32. But whoever of you is obedient to Allah and His Messenger and does good works, We shall give her her reward twice over; and We have prepared for her an honourable provision. 3098

33. O wives of the Prophet! you are not like any other women if you are righteous. So be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease should feel tempted; and speak a decent speech. 3099

34. And stay in your houses with dignity, and do not show off yourselves like the showing off of the former days of ignorance, and observe Prayer, and pay the Zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Surely, Allah desires to remove from you all uncleanness, O Members of the Household, and purify you completely. 3100

3098. Commentary:
The masculine gender of the verb بَتْتَ (butta) is used because of the subject يَّنَا which is invariably followed by a verb in the masculine gender.

3099. Commentary:
The wives of the Holy Prophet are here enjoined to preserve the dignity of their very exalted position and to conduct themselves with due propriety and decorum while talking to members of the opposite sex.

By implication all Muslim women are included in this injunction. They are expected to be kind and gentle in speech but their gentleness should not be misunderstood by any evilly-inclined person for pliancy and softness.

3100. Important Words:

- رجس (rajasa) which means, it was or became dirty or filthy or unclean or hated; he did a bad or evil action.
- رجس (rijsun) means, dirt or filth; a dirty or filthy thing; a thing or action disliked for its filthiness; a sin; an action that leads to punishment; doubt; infidelity; suggestion of the devil (Lane & Aqrab). See also 5:91.

Commentary:
The words “stay in your houses” show that the principal sphere of the activities of a woman is her house—not that she is not allowed to leave its four walls. She may go out as many times as she may require for the performance of a legitimate errand or the satisfaction of a legitimate
35. And remember what is rehearsed in your houses of the Signs of Allah and of wisdom. Verily, Allah is the Knower of subtleties, All-Aware. 

need. But to move about in mixed society and take part in all sorts of avocations and professions, shoulder to shoulder with man, and to do so to the neglect and detriment of her special domestic duties as the mistress of the house is not the Islamic conception of ideal womanhood. The Holy Prophet’s wives were particularly required to “stay in their houses” because the dignity of their exalted position as “Mothers of the Faithful” demanded this and also because Muslims often visited them to pay their respects and sought necessary information and guidance from them on all important religious matters.

The commandment seems to apply only to the wives of the Holy Prophet but it equally applies to all Muslim women. It is the Quranic way of address that while it appears to be particularly addressing the Holy Prophet, the address is meant equally for all Muslims. Similarly, a commandment addressed to the wives of the Holy Prophet applies also to all Muslim women.

The expression اهل البيت applies principally and primarily to the Holy Prophet’s wives. This is quite clear from the context and also from vv. 11:74 and 28:13. In its wider sense, however, it includes all members of a family who form one’s household, even one’s children and children’s children. The expression had also been used by the Holy Prophet for some of his select Companions. i.e. “Salmān is member of our household” (Saghīr), is a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet.

3101. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet’s noble consorts were required not only to serve as model of virtue, piety and righteousness for the Faithful but to teach them the principles and precepts of Islam which they had learnt direct from the Prophet.
36. “Surely, men who submit themselves to God and women who submit themselves to Him, and believing men and believing women, and obedient men and obedient women, and truthful men and truthful women, and men steadfast in their faith and steadfast women, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their chastity and women who guard their chastity, and men who remember Allah much and women who remember Him—Allah has prepared for all of them forgiveness and a great reward.”

3102. Commentary:

This verse embodies a most effective repudiation of the charge that Christian missionaries and publicists are in the habit of levelling at Islam, viz., that it accords a lower status to women. The Qur’an has repeatedly said that Muslim women stand on the same level with Muslim men, and that they can attain to all those spiritual heights to which men can attain. Besides, Islam confers on women all the political and social rights which men enjoy. Only their spheres of activities being different, their duties are different. It is this difference in duties of both the sexes that has been mistakenly, or perhaps deliberately, misunderstood by hostile critics of Islam as implying a lower status for women.

The ten outstanding attributes of Muslim men and women mentioned in this verse have been appropriately described in an ascending order.

The first stage of the spiritual development of a believer is that of إيمان which in this verse has been used in the sense of intellectual acceptance of truth. The next stage is that of سلام which implies the giving of peace and safety to others and testifying to the Divinely-revealed Teaching. At the stage of إيمان a Muslim accepts truth because reason and common sense demand of him this acceptance, while at the stage of سلام he combines emotions and feelings with reason, and becomes intellectually and emotionally a true believer. The third stage of spiritual development is that of صدق which signifies total obedience to God’s commandments. At this stage the spiritual way-farer finds himself irresistibly attracted towards his Creator, and his submission to Divine commandments proceeds from his love for the Supreme Being. The next stage in the spiritual journey is reached when a believer becomes صادق which means that he identifies himself completely with truth, and faces trials and temptations with complete equanimity. His faith becomes pure and free from all dross of hypocrisy and love of worldly things. The
37. And it behoves not a believing man or a believing woman, "when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that there should be a choice for them in the matter concerning them. And whoso disobeys Allah and His Messenger, surely strays away in manifest error. \(^{3103}\)

fifth stage is that of صبر; when identification with truth becomes a permanent feature of a believer's character. The stage of خشوع is a still higher stage in spiritual progress. It indicates an attitude of humility which the believer develops after he has gained complete victory over trials and tribulations consequent upon the growing consciousness of his own weakness and that of the perfection and completeness of the Divine Being. The next stage is that of مصانع. At this stage the believer becomes conscious that he is not to live for himself alone but should share God-given blessings with other fellow-beings. At the stage of صائم which is the next high spiritual stage the believer learns to sacrifice his own legitimate needs and comforts for the benefit of others and at the ninth stage of حافظين فروهم he scrupulously guards all the avenues through which sin can find access to his mind. At the tenth stage i.e. الدا كريم الله, which is the last stage and which forms the climax of spiritual growth and development, the believer is so completely engrossed in God as to have become lost in His remembrance.

3103. **Commentary:**

The verse under comment continues the general theme of the preceding verses, viz., that believers should try as far as possible, to subdivide their own desires to the desire of the Holy Prophet and when he has given his decision regarding an affair, they should accept it unhesitatingly without the least mental reservation. The immediate occasion for the revelation of this verse may have been Zainab's hesitation to comply with the Holy Prophet's greatly cherished wish that she should marry Zaid, his freed slave. It goes to Zainab's credit that in deference to the Prophet's wish she agreed to her marriage with Zaid, much against her personal inclination. Zainab's marriage with Zaid and their subsequent separation has been dealt with in some detail in the next verse. It is, however, wrong to assume, as some Commentators have mistakenly assumed, that the Holy Prophet pressed and compelled Zainab against her will to accept Zaid as her husband. It being inconsistent with Islamic teaching, the Holy Prophet could not have done this. Zainab only deferred to the wish of the Holy Prophet.
38. And remember when thou didst say to him on whom Allah had bestowed favours and on whom thou also hadst bestowed favours: ‘Keep thy wife to thyself, and fear Allah.’ And thou didst conceal in thy heart what Allah was going to bring to light, and thou wast afraid of the people, whereas Allah has better right that thou shouldst fear Him. Then, when Zaid had accomplished his want of her so as to have no further need of her, We joined her in marriage to thee, so that there may be no hindrance for the believers with regard to marriage with the wives of their adopted sons, when they have accomplished their want of them and have divorced them. And Allah’s decree must be fulfilled.

3104. Important Words:

وطرا (want) has no verb. It means, a want, a need, an object of want or need; or that which one proposes to accomplish or of which one is desirous. They say قضي منه وطره i.e. he accomplished or obtained his want from him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

As the verse deals with an incident of very great historical importance, it demands and deserves a somewhat detailed explanation. Zaid bin Ḥārith, to whom the words “on whom Allah had bestowed favours and on whom thou also had bestowed favours” refer, belonged to the tribe of Kalb. In his childhood he was kidnapped and sold as a slave in Mecca where he was bought by Khadijah’s brother and given over to her. On her marriage with the Holy Prophet Khadijah presented Zaid to him who at once emancipated him. Zaid was so much attached to the Prophet that when later his father and uncle begged of the Holy Prophet to let him go with them as the grief of his separation from home had almost killed his mother, the Prophet readily gave his permission. But Zaid himself flatly refused to part company with the Holy Prophet, exclaiming that he was dearer to him than his father and mother. The Prophet was so deeply touched by Zaid’s fidelity and love for him that he at once declared him (Zaid) to be his son and henceforward Zaid became to be known as the Prophet’s son. Zaid remained throughout his life a most beloved and faithful disciple of the Holy Prophet and sealed his fidelity to Islam and the Prophet with his blood on the battle-field of Mútā.

Zainab was the daughter of the Holy Prophet’s aunt, hence a full-blooded Arab, intensely proud of her ancestry and exalted social status. Islam had envisaged and given to the world a civilization and culture in which there were to be no class divisions, no hereditary nobility, no vested interests. All men were to be free and equal in the sight of God. The Holy Prophet wanted to start with his own family the carrying
into actual effect of this noble ideal of Islam. He wished to marry Zainab to Zaid, who in spite of having been liberated by the Prophet and called his son, unfortunately still carried the stigma of slavery in the minds of some people. It was exactly this stigma of slavery, this invidious distinction between 'free' and 'slave' which the Holy Prophet sought to remove by Zainab's marriage with Zaid. In deference to the Holy Prophet's wish Zainab agreed to the proposal. The purpose of the Holy Prophet was achieved. The marriage levelled to the ground all class distinctions and divisions. It was a practical demonstration of Islam's noble ideal. The marriage, however, ended in failure, not so much due to a difference in the social status of Zainab and Zaid as to the incompatibility of their dispositions and temperaments and also due to a feeling of inferiority from which Zaid suffered. The failure of the marriage naturally grieved the Holy Prophet. But it also served a very useful purpose. In pursuance of Divine command, as mentioned in the latter part of the verse under comment, the Prophet himself married Zainab, thus cutting at the very root of another obnoxious and deep-seated Arab custom, viz., that it was a sacrilege to marry the wife of one's adopted son. The custom of adoption was abolished and with it went also this foolish notion. Thus Zainab's marriage with Zaid served one very noble object and its failure another highly useful purpose.

The words "fear Allah" signify that Zaid wanted to divorce Zainab, and as divorce according to Islam is very hateful in the sight of God, the Holy Prophet exhorted him not to do so.

The clause, "And then . . . . . . thou shouldst fear Him," may apply to both Zaid and the Holy Prophet. Applying to Zaid it would mean that Zaid did not like that the cause of his separation from Zainab should come to light, perhaps because as the words "fear Allah," indicate the fault lay more with him than with Zainab. As, however, applying to the Holy Prophet, the words would signify that as the marriage between Zaid and Zainab was arranged at his instance and wish, he naturally did not like its breaking. The clause also shows that the Prophet feared that the break-down of the marriage which was arranged by him and which had been entered into in deference to his special wish, but which resulted in an ostensible failure of the experiment in Islamic brotherhood, would cause some mental confusion and uneasiness among people whose faith was weak. This was the anxiety that lay heavy on the Prophet's heart. The words, "thou didst fear men," seem to point to this fear of his. But, as mentioned above, God had His own purpose in the failure of this marriage. He wanted to show that there was nothing in this failure to be afraid of. On the contrary, it was a blessing in disguise and was intended to serve a great purpose and therefore the Prophet's fear was unfounded.

Christian and other hostile critics of Islam pretend to find in the Holy Prophet's marriage with Zainab a basis for mean attacks on him. It is stated that the Prophet, having by chance seen Zainab, became enamoured of her beauty and Zaid, having come to know of his desire to marry her, sought divorce from her. The fact that the Holy Prophet's most inveterate enemies, before whose eyes the whole affair had actually taken place, dared not attribute the base motives ascribed to him by these critics after so many centuries, completely knocks the bottom from under this base and totally unfounded charge. Zainab was the Prophet's own cousin and being
39. No blame can attach to the Prophet with respect to that which Allah has made incumbent upon him. Such indeed was the way of Allah with those who have passed away before—and the command of Allah is a decree ordained—

40. Those who delivered the messages of Allah and feared Him, and feared none but Allah. And sufficient is Allah as a Reckoner.

so closely related to him he must have seen her many times, for “Purdah” had not as yet been enjoined. Besides, it was in deference to his own persistently expressed wish that Zainab had reluctantly agreed to marry Zaid. It is on record that she and her brother had desired before her marriage with Zaid that she should be taken in marriage by the Holy Prophet himself. What was it that prevented the Holy Prophet from marrying her when she was a virgin and when she herself ardently desired to get married to him? The whole story evidently seems to be a figment of the “fertile” imagination of the Holy Prophet’s hostile critics and it is an insult to human intellect to give the least credence to it. But while there are some Christian critics like Muir and Margolioth who find fault with the Holy Prophet for having married Zainab, there are others better informed and more honest like the good and noble Rev. Bosworth Smith who find nothing in this marriage to cavil at. The Rev. gentleman says:

It should be remembered, however, that most of Muhammad’s marriages may be explained, at least, as much by his pity for the forlorn condition of the persons concerned, as by other motives. They were almost all of them widows who were not remarkable either for their beauty or their wealth, but quite the reverse. May not this fact, and his undoubted faithfulness to Khadijah till her dying day, and till he himself was fifty years of age, give us additional ground to hope that calumny or misconception has been at work in the story of Zainab (“Muhammad and Muhammadanism”).

The reference in the words, “that which Allah has made incumbent upon him,” and “the command of Allah is a decree ordained,” is to the Holy Prophet’s marriage with Zainab. The words show that this marriage took place in obedience to express Divine command.

Though the Holy Prophet knew that Zainab being the divorced wife of Zaid known to be his adopted son, his marriage with her would give rise to much criticism among the Arabs, he did not at all hesitate to marry her when he found that it was God’s command to do so. In the performance of his sacred mission the Holy Prophet never cared for the feelings and susceptibilities of anybody. In fact, God’s
41. Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah, and the Seal of the Prophets; and Allah has full knowledge of all things.\(^3\)

Prophets do not fear anyone in the discharge of their duties. So, the words “thou didst fear men” in v. 38 should be taken as signifying that the Holy Prophet did not fear men but he feared for them, lest by regarding Zainab’s marriage with Zaid a miscalculation of the Prophet, they might injure their own souls.

3106. **Important Words**: 

\(\text{خاتم النبیین} (\text{Khātam})\) is derived from \(\text{ختم} \) \(\text{i.e.} \) he sealed, stamped, impressed or imprinted the thing or he put the seal on it. This is the primary signification of this word. Or the primary signification of \(\text{ختم} (\text{khatm})\) is the act of covering over the thing. It also signifies the protecting of what is in a writing by marking or stamping a piece of clay upon it, or by means of a seal of any kind. \(\text{ختم القرآن} \) also means, he recited the end of the thing. \(\text{ختم} \) also means, he recited the whole of the Qur'an. This is the secondary meaning of the word. Thus \(\text{خاتم} (\text{khātam})\) means, a signet-ring; a seal or stamp and a mark; the end or last part or portion and result or issue of a thing; the hollow of the back of the neck. The words \(\text{ختم} (\text{khatm})\) and \(\text{خاتم} (\text{khatim} \text{and} \text{khātam})\) are almost synonymous and mean a signet. \(\text{خاتم} (\text{khātam})\) also signifies, embellishment or ornament, the best and most perfect (Lane, Aqrab, Mufradat, Fatḥ & Zurqānī). So the expression \(\text{النبيین} \) would mean, the Seal of the Prophets; the best and most perfect of the Prophets. Secondarily, the expression may also mean, the last of the Prophets.

**Commentary**: 

Much confusion and misunderstanding seems to prevail as to what is the real spiritual status and position of the Holy Prophet as indicated by the expression \(\text{خاتم النبیین} \text{i.e. the Seal of the Prophets}. A careful study of the context, however, removes the prevalent misconception. At Mecca when all the Holy Prophet’s male children died in their childhood, his enemies taunted him with being \(\text{أب} \) (one who has no male issue), meaning that his movement would sooner or later come to an end (Mūḥīṭ). In answer to this taunt of disbelievers it was emphatically declared in \(\text{سورة كؤس} \) (that not the Holy Prophet but his enemies would remain issueless. After the revelation of \(\text{سورة كؤس} \) the idea naturally found favour with the early Muslims that the Holy Prophet would be blessed with sons who would live to an adult age. The verse under comment removed that misconception inasmuch as it declared that the Prophet is not, never was, nor will ever be the father of any grown-up young men (رجال meaning grown-up young men). The verse under comment while appearing to be in conflict with \(\text{سورة كؤس} \) in which not the Holy Prophet but his enemies have been threatened with being issueless, in reality seeks to set at rest doubts and misgivings to which this seeming contradiction gives
rise. It says that the Holy Prophet is \( \text{رسول الله} \), i.e., the spiritual father of a whole \textit{Ummat} and he is also \( \text{خاتم النبیین} \), signifying that he is the spiritual father of all the past and future Prophets. So when he is the spiritual father of all the believers and all Prophets, how can he be said to be \( \text{ابن} \), i.e., issueless. But if the expression \( \text{خاتم النبیین} \) be taken to mean that the Holy Prophet is the last of the Prophets and that no Prophet will come after him, then the verse appears to be out of tune with the context and instead of refuting the objection of disbelievers that the Holy Prophet was issueless, supports and reinforces it.

Briefly, according to the meaning of the word \( \text{خاتم} \), the expression \( \text{خاتم النبیین} \) can have four possible meanings:

1. That the Holy Prophet was the Seal of the Prophets, i.e., no Prophet, past or future, can be regarded as true unless his prophethood bears the seal of the Holy Prophet. The prophethood of every past Prophet must be confirmed and testified to by the Holy Prophet and nobody can attain to prophethood after him except by being his \( \text{اتّی} \), (follower). All claims to prophethood must be judged and tested by reference to the revelation received by the Holy Prophet and to his teachings.

2. That the Holy Prophet was the best, the noblest and the most perfect of all the Prophets and that he was also a source of embellishment for them (\text{Zurqānī, Sharaḥ Mawāhib al-Ladunniyya}).

3. That the Holy Prophet was the last of the Law-bearing Prophets. This interpretation has been accepted by many eminent Muslim theologians, saints and savants such as Ibn `Arabi, Shāh Wali-Allah, Imām `Alī Qārī, Mujaddid Alī Thānī, etc. According to these great scholars and saints no Prophet can come after the Holy Prophet who should abrogate his \textit{Millat} or should not be in his \textit{Ummat} (\text{Futūḥāt, Tafhimāt, Mukātabāt & Yawāqīt wa'l Jawāhir}). `A'ishah, the talented spouse of Jawāhir, has removed all ambiguity about the meaning of the expression \( \text{خاتم النبیین} \). She is reported to have said:

\( \text{قولوا انّه خاتم النبیین ولا تقولوا لا نبی بعده} \), i.e., Say that he (the Holy Prophet) is \( \text{خاتم النبیین} \), but do not say that there will be no Prophet after him (\text{Manthur}). This saying of `A'ishah makes it quite clear that the expression \( \text{خاتم النبیین} \) and \( \text{لا نبی بعده} \) were considered by her to be contradictory to each other in meaning and significance.

4. That the Holy Prophet was the last of the Prophets, but only in this sense that all the qualities and attributes of prophethood found their most perfect and complete consummation and expression in him; \( \text{خاتم} \) in the sense of being the last word in excellence and perfection is of common use.

Moreover, the Qur'ān clearly speaks of the advent of Prophets after the Holy Prophet. The following two verses leave no ambiguity on this point:-

\begin{align*}
\text{And whoso obeys Allah and this Messenger of His shall be among those on whom Allah has bestowed His blessings, namely, the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs and the Righteous. And excellent companions are these (4:70).} \\
\text{O children of Adam! if Messengers come to you from among yourselves, rehearsing My Signs come unto you, then whoso shall fear God and do good deeds, on them shall come no fear nor shall they grieve (7:36).}
\end{align*}

The Holy Prophet himself was clear in his mind as to the continuity of prophethood after him. He is reported to have said: “If Abraham (his son) had lived long, he would have been a Prophet” (\text{Māja, kitāb al-Janā'iz}), and, “Abū Bakr is best of men after me, except that a Prophet should appear” (\text{Kanz al-'Ummāl}).
6 42. O ye who believe! **remember Allah with much remembrance,** \(^{3107}\)

43. \(^{b}\)And glorify Him morning and evening.

44. He it is Who sends blessings on you, as \(^{d}\)do His angels, \(^{e}\)that He may bring you forth from all **kinds of** darkness into light. And He is Merciful to the believers. \(^{3107A}\)

45. \(^{d}\)Their greeting on the day when they meet Him, will be ‘Peace.’ And He has prepared for them an honourable reward.

46. O Prophet! truly \(^{e}\)We have sent thee as a Witness, and a Bearer of glad tidings, and a Warner, \(^{3108}\)

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\(^{a4}\) : 104; \(^{8}\) : 46; \(^{62}\) : 11. \(^{3}\) : 42 : 19 : 12. \(^{62}\) : 258; \(^{14}\) : 6; \(^{57}\) : 10; \(^{65}\) : 12.

\(^{d10}\) : 11; \(^{36}\) : 59. \(^{e25}\) : 57; \(^{35}\) : 25; \(^{48}\) : 9.

3107. **Commentary:**

The verse means to say that the remembrance of God will play a great part in the wonderful revolution that the Holy Prophet will bring about among his people by his noble example.

3107A. **Commentary:**

The Suta under comment primarily deals with the domestic life of the Holy Prophet and tells us, how it was not only pure and beyond reproach but was an ideal and exemplary one. The present and the next few verses serve as a prelude to the real subject of marriage and divorce in relation to the Prophet, which begins with v. 50 below. The marriages of the Holy Prophet have been subjected to much mean and vile criticism. To this a somewhat detailed reference has already been made (33 : 38). The present verse, however, means to say that that great and noble Prophet who brought about such a wonderful revolution in the lives of his people and “brought them forth from darkness into light” could not be the type of man his traducers vainly try to depict him.

The words إِسْلَمُكَ when used about God mean, “He sends down blessings upon you,” but when used about the angels or the believers they mean, “they pray for you.”

3108. **Commentary:**

In this and the next verse five prominent qualities of the Holy Prophet have been mentioned to show that he possesses all the necessary qualifications which a spiritual Leader who is entrusted with the Divine mission “to bring men out of darkness into light,” should possess; (1) he is a Witness. \(i.e.\) a promulgator of the Law and a
47. And as a Summoner unto Allah by His Command, and as a Lamp that gives bright light.\textsuperscript{3108A}

48. And announce to the believers the glad tidings that they will have great bounty from Allah.

49. "And follow not the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and leave alone their annoyance, and put thy trust in Allah; for Allah is sufficient as a Guardian.\textsuperscript{3109}

50. O ye who believe! when you marry believing women and then divorce them before you have touched them, then you have no right against them with regard to the period of waiting that you reckon. So make some provision for them and send them away in a handsome manner.\textsuperscript{3110}

\textsuperscript{a}18:29; 25:53. \textsuperscript{b}2:237.

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model; (2) he is a Bearer of glad tidings, \textit{i.e.} God has not lost interest in men and continues to send His Messengers and Prophets to reclaim lost humanity when there is need for one; (3) he is a Warner telling men that if they did not benefit by his teaching and persisted in their evil ways, they will come to grief; (4) he is a Summoner unto Allah by His command, \textit{i.e.} he is not a self-appointed Reformer but a Divinely-commissioned Teacher; and (5) he is a Lamp that gives light, \textit{i.e.} now, he alone is “the light and the way.”

\textsuperscript{3108A.} Commentary:

In this verse the Holy Prophet has been likened to the sun, thus indicating that as the sun is the central point in the physical universe so is the Holy Prophet the central point in the spiritual realm, \textit{i.e.}, he is like the sun in the firmament of Prophets who are like so many stars and moons in comparison with him. He is also like the sun among his own Companions whom he himself has likened to stars. He is reported to have said: My Companions are like so many stars; whomsoever of them you follow you will be rightly guided (Sağhir).

\textsuperscript{3109.} Commentary:

The reference in the words “leave alone their annoyance” might be to the vile attacks that were to be made by evil-minded critics upon the spotless character of the Holy Prophet on account of some of the marriages he had to enter into in the latter part of his life.

\textsuperscript{3110.} Commentary:

The words “and send them away in a handsome manner” signify (1) that no reproach or disgrace should be considered to be attached to divorce; (2) that the divorced woman should ordinarily be paid more than her part of the stipulated dower, and (3) that after divorce her
51. O Prophet! We have made lawful to thee thy wives whom thou hast paid their dowries, and those whom thy right hand possesses from among those whom Allah has given thee as gains of war, and the daughters of thy paternal uncle, and the daughters of thy paternal aunts, and the daughters of thy maternal uncle, and the daughters of thy maternal aunts who have emigrated with thee and any other believing woman if she offers herself to the Prophet provided the Prophet desires to marry her: this provision is only for thee, as against other believers—We have already made known what We have enjoined on them concerning their wives and those whom their right hands possess—in order that there may be no difficulty for thee in the discharge of thy work. And Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.

3111. Commentary:

This verse should be read along with vv. 29 and 30 above. In those verses the wives of the Holy Prophet were offered a choice between the companionship of the Holy Prophet and the material benefits and comforts of life but, they preferred the Prophet's company. The present verse by implication refers to that reply of the Prophet's consorts which is recorded in the books of history but expressly nowhere in the Qur'an. Till they gave their reply, the marital relations between them and the Holy Prophet remained, as it were, in a state of suspension. The verse shows that while the wives of the Holy Prophet preferred his company to material goods and amenities of life, he too had great consideration for their feelings, and though he was given the choice to retain such of them as he liked (v. 52) he did not exercise the choice and in deference to his wishes God permitted him in the present verse to retain all his wives.

The verse refers to three kinds of women whom the Holy Prophet could marry in addition to his already wedded wives: (1) Women who were taken prisoner in wars against Islam; (2) women who had migrated to Medina with the Holy Prophet, and (3) a woman who should offer herself for marriage to him. This shows that the Holy Prophet's marriages were motivated by considerations other than sensuous gratification as his ignorant and mischievous critics try to depict. Those who had left their hearths and homes for the sake of Islam and those whose husbands had been killed in wars fighting in defence of Islam had special claim on the Holy Prophet's consideration. It is in view of these
considerations that he married most of his wives. He married Ḥafṣah whose husband was killed in the Battle of Badr, Zainab bint Khuzaimah whose husband was killed in the Battle of Uhud, Umm Salmah whose husband died in 4 A.H., and Umm Ḥabibah, daughter of Abū Sufyān, who became a widow in 5 or 6 A.H. (in exile in Abyssinia). He married Juwairiyah and Șafiyyah, both widows, in 5 A.H. and 7 A.H. respectively, seeking a union with and pacification of their tribes. It is worthy of note that a hundred families of the Banū Muṣāliq were liberated by Muslims when the Holy Prophet married Juwairiyah. Maimūnah, another widow, it is said, offered herself to be taken in marriage by the Holy Prophet which offer he condescended to accept in the interest of the education and training of Muslim women. He married Zainab, the divorced wife of Zaid in 5 A.H. in order to put a stop to a foolish custom prevailing among the Arabs and in order also to assuage her wounded feelings as the respected lady had felt deeply humiliated at being divorced by Zaid. He married Māriah in 7 A.H. and thus by raising a freed slave girl to the highly eminent spiritual status of the “Mother of the Faithful” he gave a death blow to slavery. Such were the pious and righteous motives of our noble Master in marrying widows and divorced women, by no means noted for their youth or beauty, and yet his cruel and mean traducers vainly try to depict him as a person who was given to gratifying his carnal desires. They deliberately ignore the patent fact that up to the age of 25 he lived the spotless life of a celibate. Then in the prime of his youth he married a lady fifteen years his senior and lived with her a most happy life till he was an old man of fifty and she about sixty-five. After her death he married Saudah, another lady of a very advanced age. He married all his other wives, to which exception has been taken by evil-minded carpers, between 2 A.H. and 7 A.H., a period when he was constantly engaged in active fighting and his life was perpetually in danger and the fate of Islam itself hung in the balance. Could any sane person in such situation of danger and uncertainty conceive of contracting marriage after marriage from motives attributed to the Holy Prophet? After this he lived for about three years as virtual ruler of the whole of Arabia when all the comforts and amenities of life were at his disposal and yet he entered into no further marriage. Does not this fact alone establish the honesty and sincerity of the Holy Prophet’s motives in marrying his wives?

The words “if she entrusts herself to the Prophet” have been taken as specially referring to Maimūnah who is reported to have offered herself to be taken into marriage by the Holy Prophet. The clause, “This provision is only for thee as against other believers,” means that it was a special privilege of the Holy Prophet and was due to the special nature of his duties as a Divine Prophet. In fact, marriages of the Holy Prophet were dictated by much higher and nobler considerations than merely personal. The clause may also refer to the special permission granted to the Holy Prophet, to retain all his wives, after the commandment contained in 4 : 4 was revealed, limiting to four the number of wives allowed to Muslims at one time.

The words, “We have already made known what We have enjoined on them concerning their wives,” refer to the commandment contained in 4 : 4.
52. Thou mayest defer the marriage of any of them that thou pleasest, and receive unto thyself whom thou pleasest; and if thou desiriest to take back any of those whom thou hast put aside, there is no blame on thee. That is more likely that their eyes may be cooled, and that they may not grieve, and that they may all be pleased with that which thou hast given them. And Allah knows what is in your hearts; and Allah is All-Knowing, Forbearing.

53. It is not allowed thee to marry women after that, nor to change them for other wives even though their goodness please thee, except any that thy right hand possesses. And Allah is Watchful over all things.

3112. Important Words:

*رجاء* (thou mayest defer) is derived from *راجع* i.e. he postponed, put off, deferred or delayed an affair. The Quranic expression, مِنْ فِرْقَةٍ (9: 107) means, those about whom decision has been deferred for the decree of Allah (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Whereas on the one hand the wives of the Holy Prophet were given the option to choose between his company and the material comforts of life and worldly goods (33: 29-30), on the other the Holy Prophet was also given the same choice to retain, or part with, any of his wives. All his wives lost no time in indicating their preference. They chose to cast in their lot with the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet, on his part, was equally considerate. He signified his intention to retain all of them. This decision of the Prophet greatly pleased them. This is the meaning of the words: *That they may all be pleased with that which thou hast given them.*

The present and the previous verse contain permissive regulations for the Holy Prophet, but the Prophet did not take advantage of any one of them, nor did he put aside or divorce any of his wives.

3113. Commentary:

This verse was revealed in 7 A.H. after which the Holy Prophet contracted no further marriage. He was prohibited to do so. He was also not permitted to divorce any of the existing wives. This was possibly in deference to their dignity as “Mothers of the Faithful” and perhaps was also due to the fact that they had preferred the rigour and austerity of the Holy Prophet’s domestic life to worldly comforts. God appreciated their sacrifice and forbade the Holy Prophet to marry any more wife or to divorce any one of the existing wives.
54. O ye who believe! enter not the houses of the Prophet unless leave is granted to you for a meal,—not waiting for its appointed time. But enter when you are invited, and when you have finished eating disperse, without seeking to engage in talk. That causes inconvenience to the Prophet, and he feels shy of asking you to leave, but Allah is not shy of saying what is true. And when you ask them—the wives of the Prophet—for anything, ask them from behind a curtain. That is purer for your hearts and their hearts. And it behoves you not to cause inconvenience to the Messenger of Allah, nor that you should ever marry his wives after him. Indeed that would be, in the sight of Allah, an enormity.

The words “Allah is Watchful over all things” may signify that God knew well the moral responsibilities of the wives of the Holy Prophet. Other women, although they might be superior to them in some respects, were not to be as useful or fitted for the great and noble task which the Prophet’s wives had to perform.

3114. Commentary:

The teaching of social ethics and domestic morals and manners with special reference to the Holy Prophet’s marriage with Zainab and the calumnies and false charges of which the evil-minded “Hypocrites” accused him form the subject of the present verse. Some of the social manners taught in this verse are: One should not enter a house uninvited and when invited one should be punctual. It is as bad to be before time as to be behind time. After meals one should depart, not wasting one’s own and other people’s time in the usual post-prandial idle talk. These are some of the rules of social conduct which need to be learnt and observed.

The commandment embodied in the words, “and when you ask them for anything, ask them from behind a curtain.” is intended to discourage too much familiarity between the sexes, the pronoun هن (them) by implication, applying to all women.

The clause, “That is purer for your hearts and their hearts,” may mean: (a) that it may lead to purity of thoughts, and (b) that such conduct may protect women from slanderous tongues.

Marriage with the widows of the Holy Prophet has been declared a grievous sin in this verse. Being the “Mothers of the Faithful” it was inconsistent with their spiritual dignity to marry any of their “spiritual sons.” Moreover, as wives of the Prophet they were entrusted with
55. "Whether you reveal a thing or conceal it, Allah knows all things full well.

56. There is no blame on them in this respect with regard to their fathers or their sons or their brothers, or the sons of their brothers or the sons of their sisters, or their womenfolk or those whom their right hands possess. And, fear Allah, O wives of the Prophet, Verily, Allah is Witness over all things.3115

57. Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O ye who believe, you too should invoke blessings on him and salute him with the salutation of peace.3116

58. Verily, those who malign Allah and His Messenger—Allah has cursed them in this world and in the Hereafter, and has prepared for them an abasing punishment.3117

the great task of the spiritual training of Muslim men and women which required utmost reverence for them on their part.

3115. Commentary:
This verse lays down exceptions to the commandment given in verse 54 above. Women can go before these relations inside the house without observing "Purdah" or can converse freely with them.

3116. Commentary:
The sending down of blessings by Allah and His angels upon the Holy Prophet signifies that those who seek to retard the progress of his cause by slandering him and bringing false accusations against him live in a fool's paradise. By their nefarious activities they can do him no harm. His cause will continue to progress and prosper because God and His angels bless it.

3117. Commentary:
By "maligning Allah" is meant "seeking to retard the cause of truth" and by "maligning His Messenger," is meant "seeking to slander and defame him."
59. "And those who malign believing men and believing women for what they have not earned shall bear the guilt of a calumny and a manifest sin." 

60. O Prophet! tell thy wives and thy daughters, and the women of the believers, that they should draw close to them portions of their loose outer coverings. That is more likely that they may thus be distinguished and not molested. And Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.

Commentary:

This verse contains the basic commandment with regard to "Purdah" as enjoined by Islam. For a full discussion, however, of this subject see 24 : 32 where the present verse has also been discussed. Briefly, it may be stated here that Islamic "Purdah" is intended to serve a double purpose. It enjoins privacy and recommends decorum and dignified behaviour. Women are not allowed to meet men promiscuously and they are expected to observe certain rules regarding dress when going out of their houses.

Important Words:

جلاب (outer coverings) is the plural ofجلاب which is derived fromجلاب. They sayجلاب جلاباً i.e. he put on himself a garment of the kind calledجلاب. This word has several meanings; (a) a woman's outer wrapping garment; this is its primary signification; (b) a shirt; (c) a garment that envelops the whole body; (d) the kind of covering called خمار; (e) a garment with which a woman covers her head and bosom; (f) a woman's head-covering; (g) a garment worn by a woman that entirely envelops the body so that not even a hand is left uncovered; (h) a garment or other thing that one uses as a covering (Lane).
61. If the hypocrites, and those in whose hearts is a disease, and those who cause agitation in the city, desist not, We shall surely make thee take action against them; then they will not dwell therein as thy neighbours, save for a little while.

3120. Important Words:

مرجعون (who cause agitation) is the plural of مرجم which is active participle from مرجم which is the transitive form of رجم which means, it was or became in a state of commotion or agitation, or in a state of violent agitation. رجم القوم means, the people prepared themselves for war. أرجعوا في الشبي means, they said what was false respecting the thing or they told many evil and false tales respecting the thing in order that the people might become in a state of commotion, agitation or disturbance in consequence thereof. أرجعوا أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفهم أطرفه...
62. Then they will be accursed. Wherever they are found, they will be seized, and cut into pieces.\footnote{3121}

63. "Such has been the way of Allah in the case of those who passed away before, and thou wilt never find a change in the way of Allah.\footnote{3122}

64. \textit{Men ask thee concerning the Hour. Say, 'The knowledge of it is with Allah alone.' And what will make thee know that the Hour may be nigh?}\footnote{3123}

65. "Allah has surely cursed the disbelievers, and has prepared for them a burning fire,

66. Wherein they will abide for ever. They will find therein no friend nor helper.

67. On the day when their faces are turned over in the fire, they will say, "O, would that we had obeyed Allah and obeyed the Messenger!"\footnote{3124}

\footnote{a17 : 78; 35 : 44; 48 : 24. b7 : 188; 79 : 43. c7 : 45. d25 : 28.}

3121. \textbf{Commentary:}

It is an established fact of history that ignominy and humiliation have dogged the footsteps of the ill-fated Jewish people throughout the ages. Their return to Palestine and the establishment of the Republic of Israel seems to be only a temporary phase.

3122. \textbf{Commentary:}

The verse purports to say that it is an invariable Divine practice that the enemies of truth fail in their wicked designs against it and come to grief in the long run. This has happened in the time of every Divine Reformer and Prophet.

3123. \textbf{Commentary:}

In verse 25 the disbelievers and "Hypocrites" were warned that they would be punished. In the present verse they are told that the time of their punishment has drawn very near. The reference in "the Hour" may be to the Battle of the Ditch.

3124. \textbf{Important Words:}

\textit{وجوه (faces) is the plural of وجه which means face, direction; object and motive; deed or action to which a person directs his attention; the thing itself; the desired way. وجه also means leaders; prominent persons. The word seems to have been used in this sense in the present verse. See also 2 : 113, 149.}
68. "And they will say, ‘Our Lord, we obeyed our chiefs and our great ones and they led us astray from the way.’

69. ‘Our Lord, give them double punishment and curse them with a very great curse.’

3125. Commentary:

In the preceding verse reference was made to the leaders of disbelief. Here the rank and file are mentioned. It is human nature that when mischief-makers are punished, they seek to shift the blame for their evil deeds to others. The leaders blame their followers for following them blindly and the rank and file accuse their leaders of deceiving them by superior intellect. In the next verse the followers demand that double punishment be inflicted on their leaders for their own evil deeds and for having misled them.

3126. Commentary:

From the Bible (Num. 12:1-10) and other Jewish literature it appears that Moses was made the butt of serious calumnies, some of which were: (1) Korah induced a woman to bring against Moses a charge of illicit connection with her. (b) Having become jealous of Aaron’s increasing influence with his people, Moses sought to kill him. (3) Moses was a victim of leprosy and syphilis; and (4) Sāmirī charged him with idolatry.

The Holy Prophet bore very close resemblance to Moses. Similar allegations were bound to be made against him. God, however, cleared both these noble Prophets of the wicked charges brought against them by their enemies and thus nullified their nefarious designs.

3127. Commentary:

The Siṣra, as mentioned above, deals with some of the most important laws of the Shari‘at. Quite appropriately it closes with a basic direction in this respect. The direction is to the effect that believers should always be on their guard against incurring the displeasure of God by unseemly conduct and should be scrupulously straightforward in dealings with other people.
72. He will set right your actions for you and forgive you your sins. And whoso obeys Allah and His Messenger, shall surely attain a mighty success.

73. Verily, We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and were afraid of it. But man bore it. Indeed, he is capable of being unjust to, and neglectful of, himself.\footnote{3128}

\footnote{3128. \textbf{Important Words:}}

- حملها (bore it). حمل means, he bore or carried it, or carried it off or away; he gave him a beast upon which to ride. حمل بدرين means, he bore or took upon himself the responsibility for the payment of debt. حمل الأمانة means, he took upon himself or accepted the trust, or he betrayed the trust, he proved false to it (Lane & Aqrab). See also 7 : 177.

- ظلوما (unjust) is the intensive form of ظلم which is active participle from ظلم which means, he did wrong or acted unjustly, wrongfully or tyrannically; he put the thing in a wrong place or in a place not its own. ظلم means, he imposed upon him a thing that was beyond his power or ability (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2 : 36 & 17 : 60.

- جهولا (neglectful) is the intensive form of جهل which is active participle from جهل (jahila) which means, he was ignorant. جهل عليه means, he acted towards him in a silly and foolish manner and wrongly. جهل الحق means, he neglected or ignored the truth. جهل means, ignorant, neglectful; foolish or silly and wrong in conduct (Lane & Aqrab).

\textbf{Commentary:}

This verse has presented Commentators of the Qur'an with some difficulty. In view of different significations of the words used, the verse seems to be susceptible of the following interpretations:

(I) Taking the word حمل as meaning to accept and الأمانة as signifying the trust of man's love of God, the verse would mean that a great spiritual destiny awaited man. He was made God's vicegerent on earth (2 : 31). He was gifted with the great capacities and powers to assimilate and manifest in his person Divine attributes and to become the image of his Creator. This was indeed a great trust which man, alone of all the universe, was found capable of discharging, other beings and things—the angels, the heavens, the earth and the mountains—being quite unequal to the task. They refused, as it were, to bear it. Man accepted this responsibility because he alone could discharge it, as he had been endowed with great natural qualities. He was capable of being ظلوم (unjust to himself) and جهولا (neglectful of himself) i.e., he could be unjust to himself in the sense that he could bear any hardship and undergo any sacrifice for the sake of his Creator, and he was capable of being neglectful in the sense that in the discharge of his great and sacred trust he could be neglectful of his own interest and desire for a life of ease and comfort.
74. The result is that Allah will punish hypocritical men and hypocritical women, and idolatrous men and idolatrous women; and Allah turns in mercy to believing men and believing women; and Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful. \[3129\]

(2) Taking امانت (trust), however, in the sense of the Law of the Qur'an and الإنسان signifying the perfect man, i.e. the Holy Prophet, the verse would mean that of all the denizens of heavens, and earth, and of all great men, and leaders of thought, the Holy Prophet alone was found to be capable of being entrusted with the revelation of the most perfect and final Law—the Qur'an, because no other man, or being was endowed with those great qualities which were indispensable for the full and adequate discharge of this great responsibility.

(3) Taking حمل in the sense of betraying or proving false to a trust, the verse would mean that the trust of the Divine Law was imposed upon man and other terrestrial and celestial beings. All of them with the exception of man refused to betray this trust, i.e. they carried out fully and faithfully all the laws to which they were made subject. The whole nature was true to its laws and the angels also carried out their duties loyally and faithfully (16 : 51). It is man alone who having been endowed with discretion and volition defies and violates Divine commandments because he is unjust and neglects and ignores his duties and responsibilities. This meaning of the verse is supported by 41 : 12 wherein it is stated that the heavens and earth were commanded to carry out the laws that were imposed on them and they gave their willing and unconditional obedience to them.

3129. Commentary:

The verse means to say that with the revelation of the Shari'at the people became split up into two classes: (1) Those acting upon it came to be known as believers and received the favours and grace of God. (2) Those who rejected and defied it got the unenviable appellation of hypocrites and idolaters and were visited with Divine punishment.
CHAPTER 34
AL-SABA’
(Revealed before Hijra)

Date of Revelation, Title and Context

The Sūra seems to owe its title to the fact that it contains a somewhat detailed reference to Saba’, a people of Yemen who were destroyed by a great flood. It was revealed at Mecca. While it is difficult to assign to it a definite date from the nature of its contents, it appears to belong to the early Meccan period, though some scholars place it in the middle Meccan period, while some others like Rodwell and Noldeke give it even a later date.

The preceding several Sūrās embodied prophecies about the rise, progress and the ultimate victory of Islam over false Faiths, while in the immediately preceding Chapter, Al-Ahzāb, the subject was dealt with at some length as to how the combined forces of darkness utterly failed in their nefarious designs to destroy Islam and how Islam emerged from one of the severest ordeals with flying colours, its power and prestige having been considerably enhanced. In the present Sūra, however, the Muslims have been warned that they should be on their guard against falling into bad ways because when wealth and prosperity come to a people they are prone to give themselves up to a life of ease and luxury. Since God has no particular relation with any community for all time, if a people in the hey-day of their glory and material prosperity lead a life of sin—as did the Israelites after Solomon or the Sabeans—they too suffer the consequences of their sinful deeds.

The immediate connection of this Sūra with its predecessor consists in the fact that towards the close of that Sūra it was stated that of the whole creation of God man alone was endowed with such inborn qualities and capacities as enable him to fulfil the demands of the Shari’āt and to imbibe and demonstrate in his person Divine attributes. All other species of creation were incapable of doing so. Therefore, when the great responsibility of conforming life to the Divine Law was placed before man and other beings and things, they all refused to accept it except man because he alone was found capable of going to the utmost limit in sacrificing his comforts and interests in the discharge of his great and grave responsibility.

The Sūra opens with the celebration of praises of the Wise and All-Aware God, Who knowing that of all creation man alone could bear the heavy burden of carrying out the grave responsibility of fulfilling the demands of the Shari’āt, laid that burden on his shoulders, but having laid it, He did not leave him alone. He continued to help him in the performance of his noble task to its completion.

2140
Subject-Matter

The Sūra has six sections and fifty-five verses. It opens with the celebration of the praises of Allah "to Whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth," implying that as God is Great and Almighty, a people who seek to defy His authority are sure to meet with failure and frustration. The disbelievers, it further says, try to delude themselves into the belief that their rejection of the Message of Islam will go unpunished and that "the Hour will never come upon them" (v. 4). They accuse the Holy Prophet of being an impostor who seeks to impose his leadership on them. But the Prophet is no liar or forger but a true Messenger of God and as such his cause will grow and prosper and disbelievers will be punished for rejecting him. Their power will break and their glory depart and this fact will constitute a proof of the truth of the Holy Prophet's mission.

The Sūra proceeds to make a somewhat detailed reference to the Prophets, David and Solomon, who made vast conquests and subdued rebellious tribes and in whose reigns the Israelite power and glory rose to its zenith. The result was that in the pride of their power and prosperity the Israelites fell into evil ways and began to lead a life of sin which resulted in Divine wrath descending upon them. The reference to David and Solomon is followed by a reference to the Sabean who were a highly prosperous and cultured people, but who like the Israelites defied and disobeyed Divine commandments and like them incurred the displeasure of God and were destroyed by a mighty flood. By referring to the might, glory and prosperity of the Israelites under David and Solomon, and to that of the Sabean, and to their subsequent destruction, the Sūra gives a warning to Muslims that great wealth, power and prosperity will also be bestowed on them, but if in the hey-day of their glory they, like the Israelites and the Sabean, gave themselves up to a life of luxury and ease, they will be punished like them.

The third section (rukū') deals with the main theme of the Sūra, viz., the progressive rise of the cause of Islam and the sad fate that is in store for idol-worshippers and their false deities. The disbelievers are challenged to call upon their deities to obstruct the progress of Islam, and to arrest the decline and downfall of their own false ideals and institutions. They are told that no power on earth could stop this from happening. They are further warned that when the "Hour" of their ultimate defeat arrives, the sinners and the guilty will be punished. This process of decline and decay of disbelief began with the Battle of Badr and reached its culmination on the day when Mecca—then the great citadel of idol-worship in Arabia—fell, and the Ka'ba was cleared of idols. In order to make disbelievers realize that their cause was destined to perish and Islam was to sweep away everything before it, they are told to study the operation of the laws of nature, which were all working in favour of Islam. In answer to the disbelievers' demand as to when the prophecy about the rise and progress of Islam will be fulfilled, the Sūra goes so far as to fix the actual date when palpable signs of the rise of Islam and decline and downfall of disbelief will begin to appear. These signs, it proceeds to add, will begin to take place about a year after the flight of the Holy Prophet from Mecca, when the Quraishites, by expelling him from his native town, will render themselves deserving of Divine punishment.

Next, the Sūra says that whenever a Divine Reformer makes his appearance it is always the vested interests and privileged classes that stand in his way. They feel and apprehend that the rise of the new Movement will weaken their hold on the poor people who, by accepting the
new Message, will refuse to be exploited or suppressed any more. So they fight it tooth and nail and try to nip it in the bud and the suppressed and exploited classes are, by threats and intimidation, dragooned into accepting their lead and opposing the Divine Reformer. This has happened in the time of every Prophet. But no amount of opposition from any direction has ever been able to stay or retard the progress of truth. When, however, the time of reckoning for the disbelievers arrives, both the exploited and the exploiters begin to curse each other for having rejected the Divine Message. But this mutual recrimination and condemnation proves of no avail.

Towards its close the Sūra refers to a criterion by which it could be easily found out that the Holy Prophet is neither an impostor nor a maniac. He is a true Prophet of God, because an impostor is never allowed to progress and prosper and eventually comes to a sad end, and a madman cannot bring about such a wonderful revolution in the life of a whole people as the Holy Prophet has done. The Sūra ends with the warning to disbelievers of Mecca to take a lesson from the fate of the opponents of Prophets of yore, who in pride of power and position, rejected the Divine Reformers and were consequently destroyed. If the Meccan disbelievers rejected the Message of Islam they, too, would meet with no better fate.
1. aIn the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.3130

2. All praise is due to Allah, to Whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And His is all praise in the Hereafter; and He is the Wise, the All-Aware.3131

3. bHe knows whatever goes into the earth and whatever comes forth from it, and whatever descends from the heaven and whatever ascends into it; and He is Merciful, Most Forgiving.3132

3130. Commentary:
See 1:1.

3131. Commentary:
Five Chapters of the Qur'an i.e., 1st, 6th, 18th, 35th and the present one, begin with the words "All praise is due to Allah." All these Chapters, expressly or by implication, deal with the subject of the Lordship, Almightyness and Majesty of God. The preceding several Chapters embodied prophecies about the rise, progress and the ultimate victory of Islam over false Faiths. In the present Sūra, however, the Muslims are warned that they should be on their guard against falling into bad ways. God being the Lord of all the worlds, He has no relation with any particular people and so if they followed evil ways as did the Israelites in the time of Solomon, all their power and glory will vanish and like the Israelites they will fall a victim to misery, degradation and ruin.

3132. Commentary:
The words "His is praise in the Hereafter" refer to the time when Islam again will become triumphant after its decline. A detailed reference to this has been made in 32:6.

b57 : 5.

The words "His is praise in the Hereafter" refer to the time when Islam again will become triumphant after its decline. A detailed reference to this has been made in 32:6.
4. And those who disbelieve say, 'The Hour will never come upon us'. Say, 'Yea, by my Lord Who knows the unseen, it will surely come upon you. "Not an atom's weight in the heavens or in the earth or anything less than that or greater escapes Him, but all is recorded in a perspicuous Book'.

5. "That He may reward those who believe and do good works. It is these who will have forgiveness and an honourable provision.'

6. "But as to those who strive against Our Signs, seeking to frustrate Our plans, it is they for whom there will be the suffering of a painful punishment.

The words "whatever comes forth from it, and whatever descends from the heaven" may refer to the Word of God which is cast away by the people and is corrupted by them and then is taken up to heaven so that it may descend on earth in a purified state.

The words, "whatever goes into the earth and whatever comes forth from it," may also signify that whatever man shall sow, so shall he reap. Good actions produce good results and bad deeds lead to evil consequences.

The verse may also signify that God is aware of every phenomenon and every event, including the rise and fall of nations and peoples.

3133. Commentary:

The reference in the word "Hour" is to the hour of the triumph of Islam and the defeat and discomfiture of disbelief.

3134. Commentary:

The subject of the preceding verse is further elaborated and developed in the present one, viz., that no action good or bad goes unrewarded. The disbelievers are thus warned that their opposition to Islam and their persecution of Muslims will not go unpunished.

The words "forgiveness" and "honourable provision" have been placed in order of precedence, for forgiveness always precedes mercifulness.
7. And those who are given knowledge see that whatever has been revealed to thee from thy Lord is the truth, and that it guides unto the path of the Mighty, the Praiseworthy.

8. And those who disbelieve say, 'Shall we show you a man who will tell you that when you are broken up into pieces, you shall be raised as a new creation?'

9. 'Has he forged a lie against Allah or is he afflicted with madness?' Nay, 'but those who believe not in the Hereafter are already suffering from the punishment and are too far gone in error.

3135. Important Words:

- مَزْقَم (you are broken up) is derived from مَزْقَم, which means, he scattered or dispersed.
- مَزْقَتِ التَّوْب means, he tore the cloth in many places.
- مَزْقَتِ عَرْضَه meaning, he rent or marred his honour or reputation. They say مَزْقَتِ كُل مَزْقَة which means, he dispersed them to all parts of the country. He (God) destroyed them thoroughly and completely (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In verse 4 disbelievers were warned that the time of the triumph of Islam and their own destruction was fast approaching. The word used in that verse to convey this warning was الساعة (the Hour). In the verse under comment the disbelievers are shown as vainly seeking to divert the subject of their defeat by pretending to take the word الساعة (the Hour) in the sense of the Day of Resurrection when they shall be broken up into pieces and not in the sense in which it has been used in v. 4, viz., the day of their defeat and destruction in this world. The verse may also mean that disbelievers accuse the Holy Prophet of seeking to create a community of his own by causing discord and disharmony in their ranks, and implies the answer that these people who brag so much of their unity were never a united people. Their talk of unity is an empty talk and their charge that the Holy Prophet seeks to create disunity among them is altogether false and unfounded.
10. Do they not see what is before them and what is behind them of the heaven and the earth? If We please, We could cause the earth to sink with them, or cause pieces of the sky to fall upon them. In that verily is a Sign for every repentant servant of Allah.  

3136. **Commentary:** The verse under comment continues the theme of the preceding verses and purports to say that there are evident Signs in the heavens and the earth which constitute an unmistakable evidence of the fast approaching triumph of Islam and the downfall and disgrace of disbelievers. The words “We will make the earth sink with them” refer to the Signs of the earth; and the words “or cause to fall upon them a portion of the heaven” allude to Heavenly Signs. Undoubtedly, the manner in which the forces of darkness and disbelief were put to rout in their combat against Islam showed that the victory of Islam was due solely to Divine help and succour which came to Muslims in the nick of time.

3137. **Important Words:**

أوَى (repeat the praises) is derived from أَوَى which means, he returned. أَوَى أَبِي means, he returned to God from his sins, he repented. أَوَى أَبَّ أَبَيُّ أَبِي means, he repeated or echoed the praises of God (Lane & Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

As the principal theme of this سُورَة is the triumph of Islam and the great wealth, power and dominion that were to be given to Muslims, and as the might and splendour of the Israelites attained its zenith in the reigns of David and Solomon, so a somewhat detailed reference has been made in this سُورَة to these two great Prophets and Kings in order, on the one hand, to tell Muslims that such great glory and splendour will come to them also, and, on the other, to warn them that if they did not behave properly and if they defied and violated Divine commandments and indulged in evil practices, they too will come to grief, as did the Israelites after Solomon’s death, when all their power and glory departed, and they became pariahs among the nations.

For a detailed discussion of the subject as to how the mountains and the birds repeated the praises of God along with David see 21:80. Briefly, the word “mountains” signifies those mountain tribes which submitted to David, while the use of the word “birds” implies that David led large and powerful armies followed by flocks of birds which feasted upon the dead...
12. And We said, 'Make thou full-length coats of mail, and make the rings of a proper measure. And do righteous deeds, surely I see all that you do.'

13. And to Solomon We subjected the wind; its morning course was a month's journey, and its evening course was a month's journey too. And We caused a fount of molten copper to flow for him. And of the Jinn were some who worked under him, by the command of his Lord. And We said that whosoever of them turned away from Our command, We would make him taste the punishment of burning fire.

bodies of his vanquished foes. The words "birds" may also signify highly spiritual men or real birds which David used for carrying messages in time of war.

The expression "And We made the iron soft for him" shows that the art of making implements of war from iron had very much developed under David and he freely made use of it for making coats of mail as the next verse shows.

3138. Important Words:
- سراغات (full length coats of mail) is the plural of درع سابقة which means, a coat of mail that is wide or ample and long or such that one drags upon the ground by reason of its length and ampleness.
- سراغ which means, a complete or full boon.

3139. Important Words:
- روف (evening course) is derived from رواج which means, he went or journeyed or worked. They say رواج اليومن i.e. he went to them or he went to them in the evening; or did a thing in the evening or in the afternoon; he went or journeyed at any time.

Commentary:
The reference in this verse is again to David's military might. The words "and do righteous deeds" embodied an admonition to the people of David that they were not to exult in their military conquests. Their main and principal object should be to preach and practise goodness. The implied admonition is meant for Muslims.
or pure thing; mercy; aid against an enemy; victory or conquest; predominance and power; a turn of good fortune (Lane & Aqrab). See also 8:47.

Commentary:

The verse speaks volumes for the vast extent of Solomon's dominions and the peace and prosperity which reigned in his empire. Solomon's dominions extended from northern Syria along the coast of the eastern Mediterranean down to the Red Sea, along the Arabian Sea and up to the Persian Gulf. In fact, in Solomon's time, the Israelite empire had reached its zenith in wealth, power and prestige as the word which, among other things, means power and conquests, used in the verse, shows. The verse also shows that Solomon possessed a large mercantile navy:

And King Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. And they came to Ophir, and fetched thence gold, four hundred and twenty tents and brought it to King Solomon (I Kings, 9:26-28).

Solomon's foreign alliances formed the basis for foreign commercial relations. From the Egyptians he bought chariots and horses, which he sold to the Hittites and other people of the north. With the Phoenicians he united in maritime commerce, sending out a fleet once in three years from Ezion-geber, at the head of the Gulf of Akaba, to Ophire, presumably on the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. From this distant port, and others on the way, he derived fabulous amounts of gold and tropical products. These revenues gave him almost unlimited means for increasing the glory of his capital city and palace, and for the perfection of his civil and military organizations (Jew. Enc. vol. xi, p. 437).

The words, "And We caused a fount of molten copper to flow for him." signify the high stage to which industry and craftsmanship had developed under Solomon. He had erected factories in which copper was molted. In the Bible we have:

Moreover, he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof and ten cubits the height thereof. Also he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compass and the height thereof was five cubits (II Chronicles 4:1-2).

The expression, "And of the Jinn were some who worked under him" shows that Solomon had conquered and pressed into service wild and rebellious mountain tribes who worked for him day and night. Incidentally, the verse shows that Solomon's rule was firm and strong. A reference to this is also to be found in the Bible in II Chronicles, 2:18.

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14. They made for him what he desired, of palaces and statues, and basins like reservoirs, and large cooking vessels fixed in their places. And We said: 'Work ye, O House of David, gratefully;' but few of My servants are grateful.

15. And when We decreed his (Solomon's) death, nothing indicated to them that he was dead save a worm of the earth that ate away his staff. So when he fell down, the Jinn plainly realized that if they had known the unseen, they would not have remained in a state of degrading torment.

3140. Important Words:

- **(palaces)** is the plural of **مَحَارِيب** which among other things means, a palace; a mosque (Lane & Aqrab). See also 3 : 38.

- **(basins)** is the plural of **خَنَف** which is infinitive noun from **خَنَف**. They say **خَنَف** i.e. he slaughtered the she-camel and gave the flesh for food to the people in bowls. **خَنَف** means, a large bowl or receptacle, particularly used for food; a small well; a generous man. **خَنَف** means, a generous man who entertains many guests and feeds many. He is so called because people are fed by him in the **خَنَف** (Lane & Aqrab).

- **(reservoirs)** is the plural of **جَبَالٌ رَاسِيَة** which is derived from **رَاسِيَة** which means, it was or became fixed, firm, stable. **قَدْرُ رَاسِيَة** means, a cooking pot that will not be removed from its place on account of its large size and heaviness. **جَبَالٌ رَاسِيَة** means, firm mountains (Lane & Aqrab). See also 16 : 16.

Commentary:

The verse shows that besides being a highly prosperous, powerful and civilized monarch, Solomon was the prince of builders among Israelite rulers. He had a special taste for architecture which had greatly developed under him. The Temple of Jerusalem bears an eloquent testimony to his fine architectural taste.

3141. Important Words:

- **(staff)** is derived from **نَسَانِيْة** which means, a staff or large stick, so called because a beast is driven with it; a pastor's big staff (Lane & Aqrab).
16. "There was indeed a Sign for Saba' in their home-land—two gardens, one on the right hand and one on the left; and We said to them, 'Eat of the provision of your Lord and be grateful to Him. A good land and a Most Forgiving Lord!"3142

Commentary:

The reference in the words "a worm of the earth" is to Solomon's worthless son and successor, Rehoboam, under whose weak rule the great and mighty kingdom of Solomon fell to pieces. Besides leading a life of ease and luxury, he was surrounded by foolish and selfish counsellors whose bad advice led him to pursue a policy which brought about the ruin and downfall of the kingdom which had been reared on firm and sound footing by his great father. The wild mountain tribes realizing that the strong hand which had held them under subjection was no more, rebelled and revolted, with the result that disorder and chaos followed and Solomon's mighty kingdom cracked and crumbled. See I Kings, Chaps. 12, 13, 14 & Jew. Enc. under "Rehoboam."

The expression "that ate away his staff," signifies that the disruption and disintegration of Solomon's kingdom set in in Rehoboam's time.

3142. Commentary:

The preceding verses having made a mention of the blessings and favours which God had bestowed upon the Israelites and which found their fullest expression in the highly prosperous reigns of David and Solomon, the present verse proceeds to refer to another very prosperous and happy people of their time—the people of Saba'. Saba', as is mentioned under 27:23, was a city of Yemen situated about three days' journey from Ṣan'ā', also called Ma'ārib.

This town finds frequent reference in the Old Testament and in Greek, Roman and Arabic literature, especially in the South Arabian inscriptions. The Sabaeans were a highly civilized and prosperous people. The finds made in the country itself are in harmony with the various classical literary sources, which agree in showing that the Sabaeans attained the greatest importance of all Arab peoples of the pre-Muhammadan period, in particular of the four leading peoples of South Arabia who were known even to the Greeks...these still extant monuments of the once highly developed civilization, to which Sabæa mainly owed its historical importance...Agatharchides's remarks on the splendid buildings of the kings and private individuals in Saba' and the descriptions of Sabæan castles by the Arabs are confirmed by the testimony of the inscriptions, which to a great extent commemorate the building of houses (palaces) and fortifications. Of public works built to assist agriculture like barriers and dams, the most celebrated was the dam of Ma'ārib" (Enc. of Islam, vol. 4, p. 16).

Tirmidhi quotes a tradition on the authority of Farwah bin Mālik that when asked whether Saba' was the name of a land or of a woman, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said, 'It is neither the name of a land nor that of a woman but the name of a man in Yemen who had ten sons. Six of them remained in Yemen while four of them went to
17. But they turned away; so We sent against them a fierce flood. And We gave them, in lieu of their gardens, two gardens bearing bitter fruit and tamarisk and a few lote-trees.\(^{3143}\)

18. Thus We requited them because of their ingratitude; and none do We requite \textit{in this manner} but the ungrateful.\(^{3144}\)

Syria. As for those who made Syria their home, they were Jotham, Ghassān and Amila; and as for those who stayed back in Yemen they were Ash'ariyyun, Himyar, Kandah, Madhpih and Āmmār. On being asked who were Āmmār, the Prophet replied “Of them are Khath'am and Bajilah” (Tāj).

The whole tenor of the verse shows that the Sabaeans were a highly prosperous and cultured people whom God had blessed in great abundance with all the comforts and amenities of life. The whole country seems to have been rendered very fertile by dams and other irrigation works and was full of gardens and streams. According to Muir there were 70 stages or stops from Hādārmāt to Aila on the road from Yemen to Syria. These stages even exist today. It was a very frequented and safe route, flanked on both sides by shady trees.

3143. \textbf{Important Words}:

- سَيْلٌ (fierce flood). سَيْلُ is derived from سَيْلُ العَرْمُ which means, it (the water) flowed. سَيْلٌ means, a torrent, a flow of water; much water or a collection of rain-water flowing in a valley or water course. مَاء سَيْلٌ means, flowing or running water. عَرْمٌ is derived from عَرْمُ (‘aroma or ‘aroma) which means, he was or became evil in disposition; he behaved insolently or he was or became corrupt. عَرْمُ means, a dam or dams constructed in valleys or torrent-beds; or a torrent of which the rush is not to be withstood; or violent rain (Lane & Aqrab).

\textbf{Commentary}:

Such is the irony of human circumstances that whenever man is blessed with material comforts and amenities of life and leads a prosperous and successful life, then instead of being grateful to God for His blessings and favours, he becomes arrogant and begins to behave ungratefully and insolently. The Sabaeans were no exception to the common run of humanity. In the day of prosperity they fell into evil ways and defied and broke Divine laws. The inevitable nemesis seized them. The same dam of Ma‘ārib to which they owed all their wealth and prosperity caused their destruction. As the result of a mighty flood it burst and inundated the whole area causing wide-spread ruin. A land full of beautiful gardens, streams and great works of art was turned into a vast waste. The dam was about two miles long and 120 ft. high. It was destroyed about the first or second century A.D. (Palmer).

3144. \textbf{Commentary}:

This is how the ungrateful and the wicked are punished and the mighty are laid low. The verse constitutes a standing warning to Muslims.
19. And We placed, between them and the towns which we had blessed, other towns that were prominently visible, and We fixed easy stages between them and said: 'Travel in them by night and day in security.'

20. But they said, 'Our Lord, place longer distances between the stages of our journeys.' And they wronged themselves; so We made them bywords and We broke them into pieces, an utter breaking up. In that verily are Signs for every steadfast and grateful person.

21. And Iblis indeed found true his judgment concerning them, so they followed him, all except a party of believers.

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3145. **Commentary:**

The words "the towns which we had blessed" refer to the towns of Palestine, the seat of Solomon's government with which the Sabaeans carried on prosperous trade.

3146. **Commentary:**

The expression "and so We made them bywords" means that the Sabaeans were so utterly destroyed that no sign or mark was left of them. They became only a subject for story-tellers.

3147. **Commentary:**

The verse means to say that by their evil deeds the people of Saba' justified Satan's estimate that he would be successful in leading them astray. The reference to this estimate of Satan about the wicked people and their
22. "And he had no power over them, but it was so that We might distinguish those who believed in the Hereafter from those who were in doubt about it. And thy Lord is Watchful over all things." 3148

23. Say, 'Call upon those whom you assert to be gods beside Allah. They control not even the weight of an atom in the heavens or in the earth, nor have they any share in either, nor has He any helper among them'. 3149

24. 'No intercession avails with Him, except for him about whom He permits it, until when their hearts are relieved of fright they would say, 'What is it that your Lord said?' They (the Messengers) will answer, 'The truth.' And He is the High, the Great. 3150

evil deeds may be found in 17: 63 where he is mentioned as saying that he will cause his (Adam’s) progeny to perish except a few.

3148. Commentary:

The verse clearly and positively removes all doubts or misgivings as to the extent of the authority and control of Satan over men. According to it Satan has definitely no authority over man. It is by his own wrong beliefs and evil deeds that man brings about his spiritual ruin.

3149. Commentary:

As stated above, the principal theme of this Sūra is the triumph of Islam. Instances of David and Solomon on the one hand and of the Sabaeans on the other given in the preceding few verses embodied a prophecy that Muslims would also be blessed with power and wealth like the Israelites in the reigns of David and Solomon and the Sabaeans but if they did not behave and were ungrateful to God, they would be punished like them. In the present verse, however, disbelievers are challenged to call upon all their false gods to arrest or retard the progress and advance of Islam and are told that they cannot do so; in fact, no power on earth can stop the new Faith from spreading.

3150. Important Words:

( relieved of fear) is derived from (fazī’a) which means, he feared, or became afraid of. (fazza’-hāt) means, he frightened him. (faz‘a‘) means, he removed fear or fright from him (Lane & Aqrab).
25. Say, "Who gives you sustenance from the heavens and the earth?" Say, "Allah. Either We or you are on right guidance or in manifest error."  

26. Say, "You will not be questioned as to our sins, nor shall we be questioned as to what you do."

27. Say, "Our Lord will bring us all together; then He will judge between us with truth: and He is the Great Judge, the All-Knowing."

Commentary:

The verse signifies that when punishment is decreed for a people on account of their evil deeds, no intercession can avail them.

The words "their hearts" may signify "the hearts of the intercessors" and the pronoun "they" in the words "they would say" refers to the sinful people who will be punished, and the second "they" in the expression "they will answer, 'the truth'" to the intercessors or to the Messengers of God. Or the words "their hearts" may refer to the hearts of disbelievers and the pronoun "they" to them in both the sentences. In such a case the verse would mean that when the curtain will be lifted from the eyes of disbelievers and reality will dawn on them in its naked form, they will say to themselves that what God had said through His Messengers was true.

3151. Commentary:

The fact that the Qur'an itself answers the question "Who gives you sustenance from the heavens and the earth?" by saying that it is Allah Who does so, shows that there could possibly be no other answer to this question except the one here given by the Qur'an.

The words, "Either we or you are on right guidance or in manifest error," mean that as surely we (the believers) are on the right, so surely you (the disbelievers) are in error.

3152. Important Words:

فتح (the Great Judge) is derived from فتح, i.e. he judged between them. 

فتح الباب means, he opened the door. 

فتح is an epithet applied to God meaning, the Great Judge; the Opener of the gates of His Mercy and of sustenance to His servants (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse is generally taken as referring to the Fall of Mecca when it was decided beyond the shadow of doubt as to which of the two parties—Muslims and disbelievers—was "on right guidance" and which "in manifest error." It was after that great victory that a union of hearts was brought about between Muslims and their adversaries, the latter having given up their false beliefs and doctrines joined the fold of Islam. The use of the expression يجمع بيننا in
28. Say, "Show me those whom you have joined with Him as partners. Nay! you cannot do so, for He is Allah, the Mighty, the Wise." 

29. And We have not sent thee but as a Bearer of glad tidings and a Warner for all mankind, but most men know not. 

30. And they say, 'When will this promise be fulfilled, if you are truthful?' 

31. Say, 'For you is the promise of a day from which you cannot remain behind a single moment nor can you get ahead of it.'

3153. Commentary:
The verse means to say that on the day of the Fall of Mecca it will be decisively established that the false gods of disbelievers were devoid of all power and wisdom and that Allah, the God of Islam, was All-Powerful and Wise.

3154. Commentary:
The Holy Prophet has been repeatedly declared in the Qur'an as having been sent as a Messenger to all mankind till the end of time. See also 21:108 & 25:2. The Message of Islam is a universal message and the Qur'an is the last revealed Book for all mankind. No other revealed Book or religion has ever laid claim to finality.

3155. Commentary:
If v. 27 above is taken as referring to the Battle of Badr, the word يوم (day) in the present verse would signify 'a year'. The Battle of Badr was fought in about a year after the Hijra.
32. And those who disbelieve say, 'We will never believe in this Qur'an, nor in what is before it;' and couldst thou see "when the wrongdoers will be made to stand before their Lord, throwing back the blame one to another. Those who were considered weak will say to those who were proud, 'Had it not been for you, we should surely have been believers.'

33. Those who were proud will say to those who were considered weak, 'Was it we that kept you away from the guidance, after it had come to you? Nay, it was you yourselves who were guilty.'

3156. Commentary:

The expression لين يده literally meaning "between his two hands" is used in the sense of "before him or it." It has been used in this sense in 5:47 and 46:22. But it is also used in the sense of "in his presence" as in v. 13. Sometimes, however, this expression refers to a thing which is yet to come. In this sense the expression لين يده may mean 'the revelation which is yet to come.'
34. "And those who were considered weak will say to those who were proud, 'Nay, but it was your scheming night and day, when you bade us disbelieve in Allah and set up equals unto Him.' And they will conceal their remorse when they see the punishment; and We shall put chains round the necks of those who disbelieved. They will not be requited but for what they did."

35. And We never sent a Warner to any city but 'the wealthy ones thereof said, 'Surely, we disbelieve in what you have been sent with.'

36. And they say, 'We have more wealth and children; and we shall not be punished.'

3157. Important Words:

أُسْرَوا (will conceal) is one of those Arabic words which have contrary meanings. أَسْرُهُ means, he concealed it; he manifested it; he made it known (Lane). See also 10:55.

عَنْقُونَ (necks) is the plural of عَنْقَة (‘unuqun) which is substantive noun from عَنْقُ (‘aniga) which means, he was or became long and thick in the neck. عَنْقُ means, the neck; a company of men or a numerous company of men; the heads or chiefs of men or great ones. عَنْقُ النَّخُلِ means, the trunks of palm-trees (Lane & Aqrab).

3158. Commentary:

The Prophets of God come to raise depressed and suppressed humanity to their rightful place in society and to restore to them the rights which are denied to them by the vested interests. That is why in all ages it is the rich, the wealthy, the men of power and influence—the vested interests—who range themselves against the new Divine Message. They feel that under its influence the oppressed and the exploited people will come to realize their true position and, therefore, will refuse to be exploited any more. Hence they fight their Prophet tooth and nail and put all sorts of obstacles and impediments in his way.

3159. Commentary:

All opposition to truth on the part of disbelievers springs from pride and arrogance, based on their wealth and power, their prestige, position and numbers.
37. Say, 'Verily, my Lord enlarges the provision for whomsoever He pleases, and straitens it for whomsoever He pleases; but most men do not know.'

38. And it is not your wealth nor your children that will bring you near Us in rank but those who believe and do good works, will have a double reward for what they did. And in lofty mansions will they be secure.

39. And as to those who strive to frustrate the purpose of Our Signs, it is they who will be brought face to face with punishment.

3160. Commentary:
The verse seems to hold out a promise to those who are looked down upon and are oppressed and exploited, that by accepting the new Message, they will become rich and powerful. In God’s possession lie the treasures of the heavens and earth, and He has decreed that the poor and the down-trodden will now inherit the earth because they have accepted the Divine Message.

3161. Commentary:
The verse seeks to remove the assumption by disbelievers of fancied and false superiority based on wealth, power and position, referred to in v. 36 and means to say that these things are not the means of achieving nearness to God. On the contrary, they tend to keep man away from Him. It is right belief and good actions which are his real wealth and which can bring him salvation and God’s pleasure.

3162. Commentary:
The verse purports to say that God has decreed that the new Faith shall prosper and triumph and all the efforts and machinations of disbelievers to retard or arrest its onward march will prove futile. The disbelievers will not be able to frustrate God’s purpose. On the contrary, their machinations will recoil on their own heads and they will be visited with Divine punishment.
40. Say, ‘Surely, my Lord enlarges the provision for such of His servants as He pleases and straitens it for such of them as He pleases. And whatever you spend, He will replace it; and He is the Best of providers.”

41. And remember “the day, when He will gather them all together; then He will say to the angels: ‘Was it you that they worshipped?’

42. They will say, b‘Holy art Thou. Thou art our Protector against them. Nay, but they worshipped the Jinn; it was in them that most of them believed.’

43. It will be said to disbelievers: ‘So, this day, you will have no power either to profit or harm one another.’ And We shall say to those who did wrong: “Taste ye the punishment of the Fire that you denied.”

3163. Commentary:
The subject-matter of v. 37 is here repeated to emphasize the fact that disbelievers should not be misled by the present poverty and weakness of Muslims, as the latter are destined to inherit the kingdom of the earth because they have believed in the Message of God Who is the Owner and Controller of all the sources of wealth.

3164. Commentary:
The reference in the word Jinn is to the proud, wicked and ungodly people who are not the followers of any revealed religion and who have been spoken of in vv. 32, 33 and 34 above. The word may also mean hidden forces of evil, the root جن (janna) meaning, it veiled, concealed or covered (Lane).
44. And when Our manifest Signs are recited to them, they say, "This is but a man who seeks to turn you away from that which your fathers worshipped." And they say, 'This is but a forged lie.' And those who disbelieve say about the truth when it comes to them, 'This is nothing but clear magic.'

45. And We gave them no Books which they studied nor did We send to them any Warner before thee.

3165. Commentary:

This verse sums up the subject-matter of the whole Sūra. The preceding verses deal with the mission of the Holy Prophet and answer the criticisms and objections of disbelievers against him. Their first objection was that the Prophet had split up the people into groups and parties and thus had sought to carve out of this chaos a new community for himself and to impose his leadership on them (v. 8). This objection was answered by a reference to the Divine practice that whenever there came a Prophet into the world, the people to whom he preached his Message naturally became split up into two hostile camps with the result that those who accepted it and followed the Prophet's lead triumphed over their opponents and became a strong community. To this the disbelievers would retort that the Prophet could not succeed in the face of their great resources, power and numbers (v. 36). When this objection was also refuted by the argument that power and wealth belonged to God and that it was not these things but right beliefs and good actions that led to the success and prosperity of a people and that Muslims being righteous and holding right beliefs were destined to triumph over them (vv. 37-40), the disbelievers pretended to derive consolation from the false and flimsy plea that the Prophet could not succeed because three great factors worked towards his failure, viz., that he acted against the old traditions of their forefathers, that he was a liar and an impostor and that he employed unfair and deceitful means for the furtherance of his cause and held out false promises. It is to these three objections of disbelievers that the verse under comment refers.

3166. Commentary:

The verse answers all the objections mentioned in the preceding verse. It purports to say that disbelievers accuse the Holy Prophet of having defied and flouted the time-honoured traditions of their forefathers. This objection is answered by the question: "do they possess any Book which has come down to them from their forebears and which contains teachings opposed to the teachings of the Prophet?" It further says
46. And those who were before them also rejected the truth—and these have not attained even to a tenth of that which We gave them, but they treated My Messengers as liars. So they shall see how terrible are the consequences of denying Me.\footnote{3167}

47. Say, 'I only exhort you to do only one thing: that you stand up before Allah in twos and singly and then reflect. You will then realize that there is no insanity in your companion; he is only a Warner to you of an impending severe punishment.'\footnote{3168}

that when no Prophet had come to their forefathers and they had received no revelation, then what value can their views and opinions possess as compared with the teachings of the Holy Prophet who claims to have been commissioned by God and to have received revelation direct from Him?

3167. \textbf{Important Words}:

معشار (a tenth) is derived from عشر (\textit{ashara}). They say عشر المال, i.e. he took the tenth part of the property. عشرهم means, he took one from them, they being ten. عشر (\textit{ushrun}) and معاشار and عشير all mean, a tenth; a tenth part; one of ten parts. Some say معاشار means, a hundredth part, yet according to some others it means, a thousandth part (Lane).

3168. \textbf{Commentary}:

In this and the next few verses another kind of argument has been suggested to test the truth of the Holy Prophet. The present verse recommends an objective and detached examination of his claim. The disbelievers are urged to ponder, dispassionately, without prejudice, and being uninfluenced by crowd mentality, whether the Holy Prophet suffers from insanity or unsoundness of mind. The Qur'an is convinced that if a person were to deliberate seriously and in solitude over the claim of the Holy Prophet, he would inevitably come to the conclusion that he is neither an impostor, nor an insane person, because an impostor is never allowed to progress and prosper, and sooner or later—sooner rather than later—he meets with a terrible end, while an insane person can neither give such excellent
48. Say, "Whatever reward I might have asked of you—let it be yours. My reward is only with Allah; and He is Witness over all things."\(^{3169}\)

49. Say, "Truly, My Lord hurls the Truth at falsehood and breaks it into pieces. He is the Great Knower of the unseen."\(^{3170}\)

50. Say, "The Truth has come, and falsehood could neither originate any good nor reproduce it."\(^{3171}\)

51. Say, "If I err, I err only against myself; and if I am rightly guided, it is because of what my Lord has revealed to me. Verily, He is Hearing, Nigh."

52. Couldst thou but see when they will be smitten with fear! Then there will be no escape, and they will be seized from a place nearby.\(^{3172}\)

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3169. **Commentary:**

This verse answers the objection raised in (v. 8) viz., that, by his claim to prophethood, the Holy Prophet seeks to impose his leadership upon his people. It tells disbelievers that in calling men to God the Prophet is actuated by no selfish motives. He calls God to bear witness to the honesty and sincerity of his purpose. Besides this his whole life constitutes an unanswerable testimony to it.

3170. **Commentary:**

The verse means to say that a further proof, if proofs are still needed, to establish the truth of the claim of the Holy Prophet, is that truth shall triumph over falsehood and the Prophet shall succeed in his mission.

3171. **Commentary:**

The words "nor could reproduce it" embody a mighty prophecy that idolatry will never regain a foothold in Arabia. It will disappear from that country for ever.

3172. **Commentary:**

The words "from a place nearby" may either refer to the battlefield of Badr or to the Fall of Mecca. The verse thus means that disbelievers will realize that they were in the wrong when they would sustain a crushing defeat at Badr or when their great citadel, Mecca, would fall to Muslim arms.
53. And they will say, ‘We now believe therein.’ But how can the attaining of faith be possible to them from a position so far-off,\textsuperscript{3173}

54. While they had disbelieved in it before? And they are uttering conjectures from a far off-place.\textsuperscript{3174}

55. And a barrier has been placed between them and that which they longed for, as was done with the likes of them before. They too were in disquieting doubt.\textsuperscript{3175}

\textsuperscript{3173} Commentary:
The words “from a position so far-off” may mean “after death.” In this sense the verse would mean that disbelievers will surely realize after death that they were in the wrong.

\textsuperscript{3174} Commentary:
The verse means to say that disbelievers are making foolish conjectures about the failure of the Prophet’s mission. These conjectures being far removed from the source of “the unseen” or from reality, reason and truth are quite foolish and baseless.

\textsuperscript{3175} Important Words:

ash'iyah (the likes of them). \textsuperscript{ash'iyah} is the plural of \textsuperscript{shu'aa} which means, followers or helpers or partisans; any people that have combined in or for an affair. The Quranic expression \textsuperscript{ash'iyah} means, as was done with the likes of them; of the same persuasion as they; of the people that have passed (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
There could be no greater frustration for man in life than that he should fail to achieve the object of his desire, and it is exactly this frustration that has always been the lot of the rejectors of God’s Prophets in every age. The opponents of Islam are here told that like the rejectors of the Prophets of yore they will also utterly fail to realize their heart’s desire—failure of the mission of the Holy Prophet.
CHAPTER 35
AL-FĀṬIR
(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation and Context

The Sūra takes its title from the Divine attribute Fāṭir, (Originator) mentioned in the second verse. This attribute sheds some light on the subject-matter of the Sūra, viz., that God has implanted in the human soul an irresistible hankering after Him, and that, being the Maker and Originator of the heavens and the earth, He has made adequate provision, not only for man’s physical needs but for his moral and spiritual needs as well, and that this provision has been fully made in the Qur’ān. The Divine attribute ‘Originator’ may also imply a reference to the new order that was to come about through the teaching of the Qur’ān and the example of the Holy Prophet. The Sūra was revealed at Mecca, probably at the time at which its predecessor was revealed.

Towards the end of the preceding Sūra it was stated that when Divine punishment overtakes disbelievers and they find no way out of it, they begin to make loud professions of faith. But in reality their hearts are devoid of all belief because they possess no mental affinity with it. They have rejected the Message of the Holy Prophet outright without giving it serious consideration and now that punishment has descended upon them they have begun loudly to proclaim their faith.

The present Sūra begins with the subject that from time immemorial the Great and Wise God has been sending Teachings for the guidance of man. He chooses angels as mediums for the revelation of His will and for the conveyance of His Teachings. These Teachings differ in importance and scope, and, therefore, the angels who bring them, also differ in their God-given powers and attributes. Some of them have two wings, others have three and so on, in an ascending order. The wings of angels represent their inherent powers and qualities and also the Divine attributes they manifest. The Qur’ān is the last and the greatest and most important of all revealed Scriptures, therefore, its revelation was naturally attended with angels having the largest number of wings.

Further, in the preceding Sūra, Muslims were told that like the Israelites they will be given wealth, power, prosperity and prestige and that if in the heyday of their glory and greatness they consigned God to oblivion and abandoned themselves to a life of luxury and ease they will draw upon their heads His wrath as did the Israelites before them. In the present Sūra they are promised honour and eminence through the Qur’ān whose commandments they should not fail to observe.
Subject-Matter

The Sūra opens with the declaration that all praise belongs to God Who is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. The declaration implies that being the Creator of the universe God has not only provided for the physical needs of man but also for his moral and spiritual needs, and that for this purpose He has created angels through whose instrumentality He controls the physical universe and conveys His will to men. The Sūra further says that since, the creation of man God has been sending Prophets and Messengers to convey His will and that now He has decreed to bestow His mercy upon mankind in the form of the Qur'ān. After this announcement of the bestowal of Divine mercy upon man He has been warned not to reject it, as this will entail grave consequences. The subject further continues that whenever a Divine Messenger addresses his Message to his people, they become split up into two camps—those that accept the Divine Message and become heirs to God's blessings and mercy and those who reject His Prophet and incur His displeasure and come to grief. Further, the Holy Prophet is asked not to grieve over his being rejected by disbelievers, since by rejecting him they only injure their own souls and cannot frustrate God's purpose. The Sūra proceeds to draw a moral lesson from the quite insignificant beginnings of man, viz., that Islam too will, from a humble start, grow into a mighty organisation. It further compares Islam to a sea whose water is sweet and pleasant to drink and whose teachings slake the thirst of spiritual wayfarers. Next, it observes that Islam is no novel phenomenon. Alternate periods of spiritual light and darkness continue to come over the world as day follows night and vice versa. After a long period of darkness and cessation of revelation, the sun of Islam has risen to illumine the dark world and God has decreed to bring into being a new creation and a new order of things through its teachings. Through the Qur'ān God will give eyes to the blind and ears to the deaf and the dead will receive new life, but those who will deliberately shut the avenues of their hearts and refuse to listen to the Divine Call will incur spiritual death and will be like the dead in the graves. The Sūra further develops the subject of the continuity of revelation and says that the Holy Prophet is no new Messenger. There have been coming in the world, from time immemorial, Divine Messengers who called men to God. "There is no people," the Sūra says, "to whom a warner has not been sent."

The Sūra then invites attention to the study of the physical phenomenon which bears a striking resemblance to a similar phenomenon in the spiritual realm. When rain falls on dry and parched land, it begins to bloom, blossom and vibrate with new life, and many kinds of crops, flowers and fruits of varying colours, tastes, and forms, are brought forth. The water that comes down as rain is the same but the crops and fruits are different. Similarly, the same water of Divine revelation produces different results among men of different natures and moral aptitudes. While on the one hand it produces highly righteous and God-fearing men, on the other, a community of vicious and wicked men also comes into being who carry on a relentless fight against the cause of truth. This fight between the devotees of truth and the forces of darkness always ends only in one inevitable result—the triumph of truth over falsehood.
Towards its close the Sūra brings home to idolaters the untenability of their position. It asks them, why do they worship false gods who create nothing, in preference to the Almighty Creator of the universe, all parts of which work in perfect harmony? It is this Great God Who has revealed the Qur’ān and has sent the Holy Prophet. This is why the whole universe is working to further the cause of Islam. If, in spite of the falsity and futility of their beliefs, and practices, the disbelievers continued to stick to them, Divine punishment will overtake them, though God is very slow in punishing, and continues to grant respite to sinners till by their perverse attitude they shut upon themselves the doors of His mercy.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.\textsuperscript{3176}

2. All praise belongs to Allah, \( b \) the Originator of the heavens and the earth, Who employs the angels as messengers, having wings, two, three, and four. He adds to His creation whatever He pleases; for Allah has power over all things.\textsuperscript{3177}

\textsuperscript{3176} Commentary:

See 1:1.

\textsuperscript{3177} Important Words:

\( جَنَاح \\) (wings) is the plural of \( جَنَاح \\) which is derived from \( جَنَح \\) which means, he or it inclined, leaned or propended. They say \( جَنَحَ الطَّائِر \\) i.e. the bird contracted its wings to descend and approached like one falling and repairing to a place of refuge.

\( جَنَاح \\) means, wing; hand; upper arm; edge; side; wing of an army; protection; refuge; power; inclination; assistant; a part or power of a thing.

The Arabs say \( نَحْنُ عَلَى جَنَاحِ السَّفَر \\) i.e. we are on the wings of journey, i.e. we are about to start on journey (Lane & Aqrab). See also 17:25.

Commentary:

The reference in this verse may be to the creation of two universes; the physical and the spiritual. God, it says, is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and of all that is between them. He has created the angels to execute His will in the material universe. These angels are \( المَدِيرَاتُ أُمَّا \\) i.e. regulators of the affairs of the world (79:6). To them is entrusted the control, management and supervision of affairs of the physical world. This is one duty and responsibility placed upon them. Their other and heavier duty is to carry God's commandments and will to His Messengers who are the bearers of the Divine revelation.

The verse may also indicate that a new spiritual Dispensation is being created through the revelation that is being sent down to the Holy Prophet. The angels bearing this revelation manifest two, three, four, attributes of God at the same time, and there may be others manifesting an even larger number of Divine attributes.

The word \( قَاطِرُ \\) (Originator) has been used in the verse to draw attention to the fact that the Great Maker Who has made full provision for the physical needs of man could not have omitted to provide for his spiritual sustenance and development, and just as He has entrusted the control and management of the physical universe to the care of the angels, so has He entrusted
3. Whatever of mercy Allah grants to men—there is none to withhold it; and whatever He withholds, there is none who can release it after that; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.  

4. O ye men, remember the favour of Allah that He has bestowed upon you. Is there any Creator other than Allah Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? There is none worthy of worship but He. Whither then are you turned away?  

5. And if they reject thee, verily, God's Messengers have been rejected before thee; and unto Allah all matters are brought back for decision.  

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3178. Commentary:
After having mentioned in the previous verse that God has created the heavens, and the earth and that He has made full provision for man's physical and spiritual needs and has entrusted the control and management of both the physical and spiritual worlds to the care of the angels, the verse under comment proceeds to say that God has now decreed to bestow His mercy upon mankind in the form of the revelation of the Qur'an, at the same time warning the would-be-enemies of truth that they will not be allowed to thwart God's plan and purpose as "He is the Mighty, the Wise!"  

3179. Commentary:
After it has been mentioned in the preceding verses that a great Divine gift is about to be
6. O ye men, assuredly the promise of Allah is true, so let not the present life deceive you, nor let the Deceiver deceive you with respect to Allah.  

7. "Surely, Satan is an enemy to you; so take him for an enemy. He calls his followers only that they may become inmates of the burning Fire.

8. For those who disbelieve there is a severe punishment. And for those who believe and do good works there is forgiveness and a great reward.


bestowed on mankind in the form of the Qur'ân and after the would-be rejectors have been warned not to hasten to reject it, the Holy Prophet is told in the present verse that he will be rejected, opposed and persecuted but this should not discourage or dismay him because his opposition and persecution would be no new thing as all the Divine Messengers and Prophets before him were also rejected, opposed and persecuted, but the enemies of truth could never frustrate God's plan but themselves always came to grief.

3180. Commentary:
It is really love of the world that leads man to sin. This is why "the present life" has been mentioned in the verse before the mention of "the Deceiver" who is Satan. This shows that it is man himself who first becomes mentally corrupt and then Satan comes to deceive and lead him astray.

3181. Commentary:
The verse points to an invariable Divine law, viz., that whenever a Prophet of God comes into the world, the people to whom he preaches his Message become split up into two hostile camps: Those who accept God's Message and receive His blessings and those who having rejected and opposed him incur His displeasure and punishment.
9. Is he, then, to whom the evil of his deed is made to appear pleasing, so that he looks upon it as good, like him who believes and does good works? Surely, Allah adjudges astray whom He will and guides whom He will. So let not thy soul waste away in sighing for them. Surely, Allah knows what they do. 3182

10. And Allah is He Who sends the winds which raise the clouds; then do We drive them to a lifeless tract of land, and quicken therewith the earth after its death. Likewise shall the Resurrection be. 3183

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3182. Commentary:

The words, "so let not thy soul waste away sighing for them," give an insight into the noble soul of the Holy Prophet—how anxious and eager he was to lead his people out of their evil ways and save them from the wrath of God.

Another verse of the Qur'an, viz., "Haply thou wilt grieve thyself to death for sorrow after them if they believe not in this discourse" (18:7), also constitutes an eloquent commentary on the solicitude and concern of the Holy Prophet for the spiritual well-being of his people and on his deep grief for their opposition to truth. But such is human ingratitude that from the very people for whom he felt and grieved so much he received nothing but abuse, invective and ridicule.

3183. Important Words:

Resurrection is an infinitive noun from نشر (share). They say نشر الخبر i.e. he spread or spread out or published the news. نشر الأرض means, the land, being rained upon, its herbage or pasturage became green after it had dried up. شر السنة means, God raised the dead to life. نشر means raising the dead; Resurrection. The word has also been used in the sense of spiritual resurrection in this life (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In the Qur'an the plural form of winds is generally used in good sense as in the present verse and in vv. 7: 58; 25: 49; etc., while the singular has been used to denote Divine punishment as in 17: 70; 33: 10; 41: 17; 46: 25; 51 42; 54: 20 & 69: 7. The word نشر (Resurrection) if taken to mean the resurrection of a people from a state of spiritual decline and degradation the verse would mean that just as dead an dry land blossoms into new life when rain falls upon it, so will a people, morally an spiritually dead and steeped in sin and wickedness as the Arabs are, rise to a new life through the heavenly water of Divine revelation—the Qur'an.
11. Whoso desires honour, let him know that all honour belongs to Allah. Unto Him ascend good words, and as for righteous work He exalts it. And those who plot evils—for them is a severe punishment; and the plotting of such will perish.3184

12. And Allah created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then He made you pairs. And no female conceives, nor does she bring forth a child save with His knowledge. And no one is granted long life who is granted long life, nor is anything diminished of his life, but it is recorded in a Book. That surely is easy for Allah.3185

3184. Important Words:

بیور (will perish) is derived from بار which means, he perished; it (commodity) was or became difficult of sale. They say بار السوق i.e. the market became dull. بار اعمال means, the work became or proved vain. بار means perdition, destruction. The Arabs say نزلت البیور على الكفار i.e. perdition overtook the disbelievers (Lane & Aqrab). See also 25 : 19.

Commentary:

The present verse continues the theme of its predecessor and proceeds to say that under the influence of the Holy Prophet, the Arabs will not only shed their evil ways and become paragons of piety and godliness but all honour and glory will also be theirs, and nations that now look down upon them and consider them beneath notice will bow down before them in humility. Their honour and glory will be the result of their true beliefs, noble ideals, and righteous conduct.

The pronoun ه in the expression يرفعه may refer to the عمل الصالح (righteous work). In that case the subject of the verb يرفع (exalts) is God, as shown in the text. Or it may refer to the کلم الطيب (good words). In that case the subject of the verb يرفع will be the عمل الصالح (the righteous work).

3185. Commentary:

By referring to the very humble and insignificant origin of man the verse draws attention to the lowly beginnings of Islam and the extremely poor condition of the early Muslims and implies a prophecy that just as out of an insignificant sperm-drop there grows a well-proportioned and fully-developed human being, similarly the lowly and poor Muslims will one day grow into a mighty community.
13. And the two seas are not alike: this one palatable, sweet and pleasant to drink, and this other salt, bitter.

And from each you eat fresh meat, and take forth ornaments which you wear. And thou seest the ships therein ploughing the waves that you may seek of His bounty, and that you may be grateful.\(^{3186}\)

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The latter part of the verse relating to what a female conceives and what she gives birth to, and to the lengthening and diminishing of a man's life implies another prophecy that the progeny of opponents of the Holy Prophet will one day become devoted followers of Islam.

3186. **Important Words:**

- عذب (palatable) is derived from عذب (‘adhiba) which means, it was or became sweet; became easy and agreeable to be swallowed or drunk.
- ماء (water). They say ماء لعذب which means, sweet water. They say ماء لعذب i.e. verily he is sweet of tongue (Lane & Aqrab). See also 25 : 54.
- ملح (salt) is noun-infinitive from ملح (malaha). They say ملح الطعام i.e. he put salt in the food. ملح الماء means, the water became saltish. ملح الماء (maloha) it (a thing) was or became beautiful or pretty (Lane & Aqrab). See also 25 : 54.
- سامع (pleasant) is derived from ملع which means, it (beverage) was easy and agreeable to swallow (Lane). See also 16 : 67.
- مواخر (ploughing the waves) is derived from مواخر. They say مخرت السفينة i.e. the boat clove the water with its stem and ran (Lane). See also 16 : 15.

For ماجج and فرات see 25 : 54.

**Commentary:**

Metaphorically, the two seas spoken of in this verse are true and false religions. The words عذب and أماج may be taken as representing respectively true and false religions which cannot be equal. The one is like sweet water which is good to drink and slakes the thirst and is also very useful for irrigation, while the other is like bitter water which is not only not fit to drink but is also unusable for purposes of irrigation. The verse continuing the metaphor purports to say that though saltish water is not fit for drinking and irrigation, it has other uses. From the saltish sea-water come out fresh meat and ornaments. Similarly, though the present opponents of Islam are, like saltish water, bitter and worthless, yet out of their loins there will be born those who will be zealous and devout bearers of its Message.
14. "He merges the night into the day, and He merges the day into the night. And He has pressed into service the sun and the moon; each one runs its course to an appointed term. Such is Allah, your Lord; His is the kingdom, and those whom you call upon beside Allah own not even a whit.\textsuperscript{3187}

15. "If you call on them, they will not hear your call; and even if they heard it, they could not answer you. And on the Day of Resurrection they will deny your having associated them with God. And none can inform thee like the One Who is All-Aware.\textsuperscript{3188}

\textsuperscript{a}22 : 62; 31 : 30; 57 : 7. \textsuperscript{b}7 : 55; 13 : 3; 29 : 26; 31 : 20; 39 : 6. \textsuperscript{c}13 : 15; 40 : 21. \textsuperscript{d}7 : 194

\textsuperscript{3187. Important Words:}

\textsuperscript{a}22 : 62; 31 : 30; 57 : 7. \textsuperscript{b}7 : 55; 13 : 3; 29 : 26; 31 : 20; 39 : 6. \textsuperscript{c}13 : 15; 40 : 21. \textsuperscript{d}7 : 194

The metaphor of the preceding verse is continued in this verse. The word \textit{النهار} (day) here represents prosperity and power and \textit{الليل} (night) signifies loss of these things combined with national decline and decadence. Taking the two words in this sense the verse implies a prophecy that with the advent of the Holy Prophet a new order will come into being. The nations which have hitherto enjoyed temporal and spiritual sovereignty will, if they rejected his Message, be debased and disgraced, and another people which have till now been looked down upon as dregs and scum of humanity because of their faith, will be raised to the highest pinnacles of power and glory. All the forces of nature will combine to work for the success of the new order and the forces of darkness led by those whom the disbelievers call upon besides Allah will utterly fail to impede or obstruct its progress, because the kingdom of the heavens and the earth is God's Who has revealed the new Teaching and Who is its Protector and Guardian.

\textsuperscript{3188. Commentary:}

The verse further dwells upon the complete failure of the forces of evil to arrest the progress of Islam. It says that the idols of idol-worshippers will prove entirely powerless and useless against the onward march of Islam.

The reference in the words, "the One Who is All-Aware," as the translation of the text shows, is to God. It may also be to the Holy Prophet when the word would mean, well-aware.
R. 3

16. O ye men, a it is you who are dependant upon Allah, but Allah is He Who is Self-Sufficient, the Praiseworthy.3189

17. b If He please, He could destroy you, and bring a new creation instead.3190

18. c And that is not difficult for Allah.

19. d And no burdened soul can bear the burden of another; and if a heavily laden soul call another to bear its load, naught of it shall be carried by the other, even though he be a kinsman. "Thou canst warn only those who fear their Lord in secret and observe Prayer. And whose purifies himself, purifies himself only to his own good; and to Allah shall be the return.3191

3189. Commentary:
The verse points to man's utter helplessness. He needs God's help every moment of his life. He needs it for his physical sustenance and he needs it for his spiritual sustenance and God, out of His unbounded grace and mercy, has made provision for both.

3190. Commentary:
The verse implies that God has decreed to bring into being a new creation, a new order through the Holy Prophet and "it is not at all difficult for Him to do so."

3191. Important Words:

- مَثَلَةٌ (heavily laden soul) is derived from ثقل which means, it was or became heavy, weighty or ponderous; it was or became heavy, weighty or preponderant ideally; he was or became slow, lazy, wanting in activity or intelligence. ثقالة the pregnancy became apparent. وَزَرَاءٌ is feminine gender means, he overburdened him. وَزَرَاءٌ of which مَثَلَةٌ is feminine gender means, heavily burdened or burdened beyond his power; overburdened; weighed down or oppressed by disease, debt, etc. (Lane & Aqrab). See also 4:41.

Commentary:
The word وَزَرَاءٌ may here signify the burden of duty or responsibility; or it may mean the remorse or shame which a person feels when he commits a sin or crime. Taking it in the first sense, the expression لَا وَزَرَاءٌ أَخَرَى would mean that the personal duty or responsibility of one
20. Not alike are the blind and the seeing; 3192

21. Nor the darkness and light, 3193

22. Nor the shade and heat.

23. Nor alike are the living and the dead. Surely, Allah causes him to hear whom He pleases; and thou canst not make those to hear who are in the graves. 3194

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 Commentary:

person cannot be shifted to, or discharged by another. Everyone has to carry his own cross. Taking the word in the second sense the expression cuts at the root of the doctrine of Atonement on which the whole fabric of Christianity stands. The verse purports to say that no person can relieve any other person of his grief or sorrow, or can share with him the remorse or regret that afflicts his conscience after he has committed a crime. Evidently as these feelings have their origin in the heart of man, they cannot be transferred to or shared by another person. The punishments of Hell are only the spiritual embodiments of man's evil actions done in this life and the person who committed the evil deeds quite clearly will not share these spiritual embodiments of his actions with another person who had not committed those evil deeds.

3192. Commentary:

Whenever a Prophet comes into the world the people to whom he preaches his Message become split up into two groups: (1) those who accept his Message and follow his lead; (2) those who reject and oppose him. These two groups of men are likened in the present verse to “the seeing” i.e. those who having been endowed with spiritual eyes see the heavenly light, and “the blind” i.e. those who are afflicted with spiritual blindness as the result of their refusal to see the light. These two classes of men have been further likened to “the living” and “the dead” in verse 23 below. The believers have been called “the living” because by accepting the truth they receive new life, and the disbelievers are called “the dead” because by rejecting truth which is the elixir of life eternal they bring spiritual death upon themselves.

3193. Commentary:

In this and the next verse truth and falsehood have been respectively compared to light and pleasantness of the cool shade, and to darkness and scorching heat. There could be no better description of truth and falsehood than this.

3194. Commentary:

The words “who are in the graves” apply to the spiritually dead disbelievers. The verse means to say that it is not possible for a Prophet of God to make those who have deliberately shut their hearts and ears, to listen to and accept the Divine Message. Such people are spiritually as dead and defunct as those buried in the graves.

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24. *Thou art only a Warner.*

25. *Verily, We have sent thee with the truth, as a Bearer of glad tidings and as a Warner; and there is no people to whom a Warner has not been sent.*

26. *And if they treat thee as a liar, those who were before them also treated their Messengers as liars. Their Messengers came to them with 'clear Signs, and with the Scriptures, and with the illuminating Book.*

27. Then I seized those who disbelieved, and how terrible were the consequences of denying Me!

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3195. **Commentary:**

After mentioning that the Holy Prophet has been sent "as a Bearer of glad tidings and as a Warner" the verse proceeds to unfold a great truth which had remained unknown to the world till the Qur'ān revealed it. It says that it is not the Holy Prophet Muhammad alone who has been sent as a Divine Messenger to call men to God but there had been sent to every people in the past a Heavenly Messenger who preached to them the same Message of truth and righteousness. This great and noble principle leads to the belief in the Divine origin of all religions, and in their Founders as Divine Messengers, and thus it becomes an article of faith with a Muslim to believe in and equally respect and revere all of them. By giving to the world this sublime truth, Islam has sought to create an atmosphere of amity and goodwill among different creeds, and to remove and banish that rancour and bitterness which has embittered relations between the followers of these creeds all over the world. See also 10:48.

3196. **Commentary:**

The verse continues the theme of the preceding verses and consoles and comforts the Holy Prophet by saying that it is a tragedy of human affairs that the very people who are called to God by their Prophets reject and persecute such Prophets, and that the Holy Prophet is not an exception to this rule. Like them he will receive mockery and abuse from his people.
4 28. Dost thou not see that Allah sends down water from the sky, and We bring forth therewith fruits of different colours; and among the mountains are streaks, white and red, of diverse hues and others raven black; 

3197. Important Words:

اية their colours is the plural of لون (lawwana). They say *لون الشيء* i.e. he coloured the thing.

لون الشبب فيه means, old age appeared in his hair. 

لون الرجل means, the man became fickle-minded. 

لون means, colour, exterior; form, shape; kind, sort, species (Aqrab & Lane).

جد (streaks) is the plural of جدة which is derived from جد which means, it (a garment) was or became new; جدة (juddatun) means, a beaten way or road; a road leading to water; a main road; a sign; the bank or side of a river; the stripe or streak that is in the back of an ass differing from his general colour, a streak in anything as in a mountain, differing in colour from the rest of the mountain (Lane & Aqrab).

غرابي سود (raven black). غرابي is the plural of غريب which is derived from غرب (ghariba) which means, he or it was or became black; or it was or became black on account of very hot wind. غريب means, intensely black; of which the colour resembles the colour of a crow; when applied to an old man it means one whose hair is intensely black or whose hair does not become white or who blackens his white hair with dye. أسودغريب. أسود means, intensely black. But if you say غرابي سود you make the latter word a substitute for the former; because a word corroborative of one signifying a colour cannot precede, nor can the corroborative of any word; one of the most excellent kinds of grapes; a variety of grapes growing at Al-Ta'if; intensely black; of the most excellent and most delicate and blackest of grapes. غرابي سود relating to mountains, may mean streaks having black rocks.

Commentary:

The present and next verse invite attention to the study of a wonderful phenomenon of nature which bears striking resemblance to a similar phenomenon in the spiritual realm. The verse purports to say that when rain falls upon dry and parched land it gives rise to a vast variety of crops, flowers and fruits of different colours, tastes, forms and kinds. The rain-water is the same, but the crops, flowers and fruits it produces are vastly different from one another. This difference is evidently due to the nature of the soil and the seed. Similarly, when Divine revelation, which at many places in the Qur'an has been likened to water, comes to a people, it produces different effects upon different men according to the soil of their hearts and the way in which they receive it. The same revelation which produced such paragons of righteousness and piety as Abu Bakr and 'Umar, served only to increase Abu Jahl, 'Utbah or Shaibah in wickedness and opposition to truth. The verse also signifies
29. And of men and beasts and cattle, in like manner, there are various colours? Only those of His servants who possess knowledge fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Mighty, Most Forgiving.\(^{3198}\)

30. Surely, only those who follow the Book of Allah and observe Prayer and spend out of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a bargain which will never fail;\(^{3199}\)

31. In order that He may give them their full rewards, and even increase them out of His bounty. He is surely Most Forgiving, Most Appreciating.\(^{3200}\)

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\(^{3198}\) Commentary:
The verse means to say that the kaleidoscopic variety in form, colour, and kind to which reference has been made in the preceding verse does not only exist in flowers, fruits and rocks but in men, beasts and cattle as well. The words 'men', 'beasts' and 'cattle' may also represent men of different capabilities, dispositions and natural aptitudes. The words, "only those of His servants who possess knowledge fear God," further lend weight to the view that these three words stand for three classes of men from among whom only those endowed with right knowledge fear God. Knowledge, however, does not necessarily mean spiritual knowledge but also knowledge of the laws of nature. A reverent study of nature and its laws inevitably leads one to realise the great powers of God and consequently makes him hold God in reverential awe.

\(^{3199}\) Commentary:
The present verse gives a description of those who possess knowledge mentioned in the preceding verse.

\(^{3200}\) Important Words:
\(\text{shukr}\) (Most Appreciating) is derived from \(\text{shukr}\) which is noun inf. and means thankfulness. \(\text{shukr}\) is of three kinds: (1) with the
32. And the Book which We have revealed to thee is the "truth itself," fulfilling that which is before it. Surely, Allah is All-Aware, All-Seeing with respect to His servants.

33. Then We gave the Book for inheritance to those of Our servants whom We chose. And of them are some who suppress their desires, severely, and of them are some who take the middle course, and of them are some who excel others in acts of goodness by Allah's leave. And that indeed is the great distinction.

Commentary:

After mentioning in verse 25 above that Divine Messengers were sent to all the peoples, and after explaining in the immediately preceding verse (v. 32) that the Qur'an testifies to the Divine origin of all the Books that were given to those Messengers and fulfills the prophecies that the former Prophets and Divine Books had made about the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet, the verse under comment proceeds to say that the sacred and onerous duty of preaching this last Divine Message to mankind has been entrusted to men whom God has specially selected for this purpose. They are not men of ordinary calibre. They have fully fitted themselves for the discharge of this great duty by passing through various stages of rigorous spiritual discipline. The following are the three stages through which a believer has to pass to attain a very high degree of spiritual development. In the first stage he wages a veritable war against his low desires and passions, and practises strict self-denial. It is after he has learned to control his passions and suppress his evil desires that he moves on to the next stage of "taking the middle course." At this stage he does not falter or fall but his progress towards his goal is but gradual. It is at the third and last stage when he has attained his full moral stature that his progress towards the realization of his great goal becomes rapid and uniform. This stage has been termed سابق بالخیرات in this verse.
34. *Their reward will be Gardens of Eternity.* They will enter them. They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold, and pearls; and their garments therein will be of silk.

35. And they will say, ‘All praise belongs to Allah Who has removed grief from us. Surely, our Lord is Most Forgiving, Most Appreciating.’

36. ‘Who has, out of His bounty, settled us in the Abode of Eternity, where no toil will touch us, nor any weariness affect us therein.’

37. But as for those who disbelieve, for them is the fire of Hell. Death will not be decreed for them so that they may die; nor will the punishment thereof be lightened for them. Thus do We requite every ungrateful person.

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3202. **Commentary:**

When a believer has gone through the three stages of spiritual development mentioned in v. 33 above, all fear of faltering or falling disappears. His spiritual future becomes safe. This state of mind of a true believer is described elsewhere in the Qur’an in the words، لَا يَحْزَنُونَ وَلَا حَمِيزُونَ، i.e. they will not grieve over their past failures, if any, nor will they have fear about any possible future failures.

3203. **Important Words:**

- **لغوب** (weariness) is infinitive-noun from لَغَوبَة which means, he was tired or wearied to the utmost or he was languid in consequence of fatigue or he was wearied in spirit or mind. لَغُوبْ means, extreme tiredness, weariness of mind or spirit (Lane & Aqrab).

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3204. **Commentary:**

As contrasted with the Paradise promised to believers and briefly but beautifully portrayed in the preceding verse, a description of the fire of Hell in which disbelievers will burn has been given in the present verse. That fire is the burning of the heart and the absence of peace of mind. There could be no greater Hell in this world than loss of mental peace and poise.
38. And they will cry for help therein, 'Our Lord, “take us out, we will do righteous works other than those we used to do.” God will say to them, 'Did We not give you a life long enough so that he who would take heed could take heed therein? And there came unto you a Warner too. So taste ye the punishment; for wrong-doers have no helper.'

39. Verily, Allah knows the secrets of the heavens and of the earth. Verily, He knows full well all that lies hidden in the breasts.

40. He it is Who made you vicegerents in the earth. So he who disbelieves, will himself suffer the consequences of his disbelief. And for the disbelievers their disbelief will only increase odium in the sight of their Lord, and their disbelief will increase for the disbelievers nothing but loss.

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3205. Important Words:

اصطرخون (cry for help) is derived from صرح which is synonymous with صرح which means, he raised his voice; called out; cried or cried vehemently or for help (Lane).

3206. Commentary:

After the advent of the Holy Prophet has been mentioned in v. 38 above, in the present verse the people to whom he preached his Message are warned that God has selected them to be the recipients and bearers of His revelation. He has been very gracious and kind to them for having selected them for the bestowal of His grace, but if they refused to accept His Messenger, great indeed will also be their punishment.
41. Say, "Have you seen your associate-gods whom you call on beside Allah? Show me then what they have created of the earth. Or have they a share in the creation of the heavens? Or have We given them a Book so that they have an evidence therefrom?" Nay, the wrongdoers promise one another nothing but delusion.\(^{3207}\)

42. "Surely, Allah holds the heavens and the earth lest they deviate from their positions. And if they did deviate, none can hold them after Him. Verily, He is Forbearing, Most Forgiving.\(^{3208}\)

43. "And they swore by Allah their strongest oaths, that if a Warner came to them, they would follow guidance better than any other people. But when a Warner did come to them, it only increased them in aversion.\(^{3209}\)

\(^{3207}\) Commentary:

As the Arabs, who were the first addressees of the Message of the Qur'an, were steeped in worst form of idolatry, God has exposed the futility of their polytheistic beliefs again and again in the Qur'an. In the present verse the idolaters are asked, why do they worship other gods besides Allah when these false gods have neither created any earthly thing nor have they made any contribution to the creation of the celestial bodies? They are further asked whether they have a revealed Book which gives them the authority to preach and promulgate their false beliefs. They should at least possess some reason or authority for their idolatrous beliefs and practices.

\(^{3208}\) Commentary:

The present verse continues the argument in repudiation of idolatry. It purports to say that both the celestial and terrestrial systems continue to work in perfect harmony with and subject to Divine laws. The fact that there exists complete harmony and order among different parts of the universe, reveals the existence of an Intelligent and All-Powerful Being behind it. That Supreme and Intelligent Being is God Who deserves and demands our worship and adoration.

\(^{3209}\) Commentary:

The verse gives another argument to bring home to disbelievers the sense of the guilt of
44. "And in being arrogant in the earth and plotting evil. But the evil plot encompasses none but the authors thereof. Do they then look for anything but God's way of dealing with the peoples of old? But thou wilt never find any change in the way of Allah; nor wilt thou ever find any alteration in the way of Allah.\(^{3210}\)

45. "Have they not travelled in the earth and seen how evil was the end of those who were before them? And they were stronger than these in power. And Allah is not such that anything in the heavens or the earth should frustrate His plans; verily, He is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.\(^{3211}\)


rejecting the Holy Prophet. It purports to say to them that they used to taunt the Jews and the Christians for rejecting their own Prophets and revelations; and, by assuming an air of superiority, used to say to the latter that if ever a Prophet of God appeared among them they would at once accept him. But now that the greatest of the Prophets has been raised among them, they are opposing and persecuting him. 3210. Commentary:

The verse warns disbelievers that if they persisted in their disbelief, they will be punished like disbelievers of the Prophets of yore. It is an established and invariable Divine law that opposition to Divine laws never goes unpunished. This fact is writ large on the history of all revealed religions. This is God’s way and God’s ways never change.

3211. Commentary:

The verse means to say that if disbelievers have any doubt that their rejection of and opposition to the Holy Prophet will not be punished, then let them “travel in the earth and see how evil was the end of those who were before them,” and who rejected God’s Prophets in their own time. Let them remember that it is God’s unalterable decree that all their plans and plots to bring the Holy Prophet to naught will end in failure and the cause of Islam will triumph over disbelief.
46. And if Allah were to punish people for what they do, He would not leave a living creature on the surface of the earth; but He grants them respite until an appointed term; and when their appointed time comes, then they find that Allah has all His servants well under His eyes.  

Commentary:

The verse purports to say that though, by their rejection of truth and iniquitous deeds, disbelievers have made themselves deserving of Divine punishment, yet the Merciful God is slow in punishing them. He grants respite and affords opportunities to the wicked and the rebellious people in order that they may mend their ways and accept the truth. If God had meted out swift and quick punishment to sinners, they would have been destroyed in no time, and the world would have come to an end, and all life on earth would have become extinct, because there would be no purpose left in the beasts, animals, birds, etc., remaining alive after man’s destruction. Being created for man’s use, they too would have perished. But this respite and delay in punishment should not be understood to signify that disbelievers can indefinitely escape or avoid it. When the cup of their iniquities is full, says the verse, the decreed hour of retribution will arrive and they will be allowed no further respite. The words دابة signifying “worm of the earth” may also apply to disbelievers because of their devoting all their labour and endeavour to the acquirement of worldly comforts and riches. In this sense of the word the verse would mean that God will not hesitate to destroy these abominable worms of the earth.
CHAPTER 36

YĀSĪN

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation and Context

This Sūra takes its title from its second verse where the Holy Prophet is addressed as ياسيئن, i.e., O perfect leader! The Sūra is decidedly of Meccan origin. All scholarly opinion is agreed on this point. Its style and contents also support this view. On account of the importance of its subject-matter, the Holy Prophet called it the heart of the Qur'an.

In the preceding Sūra it was stated that God, being the Maker of the heavens and the earth, has made full provision not only for the physical needs of man but also for his moral and spiritual requirements. This He did by revealing Himself to His chosen servants, whom He raised among every people. The revelation of God to His servants found its most perfect manifestation in the Holy Prophet whom the present Sūra designates as "perfect leader" or the leader par excellence. To him God not only revealed Himself in His completest manifestation but also gave him the most perfect and infallible Book in the form of the Qur'an, by which his people attained God's pleasure and achieved great success and eminence in life.

Summary of the Subject-Matter

The Sūra opens with addressing the Holy Prophet as "perfect leader" or leader par excellence, meaning that the system of Divine Messengers which began with Adam found its most perfect example in him. The Holy Prophet's path is now the only right and straight path that leads to God. All other paths that formerly led to the Supreme Being have now been closed and shall remain closed till the end of time. God will now reveal Himself to the world through the Holy Prophet's followers. In His infallible wisdom He has chosen the Arabs, among whom no Messenger had come for centuries, to preach to humanity the last Divine Message i.e. Islam. The land of Arabia was dreary and dry. The water of Divine revelation descended upon it and it has now begun to blossom into a new and vigorous spiritual life.

The Sūra then proceeds to tell in metaphorical language how God had been revealing Himself to mankind through His Messengers. It tells of Moses and Jesus and of the Holy Prophet, who were raised in the fulness of time to call men to God. Then it tells of a "certain man" whom God will raise from among the followers of the Holy Prophet in a land far from the centre of Islam, in the Latter Days, when religion would be at its lowest ebb and the very idea of Divine revelation would be doubted and denied. This Divine Reformer will call mankind to Islam. But like the Prophets of yore, his will be a voice in the wilderness. The forces of evil will hold the whole world in their
firm grip. Man will worship false gods and as a result of his sins Divine wrath will be excited and God's punishment will descend upon the world. This punishment will be sudden and swift like a blast from heaven and will leave the earth scorched and singed and the guilty will be called upon to render an account of their evil actions.

Next, the Sūra invites attention to the study of a well-known law of nature, viz., that when all earth becomes dry and parched, God sends down rain and the dead soil begins to vibrate with a new life, and herbage, vegetables and flowers and fruits of various kinds grow up. Similarly, in the spiritual realm when man's soul becomes corroded and contaminated and he is stuck fast in the quagmire of sin and iniquity, God, out of His infinite grace and mercy, causes spiritual water to descend from heaven in the form of Divine revelation. The Sūra then gives another simile to explain the same subject. It points to the law of the alternation of day and night and from it draws the moral lesson that just as, in the physical world, day follows night, similarly in the spiritual world when darkness spreads, a Prophet is raised to dispel it. Divine Prophets are of two categories: (a) Law-bearing Prophets who, like the sun, are an independent source of light; and (b) subordinate Prophets who, like the moon, derive and borrow their light from the Master-Prophet. The Sūra further points to a revealed truth that God has created all things in pairs; there are pairs even in vegetables and inorganic matter. This simile points out that Divine revelation must be accompanied by human reason and intelligence. All true knowledge is the result of the combination of Divine revelation and human reason.

Then, after recounting some Divine blessings, the Sūra gives a brief but graphic description of the conditions of believers and disbelievers in this and the next world. The believers, it says, will have the good things of the world in this life and the pleasure and grace of God in the next, and disbelievers will completely fail in their designs and endeavours against the cause of truth in this life. They will be punished with (a blast) in this world and will burn in the fire of Hell in the next, and when they will be made to stand before God's Judgment Seat, their mouths, hands, and feet will bear witness against them.

Towards its close the Sūra draws attention to the great and bright future of Islam. It says that God's decree, viz., that a people like the Arabs who had lain very low in the scale of humanity for long centuries should now rise to the height of material power and spiritual glory, is not an idle dream or poetic fancy. A Prophet of God, a Divine Messenger, has appeared among them and he will lead them to the highest pinnacles of spiritual and material grandeur. And this is not a difficult thing for the Almighty and All-Powerful God, Who creates man from a mere sperm-drop and then develops him into a full-fledged, strong, vigorous and intelligent being. When it is the decree of the Great Creator and Controller of the universe that a people grovelling in dust and dirt should be made the rulers and teachers of mankind, who can stand in the way of His design or who can thwart or frustrate His purpose?
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.\textsuperscript{3213}

2. Ya Sin.\textsuperscript{3213A}

3. By the Qur'an, full of wisdom.\textsuperscript{3214}

4. Thou art indeed one of the Messengers,
5. On a right path.\textsuperscript{3215}

\textsuperscript{3213} Commentary:
See: 1:1.

\textsuperscript{3213A} Commentary:
In the combined abbreviated letters يس الناس according to Ibn 'Abbās stands for meaning, man or perfect man, or for i.e. chief or leader. Thus the expression يس الناس would mean, "O Perfect Man!" or "O Perfect Leader!" According to the consensus of scholarly opinion, the reference in these combined letters is to the Holy Prophet. The Prophet has been addressed as "perfect man" because humanity found its best and most perfect specimen in him. He has also been called "the perfect leader," because after his advent great religious Reformers and Divine Teachers were to rise only from among his followers. The door of revelation has been closed to the followers of all other Prophets. He is therefore "the perfect man" or the "leader par excellence."

\textsuperscript{3214} Commentary:
The Qur'an has been adduced here as an argument to prove and establish the Holy Prophet's claim as a Messenger of God. In fact, the most effective and convincing argument to prove the truth of the Holy Prophet's mission is the Qur'an. There could be no greater testimony to the Holy Prophet's truth than the fact that being himself unlettered he gave to the world a Book which is full of wisdom and which far excels all other revealed Scriptures in its multifarious and multitudinous beauties and excellences and is a complete code of laws meant for the moral uplift and spiritual regeneration of humanity for all time. The Qur'an is indeed a standing miracle and an incontrovertible testimony to the truth of the Holy Prophet.

\textsuperscript{3215} Commentary:
The Holy Prophet's path now is the only right and straight path that leads to God. All other paths that formerly led to Him have now been closed and shall remain closed till the end of time. The fact that after the advent of the Holy Prophet there has not appeared among the followers of any other religion a single claimant to Divine revelation, while there have been living among the followers of Islam in every age, persons to whom God spoke and revealed Himself, is a proof positive of the Holy Prophet's path being now the only right and straight path, and of the Qur'an being the only revealed Book which can lead man to God.
6. "This is a revelation of the Mighty, the Merciful,

7. "That thou mayest warn a people whose fathers were not warned, and so they are heedless."

8. Surely, the word has proved true against most of them, for they believe not.

9. "We have put round their necks collars reaching unto the chins, so that their heads are forced up."

The verse makes a fine distinction between a Prophet and a philosopher. A philosopher takes a long time to find out truth and often gets lost in the quest, but a Prophet of God discovers it by the shortest route and in the shortest period of time. Unlike philosophers he is guided to it direct by Divine revelation without wandering in the labyrinth of abstract and abstruse ideas.

3216. Commentary:

The Arabs were the immediate addressees of the Holy Prophet and among them no Divine Messenger had appeared for a long time. But in His infallible wisdom God selected them for preaching to mankind the last Divine Message. The Qur'an has incontestibly laid claim to being that Message. The following verses of the Qur'an speak of its finality and universality: "Say, O mankind, truly I am a Messenger to you all from Allah" (7:159); "And We have sent thee not but as a mercy for all peoples" (21:108); "Blessed is He Who has sent down the Discrimination to His servant, that he may be a Warner to all the worlds (25:2); "And We have not sent thee but as a Bearer of good news and as a Warner to all mankind" (34:29).

3217. Important Words:

- "" (their heads are forced up) is derived from لعف. They say لعف i.e. the camel raised his head from the water and refused to drink, his thirst being satisfied by reason of his dislike of water. أتمح means, he raised his head and contracted his eyes. أتمح الغل means, the collar caused his (the captive's) head to be raised by reason of the straitness thereof. أتمح بالنف means, he was proud; behaved proudly; or elevated his nose from pride. أتمح also signifies the elevating of the head by means of pride (Aqrab & Lane).

Commentary:

The reference in the word أغلال (chains) may be to the "shackles" of customs, usages, and prejudices, by which disbelievers are fettered and which prevent them from accepting the truth. The word مصمحون (their heads are forced up) may also refer to disbelievers’ notion of false superiority and pride which leads to the same result. The verse may have reference also to the Battle of Badr or to the Fall of Mecca. After the Battle
10. And We have set a barrier before them and a barrier behind them, and have covered them over, so that they cannot see.\textsuperscript{3218}

11. And it is alike to them whether thou warn them or warn them not: they will not believe.\textsuperscript{3219}

12. Thou canst warn only him who would follow the Reminder and fear the Gracious God in secret. So give him the glad tidings of forgiveness and a noble reward.\textsuperscript{3220}

of Badr the Meccan chiefs were brought in chains and at the Fall of Mecca they were seized with utter confusion, the word الس financiers (see root meaning of the word under “Important Words” above) giving a graphic description of their bewilderment and consternation when all of a sudden they found the Holy Prophet at the very gates of Mecca, at the head of an army of ten thousand strong. Their eyes remained fixed in a stare and they ran about with heads raised in bewilderment.

3218. Commentary:
The barriers referred to in the verse may be the barriers of usages, prejudices, and pride of disbelievers. They could not look forward to the great and bright future which lay before them if they accepted Islam, and they did not look back to the histories of past peoples who rejected the truth and were seized with Divine punishment. The result of the barriers placed before and behind them was that they themselves became totally devoid of all spiritual light.

3219. Commentary:
The verse means to say that the inevitable result of disbelievers’ deliberately shutting their eyes and ears to the truth to which reference has been made in the preceding verse was that the timely warning did not benefit them and by their persistent rejection of the Truth they rendered themselves deserving of Divine punishment.

3220. Commentary:
The expression بالغيب (in secret) may mean that (1) a believer fears God while he does not see Him; (2) he behaves as a righteous and God-fearing person even when other people are not seeing him, i.e. he is sincere and honest in his belief and actions.
13. Surely, We alone give life to the dead, and We write down that which they send forward and that which they leave behind; and all things have We recorded in a clear Book.\textsuperscript{3221}

14. And set forth to them the parable of a people of the town, when the Messengers came to it.\textsuperscript{3222}

\textsuperscript{3221} Important Words:

- \textit{إِمَام} (Book) is derived from أم i.e. he led the people; he took precedence of them. إِمَام means, a leader of a people or army; a model or an example; the religious Scripture of any people; a road or way, a tract of land, etc. (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2 : 125; 17 : 72 & 25 : 75.

- \textit{آثَارُهُم} (that which they leave behind). \textit{آثَارُ} is the plural of \textit{أَثَر} which is infinitive noun from \textit{أَثَرَ خَفُّ الْبِعْرُ} i.e. he made an incision in the foot of the camel. \textit{أَثَر} means, a relic; a trace remaining of a thing; a sign or mark or trace; a foot-print (Lane). See also 20 : 97.

Commentary:

The verse means to say that with the exception of those unfortunate people who by their persistent rejection of Truth have shut upon themselves the door of God's mercy and for whom no admonition is of any avail, the spiritually dead Arabs will be brought to life through the teachings of the Qur'an and they will set such a noble example of righteousness and godliness that the footprints they will leave behind for others to follow will be made to endure and will be remembered with respect and serve as a source of inspiration for generations yet unborn.

\textsuperscript{3222} Important Words:

- \textit{قرَى} (the town) is infinitive-noun from قرَى. They say قرَى i.e. he entertained the guest. قرَى means, he collected the water in the pond. قرَى means, a town, a central town. It is so called because people from all quarters gather there and also because they are entertained there. The word also means, gathering of men (Aqrab).

Commentary:

A part of the Sūra deals, in metaphorical language, with the advent of a great Reformer in the Latter Days who was to represent the Second Coming of the Holy Prophet. This important subject begins with the present verse. The word قرَى may have been used here in its wider sense meaning any town or place, or speaking metaphorically, it may stand for the whole world. The whole world has been called a قرَى here because in the Latter Days the means of communication were to develop so extensively that the whole world was to become, as it were, one town. In this sense of the word the expression may signify humanity at large. The use of the word “parable” with regard to
15. When We sent to them two Messengers, and they rejected them both; so We strengthened them by a third, and they said, ‘Verily, we have been sent to you as Messengers.’

16. They replied, “You are but men like us and the Gracious God has not revealed anything. You only lie.”

17. They said, ‘Our Lord knows that we are indeed His Messengers to you;

18. “And our duty is only plain delivery of the Message.’

3223. Commentary:

The verse by way of introduction to the main subject makes a brief reference to two great Israelite Prophets, Moses and Jesus, one the Founder, and the other the great exponent of the Jewish Dispensation.

If the word in the preceding verse may be taken as referring to Mecca, the two Messengers mentioned in the verse under comment will be Abraham and Ishmael.

The reference in the words “a third,” in the expression “We strengthened them by third,” seems to be to the Holy Prophet who testified to the truth of both Moses and Jesus and also to that of Abraham and Ishmael. The word (a third) has been used as a in order to signify the greatness of the third Prophet, the Holy Prophet.

The Holy Prophet “strengthened” Moses and Jesus, also Abraham and Ishmael by testifying to the truth of their missions and by fulfilling in his person the prophecies they had made about his advent (Deut. 18:18 & Matt. 21:33-46).

3224. Commentary:

All the three great Prophets mentioned in the preceding verse were rejected on the plea that they were just ordinary “men like us” and that God never revealed anything to anybody. The pretext which disbelievers put forward in justification of their rejection of God’s Prophets has elsewhere been mentioned in the Qur’an in the words: “We have not heard of such a thing among our forefathers” (23:25).
19. They said, ‘Surely, we augur evil fortune from you; if you desist not, we will certainly stone you, and a painful punishment will surely befall you at our hands.’

20. They replied, ‘Your evil fortune is with your own selves. Do you say this because you have been admonished? Nay, you are a people transgressing all bounds.

21. "And from the farthest part of the town there came a man running. He said, ‘O my people, follow the Messengers,’

3228: 21.

3225. Important Words:

(We will certainly stone you) is derived from رحم. They say رحم i.e. he pelted him with stones; he smote and killed him; he drove him and killed him; he drove him away; he cursed him; he reviled or abused him; he boycotted or excommunicated him (Lane & Aqrab). See also 19: 47.

Commentary:

When as a result of their rejection of the Divine Message disbelievers are visited with heavenly punishment in the form of calamities and misfortunes, then instead of repenting and mending their ways, they seek to attribute those visitations to the “inauspicious” advent of the Prophet himself. Moses was taunted by the Israelites for having brought all the misfortunes with him in the words, "We were made to suffer before thou camest to us and even after thou camest to us (7: 130). Similarly, all other Prophets were taunted and mocked by disbelievers. It is to this attitude of disbelievers that the words, “surely we augur evil fortune from you,” refer.

3225A. Commentary:

also means, your works. See 17: 14.

3226. Commentary:

The implied reference in the word رجل signifying “a great man,” may be to the Promised Messiah who has been referred to as رجل in several sayings of the Holy Prophet. In one of his very well-known sayings the Holy Prophet is reported to have said:

Lo! the Faith were to go up to the Pleiades, a man from among the sons of Persia would bring it down to the earth (Bukhari, kitāb al-Tafsir).

(36: 14) or for i.e. the town of the Holy Prophet. In the latter sense of the word, the expression أقصى المدينة may signify that the Promised Messiah would be born in a place far away from the second Centre and Headquarters of Islam. In another verse of the Qur‘ān (17: 2), the scene of the Second Advent of the Holy
22. ‘Follow those who ask of you no reward, and who are rightly guided.

23. ‘And what reason have I that I should not worship Him Who has created me, and unto Whom you will be brought back?’

24. ‘Shall I take others beside Him as gods? If the Gracious God should intend me any harm, their intercession will avail me naught, nor can they rescue me.

25. ‘In that case I should indeed be in manifest error.

26. ‘I believe in your Lord; so listen to me.’

Prophet has been spoken of as i.e. the Distant Mosque. Words analogous in meaning and significance to the word (running) have also been used about the Promised Messiah by the Holy Prophet in some of his sayings which point to his tireless, quick and indefatigable work for the cause of Islam.

All the above references, seem to point to the Promised Messiah as being the (the great man) mentioned in the verse under comment. It is the Promised Messiah who, for the first time, revealed to the world the Quranic truth that Founders of all the great religions of the world were Divine Messengers. as the words, ‘he said, ‘O my people, follow the Messengers,’ point out.’

3227. Commentary:

The implied reference in this and the preceding verse seems to be to the special pledge which the Promised Messiah used to take from every new Ahmadi in the words:

i.e. I will give precedence to religion over the things of the world.

3228. Commentary:

The verse shows that people will worship various gods in the time of the Promised Messiah—mammon, material power, false political philosophies and impracticable economic theories, etc.

3229. Commentary:

This verse shows that the Promised Messiah will found no new religion. He will only invite people to their Lord, i.e. to the religion of the people (Muslims) to whom he will primarily address his Message, i.e. he will invite people to Islam.