

SPREAD KNOWLEDGE

THE  
HOLY QURAN

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ENGLISH TAFSEER  
CHAPTER 19  
SURAH MARYAM

COMMENTARY & EXPLANATORY

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By  
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**HOLY QURAN**

**CHAPTER**

**019**

**SURAH MARYAM**

*ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI*

### **Introduction and Summary**

The spiritual growth of man as an individual soul having been explained in Surah 17 as beginning with the first principles of moral conduct and in Surah 18 as being dependent upon our realization of the brevity and mystery of this life and the true use of power as in the story of Dhul al Qarnayn, we now pass on the story of individual Messengers of Allah in their personal relations with their environment:

- Yahya with his father Zakariya,

- Jesus with his mother Mary:
- Abraham with his unbelieving father,
- Moses with his brother Aaron,
- Ismail with his family,
- and Idris in the high station to which he was called.

Seeing how these great ones fitted into the scheme of life, man is condemned for his want of faith, or for degrading his faith to superstition, and warned of the Hereafter.

In chronology, it was revealed before the first resort of the batch of Muslims to Abyssinia, say seven years before Hijrah.

**Summery-** Zakariya was anxious to have an heir to carry on Allah's work in a world of unrighteousness, and Yahya was given to him (19:1-15, and C. 138).

Mary the mother of Jesus was maligned by her people, but Jesus comforted her and was good to her (19:16-40, and C. 139).

Abraham was persecuted for his Faith by his people, including his unbelieving father, but he withdrew from them, and was blessed: Moses was helped by his brother Aaron, Ismail brought up his family in piety: and Idris was truthful and pious in a high station: they showed the way: yet men will not learn the good of life (19:41-65, and C. 140).

Man should not disbelieve in the Hereafter, nor sully his faith by false notions about Allah (19:66-98, and C. 141).

### **C.138 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)**

**(19:1-15)**

*Men of God show their qualities  
In their private relationships as much*

*As in their public ministry. Zakariya  
Was anxious, in a world of unrighteousness.  
To find a successor to continue his godly  
Errand. He was given a son, Yahya,  
Who heralded Jesus, and lived a life  
Of wisdom, gentle love, and purity.*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

كهيعص (١)

1. **Kaf Ha Ya 'Ayn Sad.**

**C2455.** This is the only Surah which begins with these five Abbreviated Letters, Kaf Ha Ya 'Ayn Sad.

For Abbreviated Letters generally, see [Appendix 1](#).

As stated in my [note 25](#), such Letters are Symbols of which the true meaning is known to Allah alone. We should not be dogmatic about any conjectures that we make.

According to the interpretation of the last letter Sad, suggested in [n. 989 to 7:1](#), I should be disposed to accept **Sad** with the meaning of Qasas, i.e. stories of the Prophets.

The main figures referred to here are:

- Zakariya,
- Yahya,
- Maryam,
- 'Isa, and
- Ibrahim:

the others are mentioned but incidentally.

The strong letter

- in Za**K**ariya is **K**;

- in Ibra**H**im, **H**;
- in Yah**Y**a and perhaps Mar**Y**am, **Y**; and
- in `Isa - '**A** (('Ayn).
- **H** also comes in **H**arun (Aaron), and
- the Arabic **Ya'** comes in all the names including Ismail and Idris.

I offer this suggestion with some difference.

The suggestion of the Tafsir Kabir is that the letters stand for attributes of Allah;

- **K** for Kafi (the One sufficient in Himself);
- **H** for Hadi (He who guides);
- **Y** for Yad (Hand as symbol of Power and Authority;  
Cf. [48:10](#).  
"The Hand of Allah is above their hands");
- '**A** for Alim (the All Knowing); and
- **S** for Sadiq (The True One).

ذِكْرُ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُ زَكَرِيَّا (٢)

2. (This is) a recital of the Mercy of thy Lord to His Servant Zakariya.

**C2456.** The Mercy of Allah to Zakariya was shown in many ways:

- in the acceptance of his prayer;
- in bestowing a son like Yahya; and
- in the love between father and son, in addition to the work which Yahya did as Allah's Messenger for the world.

Cf. 3:38-41 and notes. There the public ministry was the point stressed; here the beautiful relations between the son and the father.

إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ نِدَاءً خَفِيًّا (٣)

3. Behold! he cried to his Lord in secret,

**C2457. In secret:** because he feared that his own family and relatives were going wrong (19:5), and he wanted to keep the lamp of Allah burning bright. He could not very well mention the fear about his colleagues (who were his relations) in public.

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاسْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا...

4. Praying:

"O my Lord! infirm indeed are my bones, and the hair of my head doth glisten with grey:

...وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ رَبِّ شَقِيًّا (٤)

but never am I unblest, O my Lord, in my prayer to Thee!

**C2458.** This preface shows the fervent faith of Zakariya. Zakariya was a prophet of the Most High Allah. His office was in the Temple, and his relatives were his colleagues. But he found in them no true spirit of the service of Allah and man. He was filled with anxiety as to who would uphold the godly ideas he had in mind, which were strange to his worldly colleagues.

وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِنْ وَرَائِي وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا...

5. "Now I fear (what) my relatives (and colleagues) (will do) after me: but my wife is barren:

...فَهَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا (٥)

so give me an heir as from Thyself --

**C2459.** His was not merely a desire for a son. If it had been, he would have prayed much earlier in his life, when he was a young man. He was too full of true piety

to put merely selfish things into his prayers. But here was a public need, in the service of the Lord.

He was too old, but could he perhaps adopt a child - who would be an heir "as from Allah?" (See n. 380 to 3:38).

يَرِثُنِي وَيَرِثُ مِنْ آلِ يَعْقُوبَ ...

6. "(One that) will (truly) represent me, and represent the posterity of Jacob;

**C2460.** It is true that an heir inherits property, but his higher duty is to represent in everything the personality of him from whom he inherits.

It is doubtful whether Zakariya had any worldly property. But he had character and virtue, as a man of God, and this he wanted to transmit to his heir as his most precious possession. It was almost the most precious possession of the posterity of Jacob. The people around him had fallen away from Allah's Message. Could his heir, like him, try and renew it?

... وَأَجْعَلُهُ رَبًّا رَضِيًّا (٦)

and make him, O my Lord! one with whom Thou art well-pleased!"

يَا زَكَرِيَّا إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَى...

7. (His prayer was answered):

"O Zakariya! We give thee good news of a son: his name shall be Yahya:

...لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا (٧)

on none by that name have We conferred distinction before."

**C2461.** This was John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus.

In accordance with his father's prayer he, and Jesus for whom he prepared the way, renewed the Message of Allah, which had been corrupted and lost among the Israelites.

The Arabic form **Yahya** suggests "Life".

The Hebrew form is Johanan, which means "Jehovah has been Gracious". Cf. **Hananan** in [verse 13 below](#).

It does not mean that the name was given for the first time, for we read of a Johanan the son of Careah in 4 Kings, 25:23, an otherwise obscure man.

It means that Allah had, for the first time, called one of His elect by that name.

قَالَ رَبِّ أَىْ يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَكَانَتْ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا...

8. He said:

"O my Lord! how shall I have a son, when my wife is barren

...وَقَدْ بَلَغْتُ مِنَ الْكِبَرِ عِتِيًّا (٨)

and I have grown quite decrepit from old age?"

قَالَ كَذَلِكَ ...

9. He said: "So (it will be):

**C2462.** Who is the "**He**" in this clause?

As I have construed it, following the majority of Commentators, it means the angel who brought the message from Allah.

Cf. [19:21 below](#).

But some Commentators construe it to refer to Zakariya. In that case the meaning will be:

Zakariya after a little reflection said (in his wonder) "So!", i.e., "Can it really be so?"

Can I really have a son in my old age?"

The speech following. "Thy Lord saith," etc., will then be that of the angel-messenger.

... قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ ...

thy Lord saith, "That is easy for Me:

...وَقَدْ خَلَقْتُكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَيْئًا (٩)

I did indeed create thee before, when thou hadst been nothing!" "



**C2463.** Every man was nothing just before he was created, i.e., his personality was called into being by Allah. Even if there are material processes in forming the body, in accordance with the laws of nature, the real creative force is the power of Allah.

But here there is a subtler meaning. John was the harbinger of Jesus, preparing the way for him; and this sentence also prepares us for the more wonderful birth of Jesus himself, see [verse 21](#) below.

Everything is possible with Allah.

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً...

10. (Zakariya) said "O my Lord! give me a Sign."

**C2464.** The "**Sign**", was in order to convince Zakariya that the Lord's promise was true, for he had faith; but it was a symbol by which he was to show in his conduct that he was to conform to his new destiny as the father of Yahya who was to come.

Yahya was to take up the work, and Zakariya was to be silent, although the latter was sound in body and there was nothing to prevent him from speaking.

...قَالَ آيَتِكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا (١٠)

"Thy Sign," was the answer, "shall be that thou shalt speak to no man for three nights, although thou art not dumb."

**C2465.** Compare this verse with 3:41.

The variations are interesting. Here it is "for three nights": there it is "for three days".

The meaning is the same, for a day is a period of 24 hours. But the point of view is different in each case.

- There it was from the point of view of the Ummah or Congregation, among whom he worked by day;
- here the point of view is that of his individual soul, which spent the nights in prayer and praise.

Notice again that at the end of the next verse, we have here, "In the morning and the evening", and at the end

of 3:41, "In the evening and in the morning" - showing again that the point of view is reversed.

فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ مِنَ الْمِحْرَابِ فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ أَنْ سَبِّحُوا بُكْرَةً  
وَعَشِيًّا (١١)

11. So Zakariya came out to his people from his chamber: he told them by signs to celebrate Allah's praises in the morning and in the evening.

يَا يَحْيَىٰ خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ...

12. (To his son came the command):

"O Yahya! take hold of the Book with might":

**C2466.** Time passes. The son is born. In this section of the Surah the centre of interest is Yahya, and the instruction is now given to him.

'Keep fast hold of Allah's revelation with all your might':

for an unbelieving world had either corrupted or neglected it, and Yahya (John the Baptist) was to prepare the way for, Jesus, who was coming to renew and re-interpret it.

...وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا (١٢)

and We gave him wisdom even as a youth.

**C2467. Hukm**, translated Wisdom, implies something more than Wisdom;

it is the Wisdom or Judgment that is entitled to judge and command, as in the matter of denouncing sin.

وَحَنَانًا مِّنْ لَّدُنَّا وَزَكَاةً وَكَانَ تَوَّيًّا (١٣)

13. And pity (for all creatures) as from Us, and purity: he was devout,

**C2468.** John the Baptist did not live long. He was imprisoned by Herod, the tetrarch (provincial ruler under the Roman Empire), whom he had reproofed for his sins, and eventually beheaded at the instigation of the woman

with whom Herod was infatuated. But even in his young life, he was granted,

- wisdom by Allah, for he boldly denounced sin;
- gentle pity and love for all Allah's creatures, for he moved among the humble and lowly, and despised "soft raiment";
- and purity of life, for he renounced the world and lived in the wilderness.

All his work he did in his youth. These things showed themselves in his conduct, for he was devout, showing love to Allah and to Allah's creatures, and more particularly to his parents (for we are considering that aspect of his life): this was also shown by the fact that he never used violence, from an attitude of arrogance, nor entertained a spirit of rebellion against divine Law. (R).

وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَيْهِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ جَبَّارًا عَصِيًّا (١٤)

14. And kind to his parents, and he was not overbearing or rebellious.

وَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ يُرْعَثُ حَيًّا (١٥)

15. So Peace on him the day he was born, the day that he dies, and the day that he will be raised up to life (again)!

**C2469.** This is spoken as in the life-time of Yahya. Peace and Allah's Blessings, were on him when he was born; they continue when he is about to die an unjust death at the hands of a tyrant; and they will be specially manifest at the Day of Judgment.

### C.139 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(19:16-40)

*Next comes the story of Jesus and his mother  
Mary. She gave birth, as a virgin, to Jesus  
But her people slandered and abused her*

*As a disagree to her lineage. Her son  
Did defend her and was kind to her. He  
Was a servant of Allah, a true Prophet,  
Blessed in the gifts of Prayer and Charity,  
But no more than a man to call him  
The son of Allah is to derogate from Allah's  
Majesty, for Allah is High above all  
His Creatures, the Judge of the Last Day.*

## Section 2

وَأَذْكُرُ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ...

16. Relate in the Book (the story of) Mary,

**C2470.** Cf. the story of Mary as related in 3:42-51.

Here the whole theme is different:

it is the personal side of the experiences of the worshippers of Allah in relation to their families or environment.

...إِذْ انْتَبَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا (١٦)

when she withdrew from her family to a place in the East.

**C2471.** To a private eastern chamber, perhaps in the Temple. She went into privacy, from her people and from people in general, for prayer and devotion.

It was in this state of purity that the angel appeared to her in the shape of a man. She thought it was a man. She was frightened, and she adjured him not to invade her privacy.

فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا...

17. She placed a screen (to screen herself) from them:

...فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا (١٧)

then We sent to her Our angel, and he appeared before her as a man in all respects.

قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا (١٨)

18. She said: "I seek refuge from thee to (Allah) Most Gracious: (come not near) if thou dost fear Allah."

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا (١٩)

19. He said: "Nay, I am only a messenger from thy Lord, (to announce) to thee the gift of a holy son."

**C2472.** Allah had destined her to be the mother of the Prophet Jesus Christ, and now had come the time when this should be announced to her.

قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا (٢٠)

20. She said: "How shall I have a son, seeing that no man has touched me, and I am not unchaste?"

قَالَ كَذَلِكَ...

21. He said: "So (it will be):

...قَالَ رَبُّكِ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ...

thy Lord saith, 'That is easy for Me:

...وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا...

and (We wish) to appoint him as a Sign unto men and a Mercy from Us':

**C2473.** The mission of Jesus is announced in two ways:

1. he was to be a Sign to men; his wonderful birth and wonderful life were to turn an ungodly world back to Allah; and
2. his mission was similar to that of all prophets of Allah.

But the point here is that the Israelites, to whom Jesus was sent, were a hardened race, for whom the message of Jesus was truly a gospel of Mercy.

...وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا (٢١)

it is a matter (so) decreed."

**C2474.** For anything that Allah wishes to create, He says "Be", and it is (Cf. 3:47).

There is no interval between His decree and its accomplishment, except such as He imposes by His decree. Time may be only a projection of our own minds in this world of relativity.

فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَدَّتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا (٢٢)

22. So she conceived him, and she retired with him to a remote place.

**C2475.** The annunciation and the conception, we may suppose, took place in Nazareth (of Galilee), say 65 miles north of Jerusalem.

The delivery took place in Bethlehem about 6 miles south of Jerusalem. It was a remote place, not only with reference to the distance of 71 miles, but because in Bethlehem itself the birth was in an obscure corner under a palm-tree, from which perhaps the babe was afterwards removed to a manger in a stable.

فَأَجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ...

23. And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree:

...قَالَتْ يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا مَنْسِيًّا (٢٣)

she cried (in her anguish): "Ah! would that I had died before this! Would that I had been a thing forgotten and out of sight!"

**C2476.** She was but human, and suffered the pangs of an expectant mother, with no one to attend on her. The circumstances being peculiar, she had got far away from her people.

فَنَادَاهَا مِن تَحْتِهَا أَلَا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا (٢٤)

24. But (a voice) cried to her from beneath the (palm-tree):

"Grieve not! for thy Lord hath provided a rivulet beneath thee;

وَهَزِي إِلَيْكَ بِجِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رُطْبًا جَنِيًّا (٢٥)

25. "And shake towards thyself the trunk of the palm-tree: it will let fall fresh ripe dates upon thee.

**C2477.** Unseen Providence had seen that she should not suffer from thirst or from hunger. The rivulet provided her with water also for ablutions.

فَكَلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا...

26. "So eat and drink and cool (thine) eye.

**C2478. Cool thine eye:** An idiom for "comfort thyself and be glad".

The literal meaning should not, however, be lost sight of. She was to cool her eyes (perhaps full of tears) with the fresh water of the rivulet and take comfort that a remarkable babe had been born to her.

She was also to look around, and if any one came near, she was to decline all conversation. It was quite true: she was under a vow, and could not talk to any one.

...فَأِمَّا تَرِينَ مِنْ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي...

And if thou dost see any man, say,

إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا (٢٦)

'I have vowed a fast to (Allah) Most Gracious, and this day will I enter into no talk with any human being.' "

**C2479.** She was to decline all conversation with man or woman, on the plea of a vow to Allah.

The "**fast**" here does not mean abstinence literally from eating and drinking. She has just been advised to eat the dates and drink of the stream. It means abstinence from the ordinary household meals, and indeed from human intercourse generally.

فَأَنْتَ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُ...

27. At length she brought the (babe) to her people, carrying him (in her arms).

...قَالُوا يَا مَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا (٢٧)

They said:

"O Mary! truly an amazing thing hast thou brought!

**C2480.** The amazement of the people knew no bounds. In any case they were ready to think the worst of her, as she had disappeared from her kin for some time. But now she comes, shamelessly parading a babe in her arms! How she had disgraced the house of Aaron, the fountain of priesthood!

We may suppose that the scene took place in the Temple in Jerusalem, or in Nazareth.

يَا أُخْتَ هَارُونَ ...

28. "O sister of Aaron!

**C2481.** Aaron the brother of Moses was the first in the line of Israelite priesthood.

Mary and her cousin Elisabeth (mother of Yahya) came of a priestly family, and were therefore, "sisters of Aaron" or daughters of 'Imran (who was Aaron's father). See n. 375 to 3:35.

Mary is reminded of her high lineage and the unexceptionable morals of her father and mother. How, they said, she had fallen, and disgraced the name of her progenitors!

... مَا كَانَ أَبُوكِ امْرَأَ سَوْءٍ وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكَ بَعْثًا (٢٨)

thy father was not a man of evil, nor thy mother a woman unchaste!"

فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ...

29. But she pointed to the babe.

**C2482.** What could Mary do?

How could she explain?

Would they, in their censorious mood, accept her explanation?

All she could do was to point to the child, who, she knew, was no ordinary child. And the child came to her rescue. By a miracle he spoke, defended his mother, and preached-to an unbelieving audience.

See 3:46, and n. 388.



...قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا (٢٩)

They said: "How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?"

قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ...

30. He said:

"I am indeed a servant of Allah:

...آتَانِي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا (٣٠)

He hath given me revelation and made me a prophet;

وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ...

31. "And He hath made me Blessed wheresoever I be,

...وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا (٣١)

and hath enjoined on me Prayer and Charity as long as I live;

**C2483.** There is a parallelism throughout the accounts of Jesus and Yahya, with some variations. Both the parallelisms and the variations are interesting.

For instance Jesus declares at the very outset that he is a servant of Allah, thus negating the false notion that he was Allah or the son of Allah.

The greatness of Yahya is described in [19:12-13](#) in terms that are not applied to Jesus, but the verses [19:14-15](#) as applied to Yahya are in almost identical terms with those applied to Jesus here ([19:32-33](#)).

Devotion in Prayer and Charity is a good description of Christ at its best, and pity, purity, and devotion in Yahya are a good description of the ways leading to Prayer and Charity, just as John led to Jesus.

وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا (٣٢)

32. "(He) hath made me kind to my mother, and not overbearing or miserable;

**C2484.** Overbearing violence is not only unjust and harmful to those on whom it is practised; it is perhaps even more harmful to the person who practices it, for his soul becomes turbid, unsettled, and ultimately unhappy

and wretched,-the state of those in Hell. Here the negative qualities are "not overbearing or miserable."

As applied to John they were "not overbearing or rebellious." John bore his punishment from the State without any protest or drawing back.

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا (٣٣)

33. "So Peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the Day that I shall be raised up to life (again)!"

**C2485.** Cf. 19:15, and n. 2469.

Christ was not crucified (4:157). (R).

ذَلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ...

34. Such (was) Jesus the son of Mary:

..قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ (٣٤)

(it is) a statement of truth, about which they (vainly) dispute.

**C2486.** The disputations about the nature of Jesus Christ were vain, but also persistent and sanguinary. The modern Christian churches have thrown them into the background, but they would do well to abandon irrational dogmas altogether.

مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ مِنْ وَلَدٍ سُبْحَانَهُ...

35. It is not befitting to (the majesty of) Allah that He should beget a son.

Glory be to Him!

...إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ (٣٥)

When He determines a matter, He only says to it,

"Be,"

and it is.

**C2487.** Begetting a son is a physical act depending on the needs of men's animal nature. Allah Most High is independent of all needs, and it is derogatory to Him to

attribute such an act to Him. It is merely a relic of pagan and anthropomorphic materialist superstitions.

وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ (٣٦)

36. Verily, Allah is my Lord and your Lord: Him therefore serve ye: this is a Way that is straight.

**C2488.** As opposed to the crooked superstitions which take refuge in all sorts of metaphysical sophistries to prove three in one and one in three. In the Quran there is no crookedness (18:1). Christ's teaching was simple, like his life, but the Christians have made it crooked.

فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ...

37. But the sects differ among themselves:

...فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ مَّسْهَدٍ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ (٣٧)

and woe to the Unbelievers because of the (coming) Judgment of a momentous Day!

**C2489. Judgment.** the word in the original is Mash-had, which implies many things:

- the time or place where evidence is taken, as in a Court of Judgment;
- the time or place where people are produced (to be judged); and
- the occasion for such production for the taking of evidence.

A very expressive phrase for the Day of Judgment.

أَسْمِعْ بِهِمْ وَأَبْصِرْ يَوْمَ يَأْتُونَنَا...

38. How plainly will they see and hear, the Day that they will appear before Us!

...لَكِنَّ الظَّالِمُونَ الْيَوْمَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ (٣٨)

But the unjust today are in error manifest!

**C2490.** Cf. 50:22. and that whole passage, where the Resurrection is described.

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ...

39. But warn them of the Day of Distress, when the matter will be determined:

**C2491. Hasrat:** Sighs, sighing, regrets, distress.

...وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ (٣٩)

for (behold), they are negligent and they do not believe!

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَرِثُ الْأَرْضَ وَمَنْ عَلَيْهَا ...

40. It is We Who will inherit the earth, and all beings thereon:

**C2492.** Cf. 3:180. n. 485; 15:23, n. 1964,

Material property passes from one to another: when one dies, another inherits it. Allah gives life and death, and all that survives after physical death goes back to Allah, the original source of all things.

... وَإِلَيْنَا يُرْجَعُونَ (٤٠)

to Us will they all be returned.

### **C.140 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)**

**(19:41-65)**

*Abraham pleaded with loving earnestness  
With his father to accept the truth of Allah:  
He was turned out, but he retained  
His gentleness and was blessed. Moses  
Asked for the aid of his brother Aaron  
And was true to his people. Ismail  
Was loyal to his father and his God, and was  
A willing and accepted sacrifice to Allah.  
Idris in his highest station held fast  
To truth and integrity. Thus are the righteous*

*Shown true in their personal environment,  
And inherit the Bliss in which the salutation  
Is Peace-perfect Peace, the reward of the Constant*

### Section 3

وَأَذْكُرُ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ...

41. Also mention in the Book (the story of) Abraham:

...إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا (٤١)

he was a man of Truth, a prophet.

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ...

42. Behold, he said to his father:

**C2493.** The reference to Abraham here is in relation to his tender solicitude for his father, who had not received the light of Unity, and to whom Abraham wanted to be a guide and friend.

...يَا أَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبْصِرُ وَلَا يُعْنِي عَنْكَ شَيْئًا (٤٢)

"O my father! why worship that which heareth not and seeth not, and can profit thee nothing?"

يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي قَدْ جَاءَنِي مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِكَ...

43. "O my father! to me hath come knowledge which hath not reached thee:

**C2494.** Some are more receptive of Light than others. It is their duty and privilege to guide and point to the right Way.

...فَاتَّبِعْنِي أَهْدِكَ صِرَاطًا سَوِيًّا (٤٣)

so follow me:

I will guide thee to a Way that is even and straight.

**C2495. Sawiyan:** right, smooth, even; complete, perfect;

hence the derived meaning: in 19:10, in full possession of all the physical senses'; in that context, 'not dumb':

in 19:17, when the angel appears in the form of a man, 'completely like' a man, a man 'in all respects.'

يَا أَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ...

44. "O my father! serve not Satan:

...كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ عَصِيًّا (٤٤)

for Satan is a rebel against (Allah) Most Gracious.

**C2496.** The rebellion is all the more heinous and inexcusable, considering that Allah is Most Just, Most Merciful, Most Gracious.

يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٌ مِّنَ الرَّحْمَنِ...

45. "O my father! I fear lest a Penalty afflict thee from (Allah) Most Gracious,

**C2497.** To entertain a feeling of friendliness, instead of aversion, to Evil, is in itself a degradation of our nature, a Penalty which Allah imposes on our deliberate rejection of the Truth. And the friendliness to Evil also implies the sharing of the outlawry of Evil.

...فَتَكُونَنَّ لِلشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيًّا (٤٥)

so that thou become to Satan a friend."

قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ أَنْتَ عَنْ آلِهَتِي يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ...

46. (The father) replied:

"Dost thou hate my gods, O Abraham?

...لَئِن لَّمْ تَنْتَهَ لِأَرْجُمَنَّكَ...

If thou forbear not I will indeed stone thee:

...وَأَهْجُرْني مَلِيًّا (٤٦)

now get away from me for a good long while!"

**C2498.** Note the gentle persuasive tone of Abraham in his speeches in 19:42-45 (for we may suppose those sentences to sum up a long course of arguments) and in

19:47-48, contrasted with the brusque and repellent tone of the father's reply in this verse.

The one was the outcome of the true Light which had come to Abraham from Allah, as the other was the outcome of Pagan arrogance and the worship of brute force.

The spiritual lesson from this episode of Abraham's life may be stated in four propositions:

- the pious son is dutiful to his father and wishes him well in all things, material and spiritual,
- if the father refuses Allah's Light, the son will do his utmost to bring such Light to the father;
- having received the Light, the son will never renounce that Light, even if he has to forfeit his father's love and renounce his home;
- even if the father repels him and turns him out, his answer will be a soft answer, full of love and forgiveness on the one hand, but firmness on behalf of Truth on the other.

قَالَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ سَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكَ رَبِّي ...

47. Abraham said:

"Peace be on thee: I will pray to my Lord for thy forgiveness:

**C2499.** Cf. 9:114. where this promise of Abraham to pray for his father is referred to, and its limitations pointed out.

... إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِي حَفِيًّا (٤٧)

for He is to me Most Gracious.

وَأَعْتَزَلَكُمُ وَمَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ...

48. "And I will turn away from you (all) and from those whom ye invoke besides Allah:

...وَأَدْعُو رَبِّي عَسَىٰ أَلَا أَكُونَ بِدُعَاءِ رَبِّي شَقِيًّا (٤٨)

I will call on my Lord: Perhaps, by my prayer to my Lord, I shall be not unblest."

**C2500.** Abraham left his father and the home of his fathers (Ur of the Chaldees) and never returned.

He left because he was turned out, and because it was not possible for him to make any compromise with what was false in religion.

In return for abuse, he spoke gentle words. And he expressed his fervent hope that at least he (Abraham) would have Allah's blessing in reply to his prayers.

Here was a prefigurement of another Hijrah many centuries later! In both cases the prayer was abundantly fulfilled.

فَلَمَّا اعْتَزَلَهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ...

49. When he had turned away from them and from those whom they worshipped besides Allah,

...وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا نَبِيًّا (٤٩)

We bestowed on him Isaac and Jacob,  
and each one of them We made a prophet.

**C2501.** Isaac and Isaac's son Jacob are mentioned here as carrying on one line of Abraham's traditions. The other line was carried on by Isma'il, who is mentioned independently five verses lower down, as his line got special honour in the Holy Prophet of Islam. That is why his mention comes after that of Moses.

Cf. 21:72.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِنَا وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا (٥٠)

50. And We bestowed of Our Mercy on them,  
and We granted them lofty honor on the tongue of truth.

**C2502.** Abraham and his son and grandson Isaac and Jacob, and their fine, maintained the banner of Allah's truth for many generations, and they won deservedly high praise-the praise of truth-on the tongues of men.

Abraham prayed that he should be praised by the tongue of truth among men to come in later ages: 26:84.



Ordinary praise may mean nothing: it may be due to selfish flattery on the part of others or artful management by the person praised. Praise on the tongue of sincere truth is praise indeed!

## Section 4

وَأَذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ مُوسَى...  
...and mention in the Book (the story of) Moses:

51. Also mention in the Book (the story of) Moses:

...إِنَّهُ كَانَ مُخْلَصًا وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا (٥١)

for he was specially chosen, and he was a Messenger (and) a Prophet.

**C2503.** Moses was;

- especially chosen, and therefore prepared and instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, in order that he might free his people from Egyptian bondage; there may also be a reference to Moses' title of Kalim Allah, the one to whom Allah spoke without the intervention of angels: see 4:164, and n. 670;
- He was a prophet (nabi), in that he received inspiration; and
- he was a messenger (rasul) in that he had a Book of Revelation, and an Ummah or organized Community, for which he instituted laws. (R).

وَنَادَيْنَاهُ مِنْ جَانِبِ الطُّورِ الْأَيْمَنِ وَقَرَّبْنَاهُ نَجِيًّا (٥٢)

52. And We called him from the right side of Mount (Sinai), and made him draw near to Us, for mystic (converse).

**C2504.** The incident here I think refers to the incidents described more fully in 20:9-36; a reference may also be made to Exod. 3:1-18 and 4:1-17.

The time is when Moses (with his family) was traveling and grazing the flocks of his father-in-law Jethro, just before he got his commission from Allah. The place is somewhere near Mount Sinai (Jabal Musa).

Moses sees a Fire in the distance, but when he goes there, he hears a voice that tells him it is sacred ground. Allah asked him to put off his shoes and to draw near, and when he went near, great mysteries were revealed to him. He was given his commission, and his brother Aaron was given to him to go with him and aid him. It is after that, that he and Aaron went and faced Pharaoh in Egypt, as narrated in 7:103-144, etc.

The right side of the mountain may mean that Moses heard the voice from the **right side of the mountain** as he faced it; or it may have the figurative meaning of "right" in Arabic, i.e., the side which was blessed or sacred ground. (R).

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ مِنْ رَحْمَتِنَا أَخَاهُ هَارُونَ نَبِيًّا (٥٣)

53. And, out of Our Mercy, We gave him his brother Aaron, (also) a prophet.

**C2505.** Moses was diffident, and reluctant to go to Pharaoh as he had an impediment in his tongue, and he asked that his brother Aaron should be associated with him in his mission. Allah in His Mercy granted his request; 20:25-36.

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ...

54. Also mention in the Book (the story of) Isma'il:

...إِنَّهُ كَانَ صَادِقَ الْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا (٥٤)

He was (strictly) true to what he promised, and he was a Messenger (and) a Prophet.

**C2506.** Isma'il was Dhabih Allah i.e., the chosen sacrifice for Allah in Muslim tradition.

When Abraham told him of the sacrifice, he voluntarily offered himself for it, and never flinched from his promise, until the sacrifice was redeemed by the substitution of a ram under Allah's commands.

He was the fountain-head of the Arabian Ummah, and in his posterity came the Prophet of Allah. The Ummah and

the Book of Islam reflect back the prophethood on Isma'il.

وَكَانَ يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ...

55. He used to enjoin on his people Prayer and Charity,

وَكَانَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ مَرْضِيًّا (٥٥)

and he was most acceptable in the sight of his Lord.

**C2507.** An acceptable sacrifice: see [last note](#).

وَأَذْكُرُ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِدْرِيسَ...

56. Also mention in the Book the case of Idris:

**C2508.** Idris is mentioned twice in the Quran, viz.; here and in 21:85, where he is mentioned among those who patiently persevered.

His identification with the Biblical Enoch, who "'walked with God' (Gen. 5:21-24), may or may not be correct. Nor are we justified in interpreting verse 57 here as meaning the same thing as in Gen. 5:24 ("God took him"), that he was taken up without passing through the portals of death.

All we are told is that he was a man of truth and sincerity, and a prophet, and that he had a high position among his people. It is this point which brings him in the series of men just mentioned; he kept himself in touch with his people, and was honoured among them.

Spiritual progress need not cut us off from our people, for we have to help and guide them. He kept to truth and piety in the highest station.

...إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا (٥٦)

he was a man of truth (and sincerity), (and) a prophet:

وَرَفَعْنَاهُ مَكَانًا عَلِيًّا (٥٧)

57. And We raised him to a lofty station.

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنَ النَّبِيِّينَ...

58. Those were some of the prophets on whom Allah did bestow His Grace --

...مِن دُرِّيَّةِ آدَمَ وَمِمَّنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوحٍ...

of the posterity of Adam, and of those whom We carried (in the Ark) with Noah,

...وَمِن دُرِّيَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْرَائِيلَ...

and of the posterity of Abraham and Israel --

**C2509.** The earlier generations are grouped into three epochs from a religious point of view:

- from Adam to Noah,
- from Noah to Abraham, and
- from Abraham to an indefinite time, say to the time when the Message of Allah was corrupted and the need arose for the final Messenger of Unity and Truth.

Israel is another name for Jacob.

...وَمِمَّنْ هَدَيْنَا وَاجْتَبَيْنَا...

of those whom We guided and chose;

...إِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُ الرَّحْمَنِ خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَبُكِيًّا (٥٨)

whenever the Signs of (Allah) Most Gracious were rehearsed to them,

they would fall down in prostrate adoration and in tears.

**C2510.** The original is in the Aorist tense, implying that the "Posterity" alluded to includes not only the messengers but their worthy followers who are true to Allah and uphold His standard.

فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ...

59. But after them there followed a posterity who missed prayers and followed after lusts:

...فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غَيًّا (٥٩)

soon, then, will they face Destruction --

**C2511.** This selfish godless posterity gains the upper hand at certain times, but even then there is always a minority who see the error of their ways, repent and believe, and live righteous lives.

They are not penalized in the Hereafter because they were associated with the ungodly in time. They reap the full reward of their faith and righteousness.

إِنَّمَا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ...

60. Except those who repent and believe, and work righteousness:  
for these will enter the Garden

...وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا (٦٠)

and will not be wronged in the least --

جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَنُ عِبَادَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ...

61. Gardens of Eternity, those which (Allah) Most Gracious has promised to His servants in the Unseen:

...إِنَّهُ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ مَأْتِيًّا (٦١)

for His promise must (necessarily) come to pass.

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا إِلَّا سَلَامًا...

62. They will not there hear any vain discourse, but only salutations of peace:

**C2512. Salam**, translated "Peace", has a much wide signification. It includes;

- a sense of security and permanence, which is unknown in this life;
- soundness, freedom from defects, perfection as in the word salim;
- preservation, salvation, deliverance, as in the word sallama,
- salutation, accord with those around us;

- resignation, in the sense that we are satisfied and not discontented;
- besides the ordinary meaning of Peace, i.e., freedom from any jarring element. All these shades of meaning are implied in the word Islam. (R).

...وَالَهُمْ رِزْقُهُمْ فِيهَا بُكْرَةً وَعَسِيًّا (٦٢)

and they will have therein their sustenance, morning and evening.

**C2513. Rizq:** literally sustenance or means of subsistence, the term covers all the means of perfect satisfaction of body and soul.

**Morning and evening,** i.e., early and late, all the time, always. (R).

تِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي نُورِثُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا مَنْ كَانَ تَقِيًّا (٦٣)

63. Such is the Garden which We give as an inheritance to those of Our Servants who guard against evil.

وَمَا نُنزِّلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ...

64. (The angels say): "We descend not but by command of thy Lord:

**C2514.** We are apt to be impatient of the evils we see around us. We may give of our best service to Allah, and yet see no results. In our human short-sightedness we may complain within ourselves. But we must not be impatient.

The angels of Grace come not haphazard, but by command of Allah according to His Universal Will and Purpose. Allah does not forget. If things are delayed, it is in accordance with a wise providence, which cares for all. Our plain duty is to be patient and constant in His service. (R).

...لَهُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِينَا وَمَا خَلْفَنَا وَمَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ...

to Him belongeth what is before us, and what is behind us, and what is between:

...وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا (٦٤)

and thy Lord never doth forget" --

رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا...

65. "Lord of the heavens and of the earth, and of all that is between them:

...فَاعْبُدْهُ وَاصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَادَتِهِ...

so worship Him, and be constant and patient in His worship:

...هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَمِيًّا (٦٥)

knowest thou of any who is worthy of the same Name as He?"

**C2515.** The more we taste of the truth and mystery of life, the more do we realise that there is no one to be mentioned in the same breath as Allah.

He is above all names. But when we think of His beautiful qualities, and picture them to ourselves by names which give us some idea of Him, we can search the whole wide world of our imagination, and we shall not find another to be compared with Him in name or quality. He is the One: praise be to Him!

### C.141 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(19:66-98)

*Why should man disbelieve in the Hereafter?  
We all must pass through the fire of temptation  
But Allah Most Gracious will save us  
If we accept Him and do right Sin  
May have its respite, but must run  
To its own destruction. We must not  
Dishonour Allah by holding false  
And monstrous ideas of Him. Glory  
To Him that He cares for all His creatures.*

## Section 5

وَيَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَإِذَا مَا مِتُّ لَسَوْفَ أُخْرَجُ حَيًّا (٦٦)

66. Man says: "What! when I am dead, shall I then be raised up alive?"

أَوَلَا يَذْكُرُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ يَكُ شَيْئًا (٦٧)

67. But does not man call to mind that We created him before out of nothing?

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَالشَّيَاطِينَ ...

68. So, by thy Lord, without doubt, We shall gather them together, and (also) the Evil Ones (with them);

**C2516.** The disbelief in a future life is not merely a philosophic doubt, but a warped will, a disingenuous obstinacy in face of our inner spiritual instincts and experiences. We were nothing before. Cannot the same Allah, Who created us out of nothing also continue our personality?

But if we refuse to accept His light and guidance, our state will grow worse and worse. We shall be deprived of His grace. We shall be herded with Satan.

In utter humiliation we shall be faced with all the consequences of our refusal of Truth.

... ثُمَّ لَنَحْضِرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا (٦٨)

then shall We bring them forth on their knees round about Hell;

**C2517. Round about Hell:** There are many ways leading to evil, and people get to it from all round.

Hence the mention of the seven Gates to Hell: see 15:44. and n. 1977. (R).

ثُمَّ لَنَنْزِعَنَّ مِنْ كُلِّ شِيعَةٍ أَيُّهُمْ أَشَدُّ عَلَى الرَّحْمَنِ عِتِيًّا (٦٩)

69. Then shall We certainly drag out from every sect all those who were worst in obstinate rebellion against (Allah) Most Gracious.



ثُمَّ لَنَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِالَّذِينَ هُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِهَا صِلِيًّا (٧٠)

70. And certainly We know best those who are most worthy of being burned therein.

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا...

71. Not one of you but will pass over it:

**C2518.** Three interpretations are possible,

1. The general interpretation is that every person must pass through or by or over the Fire. Those who have had Taqwa (see. [n. 26 to 2:2](#)) will be saved by Allah's Mercy, while unrepentant sinners will suffer the torments in ignominy,
2. If we refer the pronoun "you" to those "in obstinate rebellion" in verse 69 above, both leaders and followers in sin, this verse only applies to the wicked,
3. Some refer this verse to the Bridge over Hell, the Bridge Sirat, over which all must pass to their final Destiny. This Bridge is not mentioned in the Quran. (R).

...كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا (٧١)

this is, with thy Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished.

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَتَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا (٧٢)

72. But We shall save those who guarded against evil, and We shall leave the wrongdoers therein, (humbled) to their knees.

وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا...

73. When Our Clear Signs are rehearsed to them, the Unbelievers say to those who believe,

...أَيُّ الْقَرِيَيْنِ خَيْرٌ مَّقَامًا وَأَحْسَنُ نَدِيًّا (٧٣)

"Which of the two sides is best in point of position?

Which makes the best show in council?"

**C2519.** The Unbelievers may, for a time, make a better show in worldly position, or in people's assemblages

where things are judged by the counting of heads. But Truth must prevail even in this world, and ultimately the positions must be reversed.

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِّنْ قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَحْسَنُ أَتَانَا وَرَثِينَا (٧٤)

74. But how many (countless) generations before them have We destroyed, who were even better in equipment and in glitter to the eye?

فَلْ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ مَدًّا...

75. Say:

"If any men go astray, (Allah) Most Gracious extends (the rope) to them.

...حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا الْعَذَابَ وَإِمَّا السَّاعَةَ...

Until, when they see the warning of Allah (being fulfilled) -- either in punishment or in (the approach of) the Hour --

**C2520.** Allah's warning is that every evil deed must have its punishment, and that there will be a Hereafter, the Day of Judgment, or the Hour, as it is frequently called.

The punishment of evil often begins in this very life. For instance, over-indulgence and excesses of all kinds bring on their Nemesis quite soon in this very life. But some subtler forms of selfishness and sin will be punished as every evil will be punished-in its own good time, as the Hour approaches.

In either case, the arrogant boasting sinners will realise that their taunt-who is best in position and in forces? (19:73)-is turned against themselves.

...فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَّكَالًا وَأَضْعَفُ جُندًا (٧٥)

they will at length realize who is worst in position, and (who) weakest in forces!

وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى...

76. "And Allah doth advance in guidance those who seek guidance;

وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ مَرَدًّا (٧٦)

and the things that endure. Good Deeds, are best in the sight of thy Lord, as rewards, and best in respect of (their) eventual returns."

**C2521.** These lines are the same as in 18:46 (second clause), (where see n. 2387), except that the word **maradd** (eventual returns) is here substituted for **amal** (hope).

The meaning is practically the same: but "hope" is more appropriate in the passage dealing generally with this world's goods, and "eventual returns" in the passage dealing with the sinner's specific investments and commitments in worldly position and organized cliques.

أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتِينَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا (٧٧)

77. Hast thou then seen the (sort of) man who rejects Our Signs, yet says: "I shall certainly be given wealth and children"?

**C2522.** Besides the man who boasts of wealth and power in actual possession, there is a type of man who boasts of getting them in the future and builds his worldly hopes thereon.

Is he sure?

He denies Allah, and His goodness and Mercy. But all good is in the hands of Allah.

Can such a man then bind Allah to bless him when he rejects faith in Allah?

Or does he pretend that he has penetrated to the mysteries of the future? For no man can tell what the future holds for him.

أَطَّلَعَ الْغَيْبَ أَمْ آتَخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا (٧٨)

78. Has he penetrated to the Unseen, or has he taken a contract with (Allah) Most Gracious?

كَلَّا...

79. Nay!

...سَنَكْتُبُ مَا يَقُولُ وَنَمُدُّ لَهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ مَدًّا (٧٩)

We shall record what he says, and We Shall add and add to his punishment.

**C2523.** Such a man deserves double punishment,

- for rejecting Allah, and
- for his blasphemies with His Holy Name.

وَنَرُّهُ مَا يَقُولُ وَيَأْتِينَا فَرْدًا (٨٠)

80. To Us shall return all that he talks of, and he shall appear before Us bare and alone.

**C2524.** Literally, "We shall inherit", Cf. [19:40](#) and n. [2492](#).

Even if the man had property and power, it must go back to the Source of all things, and the man must appear before the Judgment-seat, alone and unaccompanied, stripped of all the things from which he expected so much!

وَأَخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ آلِهَةً لِيَكُونُوا لَهُمْ عِزًّا (٨١)

81. And they have taken (for worship) gods other than Allah, to give them power and glory!

**C2525.** 'Izz: exalted rank, glory, power, might, the ability to impose one's will or to carry out one's will.

كَلَّا سَيَكْفُرُونَ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ وَيَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضِدًّا (٨٢)

82. Instead, they shall reject their worship, and become adversaries against them.

**C2526.** Cf. [10:28-30](#), where the idols deny that they knew anything of their worship, and leave their worshippers in the lurch;

and [5:119](#), where Jesus denies that he asked for worship, and leaves his false worshippers to the punishment of Allah.

## Section 6

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَا أَرْسَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ تَؤُزُّهُمْ أَزًّا (٨٣)

83. Seest thou not that We have set the Evil Ones on against the Unbelievers, to incite them with fury?

**C2527.** Under the laws instituted by Allah, when evil reaches a certain stage of rebellion and defiance, it is left to gather momentum and to rush with fury to its own destruction. It is given a certain amount of respite, as a last chance: but failing repentance, its days are numbered.

The godly therefore should not worry themselves over the apparent worldly success of evil, but should get on with their own duties in a spirit of trust in Allah.

فَلَا تَعْجَلْ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّمَا نَعُدُّ لَهُمْ عَدًّا (٨٤)

84. So make no haste against them, for We but count out to them a (limited) number (of days).

يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ الْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ وَفَدًّا (٨٥)

85. The day We shall gather the righteous to (Allah) Most Gracious, like a band presented before a king for honors.

وَنَسُوقُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وِرْدًا (٨٦)

86. And We shall drive the sinners to Hell, like thirsty cattle driven down to water --

**C2528.** Note the contrast between the saved and the doomed.

- The one march with dignity like honoured ones before a king,
- and the other rush in anguish to their punishment like a herd of cattle driven down by thirst to their watering place.

Note the metaphor of the water. They rush madly for water but are plunged into the Fire!

لَا يَمْلِكُونَ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا (٨٧)

87. None shall have the power of intercession, but such a one as has received permission (or promise) from (Allah) Most Gracious.

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا (٨٨)

88. They say: "(Allah) Most Gracious has begotten a son!"

لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئًا إِدًّا (٨٩)

89. Indeed ye have put forth a thing most monstrous!

**C2529.** The belief in Allah begetting a son is not a question merely of words or of speculative thought. It is a stupendous blasphemy against Allah. It lowers Allah to the level of an animal.

If combined with the doctrine of vicarious atonement, it amounts to a negation of Allah's justice and man's personal responsibility.

It is destructive of all moral and spiritual order, and is condemned in the strongest possible terms.

تَكَادُ السَّمَاوَاتُ يَنْفَطِرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنْشِقُ الْأَرْضُ...

90. At if the skies are ready to burst, the earth to split asunder,

...وَتَخِرُّ الْجِبَالُ هَدًّا (٩٠)

and the mountains to fall down in utter ruin.

أَنْ دَعَوْا لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدًا (٩١)

91. That they should invoke a son for (Allah) Most Gracious.

وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّحْمَنِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا (٩٢)

92. For it is not consonant with the majesty of (Allah) Most Gracious that He should beget a son.

**C2530.** This basic principle was laid down early in the argument ([19:35](#)).

It was illustrated by a reference to the personal history of many messengers, including Jesus himself, who

behaved justly as men to their kith and kin and humbly served Allah.

The evil results of such superstitions were pointed out in the case of many previous generations which went to their ruin by dishonouring Allah.

And the argument is now rounded off towards the close of the Surah.

إِن كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا (٩٣)

93. Not one of the beings in the heavens and the earth but must come to (Allah) Most Gracious as a servant.

لَقَدْ أَحْصَاهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا (٩٤)

94. He does take and account of them (all), and hath numbered them (all) exactly.

**C2531.** Allah has no sons or favorites or parasites, such as we associate with human beings.

On the other hand every creature of His gets His love, and His cherishing care.

Everyone of them, however humble, is individually marked before His Throne of Justice and Mercy, and will stand before Him on his own deserts.

وَكُلُّهُمْ آتِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَرْدًا (٩٥)

95. And every one of them will come to him singly on the Day of Judgment.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَيَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ وُدًّا (٩٦)

96. On those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, will (Allah) Most Gracious bestow Love.

**C2532.** His own love, and the love of man's fellow-creatures, in this world and in the Hereafter.

Goodness breeds love and peace, and sin breeds hatred and contention.

فَاتِمَّا بِسِرِّتَاهُ بِلِسَانِكَ...

97. So have We made the (Qur'án) easy in thine own tongue,

...لِنُبَشِّرَ بِهِ الْمُتَّقِينَ وَنُنذِرَ بِهِ قَوْمًا لُدًّا (٩٧)

that with it thou mayest give Glad Tidings to the righteous, and warnings to people given to contention.

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِّنْ قَرْنٍ...

98. But how many (countless) generation before them have We destroyed?

**C2533.** Cf. 19:74, from which this sentence is brought up as a reminiscence, showing the progress of sin, the Guidance which Allah gives to the good, the degradation of blasphemy, the respite granted, and the final End, when personal responsibility will be enforced.

...هَلْ نَحِسُّ مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْ تَسْمَعُ لَهُمْ رِكْزًا (٩٨)

Canst thou find a single one of them (now) or hear (so much as) a whisper of them?