30. Then his wife came forward extremely embarrassed, and smote her face and said, 'A barren old woman'!a3911

31. They said, b‘Even so has thy Lord said. Surely, He is the Wise, the All-Knowing.’

32. Abraham said, ‘Now what is your errand,’ O ye who have been sent?’3912

33. They said, ‘We have been sent to a sinful people.’

34. ‘That we may send down upon them stones of clay.’

35. ‘Marked,f with thy Lord, for those guilty of excesses.’3913

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3911. Important Words:

صورة (extreme embarrassment) is derived from صر which means, it made a sound or noise or a prolonged sound; he cried or raised a clamour with utmost vehemence. صرة means, vociferation or clamour or the most vehement clamour of crying; vehemence of grief, heat or anxiety; a contraction and moroseness of the face by reason of dislike or hatred or shame; a fit (Lane & Aqrab).

صكت (smote). صكك means, he struck him or hit violently or he slapped him with his hand upon the back of his neck or upon his face. صك الباب means, he locked the door. صك وجه means, he slapped his face (Lane & Aqrab).

3912. Important Words:

خطب (your errand). خطب means, a thing, an affair, or a business small or great; the cause or occasion of a thing or an event. They say ما خطب i.e., what is the thing or affair or business that thou sekest or desirest to do; or what is the cause of thy coming? (Lane & Aqrab). See also 12:52.

3913. Commentary:

The Divine punishment which seized the people of Lot is variously described in the Qur’an by the words حجارة i.e., storm of stones (54:35); حجارة i.e., a blast and حجارة من سجيل i.e., stones of clay (11:83). These people seemed to have been destroyed by a violent earthquake which turned parts of the earth upside down (11:83).
36. And We brought forth therefrom such of the believers as were there.

37. And We found not there except one house of those who were obedient to us.  

38. And We left therein a Sign for those who fear painful punishment.

39. And in the story of Moses also there were many Signs when We sent him to Pharaoh with clear authority.

40. But he turned away from Moses on account of his power, and said, 'A sorcerer, or a madman.'

41. So We seized him and his hosts and threw them into the sea; and he himself was to blame.

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3914. Commentary:

The house referred to in the verse was that of Lot minus his wife, who chose to side with her disbelieving relatives and refused to go with Lot.

3915. Commentary:

For the story of Moses, the Divine Message he gave to Pharaoh, for his mission of the deliverance of Israelites from a most debasing and disgraceful bondage and for the causes that led to the undoing and destruction of Pharaoh and his mighty hosts see 7:104-156; 10:76-93; 20:10-55; 26:11-69 & 28:4-45.

3916. Important Words:

रक्न (power) is derived from रक्न (rakana or rakina). They say रक्न अपने i.e., he inclined towards him or it; he trusted or relied upon him or it so as to be or become easy or quiet in mind; he was or became firm, still, grave, staid, sedate or calm. रक्न (ruknum) means, side or outward part of a thing; a stay or support; power, might and resistance; a man's kinsfolk or clan, his people or party; persons by whom he is aided and strengthened; a noble or high person. They say हो रक्न अपने i.e., he is an important person among the great men of his people. The word also means, an affair of great importance; a formidable event; the essence of a thing whereby it subsists. आरक्न (another) means, the fundamentals of Prayer without which it is incomplete (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradat).
42. And there was a Sign in the story of the tribe of 'Ad, when We sent against them the destructive wind. 3917
43. It spared nothing whatever that it came upon but made it like a rotten bone.
44. And a Sign there was in the story of the tribe of Thamūd when it was said to them, 4 'Enjoy yourselves for a while.' 3918
45. But they rebelled against the command of their Lord. So the thunderbolt overtook them while they gazed 4;
46. And they were not able to rise up again, nor could they defend themselves. 3919
47. And We destroyed the people of Noah before them; they were a disobedient people. 3920
48. And We have built the heaven with Our own hands, and verily We have vast powers. 3921

3917. Commentary:
For the story of 'Ad see 11:51-61 and 26:124-141.

3918. Commentary:
For a detailed note on Thamūd see 11:62 and 26:142.

3919. Important Words:
"defend themselves" is derived from which means, he gained victory and power; he defended himself. They say i.e., he took revenge from his enemy. means, he triumphed over his enemy (Lane & Aqrab).

3920. Commentary:
For a somewhat detailed account of Noah see 11:37-50.

3921. Important Words:
أيدي (hands) is plural of which has a vast variety of meanings, some of which are: (1) benefit, bounty, favour; (2) power, might, influence; dignity, rank or status; (3) assistance, help, protection; (4) possessions, wealth; (5) host, army; etc. See also 38:46.  يده means, before him, in his presence.  ما لكي عليه يده means, you have no power or influence over him.  سقط في يده means, he was smitten with remorse, he repented.  هذا في يدي means, it is in my possession.  بينيها بأيدي may mean, We have created it
49. "And the earth We have spread out, and how excellently We lay it out!"

50. And of everything have We created pairs,\textsuperscript{b} that you may reflect.\textsuperscript{3922}

51. Flee ye therefore unto Allah. Surely, I am a plain Warner unto you from Him.\textsuperscript{3923}

52. And do not set up another god along with Allah.\textsuperscript{a} Surely, I am a plain Warner unto you from Him.\textsuperscript{3924}

53. Even so there came no Messenger to those before them, but they said, 'A sorcerer, or a madman!'

Commentary:

The verse makes pointed reference to God's marvellous handiwork—the universe, creation of which leads directly to the object of the creation of man, who is the aim and object of its creation and its acme and apex. In the creation of the heavens and the earth there is proof of many Divine attributes, the prominent being His Glory, Might and Majesty.

3922. \textbf{Commentary}:

The verse implies a subtle allusion to the object of man's creation, one of the main themes of the \textit{Sūra}. The verse, like several other Quranic verses states that God has created all things in pairs. There are pairs not only in animal life, but also in vegetables, and even in inanimate things. There are pairs also in spiritual things. Even heaven and earth make a pair. Unless water comes from heaven and the sun gives warmth and light to the earth there can be no vegetation. Similarly, the human soul, which has been compared to earth in the foregoing verses, can find no scope for the manifestation of its latent and inherent powers and attributes unless the light of revelation descends upon it.

3923. \textbf{Commentary}:

The verse purports to say that if believers really wish to establish real and permanent connection with God, the best way to achieve it is to seek His help and protection and guidance. In this lies the quintessence of the Message which all Divine Prophets have given to the world.

3924. \textbf{Commentary}:

True and unadulterated belief in God's Oneness and Unity is the pivotal and primal fact of all religions.
54. Have they bequeathed this attitude as a legacy to one another? Nay, they are all a rebellious people.  

55. So turn away from them; and there will be no blame on thee.  

56. And keep on exhorting; for verily, exhortation benefits those who would believe.  

57. And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me.

3925. Commentary:  
   So strikingly similar are the charges leveled against Divine Reformers by their opponents in all ages that it seems they bequeathed it as a legacy to their successors to go on repeating those accusations.  

3926. Important Words:  
   ليعبدون (they may worship Me) is derived from عبّد الله. عبّد means, he served, worshipped or adored God alone or he rendered to God humble obedience. عبّد (aboda) means, he was or became a slave, his forefathers having been so before him. عبّد به (abbed) means, he clave to it or him. عبّد (abbada) means, he enslaved him; he subdued him so that he did the work of slaves. عبّد الطريق (abbed the way) means, he trod the road so as to make it even or easy to walk or ride upon. عبّد البقر (abbed the calf) means, he subdued or rendered the camel submissive (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradat).

Commentary:  
   The primary signification of the word عبّاد ('Ibadat) as shown under Important Words above, is to subject oneself to a rigorous spiritual discipline, working with all one's inherent powers and capacities to their fullest scope, in perfect harmony with and in obedience to God's design, so as to receive the Divine impress and thus be able to manifest in oneself God's attributes. This is, as stated in the present verse, the great and noble aim and object of man's creation and this is exactly what worship of God means. The external and internal endowments of human nature give us clearly to understand that of God-given faculties the highest is the one which awakens in man the urge to search after God and incites in him the noble desire completely to submit himself to His will. This being the great object of man's existence the Qur'an has not failed to prescribe ways and means to attain it.

   The first means towards the attainment of this end is right knowledge and firm faith in a Living God and the recognition and realization of His beauty and goodness, because beauty and goodness are the two incentives to love (1:2-4 & 14:35).

   Another important means to realize this noble end is prayer. Repeated stress has been laid upon prayer in the Qur'an because man can reach God only with Divine help and assistance (40:61).

   Without mujahadah it is idle even to conceive of attaining this end. Mujahadah consists in seeking God by spending one's money and time and applying one's faculties, and 

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58. I desire no sustenance from them, nor do I desire that they should feed Me.\textsuperscript{3927}

59. Surely, it is Allah Himself Who is the Great Sustainer, the Lord of Power, the Strong.

60. So the fate of those who do wrong shall surely be like the fate of their fellows of old; so let them not ask Me to hasten on the punishment.\textsuperscript{3928}

sacrificing one's life as well as using one's knowledge and wisdom in the cause of God (9: 41; 2: 4 & 29: 70).

Fitful or lop-sided effort produces no lasting results. It is unwavering perseverance and constancy in his endeavours which are needed for a spiritual wayfarer to reach his goal. He should be indefatigable and untiring in the way in which he walks and should remain steadfast under hardest trials (41: 31). When adversities encompass a man all around and when he is threatened with loss of life, property and honour in the way of God, and death stares him in the face and the last ray of hope departs, it is then that perseverance must be shown (2: 208). It is such perseverance that leads one to God.

Another important means to attain this supreme object is to keep company with the righteous and to imitate their example because man is by nature inclined to imitate a model and he constantly feels the need of it (9: 119).

Last but perhaps the most important factor which helps man to attain this great and noble object are pure dreams, visions and revelations from God. As the road which leads to God is very mysterious and intricate and is full of difficulties and dangers, the spiritual wayfarer may depart from the right course or despair of attaining the goal. The grace of God, therefore, continues to encourage and strengthen him in his spiritual journey with inspiring visions and revelations, and animates him with a still more zealous desire to pursue his journey eagerly. Thus strengthened he proceeds upon his journey with great vigour and zeal (10: 65).

3927. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that if the spiritual wayfarer pursues his course towards the noble object of his life steadfastly and with perseverance, he does no good to God, or to anybody else, but himself profits from it and attains the object of his quest. It is in a life led in obedience to, and harmony with, Divine laws that lie his spiritual development and the attainment of everlasting and eternal life.

3928. Important Words:

\textsuperscript{3927} The verse purports to say that if the spiritual wayfarer pursues his course towards the noble object of his life steadfastly and with perseverance, he does no good to God, or to anybody else, but himself profits from it and attains the object of his quest. It is in a life led in obedience to, and harmony with, Divine laws that lie his spiritual development and the attainment of everlasting and eternal life.

Important Words:

\textsuperscript{3928} (lot) is derived from ذنب. They say ذنب i.e., he followed his tail, not quitting his
61. Woe, then, to those who disbelieve, because of that day of theirs which they have been promised.

Commentary:
The verse warns disbelievers that if they persisted in their evil course, they will meet with a fate similar to that of the opponents of former Prophets. Like them they will come to a sad end.
CHAPTER 52

AL-ŢÜR

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This Sūra, like its two predecessors, was revealed at Mecca in the early period of the Call. Noldeke places it after Chapter 51, while according to Muir it was revealed somewhat later. The contents of the Sūra show that it was revealed at a time when opposition to Islam had become severe and persistent, and even plots had begun to be hatched against the life of the Holy Prophet. The Sūra has 50 verses and takes its title from its second verse.

In the preceding Sūra attention was drawn to the great spiritual revolution which was to be brought about by the Qur‘ān. It was in the fitness of things and quite in accordance with the laws of nature (the Sūra stated) that because men had become corrupt and had forsaken God, a new Revelation should have come, like rain that descends upon dry land at the proper time and quickens it into a new life. The Sūra had ended on the note that like former Prophets the Holy Prophet will meet with severe opposition, but the cause of Truth will triumph and disbelievers will be punished. The present Sūra refers also to the Biblical prophecies about the Holy Prophet and warns disbelievers that if they persisted in their opposition they will be seized with Divine punishment.

Summary

The Sūra opens with a direct and emphatic reference to the prophecies about the Qur‘ān and the Holy Prophet in the Bible, and states that the Bible, the Qur‘ān and the Ka‘ba all bear evidence to the truth of Islam and the Holy Prophet, and proceeds to warn disbelievers that opposition to truth is never productive of good results and that their power would be broken and disgrace and humiliation would be their lot. But those righteous servants of God who accept the Divine Teaching and mould their lives in accordance with it would receive Divine favours. Not only they but also those of their children who followed in their footsteps and led righteous lives would be made to join with them in the Abode of Eternity.

Next, the Sūra says that the Holy Prophet is neither a soothsayer, nor a madman or a poet but a true Messenger of God, because the great moral and spiritual revolution brought about by him could not be the work of a madman or a poet; nor could the great Divine Book—the Qur‘ān—that has been revealed to him, be the work of a forger of lies or a fabricator. The Qur‘ān has been revealed by the Great Creator of the heavens and the earth. The Prophet seeks no reward from them nor would their plans against him succeed because he is under God’s protection. On the contrary, Divine punishment would overtake disbelievers and the time of their chastisement is fast approaching.
1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.  
2. By the Mount;  
3. And by the Book inscribed;  
4. On parchment unfolded;  
5. And by the Frequented House;

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**Commentary:**

See 1:1.  

3929. **Commentary:**

See 1:1.

3930. **Commentary:**

The particle 
may mean: “I swear;” “I cite as witness;” etc. For the philosophy, importance and significance of oaths, see 37:2; 51:2 & 91:2.

اللَّهُ (the Mount) stands for mount Sinai. For a collective note on vv. 2—7 see v. 7 below.

3931. **Commentary:**

The expression “a Book inscribed,” may refer to both the Qur’an and the Book of Moses, preferably to the former.

3932. **Important Words:**

رق (parchment) is substantive noun from رق (raqqa) which means, it was or became thin, delicate in texture. رق means, fine parchment; white or fine piece of paper or skin, used for the purpose of writing on it (Lane).

3933. **Important Words:**

عمرو (Frequented) is derived from عمر بالمكان i.e. he stayed in the house or he occupied, tenanted or inhabited it. عمر البناة means, he kept the building in a good state. عمر المكان means, he visited the place. عمر دار معمور means, an inhabited or a visited or frequented house. عمر ربه (ammara) means, he worshipped his Creator (Lane & Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

The words “parchment unfolded,” qualify the expression, “the Book inscribed,” which stands for the Qur’an or the Book of Moses.

The words “the Frequented House,” may refer to the Tabernacle that Moses had constructed in the wilderness where the Israelites worshipped, or to the Temple at Jerusalem, or to any sacred house of worship. But preferably it refers to the Ka’ba which is described in the Qur’an also as “a Resort” (2:126); “the Sacred House” (5:3); “the Sacred Mosque” (17:2); “the Ancient House” (22:30); and “the Town of Security” (95:4); etc.
6. And by the Elevated Roof;\textsuperscript{3934}

7. And by the Swollen Sea\textsuperscript{a};\textsuperscript{3935}

\textsuperscript{3934} Commentary:

'The Elevated Roof' may also refer to the Tabernacle which Moses set up in the wilderness in the form of a canopy under which the Israelites worshipped. Or it may refer to the Ka'ba or to the sky or heaven, the last reference being more appropriate and relevant.

\textsuperscript{3935} Important Words:

- سجّر (swollen) is derived from سجر الماء النهر i.e., the water filled the stream.
- سجر النور (sajjara) means, he filled the oven with firewood and heated it.
- في السجر الماء means, he made the water to flow forth whithersoever it would.
- سجّر means, filled; kindled; still or quiet, or still and full at the same time; empty (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

It is characteristic of the Qur'an that when it has to make a firm declaration and impart emphasis and certainty to that declaration it swears by, or cites as witnesses, certain beings or objects or natural laws or phenomena. In the first few verses the Sûra swears by certain things intimately connected with Moses—the counterpart of the Holy Prophet. It was on the Tûr that the revelation was vouchsafed to Moses which embodied his Law and the prophecies which spoke about the appearance of a great Divine Prophet from among the brethren of the Israelites. That Prophet was to be the like of Moses and was to shine forth from mount Paran and to come with ten thousand saints, holding in his right hand a fiery law (Deut. 18:18 & 33:2). Evidently, the Holy Prophet was the Divine Messenger spoken of in the prophecy. His advent is likened in the Qur'an to the advent of Moses (73:16). He shined forth from mount Paran, holding the Qur'an in his right hand and entered Mecca at the head of ten thousand saintly warriors. The Sûra then cites, as evidence, the "Inscribed Book" which is the Bible or the Qur'an, preferably the latter, and which stands as a standing and incontrovertible testimony to the truth of the claims of the Holy Prophet. "The Frequented House"—the Ka'ba,—more than anything else, shows that the religion of which it forms the citadel and the centre is God's final Dispensation. The site where the Ka'ba stands was a dry barren waste where no sign of human or animal life was visible. Here, long centuries ago, a holy man of God—the Patriarch Abraham, aided and assisted by his son, Ishmael, while raising its foundations, had prayed that the place may become a haven of safety and security and may constitute the centre from where God's Unity and Oneness may be proclaimed and preached. It was "this barren waste that didst not bear and didst not travail with child" which gave birth to the Greatest Son of man, as was spoken of old (Isa. 54:1). Here it was (as was foretold) that "the glory of God rose and shone; the multitudes of camels came, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah, all came from Sheba and brought gold and incense and shewed forth the praises of the Lord" (Isa. 60:1-6).

The reference in the words "the Elevated Roof," being to heaven, the verse (v. 6) signifies
8. The punishment of thy Lord shall certainly come to pass;\(^{3936}\)
9. There is none that can avert it.
10. On the day when the heaven will be in a state of terrific commotion,\(^{3937}\)
11. And the mountains will move fast,\(^{3938}\)
12. Then woe that day to those who reject the truth,
13. Who indulge in idle talk for pastime.

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that the disbelievers are so unwise as not to see this simple fact that whereas the Prophet continuously receives Divine help and his cause progresses and prospers, failure dogs their footsteps and all their designs and plans against the Prophet prove abortive. In the words “the Swollen Sea,” the reference may be to the Mediterranean Sea where Pharaoh and his mighty hosts were drowned while pursuing the Israelites or they may refer to the battlefield of Badr where all the great leaders of the Quraisy were killed, as it was known as the sea (Nihayah). The words may also apply to the Qur’an which like a fathomless sea of spiritual knowledge continues to throw out treasures of Divine knowledge. “Why do not the disbelievers,” the verse purports to say, “take a lesson from these patent facts and realize that opposition to God’s Messengers does not pay and will end in their ruin?”

3936. Commentary:

All the facts mentioned in the preceding six verses show that if disbelievers do not give up their evil ways and opposition to the Holy Prophet, Divine punishment would descend upon them and would break them to pieces. “The punishment of thy Lord,” may also refer to the punishment of the Day of Resurrection.

3937. Commentary:

The verse may signify that on that day all the heavenly forces will operate in favour of the Holy Prophet. So did it happen on the Day of Badr.

3938. Commentary:

The verse means that on the day of retribution the leaders of disbelievers will meet with a terrible end. They will be blown away like chaff before the wind. Or it may signify that the Iranian and Byzantine Empires will be broken and shattered. This and the preceding verse make a subtle allusion to the new order of things before which the old decrepit and decayed systems would be swept away. These verses may also apply to the Day of Judgment.
14. The day when they shall be thrust into the fire of Hell with a violent thrust.\textsuperscript{a3939}

15. 'This is the Fire which you treated as a lie.\textsuperscript{b}

16. 'Is this then magic, or do you still not see\textsuperscript{c}?

17. 'Burn ye therein; and whether you show patience or you show it not, it will be the same for you.\textsuperscript{d} You are requited only for what you used to do.\textsuperscript{e3941}

18. Verily, the righteous will surely be in Gardens and in Bliss.\textsuperscript{f}

19. Enjoying what their Lord has bestowed on them; and their Lord will save them from the torment of the Fire.

\textsuperscript{a}18:54; 21:40; 38:86. \textsuperscript{b}51:15; 55:44. \textsuperscript{c}14:22; 41:25. \textsuperscript{d}7:44; 15:46; 19:64; 43:73-74; 44:56; 77:42-43; 78:32-33.

\textsuperscript{3939} Commentary:

The dead bodies of leaders of the Quraish who were killed in the Battle of Badr were thrown into a pit and the Holy Prophet went up to its edge and, addressing the dead bodies, is reported to have said “Did you find the promise of punishment of your Lord true. What God had promised me has been fulfilled” (Bukhari & Tabri). The verse is equally applicable to the punishment which will be meted out to disbelievers on the Resurrection Day.

\textsuperscript{3940} Commentary:

When disbelievers will be confronted with the consequences of their evil deeds on the Day of Reckoning, they will be asked if they had realized that what God’s Messengers had told them was not a fake or forgery, or whether they still did not see the utter futility and falsity of their beliefs and doctrines. The verse may also refer to the day of reckoning for disbelievers in this life.

\textsuperscript{3941} Commentary:

The verse depicts the disbelievers’ condition after their guilt will be fully established and the time for repentance will have passed.

\textsuperscript{3942} Commentary:

The present and the following verses recount some of the Divine favours and blessings that are bestowed on the righteous. These may also be taken as embodying a prophecy which was literally fulfilled when the dwellers of the barren and sandy deserts of Arabia conquered the great Iranian and Byzantine Empires.
20. And will say to them, 'Eat and drink in happiness because of what you used to do.

21. a'Reclining on couches arranged in rows.' b And We shall consort them with fair maidens having wide, beautiful eyes.'

**Commentary:**

Description of the rewards and punishments of Heaven and Hell as given in some Quranic Sūras, particularly in Al-Rahmān, Al-Wāqi'ah and in the present Sūra call for an explanatory note. The following points may be borne in mind for an appreciation of life after death:

1. According to the Qur'ān, God’s handiwork as manifested in the creation of the universe, and in that of man placed at its centre, shows that man’s life on earth has a purpose higher and nobler and beyond mere eating and drinking or leading a more or less circumscribed existence (23:115-116).

2. There is a life after death and that life is the continuation of the life which man leads in this world. One’s heaven or hell begins from this very world; death only opening up vast and unknown vistas of ever-expanding spiritual progress.

3. As soon as the human soul leaves this tabernacle of clay, it is given a new body, because the soul can make no progress or enjoy no bliss or feel no pain without a body. Its development and progress depend upon its permanent...
connection with a body. The new body is as fine and delicate as the soul was in this world. In fact, it is the very soul in a new transformation which after having passed through certain experiences develops a new soul which possesses far higher and finer and more delicate faculties and perception than the soul from which it emanates. To this new soul the old soul serves as a body and man is able to perceive things through his new senses which he could perceive formerly only through the soul, and is able to partake of the pains and pleasures of the next world—the present body of clay being quite unfit for the new experience. That is why the Qur’an says, “And no soul knows what joy of the eyes is kept hidden for them, as a reward for their good works” (32: 18).

And the Holy Prophet explained this Quranic verse in a well-known saying, viz., “No eye has seen the blessings of Paradise, nor has any ear heard of them nor can human mind conceive of them” (Bukhari, kitab bad’al-khalq).

4. Life after death is only an image and manifestation of the present life and the rewards and punishments of the next world would be only embodiments and images of the actions done in this life. Heaven and Hell are not new material worlds which come from outside. It is true that they shall be visible and palpable, call them material, if you please, but they are only embodiments of the spiritual facts of this life. The spiritual torture of this world has been represented in the Qur’ân as a physical punishment in the next. The chains to be put round the necks of disbelievers, for instance, represent the desires of this world which keep a man’s head bent upon the earth, and it is these desires that shall assume the shape of chains. Similarly, the entanglements of this world shall clearly seen as flames of burning fire, and the love which a believer feels for his Lord and Creator will appear embodied as wine in the life to come, etc. Thus there will be gardens, streams, milk, honey, flesh of birds, wine, fruits, thrones, companions and many other things in Paradise; but they will not be the things of this world but the embodiments of spiritual facts of the life of this world.

5. There will be no sin, levity, or vain talk in Paradise, no pleasures of the flesh as we understand them, but all-pervading peace and pleasure of God (56: 26-27). In view of this Quranic conception of Paradise, it is the height of ignorance or blind prejudice to suggest that the Qur’ân promises a sensuous Paradise to its followers.

Moreover, the words عين زوجنا and حور as explained under Important Words above, present no difficulty and, in view of these explanations, the verse may mean that in Paradise the righteous servants of God will be made to live with pure and clean companions whose faces will be shining with radiant spiritual beauty; or they will have as companions fair maidens i.e., their wives.

Besides, the promise, made to the righteous in this and the following verses, was literally fulfilled when the Muslims conquered vast territories of the Byzantine and Iranian Empires, and all these things fell into their hands and thus the promise constituted an incontrovertible testimony to the fact that the promise about the next life is also true.
22. And those who believe and whose children follow them in faith—
with them shall We join their children. And We will not diminish anything
from the reward of their works. Every man stands pledged for what he has
earned.

23. And We shall bestow upon them every kind of fruit and meat
such as they will wish for.

24. There they will pass from one to another a cup wherein is neither
levity nor sin.

25. And there will wait upon them youths of their own, pure as though
they were pearls well-preserved.

3944. Important Words:

CHILDREN (children) is derived from ذرية. They say ذر اتى عباده في الأرض i.e., God spread His servants upon the earth. ذرية used as both singular and plural (ذريات—plural) means, children or offspring of a man, male or female; little ones or young ones; descendants; progenitors or ancestors, women (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

This verse further explains its predecessor. Whereas in the former verse it was stated that the righteous will be made to live with their pure, beautiful wives, this verse explains that their offspring will also be united with them, thus making their joy complete.

The words “Every man stands pledged for what he has earned,” remove one possible misunderstanding, viz., that the mere fact of being related to a righteous man would do the believer no good. It is his own good works that will earn him his place in Paradise. The verse clearly speaks of man’s responsibility for his actions.

3945. Important Words:

PASS FROM ONE TO ANOTHER (will pass from one to another) is derived from نازع. They say نازع فلنا i.e., he shook hands with such a one. نازع الكأس means, he took the cup. نازعوا الكأس means, they took the cup from one another’s hand (Aqrab).

Commentary:

3946. Commentary:

YOUTHS (youths) is plural of غلام which means, youth; servant; son, etc. (Lane & Aqrab). The word has also been used in the Qur‘an synonymously with ولد in the sense of ‘son’ (3: 41; 15: 54; 19: 8; 37: 102; 51: 29). Elsewhere in the Qur‘an (76:20) the word غلام (sons) has been substituted for ولد which shows that the youths who will move about in
26. And they will turn one to another, asking each other questions.

27. They will say, 'Before this, when we were among our family, we were very much afraid of God's displeasure.\textsuperscript{3947}

28. 'But Allah has been gracious unto us and has saved us from the torment of the burning blast.\textsuperscript{a}

29. 'We used to pray to Him before. Surely, He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.'

30. Admonish then. By the grace of thy Lord, thou art neither a soothsayer,\textsuperscript{b} nor a madman.\textsuperscript{3948}

31. Do they say, 'He is a poet;\textsuperscript{c} we are waiting for some calamity which time will bring upon him?'\textsuperscript{3949}

\textsuperscript{a}44 : 57. \textsuperscript{b}69 : 43. \textsuperscript{c}21 : 6; 69 : 42.

the company of the righteous in Paradise will be their own sons. The verse may also refer to the Divine promise of great wealth and power coming into the possession of the poor Muslims, and to the hosts of servants who were to wait upon them.

3947. \textbf{Commentary}:

Besides the meaning given in the text the verse may also signify: "Being surrounded by enemies, their threats would sometimes frighten and terrify us. But now we enjoy perfect peace and security."

3948. \textbf{Commentary}:

In the foregoing verses prophecies in former revealed Scriptures, particularly in the Book of Moses, were advanced as arguments to support and substantiate the truth of the Qur'an being the revealed Word of God. Those prophecies spoke of the appearance of a Prophet in the wilderness of Mecca and having a "fiery Law" in his right hand (Deut. 33 : 2). In the present and the following several verses, however, the testimony of reason, common sense and human conscience has been adduced as proof to serve the same purpose.

3949. \textbf{Important Words}:

\textbf{راب} (calamity) is inf. noun from راب in his right hand (Deut. 33 : 2). In the present and the following several verses, however, the testimony of reason, common sense and human conscience has been adduced as proof to serve the same purpose.

\textbf{راب} (calamity) is inf. noun from راب in his right hand (Deut. 33 : 2). In the present and the following several verses, however, the testimony of reason, common sense and human conscience has been adduced as proof to serve the same purpose.

\textbf{راب} (calamity) is inf. noun from راب in his right hand (Deut. 33 : 2). In the present and the following several verses, however, the testimony of reason, common sense and human conscience has been adduced as proof to serve the same purpose.
32. Say, "Await ye then. I too
am with you among those who are
waiting." 3950

33. Do their intellect and reason
enjoin this upon them or are they a
rebellious people? 3951

or ريب الدهر means, the calamities or vi-
cissitudes of time (Lane).

تروص (we are waiting for) is derived from رص. They say تروص i.e. he waited for good or evil, particularly the latter, to befall him. تروص به الأمر means, he expected or waited for the event to befall him (Lane & Aqrab). An Arab poet says:

ترص بها ريب المنون لعلها
تلقلق يوماً أو يوم حاليها

i.e., wait thou for the vicissitudes of time to befall her; perhaps she might be divorced some day or her husband might die (Lane).

Commentary:

The Holy Prophet’s enemies accused him of being a soothsayer, a poet and even a madman. The verse implies the refutation of all these foolish charges. The Prophet is not a poet (the verse purports to say) because poets have no fixed ideal or programme in life. They only indulge in day-dreaming, and as it were, “wander about distractedly in every valley” (26: 226), but the Holy Prophet has before him a great and noble aim—the regeneration of a corrupt and degenerate society. He is neither a sooth-
sayer, because soothsayers dabble in occult sciences and make mere conjectures and guesses. They try to hoodwink simple-minded people by clever contrivances but the Holy Prophet is universally known to be an honest and sincere man. Nor is he a madman because madmen are not known to have brought about the great and wonderful revolution that he has, among his completely demoralized, de-
genenerate and degraded people.

3950. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that disbelievers call the Holy Prophet a poet, who indulges in building castles in the air about his great future, a soothsayer who plays upon the credulity of simple-minded folk, a raving maniac and, as such, naturally they expect that sooner or later he will come to a sad end. The Prophet is enjoined to tell them that they will have to wait till Doomsday for the realization of their futile expectations. Time alone will decide the issue between them.

3951. Commentary:

The words of the verse seem to have been spoken ironically. Even after seeing that the Holy Prophet has given a Teaching which has brought about such a wonderful revolution among his people and that his mission is meeting with rapid and progressive success, does the disbelievers’ intellect lead them to the conclusion that he is a poet, a soothsayer or a madman? Is it their reason that has misled them or have they thrown all restraint and moderation to the winds, and in rejecting the Divine Message have transgressed all legitimate bounds?
34. "Do they say, 'He has fabricated it?' Nay, but they would not believe. 3952

35. Let them, then, bring forth a discourse like this, if they speak the truth. 3953

36. Have they been created for nothing, or are they themselves the creators? 3954

37. Did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they have no faith.

38. Do they own the treasures of thy Lord, or are they the guardians thereof? 3955

3952. Important Words:

تقول (he has forged) is derived from تقول i.e., he said. تقول على (he attributed to me a thing which I did not say) (Lane & Aqrab).

3953. Commentary:

The verse refutes the disbelievers' allegation of forgery against the Holy Prophet. If the Prophet (the verse seems to hold out a challenge to them) receives no revelations from God and the Qur'an is his own fabrication, then let them produce a book like it which should possess such a simple and beautiful style and inapproachably exquisite diction as the Qur'an, and should thoroughly and effectively deal with all the complex and difficult moral and spiritual human problems, and should satisfy the multitudinous and multifarious needs of man, and should exert such powerful influence on the lives of its followers, and, above all, should be the repository of all eternal truths and imperishable teachings. The disbelievers are further challenged to produce a book like the Qur'an with their combined and concerted effort, calling in "all the men and jinn" to help and assist them. The Qur'an emphatically asserts that they will not be able to produce such a book because the Qur'an is God's own revealed Word. See also 2 : 24; 14 : 25 and 17 : 89.

3954. Commentary:

"Do they think," the verse appears to tell disbelievers, "that they have been created without a cause or purpose, or that they are their own creators." If that is not the case and God is their Creator, and their creation serves a noble and sublime purpose, and the Qur'an has been revealed to help them to attain that noble object, then why do they not accept it?" 3955. Commentary:

God has been Gracious and Merciful to men, in that He has sent the Holy Prophet and has revealed the Qur'an to him that they may understand the object of their life and, by following him, may attain it and establish a true and real connection with God. But they refuse to escape
39. Have they a ladder by means of which they can ascend into heaven and overhear? Then let their listener bring a manifest authority.\\(^{3956}\)

40. "Has He daughters and for you are sons?\\(^{3957}\)

41. "Dost thou ask a reward from them, so that they are weighed down with a load of debt?\\(^{3958}\)

42. Do they possess knowledge of the unseen, so that they write it down?

43. Do they intend a plot? But it is those who disbelieve that will be the victims of their plot.\\(^{3959}\)

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3956. Commentary:

In these verses (vv. 30–44) untenability and futility of their position in rejecting the Holy Prophet has been brought home to disbelievers. The present verse further tells them that if they claim to have access to the secrets of the heavens, then let them produce authority for the allegation that the Holy Prophet is not the appointed Messenger of God.

3957. Commentary:

It is repugnant (says the verse) to God’s Unity, that He should be attributed with having even a son, and yet the disbelievers have the hardihood to assign to Him daughters whose birth is considered by them a mark of humiliation and disgrace.

3958. Commentary:

The verse seems to appeal to the good sense of disbelievers and purports to say to them that when, out of a sincere solicitude for their moral and spiritual well-being, the Prophet calls them to the ways of righteousness and asks for no reward for his labours, then why do they not accept him? On the contrary, they oppose and persecute him.

3959. Important Words:

كيد (a plot) is inf. noun from كاد, i.e., he contrived, devised or plotted a thing whether right or wrong. They say كاده i.e., he deceived him, beguiled or circumvented him; he taught him how to deceive or cheat; he fought him. كيد means, deceit, cunning, stratagem; war (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that disbelievers are hatching plots against Islam but their plots will recoil on their own heads. The word كيد meaning war, as it has been used in the Qur'an about the Battle of Badr, the reference...
44. Have they a god other than Allah? Exalted is Allah above all that which they associate with Him.\textsuperscript{3960}

45. And if they should see a piece of the sky falling down, they would say, Just clouds piled up.\textsuperscript{3961}

46. So leave them until they meet that day of theirs, on which they will be overtaken by a thunderbolt.\textsuperscript{3962}

47. The day when their plotting will not avail them aught, nor shall they be helped.

\textsuperscript{a}46 : 25. \textsuperscript{b}23 : 55; 52 : 46; 70 : 43.

in the verse may be particularly to that battle (8 : 19). According to some Commentators of the Qur‘ān, the next three verses also refer to it.

3960. Commentary:

In the preceding verse disbelievers were warned that they themselves would fall victims to the plots they were hatching against Islam. In this verse they are told that when the day of decision arrives, their false gods would not be able to render them any help, nor would they be able to help themselves, that idolatry would disappear from Arabia and the country would resound with Divine alleluias.

3961. Commentary:

In the two previous verses disbelievers were warned that Divine punishment was about to overtake them. But such is their state of utter heedlessness and false sense of security (says the verse) that they do not benefit by the timely Divine warning, so that even if they see a piece of the sky actually falling upon them, they would deceive themselves by considering it as a piece of God’s mercy in the form of ‘piled-up clouds.’ The disbelievers go so far as to challenge the Prophet to “cause a portion of the sky to fall upon us if thou art truthful” (26 : 188).

3962. Commentary:

The words ‘that day of theirs’ have been taken to refer to the Day of Badr. On that day a well-equipped Qur‘āesh army received a crushing defeat at the hands of a small, ill-armed and ill-equipped band of Muslims. The defeat came as a veritable bolt from the blue for the Qur‘āesh. The verse may equally refer to the day of the fall of Mecca when the Qur‘āesh were completely unnerved at seeing the Muslim army of ten thousand strong at the very gates of the city.
48. "And verily, for those who do wrong there is a punishment besides that. But most of them know not. 3963

49. So wait patiently for the judgment of thy Lord; for assuredly thou art before Our eyes, and glorify thy Lord with His praise when thou risest up from sleep. 3964

50. "And for part of the night also do thou glorify Him and at the setting of the stars.

3963. Important Words:

(besides) among other things means; before and behind in respect of place or time; at, near, nearby; with or present with; other than, beside or besides (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

If "day" in the preceding verse be taken to refer to the Day of Badr, the expression would signify the Divine punishment that overtook the Meccan disbelievers in the form of the destructive "seven year famine," etc. But if "day" may refer to the Day of Judgment, the expression would mean the punishments that come upon disbelievers in this life.

3964. Commentary:

"The judgment of thy Lord" may signify the punishment that was soon to overtake disbelievers, and the words "thou art before Our eyes" mean that the Holy Prophet was under Divine protection and plotting of the enemies could do him no harm. The reference is to the promise of protection given to him in the words: "And Allah will protect thee from men" (5:68).
CHAPTER 53
AL-NAJM
(Revealed before Hijra)

Date of Revelation and Context

The Sūra takes its title from the very first word of its text. It is a Meccan Sūra, having been revealed, according to overwhelming scholarly opinion, in the 5th year of the Call, shortly after the first emigration to Abyssinia which took place in the month of Rajab of that year.

Whereas the preceding Sūra had ended on the injunction contained in the verse: “And for part of the night also do thou glorify Him and at the setting of the stars,” the present Sūra opens with the words, “By the star when it falls.” Moreover, in the preceding Sūra the truth of the Quranic revelation and of the Divine claim of the Holy Prophet was sought to be established by a fleeting reference to Biblical prophecies and natural phenomena. In the Sūra under comment the same subject has been dealt with in a very exquisite and forceful style. It is stated that the Holy Prophet was not only a true Messenger of God but Prophet par excellence, and that he was commissioned by God as humanity’s last and infallible guide and preceptor.

Summary of the Subject-Matter

The Sūra opens with citing the falling of النجم (for an explanation of this word see under v. 2) as an evidence in support of the Divine claim of the Holy Prophet, and proceeds to say: “Your companion has neither erred, nor has he gone astray,” because, “The Lord of mighty powers has taught him, the One Possessor of strength.” The Prophet, having been initiated into Divine mysteries, and having drunk deep at the fountain of Divine Grace and Knowledge, and of the Realization of God, attained to the highest peak of spiritual eminence to which a human being can conceivably rise. Then he became filled to the fullest extent with the milk of human kindness and sympathy, and, having been thus spiritually equipped, was appointed to preach Divine Unity to a world given to the worship of gods made of wood and stone and creations of man’s own imagination. The Sūra continues to give very strong, solid and sound arguments from human reason and history, and from the insignificant beginnings of man, in support of the doctrine of the Oneness of God; and condemns idolatry in forceful terms. This foolish doctrine, the Sūra declares, is born of lack of true knowledge and rests on baseless conjecture which “avails naught against truth.” Next, it says that idolaters should have learned from the life-stories of Abraham, Moses and other Prophets that idolatrous beliefs and practices have always landed mankind into moral and spiritual ruin, and that every man will have to bear his own cross and render account of his actions to God Who is the final goal of all, and Who gives life and causes death, and brings man to life after he is dead and reduced to particles of earth.

The Sūra closes on a note of warning to disbelievers that if they persisted in rejection of the Divine Message, they would meet with a sad fate as did the people of Noah and ‘Ād and Thamūd and that destruction of falsehood was inevitable and nothing could avert or avoid it.

2508
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful."  
2. By the star when it falls,  
3. Your companion has neither erred, nor has he gone astray.

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3965. **Commentary:**  
See 1:1.

3966. **Important Words:**

- **النجم** (the star). The word has been variously interpreted. Generally it means, star or a stemless plant, but when used as a proper noun it signifies "the Pleiades." It is taken by some scholars to signify the gradual revelation of the Qur'an in pieces, and by some other authorities to refer to the Holy Prophet himself. Its plural يَمْجاَمْ (النُمَجَامُونَ) also means, chiefs of a people, or small States or Principalities (Lane, Aqrab, Kashshaf, Tāj & Gharā'ib al-Qur'an).

- **هَوَى** (falls). They say هَوِيُ (i.e., the thing fell from a high to a low place; it rose and ascended. It is said that هَوَى (al-hawiyu) is used for going up and هَوَى (al-huwiyyu) for coming down (Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

In view of different meanings of the word **النجم** given under Important Words, the verse may refer (1) to a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet to the effect that when spiritual darkness will spread over the entire face of the earth and there will remain nothing of Islam but its name and of the Qur'an but its letters and faith will go up to heavens, a man of the Persian descent, will bring it back to earth (Tirmidhī & Bukhārī). Or (2) it may signify that the Quranic revelation bears witness to its own truth. Or (3) it may mean that the tender plant of Islam, which now seems to be going down before the strong and adverse winds of opposition that are fiercely blowing against it, would very shortly rise and develop into a mighty tree under whose cool shade great nations would take shelter. Or (4) the verse may mean that as the Arabs are used to determine the course and direction of, and are guided by, the movements of the stars in the sandy waste of Arabia (16:17), so they would now be led to the goal and end of their spiritual journey by the star par excellence, i.e., the Holy Prophet. (5) The verse may also embody a prophecy about the fall of the ramshackle State of Arabia, a prophecy much more explicitly stated in the verse, "The Hour has drawn nigh and the moon is rent asunder" (54:2).

3967. **Commentary:**

The verse signifies that the ideals and principles presented by the Holy Prophet are not wrong (بَيْنَاءَ), nor has the Prophet in the least deviated from those principles (بَيْنَاءَ). Thus, both as regards his great ideals, and the way he lives up to them, he is a sure and safe guide. The argument is reinforced in the next few verses.
4. Nor does he speak out of his own desire.  

5. It is nothing but pure revelation, revealed by God.  

6. The Lord of Mighty Powers has taught him,  

7. The One Possessor of Strength. So He manifested His ascendance over everything.

The words "your companion" seem to imply a subtle rebuke to the Meccan disbelievers, telling them in effect that the Holy Prophet has lived among them a whole life-time and they had always looked upon him as a paragon of honesty, integrity and truthfulness but now they dare impute to him such a heinous sin as forging lies against God (10:17). How inconsistent is their attitude?

3968. Commentary:
See next verse.

3969. Commentary:
Whereas the present verse speaks of the Divine source of the Holy Prophet's revelation, the two preceding verses allude to the hallucinations of a deranged mind and to the ideas that proceed from one's own desires and the promptings of the Evil Spirit.

The word هو in the verse relates to the Qur'ān.

3970. Important Words:
القوى (powers) is the plural of قوة which is inf. noun from قوى i.e., he became strong; vigorous, robust or sturdy. قوة means, strength, power, potency, might or force (cont. of ضعف) in body and also in intellect (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
The verse signifies that the Qur'ān is a mighty and powerful Revelation before which all former revealed Scriptures pale into insignificance.

3971. Important Words:
الوضع (gained ascendance over everything) is derived from i.e., he was or became firm or had the mastery or complete ascendancy over the thing. الاستوى is derived from سوى, i.e., the affair of the man became right or straight. استوى means, he became full-grown and mature in body and intellect or he attained the completion of his make and intellect. استوى على الشتى means, he gained or had the mastery or complete ascendancy over the thing. استوى الطعام means, the food became thoroughly cooked (Lane & Aqrab). See also 2:30 & 19:11.
8. And He revealed His Word when he was on the uppermost horizon,\(^\text{3972}\)

9. Then he drew nearer to God; then he came down to mankind,\(^\text{3973}\)

10. So that he became, as it were, one chord to two bows or closer still.\(^\text{3974}\)

**Commentary:**

The expression ذو مرأة, besides the meaning given under Important Words above, signifies: One Whose powers perpetually manifest themselves. The word مستوى besides the meaning given in the text may also apply to the Holy Prophet, signifying that the Prophet's physical and intellectual powers have attained their fullest vigour and maturity. For a collective note on this and the next two verses see v. 10.

3972. **Commentary:**

The verse purports to say that the Holy Prophet had attained to the highest point in his spiritual ascension when God revealed Himself to him in full Glory and Majesty. Or "the Prophet's being on the uppermost horizon" may signify that the light of Islam was set on a very high place from where it could illumine the whole world.

The word هو may also refer to God. See also verse 10.

3973. **Important Words:**

(1) (came down) is derived from دلأ which means, he was or became lowly, humble or submissive; he drew near or approached or increased in nearness. (Lane, Aqrab & Lisān).

**Commentary:**

The verse means that the Holy Prophet attained the utmost nearness to God. See next verse.

3974. **Important Words:**

(2) (chord) substantive noun from قبا which means, he was or became near or he approached. قبا means, the portion of a bow that is between the part that is grasped by the hand and the curved extremity; or from one extremity of the bow to the other; measure or space. The Arabs say بينهما قبا قوسين i.e., between them two is the measure of a bow, which means that there is a very close relationship between them. The Arabic proverb ثمونا عن قوس واحد i.e., they shot at us from one bow, means, they were unanimous against us. The word thus denotes complete agreement (Lane, Lisān & Zamakhshari).

**Commentary:**

Whatever may be the significance of the word قبا the expression قبا قوسين indicates very close union between two persons. In this sense of the expression the verse purports to say that the Holy Prophet continued to scale the
11. Then He revealed to His servant that which He revealed. 3975

12. The heart of the Prophet was not untrue to that which he saw.

13. Will you then dispute with him about what he saw? 3976

Heights of spiritual ascension and to approach near God till all distance between them disappeared and the Prophet became, as it were, "one chord to two bows." The verse reminds of an ancient Arab custom according to which when two persons pledged themselves to firm friendship they would join their bows in such a way that they appeared as one and then they would shoot an arrow from that combined bow; thus indicating that they had become, as it were, one person, and that an attack on one was an attack on the other. If the word تلعت is to apply to God, the verse would mean that the Holy Prophet went up to God and God came down to him till they both became, as it were, united into one person.

The expression وكان قاب قوسين possesses yet another very beautiful and subtle significance, viz., that while on the one hand the Holy Prophet became so completely merged in his Lord and Creator that he became, as it were, His image (بيبكر أو شد سراسر صورت رجيم), on the other he came down to mankind and became so full of love, sympathy and solicitude that Divinity and Humanity became united in him, and in the Quranic words he became the central point of the chord of the two bows of Divinity and Humanity.

The words وأدنى signify that the relationship between the Holy Prophet and God became closer and more intimate than could be conceived.

Verses 8—18 describe the Spiritual Ascension (میراج) of the Holy Prophet, when he was spiritually transported to heavens and was vouchsafed the view of a spiritual manifestation of God, and ascended spiritually very close to his Maker. The میراج was, in fact, a double spiritual experience, comprising the spiritual ascent of the Holy Prophet, and the descent towards him of God's manifestation.

The میراج (Spiritual Ascension) has become confused in popular mind with Isra' (اسراء or Spiritual Night Journey of the Prophet to Jerusalem), from which it is quite distinct and separate. The Isra' took place in the eleventh or twelfth year of the Call (Zurqānī) while the Holy Prophet had the experience of the میراج or Spiritual Ascension to Heavens in its 5th year, shortly after the first emigration to Abyssinia, six or seven years earlier. A careful and minute study of the details of these two incidents mentioned in the Ḥadīth also supports this view. For a detailed exposition of the two incidents—the میراج and the Isra',—being separate and distinct from each other, see 17 : 2.

3975. Important Words:

 لما (what) is sometimes used, to denote honour, surprise, or for emphasis. ما أحسن زيدا 3976 means, how beautiful Zaid is. ق分かり بالن 3976 means, an excellent youth is such a one (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse means that God revealed to His servant, and what an excellent and mighty revelation it was!

3976. Commentary:

The verse implies that what the Holy Prophet had seen was his real personal experience; it was veritable truth and no figment of his imagination.
14. And certainly, he saw Him a second time also,3977
15. Near the farthest Lote-tree,3978
16. Near which is the Garden of Eternal Abode.
17. This was when that which covers covered the Lote-tree.3979
18. The eye deviated not, nor did it wander.3980
19. Surely, he saw the greatest of the Signs of his Lord.
20. Now tell me about Lat and 'Uzza.
21. And Manat, the third one, another goddess'!3981

3977. Commentary:
The verse means that the Holy Prophet's vision was a double spiritual experience.

3978. Important Words:

سدرة (lote-tree) is derived from سدر which means, he was or became confounded, perplexed or dumbfounded. سدر (sadira) means, bewildered, perplexed, confounded. سدار (sadirun) means, the sea (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In view of the root-meaning of the word سدار the verse may signify that in his Spiritual Ascension (راجع), the Holy Prophet had reached a high stage of nearness to God which was beyond human mind to conceive; or it may signify that at that stage a sea of endless vistas of Divine knowledge and eternal realities and verities opened out before him.

Or the verse may possess a symbolic allusion to the fact that Divine knowledge vouchsafed to the Holy Prophet would, like the lote-tree, give comfort and shelter to the tired and jaded limbs of the spiritual wayfarer. Or it may possess a prophetic reference to the tree under which the Companions of the Holy Prophet took the oath of fealty at his hands at the time of the Truce of Hudaibiya. Moreover, as the leaves of the lote-tree possess the quality of safeguarding a dead body from corruption, the verse may signify that the Teaching revealed to the Holy Prophet not only is itself immune against corruption but is eminently fitted to save and preserve mankind from moral corruption.

3979. Commentary:
The words 'that which covers,' signify the manifestation of God.

3980. Commentary:
The verse sheds a flood of light on the bed-rock of certainty and invincible faith on which the Holy Prophet stood.

3981. Commentary:

This and the preceding verse imply a subtle rebuke to the disbelievers. After having declared the Glory, Majesty and Dignity of God in.
the former verses, these two verses seem to say to them that, instead of adoring such a Mighty and Powerful Creator and Lord, they stoop so low as to worship gods made of wood and stone.

It may be noted here that some prejudiced Christian critics of the Holy Prophet have woven quite a fantastic and foolish story of his having fallen a victim to the machinations of Satan. It is stated that one day at Mecca, when the Holy Prophet recited this Sūra and as in his recitation he came upon these verses, before a mixed assembly of Muslims and disbelievers, Satan contrived to put in his mouth the words:

 تلك التراثي العلي و ان شفاعتهن لترجيل

i.e., these are exalted goddesses and their intercession is hoped for (Zurqānī). The critics call it the “lapse of Muḥammad” or his “compromise with idolatry” and seem to rely upon Waqīdī—that invertebrate liar and fabricator of reports—or on Ṭabārī, who is generally regarded as a credulous and indiscriminate narrator of events, for this entirely baseless story. These gentlemen have the audacity to attribute this blasphemous utterance to that great iconoclast (the Holy Prophet) whose whole life was spent in denouncing and condemning idolatry and who carried out his noble mission with unremitting vigour and fearless devotion, spurning all offers of compromise with idol-worship, and whom blandishments, bribes, cajolery or intimidation failed to move an inch from his set purpose, and to whose unshakable firmness against idolatry the Almighty Himself has borne testimony in the words:

واتوا لو تدهن فيدهون

i.e., it is their intense desire that thou shouldst show some pliancy so that they may also be pliant (68 : 10).

Moreover, the whole context gives the direct lie to this baseless assertion. Not only do the verses that follow but the whole Sūra contains an unsparring condemnation of idolatry and an uncompromising insistence on Divine Unity. It is strange that this patent fact should have escaped the notice of the Holy Prophet’s critics and carpers.

Historical data, too, lend no support whatever to this so-called “lapse.” The story has been rejected as completely unreliable by all the learned Commentators of the Qurʾān, Ibn Kathīr and Rādī among them. The renowned leaders of Muslim religious thought, well versed in the science of Ḥadīth, such as ‘Ainī, Qāḍī ‘Ayyāq and Nawawī, have regarded it as pure invention. No trace of this story is to be found in the Ṣanāḥ al-ʾAṣma (the Six Reliable Collections of Ḥadīth). Imām Bukhārī, whose collection, the Shāhīḥ Al-Bukhārī, is regarded by Muslim scholars as the most reliable book next to the Qurʾān and who himself was a contemporary of Waqīdī to whom goes the unenviable credit of forging and reporting this story, makes no mention of it, nor does the great historian, Ibn Ishāq, who was born more than 40 years before him. It may be, as stated by Qaṣṭalānī and Zurqānī and supported by some other eminent scholars, that when the Holy Prophet, during the recital of the present Sūra before a mixed assembly of Muslims and disbelievers, came to these verses, some evil-minded person from among the disbelievers might have loudly interjected the words:

تلك التراثي العلي و ان شفاعتهن لترجيل

as was the disbelievers’ wont to create confusion by resorting to such low tactics, when the Qurʾān was being recited (41 : 27).

It is also on record that in the “Days of Ignorance,” the Quraish, when making a circuit of the Kaʿba, used to recite the sentence:

تلك التراثي العلي و ان شفاعتهن لترجيل (Muʿjam al-Buldān, vol. 5, under ‘Uzzā).

Besides, it is not possible for Satan to interfere with the purity of the Quranic text. God has taken it upon Himself to protect and safeguard the Qurʾān against all interference and interpolation (15 : 10 & 72 : 27-29). So the whole story
22. 'What! for you the males and for Him the females'!  

23. That indeed is an unfair division.

24. 'These are but names which you have named—you and your fathers—for which Allah has sent down no authority.' They follow naught but conjecture and what their souls desire, while there has already come to them guidance from their Lord.

as invented by Wāqidi and taken undue advantage of by Muir and others of his class is a pure myth and possesses no basis in fact.

It is further stated that the 53rd verse of Sūra Al-Hājj was revealed in connection with this incident. The fact that the Sūra under comment was revealed in the 5th year of the Call and Sūra Al-Hājj in the 13th or 12th year, takes the bottom completely from under this baseless assertion.

3982. Commentary:

The verse administers a further rebuke to the Meccan pagans, purporting to say to them that apart from their blasphemous practice of associating gods, made of wood and stone, with the Almighty God, the Creator of heavens and earth and the Lord of Glory, Majesty and Dignity, they have the hardihood to assign to Him daughters whose birth they regard as a source of disgrace and humiliation in their own case.

3983. Important Words:

ضَيْرَة (unjust) is derived from ضَرَّ which means, he deviated from the right course; he acted unjustly, wrongfully, tyrannically. ضَرَّ في الحِكْم means, he gave an unjust judgment. ضَرَّه حقَّ means, he deprived him or defrauded him of a part or the whole of his right or due (Lane & Aqrab).

3984. Commentary:

Whereas a true believer stands on the bedrock of certainty and sure knowledge (12:109), an idolater possesses no rational argument and no revealed authority for his false beliefs or doctrines. He falls a helpless victim to conjecture and superstition and is a slave to his own desires and fancies. The verse, as also v. 29, speaks of the utter untenability of an idolater's position. He stands on a broken reed.
25. Can man have whatever he desires?  

26. Nay, to Allah belong the Hereafter and this world.

R. 2 27. And how many an angel is there in the heavens, but their intercession shall be of no avail, except after Allah has given permission to whomsoever He wills and pleases.

28. Those who believe not in the Hereafter name the angels with names of females;

29. But they have no knowledge thereof. They follow nothing but conjecture; and conjecture avails naught against truth.

30. So turn aside from him who turns away from Our remembrance, and seeks nothing but the life of this world.

31. That is the utmost limit of their knowledge. Verily, thy Lord knows best him who strays from His way, and He knows him best who follows guidance.

3985. Commentary:

The verse means that idolaters hope that their gods will intercede for them with Allah. They are entertaining a false hope which will never be fulfilled.

3986. Commentary:

For a detailed note on شفاعة (intercession) see 2:49 and 19:88.

The words لمن يشاء ويرضى may also mean, regarding one who conforms to His will and with whom He is pleased.

3987. Commentary:

The words of the verse seem to have been spoken ironically or by way of reproach. The utmost limit of the knowledge of disbelievers (the verse purports to say) is that they worship gods, which can do them no good nor can they injure them, in preference to the Almighty God, to Whom belongs whatever is in the
32. And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, that He may requite those who do evil for what they have wrought, and reward those who do good with what is best.\footnote{4 : 124-125; 6 : 161; 41 : 47.}

33. Those who shun the grave sins and immoral actions except minor faults\footnote{b4 : 32; 42 : 38.}—verily, thy Lord is Master of vast forgiveness.\footnote{c13 : 7; 41 : 44.} He knows you full well from the time when He created you from the earth, and when you were embryos in the bellies of your mothers. So ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows him best who is truly righteous.\footnote{3988}

34. Seest thou him who turns away.

35. And gives a little, and does it grudgingly?\footnote{3989}

heavens and the earth and Who has created all things for the service of man. Moreover, all their strivings are confined to the acquirement of material things of this life and they have no thought for the Hereafter.

3988. Important Words:

(minor faults) is derived from the root--word . They say , he came to the people and alighted at their abode temporarily as a guest. I appreciated it without committing it. also means, he visited covertly or in a light, slight or hasty manner or rarely. means, a chance leaning towards evil; a temporary and light lapse; a rare slight offence, a passing evil idea which flashes across the mind and leaves no impression on it. The root-word possesses the sense of temporariness, haste and infrequency and of doing a thing unintentionally. A chance, unintentional look at a woman has also been called by some authorities (Lane & Aqrab).

3989. Important Words:

(gives grudgingly) is derived from the root-words . They say , the man gave niggardly or grudgingly; he did not succeed in getting what he wanted. means, he prevented him from such a thing. means, the mine refused to bring out diamonds and jewels. means, the digger in the course of digging came across a hard or stony piece of ground or clod and could dig no further.
36. Has he the knowledge of the unseen, so that he can see his own end?
37. Has he not been informed of what is in the Scriptures of Moses,
38. And of Abraham who fulfilled the commandments?—
39. That no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another;
40. And that man will have nothing but what he strives for;
41. And that his striving shall soon be seen;
42. Then will he be rewarded for it with the fullest reward;

3990. Commentary:

Patriarch Abraham, the progenitor of the three great religious peoples—Jews, Christians and Muslims—fulfilled faithfully the covenant he had made with God. He carried out literally all Divine commandments. He was made to pass through severe trials and tribulations and successfully came out of those ordeals. Says the Qur'an: And remember when his Lord tried Abraham with certain commands, which he fulfilled (2: 125). Abraham was commanded by God to leave his only son Ishmael, (the hope and prop of his old age), when a mere child, with his elderly mother, in the arid and barren waste, near Mecca, and then, the child having grown up to be a young boy, he was commanded to slaughter him, which command Abraham prepared to carry out, without the least hesitancy. It were actions like these that earned for him the Divine title of the Faithful, which is the significance of the word ṣāliḥ.

3991. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that every man shall have to carry his own cross and bear his own burden. See also 17:14-16.

3992. Commentary:

It is after unremitting, incessant and persistent striving, accompanied by noble ideals and sublime principles, that one can achieve the object of one's quest.

3993. Commentary:

The kind of striving mentioned in the preceding verse never fails to produce the desired results.
43. And that to thy Lord do all things ultimately go;

44. And that it is He Who makes men laugh and makes them weep;

45. And that it is He Who causes death and gives life;

46. And that He creates the pairs, male and female,

47. From a sperm-drop when it is poured forth;

48. And that it is for Him to bring forth the second creation;

49. And that it is He Who enriches and grants wealth to one's satisfaction;

50. And that He is the Lord of Sirius;

51. And that He destroyed the first tribe of 'Ad.

[Commentary]

3994. Commentary:
The verse purports to say that the whole system of cause and effect ends with God. He is the Cause of all causes or the First Cause. A natural order of cause and effect pervades the whole universe. Every cause, which is not itself primary, is traceable to some other cause and this to another and so on. But as the series of cause and effect in our finite world cannot be indefinite it must terminate at some point. The Final Cause is, therefore, the Author of the universe. It is to this Final Cause that the present verse calls attention.

3995. Important Words:

أثقل (grants wealth to one's satisfaction) is the transitive form of قننة المال. They say قننة المال i.e.,

he took for himself property for permanent use and not for possession. أثقل means God gave him wealth and pleased him i.e., it made him contented and satisfied (Lane & Aqrab).

3996. Commentary:
The Arabs worshipped the mighty star, Sirius, because they regarded it as a source of good or bad luck for them.

3997. Commentary:
After putting forward argument in support of Divine Unity from human reason and the insignificant beginning of man, the Sūra, from this verse introduces history to prove the same thesis.
52. And the tribe of Thamūd, and He spared not any of them. 3998

53. And He destroyed the people of Noah before them—verily, they were most unjust and most rebellious—

54. And He overthrew the subverted cities of the people of Lot.

55. So that there covered them that which covered. 3999

56. Which then, O believer, of the bounties of thy Lord wilt thou dispute? 4000

57. This is a Warner from among the class of the Warners of old.

58. The Hour that was to come has drawn nigh, 4001

59. None but Allah can avert it.

60. Do you then wonder at this announcement? 4002

3998. Commentary:

The tribe of Thamūd is known as the second ‘Ad.

3999. Commentary:

The particle has been used here to denote respect or dignity, meaning that an overwhelming punishment enveloped them.

4000. Commentary:

After seeing so many and so clear and invincible arguments and Signs that support and substantiate the claims of the Holy Prophet, the verse says to the obstinate disbelievers, in words full of pathos, mixed with irony, how long will they continue to deny truth and wander in the wilderness of disbelief?

4001. Important Words:

الازنة (The Hour) is fem. act. part. from أذ which means, he was or became or drew near; he hastened or was quick. الأذنة means, the Hour of Judgment; the Resurrection; the near event; death (Lane).

Commentary:

The idolaters of Mecca, says the verse, have persisted in denying the Divine Message and as a result of their denial the hour of the overthrow of their power has drawn very near; nay it is knocking at their very door.

4002. Commentary:

This Sūra was revealed very early in the Holy Prophet’s ministry i.e., in the fifth year of the Call, when in the midst of mockery, threats and persecution, the fate of Islam was hanging in the balance. It was at that time that the prophecy was made about the overthrow of
61. And do you laugh, and weep not?
62. And will you remain proudly heedless?  
63. So prostrate yourselves before Allah, and worship Him.

4003. Important Words:

سادون (proudly heedless) is the plural of سعد which is act. part. from سد which means, he was or became high and elevated; he raised his head in pride; he diverted himself, sported and played; he was or became negligent or heedless and went away leaving a thing; he was or became confounded, perplexed, amazed, and was unable to see the right course; he kept constantly to an affair (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
The warning contained in vv. 58—61 is repeated here.

4004. Commentary:
The verse seems to say to disbelievers, there is yet time that they should accept the Divine Message and worship God and repent so that mercy might be shown to them.

It seems that as the Holy Prophet finished reciting the Sūra, before a mixed gathering of Muslims and disbelievers, and, along with his followers, he prostrated himself on the ground, the disbelievers too, having been deeply impressed with the solemnity of the occasion and being overawed by the august recitation of the Quranic words, as well as by God's Majesty and Glory, might also have fallen in prostration. This was not unlikely since they regarded God as the Supreme Lord and Creator and their own deities as mere intercessors with Him (10:19). By connecting this plausible incident, however, with the baseless legend woven round vv. 21—23 by some "inventive minds," the traducers of the Holy Prophet have persuaded themselves to detect in it a "lapse" on his part. But the lapse, if any, is the creation of their own imagination.
CHAPTER 54

SURA AL-QAMAR

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The Sūra takes its title from its opening verse. It definitely is an early Meccan Sūra, having been revealed about the same time as the preceding Sūra, Al-Najm, which was revealed in the 5th year of the Call. The Sūra so closely resembles Sūra Al-Najm in style and contents that it seems to supplement the latter's subject-matter. Whereas Sūra Al-Najm had ended on a note of warning to disbelievers in the words: أُرْزِقُوا الْدُمَّ i.e., the Hour of their doom has drawn near, the present Sūra opens with the expression أُتْبِعُوا السَّاعَةٌ meaning, that the threatened Hour has almost arrived; it is at their very door.

Subject-Matter

The Sūra is the fifth of the group of seven Sūras which begin with Sūra Qāf and end with Al-Wāqi'ah. All these Sūras were revealed very early in the Holy Prophet's ministry and deal with the basic doctrines of Islam—Existence and Unity of God, the Resurrection and Revelation. The Sūras adduce laws of nature, human reason, common sense and histories of the past Prophets as arguments to prove these theses. In some of these Sūras special emphasis has been laid on one kind of arguments with a fleeting reference to other kinds and vice versa. In the present Sūra, however, the Holy Prophet's Divine claim and the Resurrection have been dealt with, with special reference to the histories of the past Prophets, particularly to those of Noah, the tribes of 'Ād and Thamūd and Lot's people.

Towards its end the Sūra makes pointed reference to the fulfilment of the prophecy about the destruction and overthrow of the power of pagan Arabs about which a warning had been given in the preceding Sūra (53 : 58).
1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.  

2. The Hour has drawn nigh, and the moon is rent asunder.

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 Commentary:

4005. **Commentary:**

See 1:1.

4006. **Important Words:**

- **Fiṭḥ** (is rent asunder) is derived from **Fiṭḥ**. They say **Fiṭḥ** i.e., he split, clave, tore or rent the thing. **Fiṭḥ** means, he broke the staff i.e., he separated himself from the community. An Arab would say, **Fiṭḥ** i.e., he created disunion and dissen- sion among the Muslims. **Fiṭḥ** means, the moon was or became rent asunder; or according to some, the affair became manifest (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradāt).

- **Qamar** (the moon). **Qamar** means, the light of the thing became intense. **Qamar** means, the night became bright with the light of the moon. **Qamar** means, the moon in its third night and after; the moon absolutely. **Qamar** means, the **ulema** or learned men of the people. **Qamar** means, the sun and the moon (Lane & Aqrab).

 Commentary:

Whether or not “splitting of the moon” into two parts, observable by the naked eye, con- travened any physical law of nature, it cannot be denied that the event lacks historical evidence which could at all be described as unimpeachable. At the same time no one can presume to have fathomed all Divine mysteries or fully comprehended or encompassed all the secrets of nature. It is not possible to imagine that such an event, affecting a considerable area of the globe, should have remained unnoticed in the observatories of the world or that it should have remained unrecorded in books of history. But the incident having found a mention in such reliable collections of Hadith as Bukhari and Muslim and having been narrated successively in traditions of reliable authority and reported by such learned Companions of the Holy Prophet as Ibn Mas‘ūd and Ibn ‘Abbās, does show that some natural phenomenon of unusual importance must have taken place in the time of the Holy Prophet. Some Commen- tators of the Qur‘ān—Rādī among them—have sought to solve the difficult problem by declaring the incident to be a lunar eclipse. Imām Ghazālī and Shah Wali Allah also hold the view that the moon had not in fact been rent asunder, but that God had so contrived that it appeared to the beholders as such. However, taking into consideration the forceful language in which it has been mentioned in the Qur‘ān, the incident appears to be something more than a mere lunar eclipse. It indeed constituted a great miracle shown by the Prophet at the insistent demand of disbelievers (see Bukhari & Muslim). It seems to be a vision of the Holy Prophet in which the Companions of the Holy Prophet and some of the Qurāish were made to share—just as the rod turning into a serpent was a vision of Moses in which the
3. "And if they see a Sign, they turn away and say, 'a continuous sorcery.'"\(^{4007}\)

magicians were made to share. Or it may be that just as the striking of sea-water by Moses with his rod coincided with the ebb of the tide and thus assumed the character of a miracle, because God alone knew when the sea would recede and it was He Who commanded Moses to strike the waters at the time of recession, similarly God may have commanded the Holy Prophet to show the miracle of the cleaving asunder of the moon at a time when a heavenly body was to take such a position in front of the moon that it caused the moon to appear to the beholders as split into two parts.

But most plausible explanation, which is also possessed of very deep spiritual significance of this, one of the most outstanding miracles shown by the Holy Prophet, lies in the fact that the moon was the national emblem of the Arabs and the symbol of their political power, just as the sun at that time was the national ensign of the Persians. When Šafiyya, the daughter of Ḥuyay bin Akhtab, a leader of the Jews of Khai’bar, mentioned to her father that she had seen in a dream that the moon had fallen into her lap, he slapped her face saying that she wanted to marry the leader of the Arabs. After the fall of Khai’bar Šafiyya’s dream was fulfilled when she was married to the Holy Prophet (Zurqāni & Usūd al-Ghābah). Similarly, ‘Ā’ishah had seen a dream that three moons had fallen in her private apartment which saw its fulfilment when the Holy Prophet, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar were buried there one after the other (Mu’āṭṭā, kitāb al-Jamā‘iz). According to this sense of the word قمر, the verse would signify that the hour of destruction of their political power with which the disbelieving Arabs had been threatened in 53:58 has already arrived. The word الساعة (Hour) in that case would refer to the Battle of Badr in which all the chiefs and leaders of the Quraish were killed and the foundations of the complete destruction of their power were laid. Thus the verse constituted a mighty prophecy which met with remarkable fulfilment, nearly eight or nine years after its announcement. Moreover, the Holy Prophet has been called “illuminating moon” (قمر متير) in the Qur’ān. In this sense of the word the verse would mean that after the Holy Prophet’s separation from the Quraish, the “Hour” of the destruction of their power would arrive, and it happened likewise. About a year after the emigration of the Holy Prophet to Medina, the Battle of Badr was fought which broke the Quraishite power.

Taking the expression انشق النمر in the sense, “the affair has become manifest,” the verse would mean that the hour of the destruction of the Quraishite power has arrived and that now it would become manifest that the Prophet was a true Divine Messenger.

The word الساعة, besides the Battle of Badr, may apply to the Battle of the Ditch and the fall of Mecca, as these three events combined to bring about complete and total annihilation of the power of pagan Arabs.

4007. Important Words:

\(^{4007}\)астمر (continuous) is derived from which means, he or it passed; went away; it (a thing) went on in one uniform course or manner; it continued in the same state; he or it became strong or firm like a rope tightly twisted. بالشئي means, he became strong to bear th
4. They reject the truth and follow their own fancies. But every decree of God shall certainly come to pass.\textsuperscript{4008}

5. And there has already come to them the great news wherein is a warning—\textsuperscript{4009}

6. Consummate wisdom; but the "warning profit them not.\textsuperscript{4010}

7. Therefore, turn thou away from them. The day when the Summoner will summon them to a disagreeable thing.\textsuperscript{4011}

\textsuperscript{4008} Commentary:

The verse means that the destruction of the power of the pagan Quraish and the triumph of Islam has been decreed by God and the Divine decree must come to pass.

\textsuperscript{4009} Important Words:

警告 (warning) is derived from 警戒 (jingji) which means, he chid, repelled, drove, spurned, checked him. They say 警戒 (jingji) i.e., he prevented or hindered him from doing so by cry or harsh speech. 警戒 means, prevention, prohibition; threatening; something by which one is prevented, forbidden from doing a certain thing—a warning (Lane & Aqrab).

\textsuperscript{4010} Important Words:

نذر (warning) is inf. noun from نذير and means, a warning. It is also the plural of نذير i.e., a warner. They say نذر بالامر i.e., he informed him or advised him of the affair; he warned him of it or put him on guard or in fear against it (Aqrab & Lane).

\textsuperscript{4011} Important Words:

نكر (disagreeable) is derived from نكر (nakira) which means, it (a thing or affair) was or became bad, evil, abominable or foul; it was or became disallowed, disagreeable; it was or became difficult, hard, arduous or severe (Lane).
8. "While their eyes will be cast down and they will come forth from their graves as though they were locusts scattered about.\textsuperscript{4012}

9. 'Hastening towards the Summoner. The disbelievers will say, 'This is a hard day.'\textsuperscript{4013}

10. The people of Noah rejected the truth before them; aye, they rejected Our Servant and said, "A madman and one who is spurned.\textsuperscript{4014}

11. He prayed to his Lord saying, 'I am overcome, so come Thou to my help!'\textsuperscript{a70 : 45, b36 : 52, c6 : 35, d23 : 26, e23 : 27, 26 : 118-118.}

**Commentary:**

See v. 9.

\textsuperscript{4012} **Commentary:**

'Graves' here means the houses of disbelievers. At several places in the Qur'an disbelievers have been likened to the dead because of their being completely devoid of spiritual life (27 : 81; 35 : 23).

\textsuperscript{4013} **Important Words:**

\textsuperscript{4014} **Commentary:**

This and the preceding two verses give a graphic picture of the confusion, consternation and bewilderment of the Quraish when they saw the Summoner—the Holy Prophet—whom they had driven out of Mecca and upon whose head they had set a price only a few years earlier, at the very gates of the city. The mighty prophecy embodied in these verses was made at a time when the fate of Islam itself was hanging in the balance and, humanly speaking, there was not the remotest possibility of its being fulfilled.

As briefly stated in the Introduction, almost the entire Sūra is devoted to a discussion of the dreadful fate which the rejectors of former Divine Prophets had met and this fact has been adduced as an argument to prove the truth of the Holy Prophet's claim. The cases of the People of Noah, of the tribes of 'Ād and Thamūd and
12. Thereupon We opened the gates of heaven, with water pouring down;  

13. "And We caused the earth to burst forth with springs, so the two waters met for a purpose that was decreed.  

14. "And We carried him upon that which was made of planks and nails.  

15. It floated on under Our eyes; a reward for him who had been rejected.  

16. "And We left it as a Sign for the succeeding generations; but is there anyone who would take heed?  

\[\text{AL-QAMAR, CH. 54}\]

that of the people of Lot have received a special and somewhat detailed mention because these peoples lived on the confines of the Hijaz and the Quraish were quite familiar with their histories and had commercial relations with them. The people to whom Noah preached his Message lived in Iraq which lies to the north-east of Arabia, and the tribe of 'Ad lived in Yemen and Haqarmaut which form the southern part of it while the tribe of Thamud thrived and flourished in the north-west of Arabia which extends from the Hijaz to Palestine and the ill-fated people of Lot lived in Sodom and Gomorrah in Palestine.  

4015. Important Words:  

منهمر (pouring down) is derived from همر. They say همر العين بالدمع i.e., he poured out the water. همر العين بالدمع means, the eyes flowed with tears. همر العين بالدمع means, the water poured out and flowed (Aqrab).  

4016. Commentary:  
The rain water pouring down in torrents from the skies and also gushing forth from under the ground, caused a huge flood which engulfed the entire land and thus the Divine decree was fulfilled, destroying the people of Noah.  

4017. Important Words:  

دسار (nails) is the plural of دسار which is derived from دسر which means, he drove a nail with force; he nailed anything; he fastened or repaired a ship with a nail, or with cord of fibres of palm-tree. They say دسر i.e., he thrust, drove, pierced or stabbed him vehemently with a spear, he or it pushed, drove, propelled him or it. دسار means, a cord of fibres of the palm tree with which the planks of a ship are bound together; a nail of a ship (Lane & Aqrab).  

4018. Important Words:  

مذكر (who would take heed) is act. part. from اذكر (iddakara) which is synonymous with تذكر, ذكر (tadhakkara) and اذكر (idhdakara) meaning, he remembered or
17. How terrible then was My punishment and My warning!
18. And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy to understand and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed?  
19. The tribe of 'Ad rejected the Truth. How terrible then was My punishment and My warning!
20. We sent against them a furious wind on a day of unending ill luck.
21. Tearing people away as though they were the trunks of uprooted palm trees.

became reminded of; he took heed, reflected or was mindful.

4019. Commentary:
All those basic ideals, principles and rules of conduct which concern man's moral development and his physical and social progress and well-being, have been laid down in the Qur'an in simple and easy language and are easily comprehensible by persons of average intelligence and understanding and are also quite practical and practicable because they are in harmony with human nature. But the treasures of Divine realization and deep mysteries of the unknown which lie hidden in the Qur'an are accessible only to those few holy men of God who are endowed with special spiritual insight and who have scaled the dizzy heights of communion with the Divine Being and have been purified by Him.

Moreover, the Qur'an has been made easy in this sense also that it comprehends all those permanent and imperishable teachings that are found in other revealed Scriptures, with a great deal more that is indispensable for the guidance of man till the end of time (98:4).

4020. Commentary:
The verse does not mean that any particular time is auspicious or inauspicious or lucky or unlucky. The meaning is that for the tribe of 'Ad the day proved unlucky.

4021. Important Words:
Monts (uprooted) is derived from قر و. They say قر means, he uprooted the tree. قر means, the tree became uprooted. قر means, uprooted (Lane & Aqrab)
22. How terrible then was My punishment and My warning!

23. And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy to understand and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed?

24. The tribe of Thamûd also rejected the Warners. 4022

25. And they said, 'What! a man, from among ourselves a single mortal! Shall we follow him? Then indeed we would be in manifest error, and would be mad. 4023

26. 'Has the Reminder been revealed to him alone of all of us? Nay, he is a boastful liar.' 4024

4022. Commentary:
As all Prophets are commissioned by God and their revelation proceeds from the same Divine Source and contains analogous eternal basic principles, the rejection of one Prophet amounts to the rejection of all of them. That is why the verse describes the tribe of Thamûd as having rejected all Divine Messengers while, in fact, they had rejected only the Prophet Sâlih.

4023. Important Words:
- سع (madness) is derived from سع (sa'ara). They say سع الحرب i.e., he provoked the war. سع الرجل (su'ira) means, the man was smitten by hot wind; he was or became vehemently hungry or thirsty; he was or became mad. سع means, madness, insanity, demoniacal possession; punishment; vehemence of heat, hunger or thirst; fury; pain (Lane & Aqrab).

4024. Important Words:
- اشر (boastful) is act. part. from اشر (ashira) which means, he exulted and behaved insolently; he behaved with pride and self-conceit. اشر means, one who is insolent and behaves with pride and exults (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
Conceit, false pride and arrogance are man's greatest spiritual enemies. They constitute the hard hurdles that bar the way to the acceptance of truth. The Qur'an has repeatedly mentioned disbelievers as having rejected the Divine Message due to these moral ills. See 25:8; 38:9; 43:32.
27. 'Tomorrow will they know who is the boastful liar.'

28. "We will send the she-camel as a trial for them. So watch them. O Šālih, and have patience." 4025

29. 'And tell them that the water is shared only between them, but as for the she-camel every drinking time may be attended by her.' 4026

30. But they called their comrade, and he seized a sword and hamstrung her. 4027

31. How terrible then was My punishment and My warning!

32. "We sent against them a single blast, and they became like the dry stubble, whittled down by a maker of enclosure." 4028

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4025. **Important Words:**

- صابر means, he was patient or constant; he acquired patience; he was tried with patience. It is the intensive form of صبر (Lane & Aqrab).

4026. **Important Words:**

- شرب (drinking) is inf. noun from شرب (shariba) and means, water that one drinks; a draught of water; a share or portion of water that falls to one's lot; the right to use water for watering fields and beasts; a watering place; a turn or time of drinking. شرب (shurbun) means, the act of drinking (Lane & Aqrab).

4027. **Important Words:**

- عطأ (seized) is derived from عطأ (ṭāṭā') which is derived from حظر which means, he raised his hand towards it. عطأ (ṭāṭā') means, he took the thing. تعاطئ اليمين means, he ventured upon the affair. تعاطئ الام means, the man stood upon the extremities of the toes and raised his hands to take a thing. عطو (inf. noun) signifies, the act of raising the head and hands to take a thing. تعاطى (ta'tā) means, the act of taking a thing with the hand; taking with the hand what is not right or just or due; contending in taking; standing upon the extremities of the toes with raising the hands to a thing; being bold or courageous so as to venture upon a thing without consideration or hesitation (Lane & Aqrab).

4028. **Important Words:**

- المعتصر (maker of enclosure) is act. part. from حظر which is derived from حظر which means, he raised his hand towards it. تعاطى الشبيه means, he took the thing.
33. And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy to understand and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed?

34. "Lot's people also rejected the Warners.

35. We sent a storm of stones upon them except the family of Lot, whom We delivered by early dawn,

36. As a favour from Us. Thus do We reward him who is grateful.

37. And he indeed had warned them of Our punishment, but they doubted the warning.

38. "And they deceitfully sought to turn him away from his guests. So We blinded their eyes, and said, 'Taste ye now My punishment and My warning.' \[4029\]

39. "And there came upon them early in the morning a lasting punishment. \[4030\]

\[4029\] Important Words:

\[4030\] Important Words:

Commentary:

The verse signifies either that the disbelievers were completely crushed or that they were as worthless in the sight of God as whittled down and crushed stubble, collected by a maker of hedges. Lot's people sought to take hold of his guests but it seems the latter went into hiding and thus they could not be found out. Or that God so arranged that attention of Lot's people became diverted from them.

Commentary:

\[4029\] Important Words:

\[4030\] Important Words:

means, he forbade, he prohibited. \[514] means, he took for himself an enclosure. \[353] means, he took it for protection means, a maker of enclosure. (Lane & Aqrab).

Means, he obliterated the mark or trace thereof. \[217\] means, the clouds concealed the stars. See also 10:89.

The verse signifies either that the disbelievers were completely crushed or that they were as worthless in the sight of God as whittled down and crushed stubble, collected by a maker of hedges.

\[4029\] important Words:

\[4030\] Important Words:

(i.e., he
40. 'Now taste ye My punishment and My warning.'

41. And, indeed, We have made the Qur'an easy to understand and to remember. But is there anyone who would take heed? 

42. And surely to the people of Pharaoh also came Warners.

43. They rejected all Our Signs. So We seized them with the seizing of the Mighty, the Powerful.

44. Are your disbelievers better than those? Or have you an immunity in the Scriptures?

45. Do they say, 'We are a victorious host'?

46. The hosts shall soon be routed and will turn their backs in flight.

came to the people or attacked them in the morning (Lane & Aqrab). See also 7:79.

4031. Commentary:

The account of each of the four peoples of antiquity with whose history the pagan Quraisy were quite conversant—the peoples of Noah and Lot and the tribes of ‘Ād and Thamūd—ends with a stern warning, coupled with a pathetic appeal to them to learn a lesson from the fate of these peoples and not to reject the Message of the Qur’an which is revealed only for their good and rejection of which would land them into ruin.

4032. Commentary:

The use in the verse of the word متدرك (The Powerful) is very significant. Pharaoh was a very powerful monarch. He regarded himself as “the most high Lord of the Israelites” (79:25). So the might of the real Omnipotent Lord of Moses and Aaron was pitted against that self-designated lord, and he was completely annihilated.

4033. Commentary:

The verse repeats a warning to the pagan Quraisy in another form. “Are you in any way better,” it asks them, “than those who rejected Noah, Hūd, Lot or Moses. Or have you received a Divine promise recorded in the Divine Scriptures that you will not be punished for your rejection of the Holy Prophet”?

4034. Commentary:

The emphatic prophecy embodied in the verse is definitely about the crushing defeat which the
47. Aye, the Hour is their appointed time; and the Hour will be most calamitous and most bitter.\(^{4035}\)

48. Surely, the guilty are in manifest error and gone mad.\(^{4036}\)

49. On the day when they will be dragged into the Fire on their faces, and it will be said to them ‘Taste ye the touch of Hell.’\(^{4037}\)

Meccan army suffered at the hands of Muslims in the Battle of Badr. The odds were so heavy against the Muslims that when fighting began the Holy Prophet prayed to God in utmost humility and extreme agony, in a tent set up for him for this purpose, in the words: “O Lord, I humbly beseech Thee to fulfil Thy covenant and Thy promise. If this small band of Muslims were destroyed, Thou wilt never be worshipped again on this earth” (Bukhari & Muslim). After having finished the prayer, the Holy Prophet came out of the tent and facing the field of battle recited the verse: ""i.e., the hosts shall soon be routed and shall turn their backs in flight.

4035. Important Words:

أدهل (most calamitous) is derived from دهيل. They say سجح i.e., what has befallen thee. The Arabs say دهته دامية i.e., a calamity befell him. أدهل means, more or most calamitous (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The defeat at Badr was indeed a most formidable and calamitous misfortune for the Quraish. Their power and prestige sustained a crushing blow. Most of their leaders and prominent chiefs were killed. Having suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of a handful of inexperienced and ill-equipped Muslims, they felt deeply humiliated and mortified. The prophecy was fulfilled to the very letter.

The الساعة (Hour) mentioned in this and the opening verse of the سورة refers to the Battle of Badr.

4036. Commentary:

The disbelievers are described in v. 25 above as in the habit of saying in contempt and mockery that it would be madness on their part to give allegiance to or follow an ordinary man from among themselves. In the verse under comment tables are turned upon them, and they are told that rejection and not acceptance of a Divine Messenger is folly and madness.

4037. Important Words:

سحاب (dragged) is derived from سجب. They say سجب i.e., he dragged or drew it along upon the ground. سحب الربيع التراب means, the wind drew along the dust upon the ground. One would say جاء يسحب ذيله i.e., he came dragging along his skirt on the ground, i.e., walking haughtily (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

How remarkably and to the very letter the prophecy made in this verse was fulfilled! It is reported that of the Quraishite leaders and chiefs who were killed in the Battle of Badr, 24 were thrown in a pit for burial, and before he left the field of battle, the Holy Prophet went to the pit, and calling each of them by name, addressed them in the words: "
50. Verily, We have created everything in due measure.\(^{4038}\)

51. And Our command is carried out by only one word, like the twinkling of an eye.\(^{4039}\)

52. And indeed We have destroyed people before you who were like unto you. But is there anyone who would take heed?

53. And everything they have done is recorded in the Books.\(^{4040}\)

54. And every matter, small and great, is written down.

55. Verily, the righteous will be in the midst of gardens and streams.\(^{4041}\)

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\(^{4038}\) Commentary: The verse purports to say that there is a determined measure for everything. It has an appointed time and place. It is when the cup of iniquities of disbelievers becomes full, that they are seized with Divine punishment. God alone knows when and how to punish the wicked people. For the pagan Quraish the Day of Badr was the appointed hour of punishment.

\(^{4039}\) Commentary: The defeat of the Meccans at the battle-field of Badr came like a bolt from the blue, so sudden and swift it was and so complete and destructive. The glory of Kedar departed, as if in the twinkling of an eye.

\(^{4040}\) Commentary: The verse purports to say that the former Scriptures contain a record of the treatment the disbelievers meted out to God’s Prophets and their followers and also of the sad end to which they came on account of their rejection of the Divine Message and their iniquities and evil deeds.

\(^{4041}\) Important Words: besides the meaning given in the text, also means, amplitude; light (Aqrab).
56. In the seat of truth with an Omnipotent King.\textsuperscript{4042}

Commentary:

After dealing with the punishment that overtakes disbelievers on account of their rejection of the Divine Message and their evil deeds, the verse refers to the Divine favours and blessings that are bestowed upon the righteous, in this and the next world.

4042. Important Words:

�لیک (King) is the intensive form of مالک which means, master.
CHAPTER 55
SŪRA AL-RAḤMĀN
(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

Being the 6th of the special group of the Sūrās which begin with Sūra Qāf and end with Al-Wāqi‘ah, and which were revealed, more or less at the same time at Mecca, in the early years of the Call, the Sūra has close resemblance with other members of the group in subject-matter, and deals, like them, with the basic principles of Islam—Divine attributes, particularly God's Unity, and with Resurrection, and Revelation. The Sūra bears such close resemblance with the five previous Sūrās, particularly with the immediately preceding one—Sūra Al-Qamar—that it seems to complement and complete its subject-matter. In Sūra Al-Qamar instances were given of the peoples of some Prophets of antiquity with whom the Arabs were quite familiar and who were punished for rejecting the Divine Message, and then the pagan Quraish were asked, would they not benefit from their fate and accept the Quranic Message which was quite easy to understand and to follow. The present Sūra gives the reasons why the Qur’ān was revealed.

Subject-Matter

The Sūra opens with the Divine attribute—Al-Raḥmān, signifying that after having created the universe, God created man, the apex and crown of all creation, and that the creation of man was the result of God's beneficence. After man's creation, God revealed Himself to him through His Prophets and Messengers, because he was unable to attain the sublime object of his creation and to fulfill his high destiny without being guided to his great goal by Divine revelation. Prophethood found its most complete and perfect manifestation in the person of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad to whom God gave the Qur’ān, the last and final code of Divine Laws for the guidance of the whole of humanity for all time. But God's gifts to man did not end with his creation. The Beneficent God made the whole universe subservient to him. The heavens with all the celestial bodies, and the earth with all its treasures, the deep seas and high mountains were all created for his sake. Over and above that, God endowed man with great intellectual and discretionary powers so that by sifting right from wrong he might follow Divine guidance and thus attain the object of his creation. But man seems to be so constituted that instead of benefiting from the endless vistas of spiritual progress and development opened up to him by the Gracious, Beneficent and Merciful Providence, he, in his conceit and arrogance seeks to ignore and defy Divine Laws, and consequently brings down upon himself God's punishment. The disobedience and defiance of Divine Laws, the Sūra hints, will assume a most heinous form in time to come, which seems to be the present time, and man will be visited with such destructive and annihilating punishment as he had not known before. But just as Heavenly
punishment which will be meted out to the guilty and the iniquitous will be most grievous and frightful, so would the Divine favours that will be bestowed upon the righteous and the God-fearing in that age of Mammon-worship and of hankering after pleasures of the flesh, be beyond measure or count, and thus both Divine punishment and favours would show that God is “Swift at reckoning and the Master of Glory and Honour.” The Sūra seems to deal particularly with the time when the power and prestige of Western nations will be at their highest, and they will add to their wealth and glory by making extensive use of the great highways of the oceans and by harnessing the forces of nature.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful."^4043

2. The Gracious God

3. He taught the Qur'an.^4044

4. He created man.^b4045

5. He taught him plain speech.^4046

6. The sun and the moon run their courses according to a fixed reckoning.^4047

7. And the stemless plants and the trees humbly submit to His will.^d4048


4043. Commentary:
See 1:1.

4044. Commentary:
God revealed Himself through His Prophets and Messengers to whom He gave His Word. The Qur'an constituted the culmination of Divine revelation. This revelation of God to man through His Word was not due to any good act on man's part. It was a sheer gift flowing from God's beneficence.

4045. Commentary:
The word الإنسان (man), besides its general connotation, may also signify here "the perfect man," i.e., the Holy Prophet, in whom Divine attributes found their most perfect and complete manifestation. The verse thus signifies that out of beneficence God created man in order that he may rise to the highest peaks of spiritual development and may reflect in his person Divine attributes.

4046. Commentary:
Man's creation and his power to express himself was also due to God's beneficence.

4047. Commentary:
See next verse.

4048. Commentary:
The verse, read along with the preceding one, shows that from the largest celestial body to the smallest stemless plant, all things are subject to certain laws and they perform regularly, punctually, and unerringly their allotted tasks. In the huge solar system, which is but one of millions of such systems, every orb proceeds safely on its destined course and never deviates from it.
8. And the heaven He has raised high and set up the measure.\(^{4049}\)

9. That you may not transgress the measure.\(^ {4050}\)

10. So weigh all things with justice and fall not short of the measure\(^ {4051}\).

11. And He has set the earth for His creatures;\(^ {4052}\)

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\(^{4049}\) Important Words:

\(\text{وزن} (\text{measure})\) is derived from \(\text{وزن} \) i.e., he raised the thing in order to know its weight or measure. \(\text{وزن الرجل} (\text{wazuna})\), means, the man was or became of sound and weighty opinion. \(\text{وزن} \) means, weight; measure; \(\text{وزن} \) means to be equal to one another in weight, measure or value; equilibrium; \(\text{الميزان} \) means, balance; measure; \(\text{الميزان} \) means, counter-part; justice. They say, استقام ميزان النهار \(i.e.\), it was mid-day (\text{Aqrab}).

\(^{4050}\) Commentary:

A little disturbance in or deviation from their set course would bring down in pieces the whole universe which has been created for the service of man. It is inconceivable, therefore, that man for whose service this vast and complicated but perfectly regulated universe has been brought into being should have been created without a purpose. The life of man surely has a grand Divine aim to which repeated reference has been made in the Qur'\(\text{a}n\).

\(^{4051}\) Commentary:

As there is an all-comprehensive harmony in the whole universe, so is man—the crown and object of creation—enjoined to maintain a just balance and to treat with equity and justice his fellow beings, giving, every one his due, and to avoid extremes, and follow the golden mean in the discharge of his duties towards his Creator. This is the significance of the expressions, “you may not transgress the measure” and “fall not short of measure.”

\(^{4052}\) Important Words:

\(\text{الانام} (\text{creatures})\) means, mankind or the \(\text{jinn} \) or all the creatures that are on the surface of the earth; everything having a soul (\text{Lane & Aqrab}).
12. Therein are all kinds of fruit and palm-trees with sheaths.\(^{4053}\)

13. And grain with its husk and fragrant plants.\(^{4054}\)

14. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny, O men and Jinn?\(^{4055}\)

\(^{4053}\) Commentary:

See next verse.

\(^{4054}\) Important Words:

\(\text{العصف} (husk)\) is inf. noun from \(\text{عصف الزرع} (fa: :afa)\). They say \(\text{عصف الريح} i.e., \) the wind blew violently or vehemently. The Arabs say \(\text{عصف بهم الدهر} i.e., \) the time destroyed them. \(\text{عصف الزرع} means, he cut the corn before it attained maturity. \(\text{عصف} means, the herb of corn or the seed-produce; \) the husk; straw; the stalk or stem of corn \((\text{Lane & Aqrab})\).

\(\text{الريحان} (fragrant plants)\) is derived from \(\text{رائح} \) and means, any sweet-smelling plant; \(\text{الريحان} \) its extremities when the first of its blossoms came forth upon it or its leaves; offspring; a bounty or gift of God; sustenance \((\text{Lane & Aqrab})\).

Commentary:

This and the preceding two verses briefly point to all those natural things which are so essential for the physical development of man, \(\text{عصف} \) being the fodder for animals which form an indispensable part of his life. The verses purport to say that when, out of His unbounded grace and beneficence, God has created all the things that are necessary for man's physical life, it is inconceivable that He should have omitted to provide the things which are so essential for his spiritual growth, which is the very aim and object of his life. For that purpose God sent His Messengers and Prophets and through them He revealed Himself. The words \(\text{العصف (husk)}\) and \(\text{الريحان (fragrance)}\) may point respectively to the physical and spiritual needs and requirements of man.

\(^{4055}\) Important Words:

\(\text{آلاء (favours)}\) is the plural of \(\text{إلو (ilwun)}\) or \(\text{ألو (alwun)}\) or \(\text{إلى (ilyun)}\) or \(\text{ألي (alyun)}\), etc., which all mean, benefit, benefaction, favour, boon or blessing; might or power; attribute or good quality. An Arab poet says:

\[\text{هم الملوك و أبناء الملوك لهم فضل على الناس في الآلاء و النعم}\]

\(i.e., \) they are kings and the sons of kings; they possess superiority over people on account of their might (or attributes) and gifts \((\text{Lane & Aqrab})\).

Commentary:

The dual form in \(\text{آلاء} \) may have been used for the two classes of \(\text{jinn} \) and men referred to in v. 34 below, or it may signify two classes of men only, viz., believers and disbelievers, leaders and their followers, the rich and the poor, or the white or coloured races. Or
15. He created man from dry ringing clay which is like baked pottery.\(^a\)

\(^a\)6:3; 15:27, 29.

It may have been used to impart emphasis to denote the dignity of the commandment embodied in the sentence. Such dual form is generally used in the Arabic language. See also 50:25.

The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that when the verse is recited the believers present should respond by the expression: خلق الإنسان من صلب صلب كالفخار. i.e., “none of Thy favours, Our Lord, do we deny and for Thee is all praise.” (Ibn Katir)

4056. Important Words:

- صلب (ringing clay) is derived from صلص, which means, it sounded or made a clashing, ringing, tinkling or repeated sound. صلب means, clay not made into pottery, so called because of its making a sound; or clay mixed with sand which, when it becomes dry, makes a sound and when baked is فخار, or dry clay that makes a sound by reason of its dryness (Lane & Aqrab). See also 15:29.

- فخار (baked pottery) is derived from فخار, i.e., he boasted or recounted his glorious deeds or qualities; or he arrogated to himself greatness and nobility; he magnified himself by boasting. فخار means, baked pottery or baked vessels of clay, applied specially to empty vessels (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

After having mentioned the creation of the celestial firmament and of the placing in it of the sun and the moon and of their regular and periodic movements, followed by a mention of the spreading of the earth and of all the vegetables that grow on it, the Sūra, in the present verse, proceeds to refer to the coming into existence of man, the climax of all creation.

The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that when the verse is recited the believers present should respond by the expression: خلق الإنسان من صلب صلب كالفخار. i.e., “none of Thy favours, Our Lord, do we deny and for Thee is all praise.” (Ibn Katir)

Three words have been used in the Qur’an to express the different stages of the creation, and of the spiritual development of man. The first stage is expressed by the words خلقه من تراب i.e., God created him out of dust (3:60). The second stage is described by the expression خلقه من طين i.e., He created you from clay (6:3), which means that after having received a sprinkling of Divine Word man attained the power of discrimination by which he could distinguish between right and wrong. At the third stage which is called the stage of فخار (baked pottery) man is tested and tried and is made to pass through the fire of trials and tribulations. So it is after he has successfully passed the tests and has attained spiritual maturity that he is received into Divine Presence.
16. And the Jinn He created from the flame of fire. 4057

17. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

18. The Lord of the two Easts and the Lord of the two Wests! 4058

19. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

20. "He has made the two bodies of water flow. They will one day meet. 4059

21. Between them there is at present a barrier; they encroach not one upon the other. 4060

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4057. Commentary:

For a detailed note on the creation of the Jinn from fire, see 15:28.

4058. Commentary:

Every spot on earth, in relation to other spots, is an East and a West. This phenomenon is described as the two Easts and the two Wests. Moreover, the earth being round, the East of the Eastern Hemisphere is the West of the Western Hemisphere and the West of the Western Hemisphere is the East of the Eastern Hemisphere and thus there are two Easts and two Wests. In the modern political parlance the two Easts may be the Near East and the Far East, and the two Wests, Europe and America. The verse seems to signify that, God being the Lord of the whole world, the light of the Qur'an will first spread in the East and then will illumine the West and thus the "whole earth will shine with the light of her God" (39:70).

4059. Commentary:

See next verse.

4060. Commentary:

"The two bodies of water" referred to in the preceding verse may be the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea on the one hand and the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean on the other, particularly the former two seas. The verse embodies a great prophecy which was remarkably fulfilled in the latter half of the nineteenth century when the Suez and the Panama Canals were constructed, the former linking the first two seas and the latter the mighty Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The world had to wait for thirteen long centuries to see the fulfilment of this prophecy, in an age of new and great discoveries and inventions in the material world. It was in the fitness of time that, concurrently, equally great discoveries should have been made in the spiritual world, the fulfilment of the above prophecy being one of them. Or (the two bodies of water) may signify the physical and spiritual sciences. In this sense of the word the verses would mean that the two sciences—natural laws and Divine revelation, were mistakenly considered to be at logger-heads,
22. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

23. There come out from them pearls and coral.  

24. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

25. And His are the lofty ships reared aloft on the sea like mountains.  

26. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

\[\text{Verse 22:} \quad \text{قَيْبَاءِ آلِ دَاوُودَ رَكَّسَ بِنَادِيَةَ بِنَادِيَةَ}
\]
\[\text{Verse 23:} \quad \text{يُخْرِجُ مِنْهُمَا الْوَلُوْدُ وَالْمِرْجَانُ}
\]
\[\text{Verse 24:} \quad \text{قَيْبَاءِ آلِ دَاوُودَ رَكَّسَ بِنَادِيَةَ بِنَادِيَةَ}
\]
\[\text{Verse 25:} \quad \text{ذَلِكَ الْجِوَارُ الْمَنْشَطُ في الْبَحْرِ كَالأَلْدَمْرُ}
\]

\[\text{Verse 26:} \quad \text{قَيْبَاءِ آلِ دَاوُودَ رَكَّسَ بِنَادِيَةَ بِنَادِيَةَ}
\]

And a barrier seemed to have kept them apart, till, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the great Divine Reformer of the age, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, succeeded in lifting that barrier and by his powerful writings unfolded the mighty truth that, instead of being antagonistic, these two sciences were corroborative of, and complementary to, each other, the one being the Work of God, and the other His Word. In this way the two seas were made to join each other.

4061. Commentary:

Curiously enough pearls and corals are found in both the Suez and Panama Canals. Spiritually speaking, the verse would signify that physical sciences and Divine revelation both contain treasures of inestimable value.

4062. Important Words:

- جَارِيَة (ships) is the plural of جَارِيَة which is fem. act. part. from جَري which means, it flowed. جَارِيَة means, a ship because of its running upon the sea; the sun; a girl or young woman; a boon or blessing bestowed by God upon His servants, etc. (Lane & Aqrab). 

- الإعْلَامُ is the plural of عَلْم (alamun) which is derived from علم (alama). علم means, he marked it. علم means, an impression or impress; a footprint, track or trace of thing erected on the way for guidance; a banner, flag or standard; a minaret; a mountain or long mountain; the chief of a people (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse contains a reference to modern “leviathans,” which ride the seas like mountains. The Sūra seems to deal with the progress and prosperity of the Western nations which is the result of their making use of the great sea-routes for extending their commerce and trade.

4063. Commentary:

The verse constitutes a befitting sequel to the description of the great boons and blessings bestowed upon mankind by God as mentioned in the foregoing verses.
R. 2 27. All that is on it (earth) will pass away. 4064

28. And there will remain only the Person of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour. 4065

29. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

30. Of Him do beg all that are in the heavens and the earth. Every day He reveals Himself in a different state. 4066

4064. Commentary:

Man with all his great works and achievements and all those things that have been created for his use and service, in fact, the whole universe, is subject to decay and death and is eventually destined to perish. God alone will abide because He is Self-Subsisting. All Sustaining, Independent and Besought of all. See next verse.

4065. Important Words:

For وجه (person) see 2:113. Among other things the word means, “that which is under the care of God” or “to which God directs His attention.” In 28:89, we have كل شيء مات إلاإذه i.e., everything will perish except that which is under the care and protection of God or that by which His pleasure is sought. The word also means, the thing itself; object and motive; favour or countenance as جعل ذلك لوجه الله i.e., he did it in order to obtain the favour of God (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse embodies a very sound and solid argument to prove and support God’s existence. It purports to say that since the earth is to be reduced to nothing and heavenly bodies all brought to nought and the whole material universe made non-existent, still human reason demands that there should be a being who should remain and who should never die nor be subject to change or decay. Such a Being is God Who created the whole universe and Who is the First and Final Cause of all things. The present and the previous verse point to two immutable laws of nature working simultaneously, viz: (1) every thing is subject to decline, decadence and death, and (2) compliance with Divine laws ensures continuity of life.

4066. Commentary:

The verse signifies that all creatures depend for their life and sustenance on God Who is their Creator, Sustainer and Nourisher. He alone is Independent and the Besought of all. His attributes know no limit or count, and keep finding their manifestations in diverse ways all the time. He is very Kind and Merciful to him who deserves His Mercy and is Severe in punishing him who incurs His displeasure.
31. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

32. Soon shall We attend to you, O ye two big groups! 4067

33. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

34. O company of Jinn and men! if you have power to go beyond the confines of the heavens and the earth, then do go. But you cannot go save with authority. 4068

4067. Important Words:

سنیرغ (We shall soon attend) is formed from فرغ. They say فرغ من العمل i.e., he was or became free from occupation; he became free or unoccupied. فرغ له و الیه means, he made him or it his exclusive object to which he directed himself (Lane & Aqrab).

التعلان (two big groups). قل means, it was or became heavy, weighty or ponderous; it was or became heavy, weighty or preponderant ideolly; it was or became onerous, oppressive or grievous; he was or became heavy, slow, lazy; wanting in activity, ability or intelligence; he became stupid. التعلان meaning two heavy things, may signify “the men” and “the Jinn” as the context shows, or it may signify the Arabs and the non-Arabs (Lane, Aqrab & Muhʃi). In the present political parlance, however, the word may signify the two main blocs—Russia and its satellites on one side and the United States of America and its allies on the other. The context seems to support this meaning. The word may also signify the Capitalist and the Labour classes.

Commentary:

The verse seems to hold a severe warning to the United States of America with its allies, and Communist Russia with its satellites. The whole world practically has become divided into these two main groups; everyone of the so-called neutral countries is inclined to one or the other of them. From the way in which these two great Powers are behaving, it seems that the world is perilously standing on the brink of an abyss. Any day they may be locked into mortal conflict, completely destroying man’s accumulated labours of centuries spent in developing arts and sciences, and inevitably rendering life on earth practically extinct.

4068. Important Words:

معشر (company) is derived from عشر. means, he mixed with them; consorted with them; held social and familiar intercourse with them. معشر among other things means, any company of men whose state of circumstances is one (Lane & Aqrab). This meaning of the word shows that معشر الطالن والاني are the two classes of men and signify the same as التعلان mentioned in v. 32 above.

Commentary:

The verse has been variously interpreted:

(i) According to one interpretation the
35. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

36. There shall be sent against you a flame of fire, and smoke; and you shall not be able to help yourselves.  

37. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

scientists and philosophers who are proud of the great advance they have made in material sciences have been warned that they cannot, however high they might rise in knowledge and science, so completely comprehend the laws of nature governing the universe as to overpower and master them. Try as they might, they will fail in their quest. This interpretation is in accordance with the context. According to another interpretation which also agrees with the context, the verse warns sinners: let them dare to break through the confines of the heavens and earth, they shall not be able to defy Divine laws with impunity and escape Divine punishment. It may also point to the making of rockets, sputniks, etc., by means of which the Russians and the Americans seek to reach heavenly bodies. They are told that at best they can reach only those planets which are visible to human eye. Beyond that their efforts shall fail. God’s universe is unfathomable.

4069. Important Words:

شواط (flame) is derived from شاط . They say شاط بلان i.e., he abused such a one and accused him. شاط به الغضب means, he became excited; his anger became enkindled. شواط means, flame or fire without smoke; heat of fire or sun; flame of fire; thirst or vehement thirst (Lane & Aqrab).

 النفس (smoke) is derived from النفس . They say النفس النار i.e., the fire had much smoke. النفس means, molten copper; fire; sparks that fall from brass or iron when it is beaten with the hammer; smoke; smoke in which there is no flame (Lane, Aqrab & Mufradat).

Commentary:

The verse points to the most destructive and dreadful punishment that might overtake the two hostile camps, if they did not desist from defying Divine commandments. God’s wrath has become excited for “what man has wrought with his hands” (30: 42), and the world seems to stand on the brink of a terrible conflagration which threatens to consume in its flames the entire human civilization and to make life extinct. Man had a foretaste of Divine punishment in the last two World Wars but what is yet in store for him staggers imagination. The verse gives a clear picture of the coming catastrophe in the form of nuclear and cosmic horrors. The words فلا تتصدران signify that the two hostile camps will not be able to escape God’s punishment, try as they might.
38. And when the heaven is rent asunder, and becomes red like red hide—

39. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

40. On that day neither man nor Jinn will be asked about his sin.

41. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

42. The guilty will be known by their marks, and they will be seized by the forelocks and the feet.

43. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

44. This is the Hell which the guilty deny,

45. Between it and the fierce boiling water will they go round.

4070. Commentary:

What a graphic picture of the threatened punishment!

4071. Commentary:

The verse means that the misdeeds of the guilty will be writ large on their faces so that they will not be asked whether or not they had committed those crimes. As mentioned elsewhere in the Qur'an (41 : 21), the very organs of the bodies of disbelievers will bear witness against them. The next verse further explains this point.

4072. Important Words:

اللواصي (forelocks) is the plural of لواصي. The expression أخد باصيته is used to denote one's extreme disgrace and humiliation (Lane & Aqrab).

4073. Commentary:

The foregoing few verses together with the present one seem to point to the state of restlessness which will seize humanity when the two blocs referred to above are pitted against each other and the fear of atomic war will, like the Sword of Democles, hang over their heads. The present international groupings and tensions are bound to lead to an armed conflict of unparalleled destructiveness. The conflict itself would be a veritable Hell; but preparations for it have brought about conditions which are not far removed from perpetual torment of one kind or other.

As applied to the next world, the verse may mean that the evil deeds of disbelievers and their ill-gotten gains will assume the form of the fire of Hell and boiling water. They will
46. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

R. 3 47. But for him who fears to stand before his Lord there are two Gardens—a79 : 41-42.

48. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

burn in the fire of Hell and will be given boiling water to quench their thirst. See also 14: 17-18.

4074. Commentary:

The foregoing verses have dealt with the very important subject, viz., that progress and advance in material sciences which makes man devote his whole attention and effort to the pursuit of physical pleasures and comforts and leads him away from God, results in loss of mental poise and peace which in the Quranic terminology is also called Hell—another name for international conflicts and wars. In the present and the following few verses we are told that pursuit of spiritual knowledge and higher moral values gives man perfect contentment and equanimity in this life and in the Hereafter. The “two Gardens” referred to in the present verse may signify peace of mind which is the result of leading a good life and freedom from gnawing cares and anxieties which come in the wake of life spent in the pursuit of material pleasures and comforts. One Paradise consists in giving up one’s desires for the sake of God in this world and the other in being blessed with God’s pleasure in the next. A true believer perpetually basks in the sun of God’s grace in this life which cares cannot disturb. This is Paradise upon earth which is granted to a God-fearing man and in which he constantly dwells; the promised heaven in the next world is only an image of the present Paradise, being an embodiment of the spiritual blessings which such a man enjoys in this life. It is to this paradisiacal state of a true believer that the two Quranic verses refer, viz., “We are your friends in this life and in the Hereafter,” (41: 32) and “for them are glad tidings in the present life and also in the Hereafter” (10: 65).

The “two Gardens” may also refer to the mighty Byzantine and Iranian Empires of which the conquest was promised to the Muslims. The Holy Prophet in a vision was given the keys of the palaces of the Emperors of Constantinople and Iran. The vision was literally fulfilled during the caliphate of ‘Umar when these countries were conquered by Muslim armies. The fact that in a hadith, Sāihnān and Jaibān, the two rivers of Iran; and Furāt (the Euphrates) and Nil (the Nile) have been spoken of as the rivers of Paradise (Muslim), lends powerful support to the view that the “Gardens” spoken of in the verse were the fertile valleys watered by these two sets, each of two rivers.
49. Having many varieties of trees.\textsuperscript{4075}

50. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

51. In both of them there are two fountains flowing \textit{freely}.\textsuperscript{4076}

52. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

53. Therein will be every \textit{kind of fruit in pairs}.\textsuperscript{4077}

54. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

55. They will recline on \textit{couches} over carpets,\textsuperscript{b} the linings of which will be of thick brocade. And the ripe fruit of the two Gardens will be within easy reach.\textsuperscript{4078}

\textsuperscript{a}44 : 56; 52 : 23; 56 : 21. \textsuperscript{b}18 : 32; 52 : 21; 76 : 14; 83 : 24.

4075. \textbf{Commentary}:

Just as in the present life true believers had undergone many kinds of sacrifice for the sake of their Lord and had done all sorts of good and righteous deeds, so in the next life those sacrifices and good works will assume the form of flowers and fruits of various hues and tastes. This seems to be the meaning of this verse.

4076. \textbf{Commentary}:

The \textit{“two fountains running freely”} may be the spiritual embodiments of \textit{حقوق الله} (the obligations owed to God) and \textit{حقوق العباد} (the obligations a Muslim owes to his fellow-beings) which the believers had fully and faithfully discharged in this life. The discharge of these two obligations would assume the form of two fountains in the Hereafter. As a true believer ceaselessly continues to discharge these obligations, the fountains have been depicted as constantly flowing.

4077. \textbf{Commentary}:

Again the word \textit{زوجان} (pairs) may spiritually represent two kinds of righteous works of the believers—(1) those they had done for their own spiritual advancement and (2) those services which they had rendered to their fellow-beings.

4078. \textbf{Important Words}:

\textit{حَجَّة} (ripe fruits) is derived from \textit{جَني}. \textit{i.e.}, he gathered or plucked the fruit from the tree while it was fresh. \textit{جَنِي العلَى} means, he acquired eminence or nobility. \textit{حَجَّة} means, whatever is gathered or plucked from the tree while fresh; fruit just gathered or plucked; fruit ready to be plucked; ripe fruit (Lane).
56. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

57. Therein will also be chaste maidens of modest gaze, whom neither man nor Jinn will have touched before them—

58. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

Commentary:

Three times the words “two Gardens” have been used in this Sūra. This is to emphasize that apart from the great blessings and boons of Paradise in the next world, true believers will have all the good things of this world also. The Sūra was revealed early at Mecca when only a few persons had accepted Islam and even those few were very poor and without worldly means and were being harassed and harassed and most of them had to take refuge in Abyssinia from the bitter persecution of the Qurāsh. It was then that the promise was made to them that one day they would recline on couches placed on rich carpets. This Divine promise was literally fulfilled in the life-time of the very Muslims who, while at Mecca, did not know where to lay their heads.

The “inner linings being of thick brocade” implies a beautiful hint that the inner-self of a believer is purer and more beautiful than his outer-self.

4079. Commentary:

In the foregoing verses mention was made of gardens, couches, fruits, etc., that believers will get in the “two Gardens.” In order to complete their peace and happiness, they will also enjoy the company of good companions. And there can be no better companion for a person than a beautiful and virtuous wife. The Quranic Paradise is not exclusively reserved for righteous men. Righteous women will be equally entitled to it.

It will be noticed that purity of heart of the companions of believers is given precedence over the beauty of their persons referred to in v. 59. The expression signifies that their whole attention would be devoted to God and they would not even cast a look at any other thing beside their Lord and Creator, and far from their bodies being touched by any man, even impure thoughts will not find access to their hearts, the word also signifying those invisible things that excite carnal passions in the mind.

It is relevant to state here again that according to Islamic conception the blessings of Paradise would resemble the pleasures of the life on earth. There will be palaces, gardens, rivers, trees, fruits, wives, children, friends, etc., only the nature of these things would be different from that of the things of this world. They would be so highly spiritual that human mind cannot conceive of them. But their existence cannot be denied. See also 32 : 18 & 52 : 21.

Incidentally, the verse repudiates the false idea that women will not go to Paradise.
59. As if they were rubies and small pearls⁴⁰⁸⁰

60. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

61. Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness.⁴⁰⁸¹

62. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

63. And besides these two, there are two other Gardens⁴⁰⁸²

⁴⁰⁸⁰ Commentary:
Whereas in v. 57 above, purity of mind and heart of the consorts of believers in Paradise has been mentioned, the verse under comment speaks of the beauty of their persons. That women mentioned in these verses are the virtuous wives of believers in this life, is apparent from a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet, viz: نساء الدنيا أفضل من الحور العين i.e., the believing women of this world are superior to the hurtis of the next.

⁴⁰⁸¹ Commentary:
How adequately and beautifully the blessings of Paradise have been summed up in this brief verse! The word “goodness” is inclusive and fully expressive of all the conceivable favours that will be bestowed upon believers in the next life, and what greater good there could be than the pleasure of God (رضوان الله) which believers will get in Paradise. (3:16)

⁴⁰⁸² Commentary:
The “two Gardens” mentioned in v. 47, may be the Gardens of Paradise; the “two Gardens” referred to in this verse may be the gardens of this world. The Muslims were promised gardens in the next world and as a proof of the fulfilment of this Divine promise they were also promised the gardens of this world which indeed they came to possess when they conquered the fertile valleys of Syria and Iraq. But the description of the “two Gardens” mentioned in v. 47 being different from that in the present verse shows that two categories of believers have been mentioned in this Sûra; the believers to whom “Gardens” mentioned in v. 47 have been promised seem to be of a higher spiritual status than those to whom “Gardens” mentioned in the verse under comment have been promised. A careful study of the relevant verses clearly brings out this fact. These two classes of believers have been mentioned in the next Sûra, in vv. 11 and 28, respectively.
64. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

65. Dark green with foliage.\(^{4083}\)

66. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

67. Therein also will be two springs gushing forth with water.\(^{4084}\)

68. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

4083. Important Words:

- مدهامتان (dark green with foliage) is derived from إدهام. They say إدهام الزرع i.e., the seed produce became of a dark green colour by reason of abundance of moisture or irrigation. إدهام الروضة means, the meadow became of a dark green colour. حديقة مدهامة means, a walled garden, having its green inclining to black (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Whereas the “Gardens” mentioned in v. 47 above are described as “having many varieties of trees” which points to the vast variety of the good works of the believers to whom they are promised, the “Gardens” mentioned in the verse under comment are described as “dark green with foliage” which indicates the intensity of the goodness of their works.

4084. Important Words:

- نضختان (gushing forth with water) is derived from نضخ. They say نضخ الماء i.e., the water gushed forth from the fountain or boiled forth vehemently. عين نضاحة means, a copious spring of water or a spring that gushes forth or boils forth copiously (Lane).

Commentary:

In the present verse and in v. 51 above two different descriptions of the fountains and springs promised to believers have been given. In v. 51 fountains promised to believers have been described as flowing freely and ceaselessly while in the present verse these springs are described as gushing forth with water. This signifies that believers to whom springs mentioned in v. 51 have been promised are of a higher spiritual status than believers to whom springs mentioned in the present verse have been promised; since believers of former category are engaged in doing good to others ceaselessly and freely without any idea or expectation of reward while those of the latter class do good works out of natural impulse but the doing of good is mainly confined to themselves.
69. In both of them there will be all kinds of fruit\(^a\), and dates and pomegranates.\(^{4085}\)

70. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

71. Therein will be maidens, good and beautiful—\(^{4086}\)

72. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

73. Fair maidens with lovely black eyes, well-guarded in pavilions—\(^{4087}\)

74. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

75. Whom neither man nor Jinn will have touched before them—

76. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?—

77. \(^b\)Reclining on green cushions and beautiful carpets.\(^{4088}\)

\(^a\)36 : 58; 38 : 52; 43 : 74. \(^b\)See 55 : 55.

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4085. Commentary:

Whereas in the “Gardens” referred to in v. 47 are to be found fruits of every kind in pairs (v. 53) fruits in the “Garden” mentioned in this verse are of a limited variety, especially dates and pomegranates.

4086. Commentary:

As compared with the words “good and beautiful” used with regard to the maidens in the present verse which possess only a general connotation, the words “rubies and pearls” used in v. 59 above have a particular significance and are expressive of beauty of special excellence.

4087. Commentary:

The words قاصرات الطرف (restraining their glances) in v. 57 evidently are expressive of chastity and modesty of a higher degree than the expression مقصورات في الخيم (confined to pavilions) in the verse under comment.

4088. Important Words:

عبقر is relative noun from عبير, a place which the Arabs asserted to be the land of the Jinn; hence it is applied as an epithet to anything wondered at or admired, for the skilfulness which it exhibits, or the excellence of its manufacture and its strength; or to any work great in estimation, and delicate. It is both singular and plural and the feminine is عبيرية. They say تياب عبيرية i.e., clothes or garments of admirable manufacture, so called in relation to a certain town عبير in Yemen.
78. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?

79. Blessed is the name of thy Lord. Master of Glory and Honour.

in which clothes or garments and carpets are figured and variegated and are of the utmost beauty. Thus عبجري means, a kind of carpets variously dyed and figured; perfect or complete applied to anything; a lord or chief of men; one who has none above him and is strong. هذا عبجري قوم means, this is a chief or Lord of a people. The word is also applied as an epithet denoting superlativeness of any quality. نظام عبجري means, an excessive tyranny. The Holy Prophet is reported to have related a dream, mentioning Umar and said: قام أمعبجري فرجى فريه i.e., I have not seen a chief of a people do his wonderful deed. عبجري حسان means, beautiful variegated carpets (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Again the words used in v. 55 about believers show that they possess a greater dignity, respect and authority than those to whom the present verse refers. With this verse the comparison between the two categories of believers specifically mentioned in the next Sūra i.e., “the foremost” (56 : 11) and “those on the right hand” (56 : 28) comes to an end.

4089. Commentary:

It is not without significance that this verse has been used as many as 31 times in the present Sūra. The Sūra seems particularly to refer to the great favours and blessings which God has bestowed upon man. In view of these multifarious and multitudinous favours the repeated use of the verse seems quite appropriate. But the Sūra also speaks of the unprecedentedly destructive Divine punishment in the form of atomic wars which will overtake man if he does not repent and mend his ways. This repeated warning of an imminent danger is also a blessing in disguise.

4090. Commentary:

The verse signifies that those who benefit by the great favours that God has bestowed upon them and walk in the path of truth and righteousness will be granted more favours by the Lord of Honour but those who, on the contrary, defy Divine laws and adopt evil ways will be punished by the Lord of Majesty.
CHAPTER 56
AL-WĀQI‘AH
(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This is the last of the group of seven Chapters beginning with Sūra Qāf. These seven Sūrās were revealed at Mecca, more or less at the same time, in the early years of the Holy Prophet's ministry. Naturally, therefore, they are very much similar in tone and tenor; but, in no other case perhaps, is this similarity so marked as it is between this Sūra and Sūra Al-Rahmān. The subject in Sūra Al-Rahmān is completed in this Sūra, and thus the Sūra forms a befitting sequel to Sūra Al-Rahmān. In Sūra Al-Rahmān, for instance, three groups of people—(a) those fortunate ones who are granted special nearness to God, (b) the general body of believers who have achieved Divine pleasure, and (c) the rejectors of Divine Messengers—were referred to only by implication. In the present Sūra, however, they have been expressly mentioned. The Sūra takes its title, like the Sūrās of this group, from its first verse, and like them, it deals particularly with the important subjects of the Resurrection, Revelation, and the repudiation of idolatry, appropriately revealed early at Mecca when the preaching of the Quranic Message was directed exclusively to the idolatrous Quraish. The seven Sūrās also contain prophecies about the great and glorious future of Islam, side by side with direct and emphatic mention of the inevitability of the Resurrection, thus drawing attention to the inescapable conclusion that the fulfilment of those prophecies would prove that the Resurrection is also an undeniable fact.

Subject-Matter

The Sūra opens with a firm and emphatic declaration that the Great and Inevitable Event which was foretold in the preceding Sūra will most surely come to pass, and when it comes to pass the earth will be shaken to its depths, and the mountains shall be shattered, causing a new world to emerge from the ashes of the old. As a result of this Great Event people will be sorted out into three classes: (a) the fortunate ones enjoying God's special nearness, (b) the true and righteous believers receiving handsome reward for their good deeds, and (c) the unfortunate disbelievers who rejected God's Message and opposed and persecuted His Messengers being punished for their evil deeds. The Sūra then proceeds to give a graphic description of the Divine blessings and favours in store for the first two classes, which is followed by a description of the punishment which will be meted out to the deniers of the Divine Message. Then, the Sūra advances the usual argument of the creation of man from a seminal drop and of its development into a full-fledged human being,
to prove his second birth after death. Towards its end the Sūra reverts to the subject with which it had begun and explains that the great reformation to which it had referred in the opening verses will be brought about by the Qurʾān which is indubitably the revealed Word of God, and which is protected and guarded like a precious treasure, and the wealth of whose teachings is revealed only to the righteous and pure of heart. The Sūra closes with a beautiful homily, viz., that when the inevitable end of all life is death, from which there is no escape, why should man be neglectful of that hard fact and consign God to oblivion?
1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. When the Event comes to pass,

3. None can say that its coming to pass is lie,

4. Some it will bring low, others it will exalt.

5. "When the earth will be shaken with a terrible shaking;"

\[\text{See } 1:1. \quad 52:8; 70:2. \]
\[\text{52:9; 70:3.} \quad \text{50:45; 84:4.} \]

**Commentary:**

- **4091.** The "Inevitable Event" referred to in the preceding verse will bring about a great revolution in the lives of men. A new world will come into being, the high and the mighty will be laid low and the despised and down-trodden will be exalted. In fact, the advent of every great Divine Reformer is attended with changes of far-reaching consequences. Elsewhere speaking about the object of Moses's advent the Qur'an says:

  \[\text{And We desired to show favour unto those who had been considered weak in the earth, and to make them leaders and to make them inheritors of Our favours, and to establish them in the earth (28:6-7).}\]

- **4092.** The "Inevitable Event" referred to in the verse is the Final Resurrection. Or it may signify total annihilation of idolatry from Arabia and complete defeat and discomfiture of the idolatrous Quraish. It may also signify the appearance of a great religious Reformer when the forces of darkness are routed, particularly the great reformation brought about by the Holy Prophet.

- **4093.** The word كاذبة is fem. act. part. from كذب and means, one who tells a lie. It is used here as مصدر to impart emphasis to its meaning (Jarir). The verse means that nothing can avert that great event. Or that there is no belying its coming to pass or denying the fact that it will come to pass. Its happening is as sure as anything. It is a dead certainty.

- **4094.** The verse means that the "Inevitable Event" referred to in the preceding verse will bring about a great revolution in the lives of men. A new world will come into being, the high and the mighty will be laid low and the despised and down-trodden will be exalted. In fact, the advent of every great Divine Reformer is attended with changes of far-reaching consequences. Elsewhere speaking about the object of Moses's advent the Qur'an says:

  \[\text{i.e., And We desired to show favour unto those who had been considered weak in the earth, and to make them leaders and to make them inheritors of Our favours, and to establish them in the earth (28:6-7).}\]

- **4095.** The word "reigned" (shall be shaken) means, he put it in motion or in a state of commotion or agitation; he put it in a state of violent motion; or convulsion or made it to shake, quake or quiver. رجّل means, he shook the door violently (Lane & Aqrab).
6. And the mountains will be shattered—a complete shattering.4096

7. They shall all become like dust particles scattered about.4097

8. And you shall be divided into three groups:4098

9. First, those on the right hand—how lucky are those on the right hand!—4099

10. Second, those on the left hand—how unlucky are those on the left hand!—4100

Commentary:

The verse means that the whole land of Arabia will be shaken to its foundations. Old beliefs, ideas, moral values, customs, ways of living, etc., will undergo a complete change. In fact, the whole old order will die, giving place to a completely new one.

The verse along with its predecessor and successors is equally applicable to Resurrection after death, to the Last Judgment.

Important Words:

ٍ(shall be shattered) ٍmeans, he crumbled it. ٍ(the high and the mighty) shall be laid low.

Commentary:

What a graphic description of the great change that was to be brought about by the Holy Prophet, and of how the prophecy was fulfilled!

Commentary:

The verse applies particularly to the time of the Holy Prophet. But it can also be applied to the time of every great Divine Reformer. Whenever a Prophet of God or a great Divine Reformer preaches his Message, people become divided into three groups which have been mentioned in detail in the verses that follow.

Commentary:

In v. 28 below أصحاب اليمين have been described as أصحاب اليمين i.e., fellows or companions of the right hand. Elsewhere (75:3) the Qur’an applies the term النفساللومة i.e., self-accusing spirit, to this group of believers, since they work out such a transformation in their souls as to become moral beings in the true sense of the word.

Important Words:

(those on the left hand). is derived from أشام which means,
11. **Third**, the foremost; they are the foremost;\(^{4101}\)

12. They will have achieved nearness to God.

13. *They will be* in the Gardens of Bliss—

14. A large party from among the early believers;\(^{4102}\)

15. And a few from the later ones,

16. *Seated* on couches inwrought with gold and jewels,\(^{4103}\)

17. “Reclining thereon, facing each other.

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he desired the left, as *أيمن* signifies, he desired the right. *أيمن* means, how unlucky he is! *مشيئة* means, the left side or direction; contrary to *يمنى* and *يمنة*. They say *نظرت *يمنة وشامة* i.e., I looked in the right and in the left direction (Lane & Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

In v. 42 this group of disbelievers have been called * أصحاب الشمال* i.e., companions of the left hand. In 12 : 54 the Qur'ān describes them as *النفس الإمارة* (the spirit prone to evil) i.e., those who choose not to walk in the light of wisdom and knowledge but are led into iniquities and immoral paths.

**4101. Commentary:**

*السيّدون* (foremost) are those believers who have scaled the highest peaks of spiritual progress. They are completely united with their Creator and cannot, as it were, exist in separation from Him. In Qur'anic terminology (89 : 28) they are called * النفس المطمئنة* (the soul at rest). This is the highest stage of spiritual perfection which a believer can attain.

**4102. Important Words:**

*ثقة* (large party) is derived from *ثَّلَّة* which means, he demolished a thing. *ثقة* means, a party or company of men or a large number of men. They say *لن أفراق بين الثلة والثقة* i.e., such a one does not distinguish between *ثقة* (thallatun) i.e., a flock of sheep and *ثقة* (thullatun) i.e., a company of men.

**Commentary:**

The word *الأولين* may refer to the early Companions of the Holy Prophet or to the early Companions of any great Divine Reformer, preferably to the former.

**4103. Commentary:**

The blessings of Paradise to be bestowed upon *السيّدون* i.e., those lucky believers who will be favoured with special Divine nearness
18. “There will wait on them youths, who will not age,”

19. Carrying goblets and ewers and cups filled out of a flowing spring—

20. No headache will they get therefrom, nor will they be intoxicated—

21. And carrying such fruits as they (the foremost believers) choose,

22. And flesh of birds as they may desire.

23. And there will be fair maidens with wide, lovely eyes,

24. Like pearls, well preserved,

25. As a reward for what they did.

mentioned in vv. 16–27 of the present Sūra closely resemble those Divine gifts which have been mentioned in vv. 47–62 of Sūra Al-Rahmān. This shows that the believers referred to in these verses of Sūra Al-Rahmān are of the class of الساقيون i.e., those who have been granted special nearness to God.

4104. Commentary:
The verse points to the innocence and perpetual freshness of the servants that will wait upon true believers.

4105. Important Words:
لا مصدر (no headache will they get) is derived from مصدر (sada'a). مصدر means, he split it so as to divide it in halves. مصدر الحق means, he spoke the truth openly or aloud, discriminating between it and falsehood. مصدر (sadda'a) means, it affected him with headache as though it made his head to split (Lane & Aqrab).

لا مصدر (nor will they be intoxicated) is derived from مصدر. They say مصدر مصدر (nazafat) i.e., the well became empty, all the water having been taken out of it. مصدر الراجل means, the man became intoxicated, the spring of his senses having exhausted; his argument became exhausted in litigation. مصدر مصدر (nazif) means, such a one became intoxicated, the root-meaning of مصدر (nazifun) being to become exhausted (Aqrab).

4106. Commentary:
The verse signifies that in this world believers will have the blessings enumerated above because of their sacrifice and suffering for the cause of Truth, and in the next world the good
26. They will not hear therein any vain or sinful talk;"a
27. Except only the word of salutation, 'Peace, peace.'b4107
28. And as for those on the right hand—how lucky are those on the right hand!—
29. They will be amidst thornless lote-trees.4108

deads done by them in this world will assume the form of these blessings. The blessings mentioned in these verses (16—24) appear to be those which befit kings and princes, because they will be given to believers of the highest spiritual eminence.

4107. Commentary:

This and the preceding verse, like many other verses of the Qur’an, effectively repudiate all those foolish notions about a sensual Paradise which ignorant and evil-minded carpers and critics of Islam pretend to find in the Qur’an, and gives an insight into its nature, essence and reality. The Heaven as conceived and promised to Muslims by the Qur’an would be a place of spiritual bliss where no sin, vain or idle talk, or lying will find access (78 : 36). All the blessings of Paradise would find their culmination and consummation in peace—complete peace of the mind and soul. And there could be no greater blessing than peace of mind. The Paradise promised to a Muslim has been designated as the “abode of peace” in the Qur’an (6 : 128); the highest stage of spiritual development to which a believer can rise is that of the “soul at peace” (89 : 28) and the greatest gift which the dwellers of Paradise will receive from God will be “peace” (36 : 59), because God Himself is the Author of peace (59 : 24). Such is the sublime Quranic conception of Paradise.

4108. Important Words:

For سدر (lote-trees) see 53 : 17.

خضدد the word which means, he broke wood or a branch or twig or a soft thing so that its parts did not separate; he bent without breaking wood or a branch or twig. They say خضدد الشجر i.e., he cut off or removed the thorns of the trees; خضدد means, a tree having its thorns removed, a thornless tree. The word also means, a tree having the branches bent by reason of the abundance of its fruit (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

When the shade of lote-tree becomes dense and crowded, it is very pleasant and in the hot and dry climate of Arabia the tired and fatigued travellers take shelter and find rest under it. The word سدر having been qualified by خضدد signifies that the trees of Paradise will not only give pleasant and plenteous shade but would also bend down on account of the abundance of their fruit, i.e., the blessings of Paradise would both be pleasant and plentiful. See also 53 : 17.
30. And clustered bananas.

31. And extended shade.

32. And flowing water.

33. And abundant fruit.

34. Neither failing, nor forbidden.

35. And they will have noble spouses.

36. Verily, We have created them a good creation.

4109. Commentary:

Whereas lotus-tree mentioned in the preceding verse grows in dry climate, the banana requires plenty of water for its growth. The combining of طلخ and مصنوع signifies that the fruits of Paradise will not only be plentiful and delightful but will be found in all climatic conditions.

4110. Commentary:

The blessings promised to the inmates of Paradise in this and other سُرَات of the Qur'an possess the following important qualities: (a) they will be in abundance; (b) they will be easily accessible and at the entire disposal of believers; (c) they will know no diminution or end; and (d) they will cause no discomfort or disease.

4111. Important Words:

شَرِيف (spouses) is the plural of شريف which means, a thing spread on the ground for one to sit upon; a bed; a man's wife; a woman's husband; the master or owner of a female slave. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: الولد للقزح وللناهر الحجر i.e., the child is for the husband or for the master of the bed who is the husband, or the owner of the woman, or for the bed; and for the adulterer shall be stone (Abû Dawûd, kitâb al-Talâq). The word قزح also means, the nest of a bird; a house, etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

In order to complete their happiness and peace of mind, the believers will have for their companions pure, beautiful spouses of noble descent and high dignity. The promise may also be taken to have been fulfilled when the Byzantine and Persian Empires fell to their victorious arms. In the next life the believers will have these things conformably to the spiritual conditions obtaining there.
37. And made them virgins,\textsuperscript{4112}
38. Loving, of equal age\textsuperscript{4113}
39. With those on the right hand:
40. A large party from among the early believers.
41. And a large party from the later ones.
42. But as for those on the left hand—how unlucky are those on the left hand!\textsuperscript{4114}
43. They will be in the midst of scorching winds and scalding water\textsuperscript{4115}

\textsuperscript{4112} Important Words:
\(\text{بَيْكَرُ} (\text{bikrun})\) which means, a virgin; a man who has not touched a woman; an unpierced pearl; etc. (Lane & Aqrab).

\textsuperscript{4113} Important Words:
\(\text{عَرِبَ} (\text{ariba})\) is derived from \(\text{عَرِبُ} \text{ the water of the well became abundant. \text{عَرِبَ} \text{i.e., the water of the well became abundant.\text{ arab} which means, a woman who loves her husband passionately and excessively and is obedient to him; also a woman disobedient to her husband and unfaithful to him (Lane & Aqrab).\text{ ariba}}\)

\textsuperscript{4114} Commentary:
A beautiful, chaste and faithful wife, having similar views and tastes and outlook on life with her husband is the greatest Divine blessing a person can possibly have. There will be good and virtuous women in Paradise, says the Qur’an, as there will be good and righteous men. It is good companionship that makes human life happy and complete.

\textsuperscript{4115} Commentary:
The disbelievers in the heat of their passions indulged in all sorts of evil activities. That heat will take the form of hot water and scorching heat.
44. And under the shadow of black smoke⁴¹¹⁶
45. Neither cool nor of any good.
46. Before this they lived a life of ease and plenty.⁴¹¹⁷
47. And used to persist in extreme sinfulness.
48. And they were wont to say, 'What! when we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we indeed be raised again?'
49. 'And our fathers of yore too?'
50. Say, 'Yes, the earlier ones and the later ones
51. 'Will all be gathered together unto the fixed time of an appointed day.
52. 'Then, O ye that have gone astray and have rejected the truth,

⁴¹¹⁶ Important Words:

black smoke (black smoke) is derived from حم. They say حم السححة i.e., he melted the fat. حم means, smoke or black smoke or intensely black smoke; a black mountain; the canopy that is extended over the inmates of Hell (Lane & Aqrab).

⁴¹¹⁷ Commentary:

The disbelievers fed fat on the hard-earned money of others, and in the pride and conceit of their wealth, prestige, and influence, arrogantly spurned the Divine Message. This and the next verse show that the root cause of all sins is inordinate desire for wealth and the comforts and pleasures of life which prompts one to exploit other people and to deny accountability for one's actions in after-life. For see 23 : 65 and 17 : 17.

⁴¹¹⁸ Commentary:

Denial of the Resurrection and after-life whether by word of mouth or conduct is at the root of all sin and crime in the world. This is why, next to belief in the existence of God the greatest stress has been laid in the Qur'ān on life after death. There can be no real and effective check on sin, or incentive to good works, without a true and real belief in life after death.
53. 'You will surely eat of the tree of Zaqqum'.

54. 'And will fill your bellies therewith.'

55. 'And will drink thereon of boiling water,'.

56. 'Drinking like the drinking of the camels that suffer from insatiable thirst.'

57. This will be their entertainment on the Day of Judgment.

58. We have created you, Why, then, do you not accept the truth?

4119. **Commentary:**

The verse purports to say that disbelievers indulged in all sorts of iniquitous activities; they, as it were, drained life to the dregs. Therefore, as a punishment, their bellies will be filled with fire and they will drink of the hot water which instead of quenching will increase their thirst.

4120. **Important Words:**

الهائم (thirsty camels) is the plural of هائم which is derived from هام which means, he went at random, not knowing where he was going, he became thirsty. هائم means, (a) severe thirst; (b) dropsy; or a kind of disease from which camels suffer from insatiable thirst; (c) insanity caused by extreme love. رجل هائم means, a thirsty man. رجل هائم means, a confused and perplexed man. أقراة (thirsty camels, sandy plains which suck all water (Aqrab).

4121. **Commentary:**

This and the preceding three verses describe the punishment that will be meted out to the guilty in the after-life, in a language which befits the enormity of their sins or crimes in the present life. They devoured what other people had earned with the sweat of their brows. They suffered from an insatiable lust for wealth, amassing it by fair means or foul, and being proud of their riches rejected the Divine Message. As punishment for their sins, they will be given the tree of Zaqqum to eat, which will burn their inside, and they will have scalding water to quench their thirst, and like diseased camels their thirst will remain unsatisfied.

4122. **Commentary:**

نّزلهم (their entertainment) means, their provision and food. The expression seems to have been used ironically.

4123. **Commentary:**

With this verse begins a series of arguments in support of life after death. The first
59. What think ye of the sperm-drop that you emit?

60. Is it you who have created it or are We the Creator?

61. We have ordained death for all of you; and We cannot be forestalled.

62. From bringing in your place others like you, and from developing you into a form which at present you know not.

63. And you have certainly known the first creation. Why, then, do you not reflect?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Argument in the present verse is taken from the very subtle and wonderful phenomenon of man’s birth, starting with a drop of semen and developing into a full-fledged human being—the crown of all creation—having been equipped with all moral and spiritual powers in order that he might assimilate and demonstrate in himself Divine attributes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The end of all physical life is death. This is the eternal law of God from which there is no escape. Death frees the human soul from the fetters and shackles of its physical habitat and enables it to start its journey on the road to spiritual development which knows no end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The disintegration of man’s physical tabernacle does not mean the end of his life. Death is only a change of state or form. After its flight from the body the human soul is given another body, which grows and develops and takes forms which it is not possible for man to conceive. The verse may also imply a warning to disbelievers that they should not remain lulled into a false state of complacency that they would continue to enjoy power, prestige and prosperity. The time was fast approaching when all their power would be broken and their glory would depart and another people—the Muslims—would take their place, and they could not conceive of this great change in their present prosperous condition. The fulfilment of this prophecy will constitute an argument in support of life after death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The verse reinforces the argument begun in the above-mentioned verses. It, in effect, says to disbelievers that they know that God created man from a mere sperm-drop and endowed him with wonderful powers and attributes to grow and develop, and yet they dare deny that the Great Creator could give him life again after his death. Does not this fact merit their reflection?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
64. Do you see what you sow?\footnote{4127}

65. Is it you who grow it or are We the Grower?

66. If We so pleased, We could reduce it all to broken pieces, then you would keep lamenting:\footnote{4128}

67. 'We are ruined.'

68. 'Nay, we are deprived of everything.'

69. Do you see the water which you drink?\footnote{4129}

70. Is it you who send it down from the clouds, or are We the Sender?

71. If We so pleased, We could make it bitter. Why, then, are you not grateful?\footnote{4130}

\footnote{4127: 21.}

\footnote{4127. Commentary:}

After referring to the birth of man from very insignificant beginning, the Sūra, from the present verse, proceeds to give a brief account of things upon which man's life on earth depends, which in fact, is a preparation for the eternal and everlasting life after death. There are three principal things upon which man's life in this world depends—food, water and fire. The first thing is food to which this verse refers.

\footnote{4128. Important Words:}

(you would keep lamenting) is derived from which means, he was or became cheerful, happy or free from straitness; jocose or was given to jesting and to laughing. (broken pieces) is derived from which means, what is broken in pieces of dry things; fragments of eggs. means, the perishable goods of this world (Lane & Aqrab).

\footnote{4129. Commentary:}

Next to food, water is the most important thing upon which human life depends for its sustenance.

\footnote{4130. Commentary:}

The sun makes the saltish and bitter water of oceans rise in the form of vapours which being buffeted by cold winds are turned into a cloud, and then fall as rain upon the dry and parched fields, and the seed which had lain buried deep in the ground sprouts and the sun causes
72. Do you see the fire which you kindle? ⁴¹³¹

73. Is it you who produce the tree for it, or are We the Producer?

74. We have made it a reminder and benefit for the wayfarers. ⁴¹³²

75. So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Great.

76. Nay, I swear by the shooting of the stars— ⁴¹³³

Commentary:

Fire plays a most important part in the life of man. Much of his physical comfort depends upon it. It is a thing of very great utility, also of destruction if improperly used. In this mechanistic age life is inconceivable without the use of fire. No industry, trade or travel is possible without it. Spiritually speaking, there is latent in man a spiritual fire in whose flames, if kept under control, all his evil passions and desires are consumed; it kindles in him a yearning of the soul to establish a true and real connection with its Creator.

Important Words:

1. (wayfarers of the desert) is derived from (i.e. the man became extremely hungry. ) (means, he alighted at a desolate place. ) (means, the house became empty of dwellers. ) (means, the provisions of the people were exhausted. ) (means, waste, barren land, ruin; hunger. ) (means, needy and hungry people; wayfarers of a desert or those who alight at a desolate place. ) (means, he spent the night hungry or in a desert (Aqrab).

2. (nay) is generally used to impart emphasis to the oath, meaning that the thing which is going to be explained next is so self-evident that it does not need calling anything to bear witness to its truth. When the refutation of a certain hypothesis is intended is used to signify that which is said before is not correct but the right thing is that which follows.

Important Words:

3. (shooting) is the plural of (which is derived from which means, it fell. ) (means, a place or time where and when a thing happens (Aqrab).
77. And, indeed, that is a grand oath, if you only knew—

78. That this is indeed a noble Qur'an,

79. In a well-preserved Book.

Commentary:

In the foregoing verses it was pointed out that there lies hidden in the inmost recesses of the human heart a longing and yearning for eternity—death not being the end or goal of life—and that adequate provision has been made in nature for the preservation of man's body. The next few verses deal with his moral and spiritual development and progress. For that purpose God has been sending His Prophets and Messengers and has been revealing to them Teachings by acting upon which man could attain the object of his life, that is, continuous and eternal progress of his soul. The Qur'an is the last and most complete and perfect Divine Teaching. The verse swears by, and holds forth portions of the Qur'an' as evidence to support and substantiate the claim that the Qur'an is eminently fitted to fulfil the grand object referred to above, as well as to establish its Divine origin. Taking Portions of the Qur'an as meaning, the place and time of the falling of stars, the verse signifies that it is an unfailing Divine Law that, at the time of the appearance of a great Divine Reformer or Prophet, stars fall in unusually large numbers, and that this happened in the time of the Holy Prophet. Before him it also happened in the time of Jesus, and, in our own time, when the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement announced his claim to be the Promised Reformer. Portions of the Qur'an may also mean those highly righteous persons among the followers of the Holy Prophet whom God favours with His special love and nearness. In this sense of the expression, the verse signifies that the treasures of Divine knowledge and mysteries that are revealed to the Divinely-favoured ones constitute an irrefutable proof of the Qur'an being God's own revealed Word.

4134. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that shooting of the stars, or the places or times of their falling) constitutes evidence of the fact that the Qur'an is the revealed Word of God, if only the disbelievers had the intelligence to understand this simple fact.

4135. Commentary:

The word كريم meaning noble, honourable, liberal, generous, bounteous, the verse signifies that upon those who would act upon the teachings of this noble Book will be bestowed bounteous blessings of God and that they will find a place of honour among the world's great nations.

4136. Commentary:

That the Qur'an is a well-preserved and well-protected Divinely revealed Book is anopen
80 Which none shall touch except who are purified. 4137

81. "It is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds." 4138

challenge to the whole world which has remained unaccepted during the past fourteen centuries. No effort has been spared by its hostile critics to find fault with the purity of its text. But all efforts in this direction have led to but one inevitable—albeit unpalatable for its enemies—result that the Book which the Holy Prophet Muḥammad gave to the world fourteen hundred years back has come down to us without the change of a single vowel. The Qur'ān stands unique in this respect among all revealed Scriptures. Books other than the Qur'ān have been interpolated, mutilated and tampered with. And this was natural, because their teachings were meant for particular peoples and for limited periods of time. But the Qur'ān, being the last Divine Message for the whole of mankind, should naturally have been vouchsafed full, complete and eternal protection. Elsewhere, the Qur'ān has made the firm assertion that it enjoys Divine protection: "Verily, We Ourself have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We are its Guardian" (15: 10). The verse under comment along with 15: 10 constitutes not only a forceful challenge but also a mighty prophecy that the Quranic text shall remain intact, which prophecy has been remarkably fulfilled. What adds weight and force to the prophecy is the fact that it was made at a time when even the art of writing had not much developed and that it was addressed to a people who did not even know how to read and write. "There is probably in the world no other book", says William Muir, "which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text...There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that we possess the text which Muḥammad himself gave forth and used...To compare their pure text with the various readings of our Scriptures, is to compare things between which there is no analogy."

"Efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolations in the Qur'ān have failed" (Enc. Brit).

The verse may also signify that the ideals and principles embodied in the Qur'ān are inscribed in the book of nature i.e., they are in complete harmony with natural laws. Like the laws of nature they are immutable and unalterable and cannot be defied with impunity. Or it may mean that the Qur'ān is preserved in "the nature which God has bestowed upon man" (30: 31). Human nature is based upon fundamental truths and has been endowed with the faculty to arrive at true judgments. A person who honestly calls human nature into action can easily recognize the truth of the Qur'ān.

4137. Commentary:

The verse signifies that only those lucky ones who by leading righteous lives will have achieved purity of the heart will be granted true understanding of, and insight into, the meanings of the Qur'ān, and they will be initiated into those spiritual mysteries of Divine knowledge to which the impure of heart are denied access. Incidentally, one should not touch or read the Qur'ān while one is not physically clean.

4138. Commentary:

The fact that the Qur'ān is a "well-preserved Book" and that "none shall touch it except who
82. Is it this *Divine* discourse that you would reject?\(^{4139}\)

83. And do you make the denial thereof your livelihood?\(^{4140}\)

84. Why, then, when the soul of the dying man reaches the throat,\(^{4141}\)

85. And you are at that moment looking on—\(^{4142}\)

86. \(\text{And We are nearer to him than you, but you see not—}\)

87. Why, then, if you are not to be called to account,\(^{4143}\)

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\(^{4139}\) Commentary:

The verse seems to administer a subtle rebuke to disbelievers that they are so inconsiderate that they reject a Book i.e., the Qurʾān, which possesses such excellences and beauties as are mentioned in the preceding verses.

\(^{4140}\) Commentary:

The rebuke administered to disbelievers in the preceding verse has been continued here. They are told that they have become so degenerate that they do not accept the truth because they are afraid that by doing so they would be deprived of their means of livelihood. So it is for the sake of filthy lucre that they reject the Divine Message. Or the verse may mean that disbelievers have made rejection of truth something on which, as it were, their very lives depend. They will not accept it at any cost.

\(^{4141}\) Commentary:

The rebuke implied in the preceding two verses is continued. The disbelievers are told that they deny truth because they seem to think that they will never die and will not be called to account for their denial. This and the next few verses contain a graphic picture of the moments when the soul departs from the body at death.

\(^{4142}\) Commentary:

This and the next verse constitute two parenthetical clauses.

\(^{4143}\) Important Words:

مذویین (called to account) is derived from دان which means, he obeyed; he was or became abased and submissive. دان means, he made him do what he disliked; he abased or enslaved him; he ruled, governed, managed him or it; he had authority over him or it; he called him to account (Lane & Aqrab).
88. You cannot bring it back, if you are truthful?

89. Now if he be of those who have attained nearness to God,

90. Then for him is comfort and fragrance of happiness and a Garden of Bliss;

91. And if he be of those who are on the right hand,

92. Then 'Peace be on thee, who is from those on the right hand.'

93. But if he be of those who reject the truth and are in error,

94. Then for him will be an entertainment of boiling water.

95. And burning in Hell.

96. Verily, this is the certain truth:

97. So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Great.

4144. Commentary:

There are three degrees of certainty, viz. حق القيمان حق القيمان حق القيمان. Of these the first degree of certainty is knowledge of a thing acquired inferentially as we conclude the existence of fire from the presence of smoke in a place without witnessing the fire itself. But if we see the fire itself, our knowledge of the existence of fire becomes certainty of the second degree. Knowledge of a thing we witness with the eye may, however, be further improved through actual experience; for instance by thrusting our hand into the fire. This is the highest stage of certainty which in the language of the Qur'an is called حقي القيمان. The verse means that life after death is certainty of the highest degree. The Sûra had opened with the subject of the Resurrection and life after death and has closed on the same subject. This is a special peculiarity of the Quranic style that when a certain Sûra begins with the discussion of a particular subject, after dealing exhaustively with it, it ends by briefly referring to the same subject.

4145. Commentary:

The verse constitutes a suitable ending to the Sûra. The main topic of the Sûra was the provision which God has made in the form of food, water and fire for the sustenance of
physical life. The description of these manifold and multifarious Divine blessings ended with an exhortation to man to glorify the name of his Lord Who has created all these things for his use (v. 75). But life on earth is not the aim and object of man’s creation. It is only a prelude to, and a preparation for, a much higher and nobler life without end. For the achievement of the object of that life, God raised His Messengers and sent down Revelation, so that man should make preparation for the day of his death. In after-life man shall have to render an account of his deeds. So, for this great favour he should glorify the name of his Lord, the Great. With this exhortation and reminder the Sūra comes to a close.
CHAPTER 57
AL-ḤADĪD

(Revealed after Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

This is the first of the last ten Medinita Sūras of the Qur'ān which end with Chapter 66. It seems to have been revealed after the conquest of Mecca or the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyya, as is clear from the mention of the victory (the victory) in v. 11 which refers to the Fall of Mecca or, according to some, more appropriately to the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyya. The series of the Meccan Sūras which began with Sūra Al-Sabā' and which, with the exception of the three intervening Medinita Chapters i.e., Muhammad, Al-Fāth and Al-Ḥujurāt, had continued without interruption, ended with the preceding Chapter. This series completes the subject matter of the Meccan Sūras. With the present Sūra, however, begins a new series of Medinita Chapters which end with Sūra Al-Tāhirīm. The Sūra takes its title from the word al-ḥadīd (the iron) occurring in v. 26.

In the preceding Sūra (v. 79) it was stated that the Qur'ān is a well-preserved Book, which among other things signifies that the teachings of the Qur'ān are in perfect harmony with natural laws and with the dictates and demands of human nature, reason and common-sense. The present Sūra opens with the Divine attributes: the Mighty, the Wise. And quite naturally, the Being Who is Wise and Mighty must have revealed a Book whose teachings are consistent with the laws of nature and with human reason and conscience. And, befittingly the Sūra opens with the words "Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares the glory of Allah," and this is because the preceding Sūra had ended on the Divine command, viz., "So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Incomparably Great." It is significant that five, out of these ten Medinita Sūras, open with the words, "Whatever is in the heavens and in the earth declares the glory of Allah, the Mighty, the Wise."

Subject Matter

In the previous seven Meccan Sūras, especially in the three immediately preceding—Al-Qamar, Al-Raḥmān, and Al-Waqi'ah—it was repeatedly declared, in forceful though metaphorical language, that a great reformation, a veritable resurrection, was about to be brought about by the Holy Prophet among a people who for long centuries had grovelled in dust and dirt; and who because they had no living relation with civilized society, were looked down upon as pariahs among the comity of great nations. The present Sūra points out that the great day of the phenomenal progress and power of that pariah nation—the Arabs—has already dawned and that the eventual victory of truth over falsehood is in sight. The Sūra opens with a declaration of the power, might and knowledge of God, the Revealer of the Qur'ān. "His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth (v. 2)." says the Sūra, "and it is He who causes the light
of truth to penetrate the darkness of falsehood and the darkness of falsehood to disappear” (v.7),
hinting thereby that the hour of the victory of Islam had approached near. But there were
essential conditions to be fulfilled before that consummation could take place i.e. there must be
on the part of Muslims a firm and invincible faith in the truth of Islamic ideals and
a preparedness to make necessary sacrifice of life and property for the furtherance of the
cause of Truth. This is how, the Sūra proceeds to say, God gives life to earth after
it is dead (v. 18), i.e., He raises a people morally corrupt and politically unsettled to spiritual
eminence and material power and greatness. The believers, however, are warned that after
they have acquired power and prosperity they should not neglect moral ideals and should not
indulge in the pursuit of transitory material pleasures because that would lead them to a
life of sin and vice.

The Sūra continues the theme namely, that from time immemorial God’s Messengers have
been appearing in the world to lead men to the goal of their lives and that God has created “iron”
(v. 26) which of all metals is perhaps of greater utility for mankind and which causes great
violence and destruction. Next, the Sūra very briefly traces back the account of Divine revelation
to the time of Noah and the Prophets of Israel and closes by warning Muslims that God’s
pleasure is not to be sought by leading a life of renunciation or flight from the world, as Jesus’s
followers had mistakenly thought and practised, but by making proper use of powers and
faculties bestowed by God on man, and of the things God has created for his benefit.
1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah; and He is the Mighty, the Wise. 4146

4146. Important Words:

- **سَحَابَة** (glorifies) is derived from سَحَابٌ. They say سَحَبَ في الماء i.e., he swam in the water. سَحَابَة means, he went or travelled far in the land. سَحَابَة means, he occupied himself in the accomplishment of his needs. سَحَابُ النَّارِ means, the man busied himself in earning his subsistence or in his affairs. سَحَابَة (sabhan) thus would signify doing one’s task or doing it with utmost effort and quickly, and سُيْلَانِيّ means, declaring God to be far removed from every imperfection, defect and impurity, or betaking oneself quickly to God’s service and to be prompt in obeying Him (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse purports to say that everything in the universe is doing its allotted task punctually and regularly, and by making use of the attributes and powers bestowed upon it by God is fulfilling the object of its creation in such a wonderful manner that one is irresistibly drawn to the conclusion that the Designer and Architect of the universe is indeed Mighty, and Wise, and that the whole universe collectively, and every created thing individually and in its own limited sphere, bears testimony to the undeniable fact that God’s handiwork is absolutely free from flaw, defect or imperfection in all its multifarious and multitudinous aspects. This is the meaning and significance of سَحَابَة. In fact, the perfection of a work presupposes two things: (a) that its doer possesses all the necessary means for accomplishing it and (b) that he possesses complete and perfect knowledge about it. God is Mighty and Wise, says the verse, i.e., His handiwork being flawless demonstrates His wisdom and might.

The verse may also signify that by the revelation of the Qur’an such a great change will come over Arabia that this land, reeking with superstition, ignorance and idol-worship, will reverberate with the glorification of the Mighty and Wise Creator and Master of the universe.
3. His is the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth; He gives life and He causes death, and He has power over all things.  

4. He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest and the Hidden, and He knows all things full well.

5. He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods, then He settled Himself on the Throne. He knows what enters the earth and what comes out of it, and what comes down from heaven and what goes up into it. And He is with you wheresoever you may be. And Allah sees all that you do.

4147. Commentary:
This verse explains the Divine attributes "Mighty" and "Wise" mentioned in the preceding verse.

The words "He gives life and He causes death," signify that the process of construction and destruction is operating every moment in every atom in the universe.

4148. Commentary:

(the First) meaning that there was nothing before God, signifies that He created everything and He is the First Cause of all things. 

(the Last) means that there is and there will be nothing after Him, i.e., He is the Last and Final Cause of all things or that whereas everything is subject to death and destruction, He alone will remain after all things had ceased

to exist. (the Manifest) may signify that all things are subject to Divine laws and God has power over all things and is subordinate to no one and is subject to no laws, or that He is manifest in His works, or is more manifest than anything else, or that He comprehends everything. (the Hidden) may signify that God is the Knower of all things, so that there is nothing hidden from Him, or that whereas He comprehends everything He Himself is Incomprehensible. The expression may also signify that there is nothing nearer than God or that there is no refuge besides Him.

These four Divine attributes show that God is above the limitations of space and time.

4149. Commentary:

For a detailed note on the first part of this verse see 7:55; 10:4 and 41:10-11, and for the
6. His is the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth; and to Allah are all affairs referred for final judgment.

7. He causes the night to pass into the day and causes the day to pass into the night; and He knows full well all that is in the breasts.4150

8. Believe in Allah and His Messenger, and spend in the way of Allah out of that to which He has made you heirs. And those of you who believe and spend will have a great reward.4151

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4150. Commentary:
In the preceding verse it was pointed out that now that God has chosen the Companions of the Holy Prophet for the bestowal of His special favours and has entrusted to them the preaching of the Quranic Message, He will give them power and predominance in the world because His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. The present verse, continuing the theme, purports to say that the night of decline and degradation that had enveloped Arabia is about to pass away and the day of its ascendance and progress is about to dawn.

4151. Commentary:
In the preceding verse Muslims were promised power, prestige and prosperity. In the present verse they are told that they will have to fulfil certain conditions to establish their title to the great favours promised to them. They must have firm faith in the truth of the Message the preaching of which is entrusted to them and must be prepared to “spend in the way of Allah out of that to which He has made you heirs.”
9. Why is it that you believe not in Allah, while the Messenger calls you to believe in your Lord, and He has already taken a covenant from you, if indeed you are believers?  

10. He it is Who sends down clear Signs to His servant, a that He may bring you out of every kind of darkness into the light. b And verily, Allah is Compassionate and Merciful to you.

11. And why is it that you spend not in the way of Allah, while to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth? Those of you who spent and fought before the Victory are not equal to those who did so later. They are greater in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards c. And to all has Allah promised good. And Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.  

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4152. Commentary:

The expression لَآ لَآ تَعْبَرُونَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ besides the meaning given in the text may also signify: “There is no earthly reason that………”

“The covenant” spoken of in the verse signifies the faith in God implanted in the nature of man, and the longing to get near to Him.

4153. Commentary:

Man will have to leave behind in this world all his material possessions which in truth belong to God.

الفتح (the Victory) may refer to the Fall of Mecca, soon after which the whole of Arabia submitted to the Holy Prophet, or it may refer to the Treaty of Ḥudaybiya which laid the foundation of the subsequent rapid spread of Islam and of the vast and very quick expansion of the political power of Muslims.
12. Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan? So He will increase it manifold for him, and he will have a generous reward.  

13. And think of the day when thou wilt see the believing men and the believing women, their light running before them and on their right hands, and it will be said to them, ‘Glad tidings for you this day!—Gardens through which streams flow, wherein you will abide. That is the supreme triumph.’

14. On the day when the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women will say to those who believe, ‘Wait a while for us that we may borrow from your light,’ it will be said to them, ‘Go back if you can, and seek for light.’ Then there will be set up between them a wall with a door in it. The inside of it, will be all mercy and outside of it, in front, will be torment.

4154. Commentary:

God regards monetary sacrifices, demanded of Muslims for their own progress and advancement, as a loan lent to Him which He promises to increase and return manifold. The sacrifices rendered by early Muslims in the cause of Truth led to a comparatively much greater reward in the form of the conquest of the mightiest empires of the time.

4155. Commentary:

The words, “their light,” mean the light of their faith and good actions which on the “day of distress and darkness” (i.e. for disbelievers) will lead believers to their goal. Thus their faith and good works will assume the form of light on the ‘Day of Resurrection.’ “Light” may also mean the light of Divine realization and the capacity to seek and achieve the pleasure of God in this very life. For “Divine Light” see 6:123.

4156. Commentary:

It is characteristic of the Hypocrites that in time of trials and tribulations they seek to dissociate themselves from believers but in the hour of success and victory they loudly profess faith and ask for their share in the benefits of victory.
15. They will call out to them, saying, ‘Were we not with you?’ They will answer, ‘Yea, but you led yourselves into temptation and you hesitated and doubted and your vain desires deceived you till the decree of Allah came to pass. And the Deceiver deceived you in respect of Allah. 4157

16. ‘So this day no ransom shall be accepted from you, nor from those who disbelieved. Your final abode is the Fire; that is your friend; and a very evil destination it is.’ 4158

“Light,” as mentioned in the preceding verse, is bestowed upon believers in consequence of their good works in this life also, and the Hypocrites are told in the present verse that the only way they could have received light in the Hereafter was by good actions in the present life; the expression وراءكم signifying the present life.

The last part of the verse may also mean that God’s mercy and grace would accompany the believers wherever they go and Divine punishment would dog the footsteps of disbelievers and, try as they might, they will find no refuge from it.

“A wall” referred to in the verse might signify the wall of Islam or of the Qur’an. The disbelievers remained outside this wall and so were deprived of Divine mercy which was granted to believers; and were seized with punishment in this life. Their having remained outside the fold of Islam will take the form of a wall in the Hereafter.

4157. Commentary:

( decree of Allah) means the decree of Allah that Divine punishment will overtake the Hypocrites. The reference may be to the punishment of the Jewish tribes of Medina for their repeated defection and treachery.

4158. Commentary:

The words “that is your friend” seem to have been used ironically. Or the words may mean that only the fire of Hell will purify them of the impurities and dross of sins committed by disbelievers in this life and will make them fit for spiritual progress and thus will be a “friend” to them.
17. Has not the time arrived for those who believe that their hearts should feel humbled at the remembrance of Allah and at the truth which has come down to them, and that they should not become like those who were given the Book before them, but because the period of the descent of Allah's grace upon them was prolonged for them, their hearts became hardened, and many of them are wicked.\footnote{4159}

18. Know that Allah is now quickening the earth after its death.\footnote{4160} We have made the Signs manifest to you, that you may understand.\footnote{4161}

19. As to the men who give alms, and the women who give alms, and those who lend to Allah a goodly loan—it will be increased manifold for them, and theirs will be a noble reward.\footnote{4161}

\footnote{4159: Commentary:}
The verse seems to refer to the Latter-Day Muslims when as a result of neglecting the teachings of Islam they will have become spiritually corrupt, morally depraved and politically impotent. The verse means to bring home to them the realization of their all-round degradation and makes to them a pathetic appeal. "Has not the time arrived yet?" it seems to say to them, "now that they have sunk to the lowest depths of degradation, they should turn to God and act upon the teachings of their religion which once raised them to the highest peaks of greatness, grandeur and glory."

\footnote{4160: Commentary:}
In the preceding verse Muslims were told that a time would come when, as the result of ignoring and neglecting the teachings of their religion, their hearts would become hardened and they would turn away from God and incur His displeasure and consequently would become degraded and disgraced. But God would not leave them in the lurch. In conformity with His time-honoured law, viz., that when the earth becomes dry, He sends down rain from heavens and gives a new life to it, He will raise among them a great Divine Reformer and through him will bring about the renaissance of Islam, and Muslims will again see better days.

\footnote{4161: Commentary:}
After the appearance of a great Divine Reformer among them, as promised in the preceding verse, the Muslims will be called upon to make great sacrifices, especially in money
20. And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers and they are the Truthful and the Witnesses in the sight of their Lord, they will have their reward and their light. But as for those who disbelieve and reject Our Signs, these are the inmates of Hell.\footnote{4162}

3 21. Know that the life of this world is only a sport and a pastime, and an adornment, and a source of boasting among yourselves, and of rivalry in multiplying riches and children. This life is like the rain, the vegetation produced whereby rejoices the tillers. Then it dries up and thou seest it turn yellow: then it becomes broken pieces of straw. And in the Hereafter there is severe punishment, and also forgiveness from Allah, and His pleasure. And the life of this world is nothing but temporary enjoyment of deceitful things.\footnote{4163}

\footnote{4162} Commentary:

The verse purports to say that if Muslims believed in the great Divine Reformer, they will attain to those spiritual heights which the Truthful (الشهداء) and the Martyrs (الصديقون) attained.

\footnote{4163} Important Words:

- Kaffar (tillers) is the plural of kafar which is act. part. from kafar. They say kafir al-shaabi' or kafir. (kaffara) i.e., he concealed, hid or covered the thing. Kaffar numa'ah or Buma'ah means, he denied or disacknowledged the favour of God, he denied and concealed it. The husbandman is called kafir because he conceals the seed under earth, and a disbeliever is so called because he conceals and denies the favour of God (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Life spent in forgetfulness of God and disregard of its higher values is, as described in the verse under comment, but a sport and a pastime, otherwise man's life on earth is a most serious fact. It has a great mission and a
22. "Vie with one another in seeking forgiveness from your Lord and for a Garden the value whereof is equal to the value of the heaven and the earth; it has been prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messenger. That is Allah's grace; He bestows it upon whomsoever He pleases, and Allah is the Lord of immense grace."

A noble object to fulfill. The verse implies that at the time when the great Promised Reformer to whom reference is impliedly made in the preceding verse would make his appearance, men would neglect the grim and noble purpose of their lives and would give themselves up, body and soul, to the pursuit of petty and paltry pleasures of life and there would be a mad craze and unhealthy competition among them, and vying with one another, for amassing wealth and material resources. But the end of all this competition and rivalry, says the verse, would be like the end of a blooming and blossoming crop over which a scorching wind has blown turning it into broken pieces of straw.

4164. Commentary:

(value) is derived from عرض (tārada). عرض (value) means, he showed, manifested, presented the thing to such a one. عرض (value) means, breadth, width; vastness; latitude. ذهب طولاً وعرضاً means, he went lengthwise and breadthwise. The word also means, worldly goods; price; gain; a compensation; a substitute; any goods or commodities except gold or silver; etc. (Lane).

Commentary:

In view of different meanings of عرض given under Important Words the verse would mean that the heavens and the earth—the whole universe—would be given to believers as a reward for the good works they had done in this life, which signifies that the reward of the righteous in the after-life would be beyond measure or count. Or the Paradise comprising both the heavens and the earth may signify that the believers will live in Paradise both in this life and in the Hereafter. Moreover, the fact that Paradise as conceived by the Qur'an is as extensive as both the heavens and the earth—the whole space—shows that it comprises Hell also. This means that Paradise and Hell are not two distinct and separate places but two conditions or states of mind. A well-known saying of the Holy Prophet gives an insight into the Quranic conception of Paradise and Hell. Once on being asked by some of his Companions: "If Paradise comprises in its vastness heavens and earth, where is Hell," the Holy Prophet is reported to have replied, أين الليل إذا جاء الفجر i.e., where is the night when the day comes (Ibn Kathîr). Besides, the substitution of the words مغفرة من ركيم وحجة in the verse under comment for مغفرة من رحمة ورضوان in the preceding verse shows that Paradise (حجة) in fact means the pleasure of God (رضوان). What a beautiful conception of Paradise!
23. There befalls not any calamity either in the earth or in your own persons, but it is recorded in a Book before We bring it into being—surely, that is easy for Allah—\(^{4165}\)

24. "That you may not grieve over what is lost to you nor exult because of that which He has given to you. And Allah loves not any self-conceited boaster,

25. \(^{b}\)Such as are niggardly and also enjoin upon men to be niggardly. And whoso turns his back, then surely Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.

26. Verily, We sent Our Messengers with manifest Signs\(^{a}\) and sent down with them the Book and the Balance\(^{d}\) that people may act with justice; and We sent down iron, wherein is material for violent warfare and many benefits for mankind, and that Allah may distinguish those who help Him and His Messengers without having seen Him. Surely, Allah is Powerful, Mighty.\(^{4166}\)

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\(^{4165}\) Commentary:

كتاب (Book) may signify Divine Law or knowledge. It may also signify the Qurʾān. According to the first meaning, the verse would signify that everything is subject to a certain law of nature. According to the second it may mean that the causes and cures of misery befalling nations and individuals have been mentioned in the Qurʾān, the words في الأرض signifying people in general, and \(\text{في نفسكم}\) meaning the Muslims as a whole or every individual.

\(^{4166}\) Commentary:

الكتاب signifies the eternal Divine Laws. The phrase يليمنا لقوم التاس والقضى وآنزلا has different senses with different scholars. Some of these are: \((a)\) Principles of equity which people are enjoined to observe in their dealings with others. \((b)\) Standards by which
And We did send Noah and Abraham, and We placed among their seed prophethood and the Book. So some of them followed the guidance, but many of them were rebellious.
28. Then We caused Our Messengers to follow in their footsteps; and We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow them, and we gave him the Gospel. And We created in the hearts of those who accepted him compassion and mercy. But monasticism which they invented for themselves—We did not prescribe it for them—for the seeking of Allah's pleasure; but they did not observe it with due observance. Yet We gave those of them who believed their due reward, but many of them are rebellious.
29. O ye who believe! fear Allah and believe in His Messenger; He will give you a double portion of His mercy, and will provide for you a light wherein you will walk, and will grant you forgiveness—and verily Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful—

30. That the People of the Book may not think that they (the Muslims) have no power to attain aught of the grace of Allah; whereas grace is entirely in the hands of Allah. He gives it to whomsoever He pleases. And Allah is the Master of immense grace.

Islam for such an impracticable teaching as “take no thought for the morrow” (Matt. 6:34). It emphatically enjoins a Muslim “to look to what he sends forth for the morrow” (59:19). According to Islam a true Muslim is one who discharges fully and completely the obligations he owes to his fellow-beings (حَقَّ الْبَعْدَاءِ) as he discharges those he owes to his Creator (حَقَّ النَّارِ).

4169. Commentary:

As in the preceding verse the Christians were admonished for regarding a life of renunciation and flight from the world as an ideal, the Muslims in the present verse are told to devote as much care and attention to their mundane as to their spiritual affairs and to discharge the obligations they owe to their Creator and Lord with as much devotion as their obligations to their fellow-beings, and that if they did so they would be granted the benefits and blessings of this life as well as those of the Hereafter. Elsewhere in the Qur’an Muslims have been enjoined constantly to pray: “Our Lord, grant us good in this world as well as good in the world to come” (2:202).

4170. Commentary:

In the preceding verse the Muslims were promised both spiritual and material benefits and blessings in order to let People of the Book disabuse their minds of the false notion that Divine Grace was their monopoly and also to remind them that now God had transferred it to another people—the followers of Islam.
CHAPTER 58
SŪRA AL-MUJĀDILAH
(Revealed after Hijra)

Title, Date of Revelation, and Context

The Sūra takes its title from the word تجادلک occurring in its opening verse. It is the second of the last seven Medinite Chapters of the Qurʾān and appears to have been revealed sometime before Sūra Al-Ahzāb (Chapter 33), in which only a cursory reference was made to the evil custom of Zihār, i.e., calling one’s wife one’s “mother.” This subject has been dealt with in some detail in the present Sūra. Khaulah, wife of Aus bin Šāmit, complained to the Holy Prophet that her husband had called her “mother,” which rendered her a “suspended” woman, neither divorced nor enjoying the status of a wife. The Holy Prophet pleaded his inability to do anything to help her in the absence of a revealed ordinance. This somewhat detailed reference to Zihār in this Sūra shows that it was revealed before Sūra Al-Ahzāb. But as Sūra Al-Ahzāb was revealed between 5th and 7th year of the Hijra, the present Sūra therefore must have been revealed earlier, very likely between the 3rd and the 4th year.

Moreover, in the immediately preceding Sūra—Al-Ḥadīd—the “People of the Book” were sternly told that Divine grace was not their monopoly and since they had repeatedly defied and had opposed and persecuted God’s Messengers, God’s favour would be transferred for all time to come to the House of Ishmael, and so Muslims are warned in the Sūra under comment that their material prosperity would excite the enmity of their external and internal foes. They should, therefore, be on their guard against their machinations. And, it is an invariable practice of the Qurʾān that whenever it deals with the enemies of Islam, it also makes a pointed reference to some social evil which may be regarded as the enemy of Islamic social system. This method was adopted in Sūrās Nūr and Aḥzāb and it has been adopted in the present Sūra also.

Subject-Matter

The Sūra opens with a sharp disapproval of the evil custom of Zihār and by citing the case of Khaulah lays down the ordinance that if anyone calls his wife “mother” he has to atone for this heinous moral lapse by either freeing a slave, if he has one, or by fasting for two successive months, or by feeding sixty needy persons. The punishment is commensurate with the offence as the evil practice is tantamount to “opposing God and His Messenger”. After dealing a death blow to the custom of Zihār, the Sūra proceeds to deal with the plots and conspiracies of the internal enemies of Islam and condemns the formation of secret societies and holding secret conferences to injure the cause of Truth. Then with befitting relevance the Sūra lays down some rules of conduct about social gatherings. Towards its close, the Sūra
gives a warning to the enemies of Truth that by their opposition they are incurring God's wrath and that they shall not be able to arrest or impede the progress of Islam because it is a Divine decree that it shall prevail. The warning to disbelievers that their opposition to Truth will not go unpunished is followed by an equally strong warning to believers, that under no circumstances should they make friends with the enemies of Islam, however nearly related the latter might be to them, as by opposing the Faith they have waged a veritable war against God, and friendship with God's enemies is inconsistent with true faith.