

SPREAD KNOWLEDGE

THE
HOLY QURAN

ENGLISH TAFSEER
CHAPTER 25
SURAH AL-FURQAN

COMMENTARY & EXPLANATORY

By
ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

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HOLY QURAN

CHAPTER

025

SURAH AL-FURQAN

ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

Introduction and Summary

This Surah further develops the contrast between Light and Darkness, as symbolical of knowledge and ignorance, righteousness and sin, spiritual progress and degradation. It closes with a definition of the deeds by which the righteous are known in the environment of this world.

It is mainly an early Makkan Surah, but its date has no significance.

Summery- Allah's highest gift to man is that He has furnished a Criterion for Judgement between right and wrong-in His revelation, which teaches us the true significance of our eternal Future (25:1-20, and C. 161).

Those who do not use that Criterion will be full of woe when the Judgement comes, for Allah gave full warning at all times (25:21-44, and C. 162).

In the contrasts of shade and sun, night and day, death and life, and the whole ordering of Allah's Creation, men may learn of Allah Most Gracious; and the virtues of the righteous respond to Allah's care them (25:45-77, and C. 163).

C.161 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(25:1-20)

*Among the highest and greatest of the gifts of Allah
Is His Revelation, which is the Criterion
By which we may judge between right
And wrong-between false and true worship,
Between the Message that comes from Allah
And the forgeries of men, between the Real
In our eternal Future and the Fancies
By which we are misled. The Prophets of Allah
Come as men to live among men and guide them.*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي ...

1. Blessed is He

C3052. Tabaraka: the root meaning is "increase" or "abundance".

Here that aspect of Allah's dealing with His creatures is emphasised, which shows His abundant goodness to all His creatures, in that He sent the Revelation of His Will, not only in the unlimited Book of Nature, but in a definite Book in human language, which gives clear directions and admonitions to all.

The English word "**blessed**" hardly conveys that meaning, but I can find no other without departing far from established usage. To emphasise the meaning I have explained, I have translated "Blessed is" but "Blessed be..." is also admissible, as it brings out another shade of meaning, that we praise and bless His holy name.

... نَزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ ...

Who sent down the Criterion to His servant,

C3053. That by which we can judge clearly between right and wrong.

Here the reference is to the Quran, which has already been symbolised by light. This symbol is continued here, and many contrasts are shown, in the midst of which we can distinguish between the true and the false by Allah's Light, especially the contrast between righteousness and sin.

... لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا (١)

that it may be an admonition to all creatures --

C3054. The pronoun in **yakuna** may refer either to **Furqan** (the Criterion) or to '**Abd** (the holy Prophet).

In either case the ultimate meaning is the same. The Quran is the standing Criterion for judgment between right and wrong.

الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

2. He to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth:

... وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ ...

no son has He begotten, nor has He a partner in His dominion:

... وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا (٢)

it is He Who created all things, and ordered them in due proportions.

C3055. The majesty of Allah and His independence of all wants or help are mentioned to show how exceedingly great is His goodness in revealing His Will to us.

وَاتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً لَّا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ...

3. Yet have they taken, besides Him, gods that can create nothing but are themselves created;

C3056. This is the first great distinction taught by the Criterion; to know the attributes of the true God, as against the false fancies of men. (R).

... وَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ لِأَنفُسِهِمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا...

that have no control of hurt or good to themselves;

... وَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ مَوْتًا وَلَا حَيَاةً وَلَا نُشُورًا (٣)

nor can they control Death nor Life nor Resurrection.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكُ افْتَرَاهُ وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ آخَرُونَ...

4. But the Misbelievers say:

"Naught is this but a lie which he has forged, and others have helped him at it."

C3057. Ifk, which I have translated a "lie" may be distinguished from **zur** at the end of this verse, translated "falsehood".

The "lie" which the enemies attributed to the holy Prophet of Allah was supposed to be something which did not exist in reality, but was invented by him with the aid of other people: the implication was that:

- the Revelation was not a revelation but a forgery,
- and that the things revealed e.g. the news of the Hereafter, the Resurrection, the Judgment, the Bliss

of the Righteous and the sufferings of the Evil, were fanciful and had no basis in fact.

Delusion is also suggested.

The reply is that, so far from that being the case, the facts were true and the charges were false (**zar**),-the falsehood being due to the habits of iniquity for which the Misbelievers' whole mental and spiritual attitude was responsible. (R).

... فَقَدْ جَاؤُوا ظُلْمًا وَزُورًا (٤)

In truth it is they who have put forward an iniquity and a falsehood.

وَقَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمْلَى عَلَيْهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا (٥)

5. And they say:

"Tales of the ancients, which he has caused to be written: and they are dictated before him morning and evening."

C3058. In their misguided arrogance they say: 'We have heard such things before; they are pretty tales which have come down from ancient times; they are good for amusement, but who takes them seriously?'

When the beauty and power of the Revelation are pointed out, and its miracle as coming from an unlearned man, they again hint at other men who wrote them, though they could not produce any one who could write anything like it.

قُلْ أَنْزَلَهُ الَّذِي يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

6. Say:

"This (Qur'án) was sent down by Him Who knows the Mystery (that is) in the heavens and the earth:

C3059. The answer is that the Quran teaches spiritual knowledge of what is ordinarily hidden from men's sight, and such knowledge can only come from Allah, to Whom alone is known the secret of the whole Creation.

In spite of man's sin and shortcomings, He forgives, and He sends His most precious gift, i.e., the revelation of His Will.

... إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا (٦)

verily He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

وَقَالُوا مَالِ هَذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ ...

7. And they say:

"What sort of a messenger is this, who eats food, and walks through the streets?

... لَوْلَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ فَيَكُونُ مَعَهُ نَذِيرًا (٧)

Why has not an angel been sent down to him to give admonition with him?

C3060. This is another objection:

'He is only a man like us: why is not an angel sent down, if not by himself, at least with him?'

The answer is:

angels would be of no use to men as Messengers, as they and men would not understand each other, and if angels came, it might cause more confusion and wonder than understanding in men's minds.

Cf. 21:7-8; 6:8-9.

The office of an angel is different. A teacher for mankind is one who shares their nature, mingles in their life, is acquainted with their doings, and sympathises with their joys and sorrows.

... أَوْ يُلْقَىٰ إِلَيْهِ كَنْزٌ ...

8. "Or (why) has not a treasure been bestowed on him,

... أَوْ تَكُونُ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ يَأْكُلُ مِنْهَا ...

or why has he (not) a garden for enjoyment?"

C3061. Literally, 'that he may eat out of it'.

As shown in n. 776 to 5:66, **akala** (to eat) has a comprehensive meaning, implying enjoyment of all kinds.

Here the garden itself stands for a type of the amenities of life: its fruits would be available for eating, its coolness for rest and refreshment, its waters and its landscape for aesthetic delight.

... وَقَالَ الظَّالِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَّسْحُورًا (٨)

The wicked say: "Ye follow none other than a man bewitched."

C3062. Cf. 17:47.

This speech, of the wicked or the ungodly, is meant to be even more bitter than that of the Misbelievers. It makes out the Prophet to be a demented fool!

انظروا كيف ضربوا لك الأمثال ...

9. See what kinds of companions they make for thee!

... فَضَلُّوا فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلًا (٩)

But they have gone astray, and never a way will they be able to find!

C3063. The charges the enemies made against the Messenger of Allah recoiled on those who made them. The Messenger was vindicated, and went from strength to strength, for Allah's Truth will always prevail.

The men who perversely leave the way of truth, righteousness, and sincerity, have not only missed the Way, but on account of their perversity they will never be able to find any way by which they can get back to Truth.

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي إِنْ شَاءَ جَعَلَ لَكَ خَيْرًا مِّنْ ذَلِكَ جَنَّاتٍ...

10. Blessed is He Who, if that were His will, could give thee better (things) than those -- Gardens

C3064. Cf. above, 25:1.

The reminiscent phrase shows that the first argument, about the Revelation and Prophethood, is completed, and we now pass on to the contrast, the fate of the rejecters of both.

... تُجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَيَجْعَلُ لَكَ فُصُورًا (١٠)

beneath which rivers flow; and He could give thee Palaces (secure to dwell in).

C3065. This phrase is usually symbolized of the Bliss in the Hereafter. If it were Allah's Plan, He could give his Messengers complete felicity and power in this life also. Instead of being persecuted, mocked, driven out of their homes, and having to exert their utmost powers of body, mind, and character to plant the flag of Truth in an unbelieving world, they could have lived in ease and security. But that would not have given the real lessons they came to teach struggling humanity by their example.

Section 2

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِالسَّاعَةِ...

11. Nay, they deny the Hour (of the Judgment to come):

C3066. Denying the Hour of Judgment means denying the power of Justice and Truth to triumph; it means asserting the dominion of Evil. But Allah himself will punish them, as shown in the following verses.

... وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِمَنْ كَذَّبَ بِالسَّاعَةِ سَعِيرًا (١١)

but We have prepared a Blazing Fire for such as deny the Hour:

إِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ سَمِعُوا لَهَا تَغِيظًا وَزَفِيرًا (١٢)

12. When it sees them from a place far off, they will hear its fury and its raging sigh.

C3067. For **zafir**, a deep emission of breath or a sigh, see n. 1607 to 11:106.

Here the Fire is personified. It is raging with hunger and fury, and as soon as it sees them from ever so far, it emits a sigh of desire. Till then they had not realised their full danger.

Now, just as their heart begins to tremble with terror, they are bound together-like with like,-and cast into the roaring flames!

وَإِذَا أُلْفُوا مِنْهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مُقَرَّبِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَالِكَ تَبُورًا (١٣)

13. And when they are cast, bound together, into a constricted place therein, they will plead for destruction there and then!

C3068. Anything-total annihilation-would be better than the anguish they will suffer. But no annihilation will be granted to them.

One destruction will not be enough to wipe out the intensity of their anguish. They will have to ask for many destructions, but they will not get them!

لَا تَدْعُوا الْيَوْمَ تَبُورًا وَاحِدًا وَادْعُوا تَبُورًا كَثِيرًا (١٤)

14. "This day plead not for a single destruction: plead for destruction oft-repeated!"

فَلْ أَدْلِكَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ جَنَّةُ الْخُلْدِ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ....

15. Say:

"Is that best, or the eternal Garden, promised to the righteous?"

C3069. Shifting the scene back to this life, they may fairly be asked:

"Here is the result of the two courses of conduct: which do you prefer?"

... كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَزَاءً وَمَصِيرًا (١٥)

For them, that is a reward as well as a goal (of attainment).

C3070. To the righteous, the final Bliss will in one sense be a reward. But the word "**reward**" does not truly represent facts, for two reasons:

- the Bliss will be greater than they deserved; and
- righteousness is its own reward.

The best way of expressing the result would be to say that;

- their highest Wish will now have been attained;
- the goal will have been reached;
- they will be in Allah's Presence.

That is salvation in the highest.

لَهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَاءُونَ خَالِدِينَ...

16. "For them there will be therein all that they wish for: they will dwell (there) for aye:

... كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ وَعْدًا مَسْئُومًا (١٦)

a promise to be prayed for from thy Lord."

C3071. That is the sort of thing

- to be prayed for from Allah which he has made binding upon Himself and not ephemeral things, even though they may be good.

And that is the sort of thing that Allah has promised and undertaken to give.

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ...

17. The Day He will gather them together as well as those whom they worship besides Allah,

... فَيَقُولُ ...

He will ask:

C3072. The question is as in a Court of Justice, to convince those who stand arraigned.

... أَنْتُمْ أَضَلَلْتُمْ عِبَادِي هَؤُلَاءِ أَمْ هُمْ ضَلُّوا السَّبِيلَ (١٧)

"Was it ye who led these my servants astray, or did they stray from the Path themselves?"

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ مَا كَانَ يَنْبَغِي لَنَا أَنْ نَتَّخِذَ مِنْ دُونِكَ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ...

18. They will say:

"Glory to Thee! not meet was it for us that we should take for protectors others besides Thee:

C3073. The creatures of Allah who were worshipped will prove that they never asked for worship: on the contrary they themselves worshipped Allah and sought the protection of Allah and of none but Allah. Cf. 46:5-6.

They will go further and show that the false worshippers added ingratitude to their other sins: for Allah bestowed abundance on them, and they blasphemed against Allah. They were indeed "worthless and destroyed", for the word *bar* bears both significations.

... وَلَكِنْ مَتَّعْتَهُمْ وَأَبَاءَهُمْ حَتَّى نَسُوا الذِّكْرَ...

but Thou didst bestow, on them and their fathers, good things (in life), until they forgot the Message:

... وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا بُورًا (١٨)

for they were a people (worthless and) lost.

فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ بِمَا تَقُولُونَ فَمَا تَسْتَطِيعُونَ صَرْفًا وَلَا نَصْرًا...

19. (Allah will say):

"Now have they proved you liars in what ye say: so ye cannot avert (your penalty) nor (get) help."

C3074. The argument is as in a court of justice. If the false worshippers plead that they were misled by those whom they falsely worshipped, the latter will be confronted with them and will prove that plea to be false. No help can be got from them, and the penalty cannot then be averted. After all these things are thus explained in detail beforehand, all ungodly men should repent and turn to Allah.

False worship is here identified with sin, for sin is disobedience to Allah, and arises from a wrong appreciation of Allah's attributes and His goodness to His creatures. The sinful man refuses, in his conduct, to serve Allah: he serves other things than Allah. (R).

... وَمَنْ يَظْلِمِ مَتَّكُم نُدِقْهُ عَذَابًا كَبِيرًا (١٩)

And whoever among you does wrong, him shall We cause to taste of a grievous Penalty.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا إِنَّهُمْ لَيَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ...

20. And the messengers whom We sent before thee were all (men) who ate food

... وَيَمْشُونَ فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ...

and walked through the streets:

C3075. Cf. above, 25:7.

... وَجَعَلْنَا بَعْضَكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ فِتْنَةً ...

We have made some of you as a trial for others:

C3076. In Allah's universal Plan, each unit or thing serves a purpose.

If some are rich, the poor should not envy them: it may be that the rich man's proximity is itself a trial of their virtue.

If some are poor, the righteous rich should not despise or neglect them: it may be that their coming within their sight is a trial for the real feeling of charity or brotherly love in the rich.

If A is bad-tempered or persecutes or ill-uses B, it may be an opportunity for B to show his patience or humility or his faith in the ultimate prevalence of justice and truth.

Whatever our experiences with other human beings may be, we must make them subserve the ends of our spiritual improvement and perhaps theirs too.

... أَتَصْبِرُونَ...

will ye have patience?

... وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ بَصِيرًا (٢٠)

For Allah is One Who sees (all things).

C.162 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(25:21-44)

*Woe to the misbelievers who arrogantly
Demand to see Allah, yet reject
His Signs! The Judgement will come
And then they see, too late, how evil
Casts nothing but treacherous snares for man.
Slowly comes Allah's Revelation, in ways
Most conducive to man's enlightenment
Men in their folly reject the most obvious
Signs of Allah. Let them mock! Soon
Will they know! Alas! men ruled by self-impulse
Are worse than brute beasts to guide or control!*

Section 3

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ ...

21. Such as fear not the meeting with Us (for Judgment) say:

"Why are not the angels sent down to us,

C3077. The blasphemers who have given up all Faith and laugh at the Hereafter: nothing is sacred to them: their arrogance and insolence are beyond all bounds.

... أَوْ تَرَى رَبَّنَا ...

or (why) do we not see our Lord?"

C3078. Cf. 2:55.

The Israelites in the time of Moses demanded to see Allah. But they were struck with thunder and lightning even as they looked on. Indeed death would have been their fate, had it not been for the mercy of Allah.

... لَقَدْ اسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ ...

Indeed they have an arrogant conceit of themselves,

... وَعَتَوْا عُتُوًّا كَبِيرًا (٢١)

and mighty is the insolence of their impiety!

يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَا بُشْرَىٰ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُجْرِمِينَ...

22. The Day they see the angels -- no joy will there be to the sinners that Day:

... وَيَقُولُونَ حَجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا (٢٢)

the (angels) will say:

"There is a barrier forbidden (to you) altogether!"

C3079. They will not be allowed to enjoy any of the felicity or peace which will be the normal state of the new world of Reality. Their own past will stand as a barrier to shut them off .

وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَّنْثُورًا (٢٣)

23. And We shall turn to whatever deeds they did (in this life), and We shall make such deeds as floating dust scattered about.

C3080. The false hopes they built on in this life, and the deeds did under the shadow of such false hopes will be dissipated as if they were dust flying about in the wind. They will have no value whatever.

أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَيْرٌ مُّسْتَقَرًّا وَأَحْسَنُ مَقِيلًا (٢٤)

24. The Companions of the Garden will be well, that Day, in their abode, and have the fairest of places for repose.

C3081. The barrier which will shut out the evil ones will not exist for the righteous, who will have an abode of bliss and repose, for they will be in the Garden of Allah's Good Pleasure.

وَيَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ السَّمَاءُ بِالْغَمَامِ وَنُزِّلَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ تَنْزِيلًا (٢٥)

25. The Day the heaven shall be rent asunder with clouds, and angels shall be sent down, descending (in ranks) --

C3082. It will be a new world, and the way to describe it must necessarily draw upon our present experience of the finest things in nature.

The sky, which now appears remote and unpeopled will be rent asunder. There will appear clouds of glory - angels and spiritual Lights of all grades and ranks- and the true majesty and goodness of Allah will be visible as it should be in reality, and as it is not now, on account of "our muddy vesture of decay". (R).

المُلْكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ لِلرَّحْمَنِ...

26. That Day, the dominion as of right and truth, shall be (wholly) for (Allah) Most Merciful:

C3083. See last note.

... وَكَانَ يَوْمًا عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ عَسِيرًا (٢٦)

it will be a day of dire difficulty for the Misbelievers.

وَيَوْمَ يَعْضُ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ...

27. The Day that the wrongdoer will bite at his hands, He will say,

... يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا (٢٧)

"Oh! would that I had taken a (straight) path with the Messenger!

C3084. The words are general, and for us the interest is in a general sense.

A man who actually receives the Truth and is on the right path is all the more culpable if he is diverted from that path by the machinations of a worldly friend.

The particular person whom some Commentators mention in this connection was one 'Uqba who received the light of Islam, but was misled afterwards by a worldly friend into apostasy and blasphemy. He came to an evil end afterwards.

يَا وَيْلَتَى لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا (٢٨)

28. "Ah! woe is me! would that I had never taken such a one for a friend!

لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي...

29. "He did lead me astray from the Message (of Allah) after it had come to me!

... وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ خَدُوْلًا (٢٩)

Ah! the Evil One is but a traitor to man!

C3085. The seductive wiles of the Satan are merely meant for snares. There is fraud and treachery in them. The deceived ones are left in the lurch after the way of escape is made impossible for them.

وَقَالَ الرَّسُوْلُ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُوْرًا (٣٠)

30. Then the Messenger will say:

"O my Lord! truly my people took this Qur'an for just foolish nonsense."

C3086. "My people" are of course the unbelieving Quraish. They treated the Quran with neglect, i.e., something to be discarded. But they were only a handful of people whose vested interests were touched by the beneficent reforms initiated by Islam.

They soon passed away, and all Arabic-speaking or Arabic-understanding people have considered the Quran as a treasury of Truths expressed in the most beautiful possible language, with a meaning that grows deeper with research. (R).

... وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا مِّنَ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ

31. Thus have We made for every prophet an enemy among the sinners:

... وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هٰدِيًّا وَنٰصِيْرًا (٣١)

but enough is thy Lord to guide and to help.

C3087. It is the nature of sin to be hostile to truth and righteousness, but such hostility will not harm the righteous and need cause no misgiving because Allah will guide and help those who work in His cause.

And what could be better or more effective than His guidance and help?

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً...

32. Those who reject Faith say: "Why is not the Qur'an revealed to him all at once?"

... كَذَلِكَ لِنُنَبِّتَ بِهِ قُودَاكَ وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلاً (٣٢)

Thus (is it revealed), that We may strengthen thy heart thereby, and We have rehearsed it to thee in slow, well-arranged stages, gradually.

C3088. Three reasons are given for the gradual revelation of the Quran.

- **"To strengthen thy heart"**: the tremendous task of winning the Arab nation, and, through them, the whole world, to Islam, required superhuman patience, constancy, and firmness, and these qualities were strengthened by the gradual promulgation of solutions to each difficulty as it arose.
- **"Slow, well-arranged stages"**: though the stages were gradual, as the occasion demanded from time to time, in the course of twenty-three years, the whole emerged, when completed, as a well-arranged scheme of spiritual instruction, as we have seen in following the arrangement of the Suras.
- Questions put and answers given: see next note.

وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا (٣٣)

33. And no question do they bring to thee but We reveal to thee the truth and the best explanation (thereof).

C3089. Divine knowledge is a fathomless ocean. But glimpses of it can be obtained by any individuals sincerely searching for the Truth. Their progress will be in grades. If they ask questions, and answers are then furnished to them, they are more likely to apprehend the

Truth, as they have already explored the part of the territory in which they are interested.

In the same way, when concrete questions arise by the logic of events, and they are answered not only for the occasion, but from a general stand-point, the teaching has a far greater chance of penetrating the human intelligence and taking shape in practical conduct. And this is the usual way of instruction in the Quran.

الَّذِينَ يُحْشَرُونَ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ...

34. Those who will be gathered to Hell (prone) on their faces --

C3090. That is, in ignominy.

... أُولَٰئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا (٣٤)

they will be in an evil plight, and, as to Path, most astray.

C3091. This verse may be compared and contrasted with [25:24 above](#).

Here the argument is rounded off about the distinction between the Good and Evil in their final Destiny. The Good are to have "the fairest of places for repose", and in contrast, the Evil are, "as to Path, most astray". They have no repose, and their wanderings lead nowhere.

Section 4

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلْنَا مَعَهُ أَخَاهُ هَارُونَ وَزِيرًا (٣٥)

35. Before this, We sent Moses the Book, and appointed his brother Aaron with him as Minister;

C3092. Cf. 20:29, and the whole passage there, which is merely referred to here, to show how previous Prophets were treated, but how they stuck fast to the Criterion given, to distinguish between Good and Evil.

فَقُلْنَا اذْهَبَا إِلَى الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا...

36. And We commanded: "Go ye both, to the people who have rejected Our Signs":

... قَدَمَرْنَاَهُمْ تَدْمِيرًا (٣٦)

and those (people) We destroyed with utter destruction.

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ لَمَّا كَذَّبُوا الرُّسُلَ أَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ آيَةً...

37. And the people of Noah -- when they rejected the messengers, We drowned them, and We made them as a Sign for mankind;

C3093. The stories of Noah, of the prophets of 'Ad and Thamud (and of other prophets), in the reactions of their communities to their teaching are told in 26:105-159.

Here they are just mentioned to illustrate how little respect past ages had for their prophets and teachers of Truth. But Allah's Truth did not suffer: it was the blind rejecters of spiritual Truth who were wiped out.

... وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا (٣٧)

and We have prepared for (all) wrongdoers a grievous Penalty --

وَعَادًا وَتَمُودَ وَأَصْحَابَ الرَّسِّ وَقُرُونًا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ كَثِيرًا (٣٨)

38. As also 'Ad and Thamud, and the Companions of the Rass, and many a generation between them.

C3094. Commentators are not clear as to who the "**Companions of the Rass**" were. The root meaning of "**rass**" is an old well or shallow water-pit. Another root connects it with the burial of the dead. But it is probably the name of a town or place.

The "**Companions of the Rass**" may well have been the people of Shu'aib, as they are here mentioned with the 'Ad, the Thamud, and Lut's people, and the people of Shu'aib are mentioned in a similar connection in 26:176-190 and in 11:84-95.

Shu'aib was the prophet of the Madyan people in the north-west of Arabia, where many old wells are found. There is however an oasis town al-Rass in the district of Qasim in Middle Najd, about thirty-five miles south-west of the town of 'Unaiza, reputed to be the central point of the Arabian Peninsula, and situated midway between Makkah and Basra.

See Doughly's Arabia Deserts, thin-paper one-volume edition, London 1926, 11, 435 and Map, Lat. 26*N., and Long. 43*E.

وَكُلًّا ضَرَبْنَا لَهُ الْأَمْثَالَ...

39. To each one We set forth parables and examples;

... وَكُلًّا تَبَّرْنَا تَتْبِيرًا (٣٩)

and each one We broke to utter annihilation (for their sins).

وَلَقَدْ أَتَوْا عَلَى الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي أَمْطَرَتِ مَطَرَ السَّوْءِ...

40. And the (Unbelievers) must indeed have passed by the town on which was rained a shower of evil:

C3095. This refers to Lut's story and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the wicked cities of the plain near the Dead Sea, by a shower of brimstone. The site lies on the highway between Arabia and Syria.

Cf. [15:74](#), [76](#), and [n. 1998](#).

... أَقْلَمَ يَكُونُوا يَرَوْنَهَا...

did they not then see it (with their own eyes)?

... بَلْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ نُشُورًا (٤٠)

But they fear not the Resurrection.

وَإِذَا رَأَوْكَ إِن يَتَّخِذُونَكَ إِلَّا هُزُوعًا...

41. When they see thee, they treat thee no otherwise than in mockery:

... أَهَذَا الَّذِي بَعَثَ اللَّهُ رَسُولًا (٤١)

"Is this the one whom Allah has sent as a messenger?"

إِن كَادَ لَيُضِلَّنَا عَنْ آلِهَتِنَا لَوْلَا أَن صَبَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا...

42. "He indeed would well-nigh have misled us from our gods, had it not been that we were constant to them!"

... وَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ حِينَ يَرَوْنَ الْعَذَابَ مَنْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا (٤٢)

Soon will they know, when they see the Penalty, who it is that is most misled in Path!

C3096. "Path" (Sabil) is almost equivalent here to conduct, way of life.

أَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ ...

43. Seest thou such a one as taketh for his god his own passion (or impulse)?

... أَفَأَنْتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا (٤٣)

Couldst thou be a disposer of affairs for him?

C3097. The man who worships his **own passions** or impulses or desires is the most hopeless to teach or lead or guide.

If it were anything else the matter with him, the Prophet could argue with him. But Reason cannot prevail over blind passion. It is vain to hope that such a man could be led, until his mad desires are killed. No one could undertake any responsibility for him, for he obeys no law and follows no advice. He is worse than brute beasts, which may not understand, but at least follow the wholesome instincts implanted in them by Allah. The lawless man has killed his instincts and is unwilling to submit to guidance.

أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ...

44. Or thinkest thou that most of them listen or understand?

... إِنَّهُمْ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ ...

They are only like cattle; --

... بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا (٤٤)

nay, they are worse astray in Path.

C.163 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(25:45-77)

*But the Signs of Allah are everywhere
In creation. The Sun and the Shadow,
The Day and the Night, the Wind and the Rain-
All things in nature are symbols, and point
Too the Law Divine, and the destiny, good
Or ill, of man. Will he not learn
And put his trust in Him, the Merciful?
His true servants ever adore him
In humility and fear of wrong, in faith
And just moderation in life, in respect
For duties owed to Allah and men
And self, in avoidance of all that is false
Or futile, in strict and grateful attention
To Allah's Message, and their families
In the van of those who love and honour Allah.*

Section 5

أَلَمْ تُرَ إِلَى رَبِّكَ ...

45. Hast thou not turned thy vision to thy Lord? --

C3098. We saw in 24:35 that Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth.

We have now another sublime passage, in which we are asked to contemplate the Glory of Allah by a parable of the subtle play of Light and Shade in Allah's creation. (R).

... كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ ...

how He doth prolong the Shadow!

C3099. In our artificial life and surroundings we fail to see some of the finest mysteries of Light and Shade.

We praise, and rightly, the wonderful colours of sunset. We see, particularly in climates more northerly than that of India, the subtle play of Light and Shade in the twilight succeeding sunsets.

If we were as assiduous in seeing sunrises and the play of Light and Shade preceding them, we should see phenomena even more impressive, as the early morning seems to us more holy than any other time in the twenty-four hours of the sun's daily journey.

- There is first the false dawn, with its curious uncertain light and the curious long uncertain shadows which it casts.
- Then there are the streaks of black in the East, succeeded by the true dawn, with its delicate tones of colours and light and shade.

The fight of this true or false Dawn is not given by the direct rays of the sun. In a sense it is not light, but the shadows or reflections of light. And they gradually merge into actual sunrise, with its more substantial or more defined shadows, which we can definitely connect with the sun.

... وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا...

If He willed, He could make it stationary!

... ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا الشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا (٤٥)

Then do We make the sun its guide:

C3100. The morning shadows are long but more definite, and their length and direction are seen to be guided by the sun. But they change insensibly every second or fraction of a second.

... ثُمَّ قَبَضْنَاهُ إِلَيْنَا ...

46. Then We draw it in towards Ourselves --

C3101. As the sun rises higher and higher, the shadows contract. In regions where the sun gets actually to the zenith at noon, there is no shadow left at that time.

Where does it go to?

It was but a shadow cast by a substance and it gets absorbed by the substance which produced it. (R).

... فَبِضْءٍ يُسِيرًا (٤٦)

a contraction by easy stages.

C3102. Let us now reverently turn our vision (as far as we are able) to the symbolic meaning.

Allah is the Light. All things in creation – whether concrete or abstract – are but shadows, depending on His Light. All shadows are not equal. He gives length or size of substance to such as He pleases. And some shadows almost become reflected lights, like the light of the false or the true Dawn. Such are holy men, in all kinds of gradations.

The shadows are constantly in a state of flux; so are all things in Creation, all things we see or covet in this life. Allah, if He wills, can give some of them greater fixity or comparative stability. (R).

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا وَالنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا...

47. And He it is Who makes the Night as a Robe for you; and Sleep as Repose,

... وَجَعَلَ النَّهَارَ نُشُورًا (٤٧)

and makes the Day (as it were) a Resurrection.

C3103. It is still the contrast between Light and Shade;

- but the shade of Night is as a Robe to cover and screen us and give us Repose from activity;
and the Light of Day is for striving, work, activity.

- Or again, the Night is like Death, our temporary Death before Judgment, the time during which our senses are as sealed in Sleep;

and the Day is like the renewal of Life at the Resurrection.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ الرِّيحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ...

48. And He it is Who sends the Winds as heralds of glad tidings, going before His Mercy,

C3104. Cf. 7:57.

The Winds are heralds of Joy, ushering in Rain, which is one form of Allah's Mercy.

Again, the symbolism presents a fresh point of view. Heat (which is connected with light) sets up currents in the atmosphere, besides sucking up moisture from the seas, and distributing it by means of Winds over wide surfaces of the earth.

In the physical world we know the beneficent action of heat on life, and by contrast, we also know how intolerable high temperatures may become, and how the cloud-bearing Winds come as welcome heralds of rain. (R).

... وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً طَهُورًا (٤٨)

and We send down purifying water from the sky --

C3105. Rain water (in pure air) is not only pure water distilled in air and sky, but it is the best purifying and sanitating agent on the largest scale known to US.

لِنُحْيِيَ بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَيِّتًا...

49. That with it We may give life to a dead land,

... وَنُسْقِيهِ مِمَّا خَلَقْنَا أَنْعَامًا وَأَنَاسِيَّ كَثِيرًا (٤٩)

and slake the thirst of things We have created, cattle and men in great numbers.

C3106. The whole cycle of water, -sea, clouds, rain or hail or snow, rivers, and sea again,- is a remarkable

illustration of the processes of nature making Allah's providence visible to us.

The salts of the sea sanitize and purify all the filth that pours into it. Water action, in the form of rain, frost, glaciers, rivers, lakes, etc., is responsible for the building up and configuration of the crust of the earth, and is the chief agent in physical geography. A parched desert quickly comes to life under the action of water.

All drinking water, whether derived from rivers, canals, lakes, reservoirs, springs, wells, or water-works of any kind, are ultimately traceable to rain.

The connection of life with water is intimate. The physical basis of life itself, protoplasm, is in great part water; see [25:54](#) below.

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا لَهُ بَيْنَهُمْ لِيَذَّكَّرُوا ...

50. And We have distributed the (water) amongst them, in order that they may celebrate (Our) praises,

C3107. The water is distributed all over the world, in order that all life may receive its support according to its needs. In [25:48-50](#), we have the argument of contrasts stated in another way.

Water is life, and is made available to sustain life all over the world; this is a physical fact which all can see. But water is also the symbol of spiritual life, whose sustaining principle is the Will of Allah as made known to us through Revelation. It sometimes comes to us in our inward or spiritual storms.

Many violent unsettlements of the spirit are but heralds of the refreshing showers of spiritual understanding that come in their wake. They purify our souls, and produce spiritual Life even where there was a parched spiritual desert before. They continue to sustain us in our normal spiritual Life out of the reservoirs of Allah's Revelation, which are open to all, and well distributed in time and space.

The universality of distribution is again referred to in the following verse.

... فَأَبَى أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ إِذَا كُفُرًا (٥٠)

but most men are averse (to aught) but (rank) ingratitude.

C3108. In contrast to Allah's abounding Mercy is man's base ingratitude; another symbolic contrast between Light and Darkness, or Water and Drought.

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَبَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ نَذِيرًا (٥١)

51. Had it been Our Will, We could have sent a warner to every center of population,

C3109. Allah's Message has been distributed to all nations. If it had been necessary, a Prophet could have been sent to every town and village.

But Allah's Plan is different. He has sent His Light to every heart, through Ms Signs in man's conscience, in Nature, and in Revelation.

فَلَا تُطِعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَجَاهِدْهُمْ بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا (٥٢)

52. Therefore listen not to the Unbelievers, but strive against them with the utmost strenuousness, with the (Qur'án).

C3110. The distribution of Allah's Signs being universal, the Prophet of Allah pays no heed to carping critics who reject Faith. He wages the biggest Jihad of all, with the weapon of Allah's Revelation,

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ...

53. It is He Who has let free the two bodies of flowing water:

C3111. Maraja: literally, let free or let loose cattle for grazing.

Bahrain: two seas, or two bodies of flowing water; for *bahr* is applied both to the salt sea and to rivers. In the world taken as a whole, there are two bodies of water, viz.:

- the great salt Ocean, and

- the bodies of sweet water fed by rain, whether they are rivers, lakes or underground springs:

their source in rain makes them one, and their drainage, whether above-ground or underground, eventually to the Ocean, also makes them one.

They are free to mingle, and in a sense they do mingle, for there is a regular water-cycle: see n. 3106 above: and the rivers flow constantly to the sea, and tidal rivers get sea-water for several miles up their estuaries at high tide.

Yet in spite of all this, the laws of gravitation are like a barrier or partition set by Allah, by which the two bodies of water as a whole are always kept apart and distinct. In the case of rivers carrying large quantities of water to the sea, like the Mississippi or the Yangtse-Kiang, the river-water with its silt remains distinct from sea-water for a long distance out at sea. But the wonderful Sign is that the two bodies of water, though they pass through each other, remain distinct bodies, with their distinct functions.

... هَذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ وَهَذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ ...

one palatable and sweet, and the other salt and bitter;

... وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا وَحِجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا (٥٣)

yet has He made a barrier between them, a partition that is forbidden to be passed.

C3112. In Allah's overall scheme of things, bodies of salt and sweet water, which are adjoining and yet separate, have significant functions. Weaving a harmonious fabric out of these different fibres shows both Allah's power and wisdom.

Incidentally, this verse points to a fact which has only recently been discovered by science. This fact relates to the oceans of the world: they meet and yet each remains separate for Allah has placed "a barrier, a partition" between them. (Eds).

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا ...

54. It is He Who has created man from water:

C3113. The basis of all living matter in the physical world, protoplasm, is water:

Cf. 24:45, notes and 21:30, and notes thereon.

... فَجَعَلَهُ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا ...

then has He established relationships of lineage and marriage:

C3114. Water is a fluid, unstable thing: yet from it arises the highest form of life known to us, in this world, man.

And man has not only the functions and characteristics of the noblest animals, but his abstract relationships are also typical of his highest nature. He can trace lineage and pedigree, and thus remember and commemorate a long line of ancestors, to whom he is bound by ties of piety, which no mere animals can do.

Further, there is the union in marriage: it is not only like the physical union of animals, but it gives rise to relationships arising out of the sexes of individuals who were not otherwise related to each other. These are physical and social facts.

But behind them, again is the symbolic lesson of spiritual contrasts; as there is a long way to go between water and man, so there is a long way to go between an ordinary man and him who is lifted up to divine Light. As opposite sexes, though different in function, are one and contribute to each other's happiness, so person of diverse talents may unite in the spiritual world for their own highest good and in the service of Allah.

... وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا (٥٤)

for thy Lord has power (over all things).

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَلَا يَضُرُّهُمْ...

55. Yet do they worship, besides Allah, things that can neither profit them nor harm them:

... وَكَانَ الْكَافِرُ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِ ظَهِيرًا (٥٥)

and the Misbeliever is a helper (of Evil), against his own Lord!

C3115. Here is the highest contrast of all-material things which are inert, and Allah, Whose goodness and power are supreme; Faith and Unfaith, meriting glad tidings and admonition; the selfish man who is self-centred, and the man of God, who works for others without reward.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا (٥٦)

56. But thee We only sent to give glad tidings and admonition.

فَلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا (٥٧)

57. Say:

"No reward do I ask of you for it but this: that each one who will may take a (straight) Path to his Lord."

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَىٰ الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهِ...

58. And put thy trust in Him Who lives and dies not; and celebrate His praise;

... وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ بَدُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا (٥٨)

and enough is He to be acquainted with the faults of His servants
--

C3116. Allah knows our faults better than we or anyone else. It is no use hiding anything from Him. We must put our trust completely in Him. His care is for all, and He is Allah Most Gracious.

الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ...

59. He Who created the heavens and the earth and all that is between, in six days,

C3117. Cf. 7:54 and n. 1031.

... ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ الْعَرْشِ...

and is firmly established on the Throne (of authority):

C3118. See n. 1386 to 10:3.

... الرَّحْمَنُ فَاسْأَلْ بِهِ خَيْرًا (٥٩)

Allah, Most Gracious: ask thou, then, about Him of any acquainted (with such things).

C3119. The argument is about the question, in whom shall we put our trust?

Worldly men put their trust in worldly things: the righteous man only in Allah.

The true distinction will be quite clear from a ray of divine knowledge. If you do not see it all clearly, ask of those who possess such knowledge.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اسْجُدُوا لِلرَّحْمَنِ...

60. When it is said to them, "Adore ye (Allah) Most Gracious!",

... قَالُوا وَمَا الرَّحْمَنُ...

they say, "And what is (Allah) Most Gracious?"

... أَنَسْجُدُ لِمَا تَأْمُرُنَا ...

Shall we adore that which thou commandest us?"

... وَزَادَهُمْ نُفُورًا (٦٠)

and it increases their flight (from the Truth).

C3120. Those who have no spiritual Light cannot understand this precept about putting all our trust in Allah.

It seems to them foolish. They have no faith, or but a superficial faith. They may possibly take the name of Allah on their lips, but they cannot understand the full significance of His title of Rahman (Most Gracious).

Perhaps they are afraid on account of their sins; perhaps they do not see how unbounded is the mercy of Allah. Such men are contrasted against the true servants of Allah, who are described below in [25:63-75](#).

Section 6

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجًا وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا سِرَاجًا وَقَمَرًا مُنِيرًا (٦١)

61. Blessed is He Who made Constellations in the skies, and placed therein a Lamp and a Moon giving light;

C3121. The glorious Lamp of the skies is the Sun; and next to him is the Moon, which gives borrowed light.

The Constellations of course include the Signs of the Zodiac, which mark the path of the planets in the heavens.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ خِلْفَةً...

62. And it is He Who made the Night and the Day to follow each other:

... لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَدَّكَّرَ أَوْ أَرَادَ شُكُورًا (٦٢)

for such as have the will to celebrate His praises or to show their gratitude.

C3122. The scenes of the phenomenal world are Signs of the Self-Revelation of Allah, for those who understand and who have the will to merge their wills in His. This they do;

- by praising Him, which means understanding something of His nature, and
- by gratitude to Him, which means carrying out His Will, and doing good to their fellow-creatures.

These two attitudes of mind and heart give rise to various consequences in their lives, which are detailed in the following verse.

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا...

63. And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility,

... وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا (٦٣)

and when the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace!"

C3123. Ignorant: in a moral sense.

Address: in the aggressive sense.

Their humility is shown in two ways:

- to those in real search of knowledge, they give such knowledge as they have and as the recipients can assimilate;
- to those who merely dispute, they do not speak harshly, but say "Peace!", as much as to say, "May it be well with you, may you repent and be better"; or "May Allah give me peace from such wrangling"; or "Peace, and Good-bye; let me leave you!"

وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا (٦٤)

64. Those who spend the night in adoration of their Lord prostrate and standing;

C3124. Humble prayer brings them nearer to Allah.

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ...

65. Those who say,

"Our Lord! avert from us the Wrath of Hell,

... إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا (٦٥)

for its Wrath is indeed an affliction grievous --

C3125. This is a prayer of humility:

such a person relies, not on any good works which he may have done, but on the Grace and Mercy of Allah; and he shows a lively sense of the Day of Judgment, when every action will weigh for or against a soul.

إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا (٦٦)

66. "Evil indeed is it as an abode, and as a place to rest in;"

C3126. The misery which results from sin is not only grievous to live in ("**an abode**") but also grievous "**to rest in**" or "to stand in", if it be only for a short time.

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا...

67. Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly,

... وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا (٦٧)

but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes);

C3127. In ordinary spending this is a wise rule. But even in charity, in which we give of our best, it is not expected that we should be extravagant, i.e., that we should either do it for show, to impress other people, or do it thoughtlessly, which would be the case if we "rob Peter to pay Paul".

We should certainly not be niggardly, but we should remember everyone's rights, including our own, and strike a perfectly just balance between them.

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ...

68. Those who invoke not, with Allah, any other god,

وَلَا يَفْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ...

nor slay such life as Allah has made sacred, except for just cause,

not commit fornication --

C3128. Here three things are expressly condemned:

- false worship, which is a crime against Allah;
- the taking of life, which is a crime against our fellow-creatures; and
- fornication, which is a crime against our self-respect, against ourselves.

Every crime is against Allah, His creatures, and ourselves, but some may be viewed more in relation to one than to another.

The prohibition against taking life is qualified: "except for just cause,": e.g., in judicial punishment for murder, or in self-preservation, which may include not only self-defence in the legal sense, but also the clearing out of

pests, and the provision of meat under conditions of Halal.- see n. 698 to 5:5. After this comes a long parenthesis, which ends with verse 71 below.

... وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا (٦٨)

and any that does this (not only) meets punishment.

يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا (٦٩)

69. (But) the Penalty on the Day of Judgment will be doubled to him, and he will dwell therein in ignominy-

C3129. The three crimes just mentioned are specially detestable and infamous, and as ignominy will be added to other punishments, the penalty will be double that of ordinary punishment.

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا...

70. Unless he repents, believes, and works righteous deeds,

... فَأُولَئِكَ يَبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ...

for Allah will change the evil of such persons into good,

... وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا (٧٠)

and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

C3130. But even in the case of great crimes, if there is true repentance as tested by a changed life in conduct, Allah's Mercy is available, and it will transform the repentant's nature from evil to good.

وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوبُ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَتَابًا (٧١)

71. And whoever repents and does good has truly turned to Allah with an (acceptable) conversion --

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ ...

72. Those who witness no falsehood,

C3131. Witness no falsehood has two significations, both implied in this passage:

- those who give no evidence that is false; and
- those who do not assist at anything which implies fraud or falsehood.

... وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا (٧٢)

and, if they pass by futility, they pass by it with honorable (avoidance);

C3132. There is not only condemnation of positive falsehood or of being mixed up with things implying falsehood; but futilities -vain random talk, unedifying jokes, useless show, etc.- are all condemned.

If a good man finds himself in such an affair, he must withdraw from it in an honourable, dignified way, not in a fussy arrogant way.

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا دُكِّرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا (٧٣)

73. Those who, when they are admonished with the Signs of their Lord, droop not down at them as if they were deaf or blind:

C3133. Kharra may mean:

- to fall down,
- to snore,
- to droop down as if the person were bored or inattentive, or did not wish to see or hear or pay attention.

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ...

74. And those who pray,

... رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا فُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ...

"Our Lord! grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes,

C3134. We must also pray for the maintenance of Allah's Law after us, through our wives and descendants: in our eyes they should not be mere accidents or play-things, but a real comfort and fulfilment of our spiritual longings.

Perhaps, through them, as well through ourselves, we may, by Allah's grace, be able to give a lead for truth and righteousness.

... وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا (٧٤)

and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous."

C3135. Let us recapitulate the virtues of the true servants of Allah:

1. they are humble and forbearing to those below them in spiritual worth;
2. they are constantly, by adoration, in touch with Allah;
3. they always remember the Judgment in the Hereafter;
4. they are moderate in all things;
5. they avoid treason to Allah, to their fellow-creatures, and to themselves;
6. they give a wide berth not only to falsehood but to futility;
7. they pay attention, both in mind and manner, to the Signs of their Lord;
8. their ambition is to bring up their families in righteousness and to lead in all good.

A fine code of individual and social ethics, a ladder of spiritual development, open to all.

أُولَئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ الْعُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا...

75. Those are the ones who will be rewarded with the highest place in heaven, because of their patient constancy;

... وَيُلَاقُونَ فِيهَا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلَامًا (٧٥)

therein shall they be met with salutations and peace,

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا...

76. Dwelling therein --

... حَسَنَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا (٧٦)

how beautiful an abode and place of rest!

قُلْ مَا يَعْجَبُ بِكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ...

77. Say (to the rejecters):

"My Lord is not uneasy because of you if ye call not on Him,

C3136. Let not the wicked think that it causes Allah any annoyance or uneasiness if they do not serve or worship Him. He is high above all needs. But He turns in His Mercy to all who call on Him.

For those who arrogantly reject Him, the evil consequences of their rejection are inevitable, and must soon come to pass. (R).

... فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا (٧٧)

but ye have indeed rejected (Him), and soon will come the inevitable (punishment)!"