

SPREAD KNOWLEDGE

THE  
HOLY QURAN

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ENGLISH TAFSEER  
CHAPTER 13  
SURAH AR-RA'D

COMMENTARY & EXPLANATORY

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By  
ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

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**HOLY QURAN**

**CHAPTER**

**013**

**SURAH AR-RA'D**

*ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI*

### **Introduction and Summary**

The chronological place of this Surah and general argument of Surahs 10 to 15 has been described in the Introduction to Surah 10.

The special argument of this Surah deals with that aspect of Allah's revelation of Himself to man and His dealings with him, which is concerned with certain contrasts which are here pointed out.

There is the revelation of the Prophets, which comes in spoken words adapted to the language of the various men and groups of men to whom it comes; and there is the parallel revelation or

Signs in the constant laws of external nature, on this earth and in the visible heavens.

There is the contrast between recurring life and death already in the external world;

why should men disbelieve in the life after death?

They mock at the idea of punishment because it is deferred; but can they not see Allah's power and glory in thunder and the forces of nature?

All creation praises Him; it is the good that endures and the evil that is swept away like froth or scum. Not only in miracles but in the normal working of the world, are shown Allah's power and mercy. What is Punishment in this world, compared to that in the life to come? Even here there are Signs of working of his law; plot or plan as men will, it is Allah's Will that must prevail. This is illustrated in Joseph's story in the preceding Surah.

**Summary-** The Book of Revelation in true, and is confirmed by the Signs to be seen in visible nature. Allah Who created much mighty forces in outer nature can raise up man again after death. Allah's knowledge is all-encompassing; so are His power and godness (13:1-18, C. 114).

The righteous seek the pleasure of Allah and find Peace; the evil ones break His Law, cavil and dispute, and reject faith; the wrath of Allah will take them unawares, but in His Own good time (13:19-31, C. 115).

So was it with Prophets before; they were mocked, but the mockers were destroyed, while the righteous rejoiced and were established (13:32-43, C. 116).

### **C.114 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)**

**(13:1-18)**

*Allah's Truth comes to man in revelation  
And in nature. How noble are His works!  
How sublime His government of the world!  
They all declare forth His glory!  
Yet man must strangely resist Faith,*

*And ask to see the Signs of His power  
Rather than the Signs of His Mercy!  
Doth not His knowledge search through  
The most hidden things? Are not  
Lightning and Thunder the Signs of His Might  
As well as of His Mercy? He alone  
Is Worthy of praise, and His Truth  
Will stand when all vanities pass  
Away like scum on the torrent of Time.*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

...المر...

1. Alif Lam Mim Ra.

**C1798.** For Alif, Lam, Mim, see [n. 25 to 2:1](#).

For Alif, Lam, Ra, see [Introduction to Surah 10](#). For abbreviated Letters generally see [Appendix 1](#).

Here there seems to be a combination of the groups Alif, Lam, Mim and Alif, Lam, Ra. We consider here not only the beginning (Alif), the middle (Lam), and the end (Mim), of man's spiritual history, but also the immediate future of the interior of our organization, such as it appeared to our Ummah towards the close of the Makkan period. But in trying to determine their meaning, we must not be dogmatic. The befitting attitude is to say: Allah knows best. (R).

...تِلْكَ آيَاتِ الْكِتَابِ...

These are the Signs (or Verses) of the Book:

**C1799.** Cf. 10:1, n. 1382.

...وَالَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ رَبِّكَ الْحَقَّ...

that which hath been revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the Truth;

...وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (١)

but most men believe not.

اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا...

2. Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that ye can see;

**C1800.** Should we construe the clause "that ye can see" to refer to "pillars" or "to the heavens"?

Either is admissible, but I prefer the former.

The heavens are supported on no pillars that we can see. What we see is the blue vault of heaven, but there are invisible forces or conditions created by Allah, which should impress us with His power and glory.

...ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ ...

is firmly established on the Throne (of Authority);

**C1801.** Cf. 10:3 , and n. 1386.

We must not think that anything came into being by itself or carries out its functions by itself. Allah is the Creator from Whom everything has its life and being and through Whom everything is maintained and supported, even though fixed laws are established for its regulation and government.

... وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ...

He has subjected the sun and the moon (to His law)!

...كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى...

each one runs (its course) for a term appointed.

The "**term appointed**" limits the duration of their functioning: its ultimate return is to Allah, as its beginning proceeded from Allah.

...يُدَبِّرُ الْأُمْرَ ...

He doth regulate affairs,

**C1802.** Cf. 10:31, n. 1425.

Where the laws of nature are fixed, and everything runs according to its appointed course, the government and regulation behind it is still that of Allah.

Where there is limited free will as in man, yet the ultimate source of man's faculties is Allah.

Allah cares for His creatures. He does not, as in the idea of polytheistic Greece, sit apart on Olympus, careless of His creatures.

... يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ بَلَاءَ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ (٢)

explaining the Signs in detail, that ye may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord.

**C1803.** One manifestation of His caring for His creatures, even where a limited amount of free-will is granted for their development, is that He is careful to explain His Signs both in nature and in express and detailed revelation through His Messengers, lest man should have any doubts whether he has to return ultimately to his Lord and account for all his actions during the "term appointed," when he was given some initiative by way of trial and preparation.

If man attends carefully to the Signs, he should have no doubt whatever.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْهَارًا...

3. And it is He Who spread out the earth, and set thereon mountains standing firm, and (flowing) rivers:

...وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ...

and fruit of every kind He made in pairs, two and two:

**C1804.** I think that this refers to sex in plants, and I see M Pickthalls has translated accordingly.

Plants like animals have their reproductive apparatus, - male stamens and female pistils. In most cases the same flower combines both stamens and pistils, but in some cases these organs are specialized in separate flowers, and in some cases, even in separate trees. The date-palm of Arabia and the Papaya of India, are instances of fruit trees which are unisexual.

...يُعْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ...

He draweth the Night as a veil o'er the Day.

**C1805.** Cf. 7:54 and n. 1032. The whole passage there may be compared with the whole passage here.

Both their similarity and their variation show how closely reasoned each argument is, with expressions exactly appropriate to each occasion.

...إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٣)

Behold, verily in these things there are Signs for those who consider!

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ قِطْعٌ مُّتَجَاوِرَاتٌ...

4. And in the earth are tracts (diverse though) neighboring,

وَجَنَّاتٌ مِّنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَزُرْعٌ وَنَخِيلٌ صِيَوَانٌ وَغَيْرُ صِيَوَانٍ يُسْقَى بِمَاءٍ  
وَاحِدٍ وَنُفُضِّلٌ...

and gardens of vines and fields sown with corn, and palm trees -- growing out of single roots or otherwise: watered with the same water,

**C1806.** Does "growing out of single roots or otherwise" qualify "palm trees" or "vines" and "corn" as well?

The former construction is adopted by the classical Commentators: in which case the reference is to the fact either;

- that two or more palm trees occasionally grow out of a single root, or
- that palm trees grow sometimes as odd trees and sometimes in great thick clusters.

If the latter construction is adopted, the reference would be to the fact that date-palm (and palms generally) and some other plants arise out of a single tap-root, while the majority of trees arise out of a net-work of roots that spread out extensively.

Here is adaptation to soil and water conditions,-another Sign or wonder of Creation.

...بَعْضَهَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ فِي الْأَكْلِ...

yet some of them We make more excellent than others to eat.

**C1807.** The date-palm, the crops of food-grains, and the grape-vine are all fed by the same kind of water, yet how different the harvests which they yield! And that applies to all vegetation.

The fruit or eatable produce may vary in shape, size, colour, flavour, etc., in endless variety.

...إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ (٤)

Behold, verily in these things there are Signs for those who understand!

وَأَن تَعْجَبَ فَعَجَبٌ قَوْلُهُمْ أَإِذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا أَإِنَّا لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ...

5. If thou dost marvel (at their want of faith), strange is their saying:

"When we are (actually) dust, shall we indeed then be in a creation renewed?"

**C1808.** After seeing the Signs in nature and the Signs in revelation, it is indeed strange that people should deny their Creator.

But if they admit the Signs of the Creator, Who works marvels before their very eyes every day, why should they doubt that when they are reduced to dust, they can be raised up again?

If one creation is possible, what difficulty can there be in accepting a renewed creation?

It becomes then a question of an obstinate and rebellious will, for which the punishment is described.

...أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ...

They are those who deny their Lord!

...وَأُولَئِكَ الْأَعْلَالُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ...

They are those round whose necks will be yokes (of servitude):

**C1809. Aglal:** yokes (of servitude): Cf. 7:157 and n. 1128.



The punishment may be conceived of in two stages:

- immediately, yokes of servitude to superstition, falsehood, etc., as against the freedom in Faith;
- and finally, the Fire which burns the very soul.

...وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (٥)

they will be Companions of the Fire, who dwell therein (for aye)!

وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمُ الْمَثَلَاتُ...

6. They ask thee to hasten on the evil in preference to the good: yet have come to pass, before them, (many) exemplary punishments!

**C1810.** The Unbelievers by way of a taunt say: "If there is a punishment, let us see it come down now."

The answer to it is threefold.

1. Why do you want to see the punishment rather than the mercy of Allah?

Which is better?

2. Have you not heard in history of terrible punishments for evil?

And have you not before your very eyes seen examples of wickedness brought to book?

3. Allah works not only in justice and punishment, but also in mercy and forgiveness, and mercy and forgiveness come first.

...وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَدُوٌّ مَغْفِرَةٌ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى ظُلْمِهِمْ...

But verily thy Lord is full of forgiveness for mankind for their wrongdoing:

...وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَشَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ (٦)

and verily thy Lord is (also) strict in punishment.

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ...

7. And the Unbelievers say!

"Why is not a Sign sent down to him from his Lord?"

**C1811.** After all the Signs that have just been mentioned it is mere fractiousness to say, "Bring down a Sign."

Al-Mustafa brought Signs and credentials as other Prophets did, and like them, refused to satisfy mere idle curiosity.

...إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ (٧)

But thou art truly a warner and to every people a guide.

**C1812.** The last sentence of this verse has usually been interpreted to mean that the Prophet's function was merely to warn, and that guidance was sent by Allah to every nation through its Prophets.

I think the following interpretation is equally possible:

'it is itself a Sign that Al-Mustafa should warn and preach and produce the Quran, and the guidance which he brings is universal guidance, as from Allah.'

## Section 2

...اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَحْمِلُ كُلُّ أُنْثَىٰ وَمَا تَغِيضُ الْأَرْحَامُ وَمَا تَزْدَادُ...

8. Allah doth know what every female (womb) doth bear, by how much the wombs fall short (of their time or number) or do exceed.

**C1813.** The female womb is just an example, a type, of extreme secrecy. Not even the female herself knows what is in the womb,-whether it is a male young or a female young, whether it is one or more, whether it is to be born short of the standard time or to exceed the standard time.

But the most hidden and apparently unknowable things are clear to Allah's knowledge: there is no mere chance; all things are regulated by Allah in just measure and proportion.

The general proposition comes in the last sentence: "every single thing is with Him in (due) proportion."

...وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ عِنْدَهُ بِمِقْدَارٍ (٨)

Every single thing is before His sight, in (due) proportion.

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْكَبِيرُ الْمُتَعَالِ (٩)

9. He knoweth the Unseen and that which is open:  
He is the Great, the Most High.

**C1814.** A verse of matchless rhythm in Arabic.

سَوَاءٌ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَسَرَ الْقَوْلَ وَمَنْ جَهَرَ بِهِ...

10. It is the same (to Him) whether any of you conceal his speech or declare it openly;

...وَمَنْ هُوَ مُسْتَخْفٍ بِاللَّيْلِ وَسَارِبٌ بِالنَّهَارِ (١٠)

whether he lie hid by night or walk freely by day.

**C1815.** Our most hidden thoughts and motives are known to Him at all times.

لَهُ مُعَقَّبَاتٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ...

11. For each (such person) there are (angels) in succession, before and behind him:  
they guard him by command of Allah.

**C1816.** See last verse.

Every person, whether he conceals or reveals his thoughts, whether he skulks in darkness or goes about by day, -all are under Allah's watch and ward. His grace encompasses everyone, and again and again protects him, if he will only take the protection, from harm and evil.

If in his folly he thinks he can secretly take some pleasure or profit, he is wrong, for recording angels record all his thoughts and deeds.

...إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ...

Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls).

**C1817.** Allah is not intent on punishment. He created man virtuous and pure; he gave him intelligence and knowledge; he surrounded him with all sorts of instruments of His grace and mercy.

If, in spite of all this, man distorts his own will and goes against Allah's Will, yet is Allah's forgiveness open to him if he will take it.

It is only when he has made his own sight blind and changed his own nature or soul away from the beautiful mould in which Allah formed it, that Allah's Wrath will descend on him and the favourable position in which Allah placed him will be changed.

When once the punishment comes, there is no turning it back. None of the things which he relied upon- other than Allah-can possibly protect him.

...وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ...

But when (once) Allah willeth a people's punishment, there can be no turning it back,

...وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَالٍ (١١)

nor will they find, besides Him, any to protect.

...هُوَ الَّذِي يُرِيكُمْ الْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ...

12. It is He Who doth show you the lightning, by way both of fear and of hope:

**C1818.** Here then is the climax to the answer of the sarcastic challenge of the Unbelievers for punishment, in language of great sublimity.

- Why look to evil rather than to good?
- to punishment rather than to mercy?
- to the fear in the force and fire of the lightning rather than to the hope of good and abundant crops in the rain which will come behind the lightning clouds?

... وَيُنشِئُ السَّحَابَ الثَّقَالَ (١٢)

it is He Who doth raise up the clouds, heavy with (fertilizing) rain!

وَيُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ ...

13. Nay,

thunder repeateth His praises,

**C1819.** Nay, thunder itself, which may frighten you, is but a tame and beneficent force before Him, declaring His praises, like the rest of creation.

THUNDER thus aptly gives the name to this Surah of contrasts, where what we may think terrible is shown to be really a submissive instrument of good in Allah's hands.

... وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ ...

and so do the angels, with awe:

**C1820.** And the angels, whom we think to be beautiful creatures of power and glory nearest to Allah, yet feel reverence and awe even as they praise His Holy Name.

... وَيُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُمْ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي اللَّهِ ...

He flingeth the loud-voiced thunderbolts, and therewith He striketh whomsoever He will... Yet these (are the men) who (dare to) dispute about Allah,

... وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْمِحَالِ (١٣)

with the strength of His power (supreme)!

**C1821.** Who is pny man, to call Allah in question?

Cf. some variations on this theme in the Book of Job, e.g. chapters 38 to 41.

لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ ...

14. For Him (alone) is prayer in Truth:

**C1822. Haq:** truth; right; what is due, befitting, proper.

All these meanings are to be understood here.

If we worship anything other than Allah (whether it is idols, stars, powers of nature, spirits, or deified men, or

Self, or Power, or Wealth, Science or Art, Talent or Intellect), our worship is both foolish and futile.

...وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُم بِشَيْءٍ...

any others that they call upon besides Him hear them no more than

...إِلَّا كَبَّاسِطٍ كَفَيْهِ إِلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِبَالِغِهِ...

if they were to stretch forth their hands for water to reach their mouth but it reaches them not:

...وَمَا دُعَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ (١٤)

for the prayer of those without Faith is nothing but (futile) wandering (in the mind).

**C1823.** Without Faith, it is obvious that prayer or worship has no meaning whatever. It is but an aberration of the mind. But there is a deeper meaning.

You may have false faith, as in superstitions or in worshipping things other than Allah, as explained in the last note. In that case, too, you are pursuing mere phantoms of the mind. When you come to examine it, it is mere imbecility or futility.

Worship and prayer are justified only to Allah, the One True God. (R).

...وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ...

15. Whatever beings there are in the heavens and the earth do prostrate themselves to Allah (acknowledging subjection)

**C1824.** Notice that the original of what I have translated "whatever being" is the personal pronoun *man*, not *ma*.

This then refers to beings with a personality, e.g., angels, spirits, human beings, and possibly other things of objective (not necessarily material) existence, as contrasted with their Shadows or Simulacra or Appearances, or Phantasms, mentioned at the end of the verse.

Both these Beings and their Shadows are subject to the Will of Allah.

See notes 1825 and 1827.

**C1825. "Prostrate themselves":** the posture means that they recognise their subjection to Allah's Will and Law, whether they wish it or not.

... طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا ...

-- with good will or in spite of themselves:

**C1826. "In spite of themselves":** Satan and Evil.

They would like to get away from the control of the All-good Allah, but they cannot, and they have to acknowledge His supremacy and lordship over them.

... وَظِلَالُهُمْ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ (١٥)

so do their shadows in the mornings and evenings.

**C1827.** Even the Shadows -creations of the Imagination, or projections from other things and dependent on the other things for their existence, as shadows are to substance- even such shadows are subject to Allah's Laws and Will, and cannot arise or have any effect on our minds except by His permission.

The Shadows are longest and therefore most prominent when the sun is level, and tend to disappear as the sun approaches the zenith. But even when they are longest and most prominent, they are still subject to Allah's Will and Law. (R).

قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

16. Say: "Who is the Lord and Sustainer of the heavens and the earth?"

**C1828.** The meaning of "**Rabb**" is explained in n. 20, to 1:2.

... قُلِ اللَّهُ...

Say: "It is Allah."

...قُلْ أَفَاتَّخَذْتُمْ مِّنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ لِأَنفُسِهِمْ نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا...

Say: "Do ye then take (for worship) protectors other than Him, such as have no power either for good or for harm to themselves?"

**C1829.** Cf. 5:76.

...قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ...

Say:

"Are the blind equal with those who see?"

...أَمْ هَلْ تَسْتَوِي الظُّلُمَاتُ وَالنُّورُ...

Or the depths of darkness equal with Light?"

...أَمْ جَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ خَلَقُوا كَخَلْقِهِ فَتَشَابَهَ الْخَلْقُ عَلَيْهِمْ...

Or do they assign to Allah partners who have created (anything) as He has created, so that the creation seemed to them similar?

**C1830.** This verse may be analyzed into six parts, each two parts going together like question and answer. Each except the fifth part is introduced by the word "Say", which is equivalent in old Arabic to inverted commas.

The fifth part, "or do they assign .... similar?" is not introduced by "Say", because it is in the indirect form.

- Who is the Lord and Sustainer of the Worlds?

It is Allah,

- And yet you worship other gods?

No, no one can be equal to Him, any more than darkness is equal to light.

- Your other gods have created nothing by which you can be misled?

No indeed; He is the only Creator, the One and Supreme.

...قُلْ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ (١٦)

Say: "Allah is the Creator of all things:

He is the One, the Supreme and Irresistible."



أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَهُ بِقَدَرِهَا...

17. He sends down water from the skies, and the channels flow, each according to its measure:

**C1831.** This verse is full of parables.

1. It is Allah Who sends rain and sends it to all.

See how it flows in different channels according to their capacities. Some are sluggish-, some have a swift current. Some form great rivers and irrigate wide tracts of country; some are clear crystal streams, perhaps in hilly tracts, with beds of clean pebbles which you can see through the water.

Some produce delicious edible fish; and some are infested by crocodiles or injurious monsters.

And there are degrees and degrees among brooks, streams, lakes, rivers, and seas.

So with the rain of Allah's mercy and the knowledge and wisdom and guidance which He sends. All can receive it. Different ones will respond according to their capacities.

2. In the physical world, water is pure and beneficial. But froth and scum will gather according to local conditions.

As the floods will carry off the scum and purify the water, so will the flood of Allah's spiritual mercy carry away our spiritual scum and purify the water.

3. The froth may make a greater show on the surface, but it will not last. So will there be frothy knowledge, which will disappear, but Allah's Truth will endure.

...فَاحْتَمَلَ السَّيْلُ زَبَدًا رَابِيًا...

but the torrent bears away the foam that mounts up to the surface.

...وَمِمَّا يُوقِدُونَ عَلَيْهِ فِي النَّارِ ابْتِغَاءَ حُلْيَةٍ أَوْ مَتَاعٍ زَبَدٌ مِثْلَهُ...

Even so, from that (ore) which they heat in the fire, to make ornaments or utensils therewith, there is a scum likewise.

**C1832.** In continuation of the last note, the fourth parable is that of metal ores:

- the ore is full of baser admixture, but the fire will separate the gold from the dross for ornaments, or
- some metal of household utility, with which you make every-day utensils, which the fire will separate from admixtures which you do not want.

So the fire of Allah's test, either by adversity or by affluence, will search out the true metal in us and reject the dross. It will show us what is valuable or what is useful, all sorts of scum and vanity which we collect and miscall knowledge.

...كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ وَالْبَاطِلَ...

Thus doth Allah (by parables) show forth Truth and Vanity:

...فَأَمَّا الزَّبَدُ فَيَذْهَبُ جُفَاءً وَأَمَّا مَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ...

for the scum disappears like froth cast out; while that which is for the good of mankind remains on the earth.

...كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ (١٧)

Thus doth Allah set forth parables.

لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمُ الْحُسْنَى...

18. For those who respond to their Lord, are (all) good things.

...وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُ لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا...

But those who respond not to Him -- even if they had all that is in the heavens and on earth,

...وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَاقْتَدُوا بِهِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْحِسَابِ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ...

and as much more, (in vain) would they offer it for ransom.

**C1833.** Cf. 3:91 and 10:54.

...وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ (١٨)

what a bed of misery!

## C.115 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(17:19-31)

*The seeing and the blind are not alike;  
Nor are those blessed with Faith and those without.*

*The former seek Allah, and attain  
Peace and blessedness in their hearts,  
And a final Home of rest; the latter  
Are in a state of Curse, and their End  
Is terrible. If Allah in His wisdom  
Postpones retribution, it is for a time.  
His promise never fails; it will come  
To pass in His own good time.  
In all things it is for Him to command*

### Section 3

أَفَمَنْ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَى...

19. Is then one who doth know that that which hath been revealed unto these from thy Lord is the Truth, like one who is blind?

**C1834.** In this section the contrast between Faith and Righteousness on the one hand and Infidelity and Evil on the other is set out.

The righteous man is known as one who;

- receives admonition;
  - is true to his covenants;
  - follows the universal Religion of Faith and Practice joined together;
  - is patient and persevering in seeking Allah;
- and in practical matters he is known to be;
- regular in prayer;
  - generous in true charity, whether open or secret;
- and

- not revengeful, but anxious to turn off evil with good, thus breaking the chain of evil which tends to perpetuate itself.

...إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولَئِكَ الْأَلْبَابِ (١٩)

It is those who are endowed with understanding that receive admonition --

الَّذِينَ يُوفُونَ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَنْفُضُونَ الْمِيثَاقَ (٢٠)

20. Those who fulfil the Covenant of Allah and fail not in their pledged word;

وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ...

21. Those who join together those things which Allah hath commanded to be joined,

**C1835.** That is,

- join faith with practice,
- love of God with love of man, and
- respect for all Prophets alike, i.e., follow the right Religion, and not odd bits of it.

...وَيَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوءَ الْحِسَابِ (٢١)

hold their Lord in awe, and fear the terrible reckoning;

وَالَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ...

22. Those who patiently persevere, seeking the countenance their Lord;

...وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً...

establish regular prayers;

spend, out of (the gifts) We have bestowed for their sustenance, secretly and openly;

...وَيَذَرُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ الْمَسِيئَةَ...

and turn off Evil with good:

...أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْعُقُوبَةُ الدَّارِ (٢٢)

for such there is the final attainment of the (Eternal) Home --

**C1836.** Their journey in this life was at best a sojourn. The Heaven is their eternal Home, which is further prefigured in the two following verses.

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ...

23. Gardens of perpetual bliss:

they shall enter there, as well as the righteous among their fathers, their spouses, and their offspring:

**C1837.** The relationships of this life are temporal, but love in righteousness is eternal.

In the eternal Gardens of Bliss the righteous will be reunited with all those near and dear ones whom they loved, provided only that they were righteous also; for in eternity nothing else counts.

Blood-relationships and marriage relationships create certain physical bonds in this life, which may lead to much good, and possibly also to evil. All that is physical or evil will go. But the good will come forth with a new meaning in the final Reckoning. Thus ancestors and descendants, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, (for **dhurriyat** includes them), whose love was pure and sanctified, will find new bliss in the perfecting of their love and will see a new and mystic meaning in the old and ephemeral bonds.

Can we wonder at Jacob's reunion with Joseph, or that of Can we wonder at Jacob's reunion with Joseph, or that of Moses with Aaron, or Muhammad Al Mustafa with the Lady Khadija?

In fact all the Righteous will be reunited in the Hereafter ([12:101](#)).

وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ (٢٣)

and angels shall enter unto them from every gate (with the salutation):

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ (٢٤)

24. "Peace unto you for that ye persevered in patience!

Now how excellent is the final Home!"

وَالَّذِينَ يَبْغُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ...

25. But those who break the Covenant of Allah, after having plighted their word thereto

...وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ...

and cut asunder those things which Allah has commanded to be joined,  
and work mischief in the land --

**C1838.** This is the opposite of the things explained in [13:21](#) above, n. 1835.

...أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ (٢٥)

on them is the Curse;

for them is the terrible Home!

**C1839.** This is in contrast to the state of the blessed, described in [13:22-24](#) above.

The Curse is the opposite of the Bliss, and the Terrible Home is the opposite of the Eternal Home, the Gardens of perpetual bliss.

اللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ...

26. Allah doth enlarge, or grant by (strict) measure the Sustenance (which He giveth) to whom so He pleaseth.

**C1840.** Allah, the Sustainer and Cherisher of all His creatures, gives sustenance to all.

To some He grants it in abundance; to others He gives it in strict measure. No one can question Him, for His Will is supreme, and it is the measure of all good.

...وَفَرِحُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا...

(The worldly) rejoice in the life of this world:

...وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا مَتَاعٌ (٢٦)

but the life of this world is but little comfort in the Hereafter.

**C1841.** Cf. 9:38.

The meaning here may also be:

This present life is just a furniture, a convenience, a stepping stone, a probation, for the life to come. In itself it is less important than the Hereafter.

## Section 4

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ...

27. The Unbelievers say: "Why is not a Sign sent down to him from his Lord?"

**C1842.** The question is repeated from [13:7](#) above;

for the line of reasoning there suggested in answer is now completed, and another line of reasoning is now taken up.

Allah provides every guidance for those who turn to Him in penitence, but He will leave those to wander astray who deliberately close their eyes and their hearts to His grace and the comfort that comes from remembering Him and celebrating His praises.

...قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَن أُنَابَ (٢٧)

Say: "Truly Allah leaveth, to stray, whom He will;  
but He guideth to Himself those who turn to Him in penitence --

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ...

28. "Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah:

...أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ (٢٨)

for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction.

**C1843.** The Sign or Miracle is not something external: it is something internal, something in your mind, heart, and soul. It depends on your inner spiritual experience. If you turn to Allah, that light, that experience, will come. If you do not, Allah will not force you.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ طُوبَىٰ لَهُمْ وَحَسُنَ مَا جِئَ بِكُمْ فِيهَا (٢٩)

29. "For those who believe and work righteousness, is (every) blessedness, and a beautiful place of (final) return."

**C1844. "Blessedness": Tuba:** an internal state of satisfaction, an inward joy which is difficult to describe in words, but which reflects itself in the life of the good man, through good and ill fortune, through good report and evil. And then, there is always the final goal to which his eyes are turned, the beautiful Home of rest in the Hereafter, after this life's struggles are over.

That goal is Allah Himself.

كَذَلِكَ أَرْسَلْنَاكَ فِي أُمَّةٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا أُمَمٌ...

30. Thus have We sent thee amongst a People before whom (long since) have (other) Peoples (gone and) passed away;

**C1845.** Our Prophet came later in time than other Prophets, to complete their Message and universalize Religion. And certainly it is after his age that the process of the unification of the world began. That process is not complete yet, but is proceeding apace.

...لَتَتْلُوَ عَلَيْهِمُ الَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالرَّحْمَنِ...

in order that thou mightest rehearse unto them what We send down unto thee by inspiration;

yet do they reject (Him), the Most Gracious!

...قُلْ هُوَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ...

Say:

"He is my Lord!

There is no god but He!

...عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ مَتَابِ (٣٠)

On Him is my trust,  
and to Him do I turn!"

**C1846.** Faith tells us that no amount of opposition from Unbelievers can ever stop Allah's Plan.



وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرْآنًا سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ الْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِعَتْ بِهِ الْأَرْضُ...

31. If there were a Qur'an with which mountains were moved,  
or the earth were cloven asunder,

...أَوْ كَلَّمَ بِهِ الْمَوْتَى...

or the dead were made to speak, (this would be the one!)

...بَلِ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ جَمِيعًا...

But, truly, the Command is with Allah in things!

**C1847.** Everything is possible and in Allah's power. His Plan is beneficent and all-embracing. But it is not for His creatures to dictate to Him, or demand what He should do, or how He should do it.

The Command is with Allah in all things. The Believers know His omnipotence, and they also know that He will order His world for the best.

...أَفَلَمْ يَبْأَسِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ لَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَهَدَى النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا...

Do not the Believers know, that, had Allah (so) willed, He could have guided all mankind (to the Right)?

...وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا تُصِيبُهُمْ بِمَا صَنَعُوا قَارِعَةٌ...

But the Unbelievers -- never will disaster cease to seize them for their (ill) deeds,

...أَوْ تَحُلُّ قَرِيبًا مِّنْ دَارِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ...

or to settle close to their homes, until the Promise of Allah come to pass,

...إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ (٣١)

for, verily, Allah will not fail in His promise.

**C1848.** Let not the Unbelievers think that if they seem to prosper for a time, that is the end of the matter. They are warned about three things.

1. Their ill deeds must carry evil consequences for them all the time, though they may not perceive them for a certain time.

2. Their homes, their places of resort, the circles in which they move, will also be haunted by their ill deeds and their consequences. For evil makes a complex of its environment. The walls of Jericho, when they fall, must bring down all Jericho in its ruins.
3. The ultimate Disaster, the final Reckoning, must come, for Allah never fails in His promise. True values must eventually be restored: the good to the good, and the evil to the evil.

The Commentators draw illustrations from the life of the Prophet, his exile from Makkah, and his restoration. A similar miracle works in all history. But the Command is with Allah.

### **C.116 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)**

**(17:32-43)**

*The mockery of Allah's Messengers is an old game  
Of the world. But Allah's Truth will come  
To its own in good time. The End  
Of the righteous is their Home of Bliss,  
And they rejoice in the revelations  
They receive. The Messengers of Allah  
Take their due share in the life  
Of the world; they win through by Allah's grace  
Against all the plots of the world.  
Their witness is from Allah, through His revelation.*

### **Section 5**

وَلَقَدْ اسْتَهْزَىءَ بِرُسُلِ مَنْ قَبْلِكَ...

32. Mocked were (many) Messengers before thee:

**C1849.** Cf. 6:10.

...فَأَمَلَيْتُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهُمْ...

but I granted respite to the Unbelievers, and finally I punished them;

...فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عِقَابِ (٣٢)

then how (terrible) was My requital!

**C1850.** The punishment was in many cases deferred. But when it did come, how terrible and exemplary it was!

أَفَمَنْ هُوَ قَائِمٌ عَلَى كُلِّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ...

33. Is then He Who standeth over every soul (and knoweth) all that it doth, (like any others)?

...وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ قُلُوبًا سَمَوْهُمْ...

And yet they ascribe partners to Allah. Say: "But name them!

**C1851.** Cf. 12:40.

'You have but to name your false gods, and you will see that they are nothing but names. There is no reality behind them, whereas Allah is the One great Reality. He penetrates everything through and through and knows all things.

Do you dare to tell aim of something on earth that He does not know?

Or is it just a trick or a show of words?

...أَمْ تُنَبِّئُونَهُ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ بظَاهِرٍ مِّنَ الْقَوْلِ...

Is it that ye will inform Him of something He knoweth not on earth, or is it (just) a show of words?"

...بَلْ زُيِّنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَكْرُهُمْ وَصُدُّوا عَنِ السَّبِيلِ...

Nay! to those who believe not, their pretence seems pleasing, but they are kept back (thereby) from the Path:

**C1852.** All pretences and fancies seem attractive to their inventors, but alas! they are a great obstruction to the Path of Religion and Truth.

However, if by their contumacy, they have cut themselves off from Allah's grace, who can guide them or reclaim them from their errors?

...وَمَنْ يُضَلِّ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ (٣٣)

and those whom Allah leaves to stray, no one can guide.

لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَشَقُّ...

34. For them is a Penalty in the life of this world, but harder, truly, is the Penalty of the Hereafter;

**C1853.** The consequences of sin may be felt in this life itself, but they are nothing compared to the final penalties in the life to come.

...وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنَ اللَّهِ مِّنْ وَّاقٍ (٣٤)

and defender have they none against Allah.

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ...

35. The parable of the Garden which the righteous are promised! --

...تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ...

beneath if flow rivers:

...أُكْلُهَا دَائِمٌ...

perpetual is the enjoyment thereof

**C1854.** For the comprehensive meaning of the root akala (literally "to eat"), see 5:66, n. 776.

In its derived meaning it means fruit and enjoyment of all kinds, spiritual as well as other.

The joys of heaven are not like the joys of the earth, which fade away or cloy. The joys of heaven are pure, lasting, and without any of the drawbacks which we associate with the joys of the sense.

... وَظِلُّهَا ...

and the shade therein:

**C1855. Zillun:** literally shade, hence, shelter, protection, security.

All these meanings are implied.

Shade is one of the delights of a garden. Cf. 4:57 and n. 579.

...ئِنَّكَ عَقْبَى الَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا...

such is the End of the Righteous;

...وَعَقْبَى الْكَافِرِيْنَ النَّارُ (٣٥)

and the End of Unbelievers is the Fire.

**C1856.** In this, as in other places, the Fire is contrasted with the Garden, as Misery is contrasted with Bliss.

We can also imagine other incidents in contrast with those of the Garden, e.g., with the Fire will be drought, aridity, thirst, instead of beautiful rivers; pain and suffering, instead of perpetual delight; no protection against the fierceness of the heat, as contrasted with the cool shades ever deepening as you proceed in the Garden.

وَالَّذِيْنَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَفْرَحُوْنَ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ...

36. Those to whom We have given the Book rejoice at what hath been revealed unto thee:

**C1857. The Book:** in a general sense, Revelation.

**"Those to whom the Book hath been given"** are both;

- the People of the Book of previous revelations, who study the new Revelation in Arabic without prejudice and find in it confirmation of what their ancestors had received and believed in it, and
- the Muslims who receive the Quran with such joy.

...وَمِنْ الْأَحْزَابِ مَنْ يُنْكِرُ بَعْضَهُ...

but there are among the clans those who reject a part thereof.

**C1858. Ahzab** (plural of hizb: parties, sects, troops, clans. The reference may be to the clans mentioned in 33:20 and 22 (that whole Surah is called Ahzab).

But we can understand it in a perfectly general sense. Among all sections of the people there are persons who would receive a portion of Allah's truth but reject whatever does not suit them or fall in with their selfish aims or vain desires. The proper answer to them is:

Surely, Allah's command is universal, -to worship and serve Him and refuse to bend the knee to any other; the man of God finds his staff and support in it; but he must invite all to share in its blessings; it came from Allah, and to Allah shall we all return.

...قُلْ إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَلَا أُشْرِكَ بِهِ...

Say:

"I am commanded to worship Allah, and not to join partners with Him.

...إِلَيْهِ أَدْعُو وَإِلَيْهِ مَأْبٍ (٣٦)

Unto Him do I call,  
and unto Him is my return."

...وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ حُكْمًا عَرَبِيًّا...

37. Thus have We revealed it to be a judgment of authority in Arabic.

**C1859.** The Quran is in Arabic; therefore the Arabs, among whom it was promulgated, could have no difficulty in understanding its precepts and using it in judging of right and wrong in all their affairs.

But it is also universal; therefore no one should give preference to his own vain fancies against this authoritative declaration.

...وَلَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ...

Wert thou to follow their (vain) desires after the knowledge which hath reached thee,

...مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا وَاقٍ (٣٧)

then wouldst thou find neither protector nor defender against Allah.

**C1860.** Cf. 2:120.

The variation is in the single word "**Waq**" here in place of "**Nasir**" in 2:120. In each case the apt word is chosen not only for the rhythm in its own passage but for the general meaning in the argument.

## Section 6

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُم أَزْوَاجًا وَدُرِيَّةً...

38. We did send Messengers before thee, and appointed for them wives and children:

**C1861.** All the Prophets of whom we have any detailed knowledge, except one, had wives and children.

The exception is Jesus the son of Mary. But his life was incomplete; his ministry barely lasted three years; his mission was limited; and he was not called upon to deal with the many-sided problems that arise in a highly organized society or State.

We pay equal respect to him, because he was Allah's Messenger; but that is not to say that his Message covers the same universal ground as that of Al-Mustafa.

There is no reproach for a normal human being if he lives a normal human life; there is glory if he beautifies it and sets a nobler example of virtue than other men, as did Al-Mustafa.

...وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ...

and it was never the part of a Messenger to bring a Sign except as Allah permitted (or commanded).

**C1862.** No Prophet performed any Miracle or showed forth any "Signs," except as Allah willed. Allah's Will (*Mashiyat*) is an all-wise, universal Plan, which is not

formed for the benefit of one tribe or *millah* or of one age or country (see also next verse).

The greatest Miracle in history was and is the Quran. We can apprehend its beauty and grandeur to-day as much as did the people of Al-Mustafa's day, -even more, as our collective knowledge of nature and of Allah's creation has increased.

...لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ كِتَابٌ (٣٨)

For each period is a Book (revealed).

**C1863. Kitab:** I have translated "a Book (revealed)";

but it can also mean "a Law decreed" or "a Decree established."

Ultimately the meaning is the same; for each age, according to Allah's wisdom, His Message is renewed.

يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ (٣٩)

39. Allah doth blot out or confirm what He pleaseth: with Him is the Mother of the Book.

**C1864. Umm-ul-Kitab:** Mother of the Book: the original foundation of all revelation; the Essence of Allah's Will and Law.

Cf. 3:7, and n. 347.

وَأِنْ مَا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتُوفِّيَنَّكَ...

40. Whether We shall show thee (within thy lifetime) part of what We promised them or take to Ourselves thy soul (before it is all accomplished),

...فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ (٤٠)

thy duty is to (make the Message) reach them:

it is Our part to call them to account.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا...

41. See they not that We gradually reduce the land (in their control) from its outlying borders?



**C1865.** In the Prophet's ministry at Makkah, the Most stiff-necked opposition came from the seat and centre of power in Makkah. The humbler people -the fringe of Makkan society- came in readily, as also did some tribes round about Makkah.

After the Hijrah there was a hard struggle between Makkah and Madinah and at last the bloodless conquest of Makkah in A.H. 8 made the Pagan structure finally collapse, though it had already been sapped to its foundations. So, generally, Truth finds easiest entrance through the humble and lowly, and not in the beginning at the headquarters of power, but in the fullness of time it makes its way everywhere with irresistible force.

...وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ لَا مُعَقَّبَ لِحُكْمِهِ...

(Where) Allah commands, there is none to put back His command:

...وَهُوَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ (٤١)

and He is swift in calling to account.

وَقَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلِلَّهِ الْمَكْرُ جَمِيعًا...

42. Those before them did (also) devise plots;  
but in all things the master planning is Allah's.

**C1866.** Cf. 3:54 and n. 393 .

...يَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ...

He knoweth the doings of every soul:

...وَسَيَعْلَمُ الْكُفَّارُ لِمَنْ عُقِبِيَ الدَّارَ (٤٢)

and soon will the Unbelievers know who gets home in the End.

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا...

43. The Unbelievers say: "No Messenger art thou."

**C1867.** The enemies of Islam have to acknowledge that Al-Mustafa was a great and noble character, but they deny his Prophethood. He could point to his credentials

from Allah in the work which he achieved, and the Quran which he brought.

... قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ ...

Say: "Enough for a witness between me and you is Allah,

... وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ (٤٣)

and such as have knowledge of the Book."

**C1868.** That is, those who have knowledge of revelation generally will recognise Allah's revelation in the holy Quran.

An alternative reading is "min indihi", which is written the same in Arabic, with only three vowel points different. If we adopt that, the last clause will be:

"and from Him is (all) knowledge of the Book": i.e., 'as all knowledge of the Book comes from Allah, the Quran also bears witness to me'.