those who created disorder!

984. Important Words:

Midian (Midian) was Abraham's son from Keturah (Gen. 25: 1, 2). His descendants dwelt in the north of the Hijaz. Midian was also the name of a town near the Red Sea, opposite to Sinai on the Arabian shore. The town was so called because it was inhabited by the descendants of Midian. Some have referred to it as a sea-port on account of its proximity to the sea, being situated only at a distance of eight miles from it; others have spoken of it as an inland town.

Shu'aib (Shu'aib) was the name of a non-Israelite Prophet who lived before Moses. He is generally looked upon as the father-in-law of Moses, though the Bible makes no mention of the name. According to the story of the Bible, the name of the father-in-law of Moses was Jethro, who is not spoken of as a Prophet. The Quran speaks of Moses as having been raised after Shu'aib, so he could not be a contemporary (7: 104). As Shu'aib has been mentioned in this verse as the "brother" of Midian, the inference is inevitable that he was a descendant of Abraham, Midian being a son of the Patriarch by his bond-maid Keturah. For fuller discussion of Shu'aib see 11: 85.

The word تلام (being set in order) refers here to the coming down of divine revelation and the advent of the Prophet Shu'aib (see 7: 57). According to the verse under comment, the most prominent evil of the Midian people was their unfair practice in measuring and weighing.

985. Commentary:

The tribe of Shu'aib appears to resemble very much the Arabs in their ways and customs, for the Meccans did with the Holy Prophet exactly what the people of Shu'aib's did with
88. And if there is a party among you who believes in that with which I have been sent, and a party who does not believe, then have patience until Allah judges between us. And He is the best of judges.\footnote{986}

89. "The chief men of his people who were arrogant said, 'Assuredly, we will drive thee out, O Shu‘aib, and the believers that are with thee, from our town, or you shall have to return to our religion.' He said: 'Even though we be unwilling?" \footnote{987}

The children of Abraham from Keturah, who was a bondwoman, were despised by both Israelites and Ishmaelites. They were looked down upon as weak and despicable, but God increased their number and gave them wealth and power. They are therefore asked to remember this favour of God and be grateful to Him.

\footnote{986} Commentary:

The verse refers to the last course that a Prophet adopts after the failure of all his efforts to make his people see the error of their ways and accept the truth. He leaves the whole matter in the hand of God and asks them to wait till God should show a decisive Sign which would clearly distinguish between right and wrong.

\footnote{987} Commentary:

Disbelievers, complacently conscious of their power and wealth, listen to no request however reasonable, and in the words of the opponents of Shu‘aib always say: "There is no need for anyone to judge between us. We ourselves can judge, and our verdict is that only he who follows our religion will be allowed to live with us." On the other hand, the followers of every Prophet, like the followers of Shu‘aib, have always made a pathetic, though unavailing, appeal to their persecutors in the words: "Will you compel us to adopt your religion, even if it offends our reason and goes against our conscience!" The concluding words of the verse also show that throughout history good and intelligent men have always believed that force should not be used in matters relating to conscience.