

SPREAD KNOWLEDGE

THE
HOLY QURAN

ENGLISH TAFSEER
CHAPTER 30
SURAH AR-RUM

COMMENTARY & EXPLANATORY

By
ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

www.quran.live

HOLY QURAN

CHAPTER

030

SURAH AR-RUM

ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

Introduction and Summary

This Surah, as remarked in the Introduction to the last Surah, deals with the question of Ma'ad or the Final End of Things, from various points of view. In the last Surah, we saw that Revelation was linked up with Life and Conduct, and Time (looking backwards and forwards) figured forth the frailty of this Life. In this Surah the Time theme and its mystery are brought into relation with human history in the foreground and the evolution of the world in all its aspects in the background.

The corruption introduced by man is cleared away by Allah, Whose Universal Plan points to the Hereafter. We shall see that the next two Surahs (31 and 32) present the theme in other aspects. All four are introduced with the Abbreviated Letters Alif, Lam, Mim, which (without being dogmatic) I have suggested as symbolical of the Past, Present and Future.

The Chronology of this Surah is significant. It was revealed about the 7th or 6th year before the Hijrah corresponding to 615-16 of the Christian era, when the tide of Persian conquest over the Roman Empire was running strong, as explained in Appendix VIII (to follow this Surah). The Christian Empire of Rome had lost Jerusalem to the Persians, and Christianity had been humbled in the dust. At that time it seemed outside the bounds of human possibility, even to one intimately acquainted with the inner resources and conditions of the Persian and Roman armies and empires, that the tables would be turned and the position reserved within the space of eight or nine years.

The pro-Persian Pagan Quraysh rejoiced exceedingly, and redoubled their taunts and persecution against the Holy Prophet, whose Message was a renewal of the Message of Christ preached in Jerusalem. Then was this passage 30-1-6 revealed, clearly foreshadowing the final defeat of Persia (Appendix VIII, 14-16) as a prelude to the destruction of the Persian Empire. There is no doubt about the prophecy and its fulfilment, for the exulting Pagans of Makkah laid a heavy wager against the fulfilment of the prophecy with Abu Bakr, and they lost it on its fulfilment.

But the rise fall even of such mighty empires as the Persian and Roman Empires, were but small events on the chequerboard of Time, compared to a mightier movement that was taking birth in the promulgation of Islam.

In the seventh or sixth year before the Hijrah, and for a year or two after the Hijrah, Islam was struggling in the world like the still small voice in the conscience of humanity. It was scarcely heeded, and when it sought to insist upon its divine claim, it was insulted, assaulted, persecuted, boycotted, and (as it seemed) suppressed. The agony of Taif (two years before the

Hijrah) and the murder-plot on the eve of the Hijrah were yet to come. But the purpose of Allah is not to be thwarted. Badr (A.H. 2 i.e. A.C. 624), rightly called the critical Day of Decision, began to redress the balance of outward events in early Islam, in the same year in which Issues (Appendix VIII, 16) began to redress the balance of outward events in Perso-Roman relations. Mightier events were yet to come.

A new inner World was being created through Islam. The spiritual Revolution was an infinitely greater moment in world history. The toppling down of priestcraft and false worship, the restoration of simplicity in faith and life, the rehabilitation of this life as the first step to the understanding of the Hereafter, the displacement of superstition and hair-splitting theology by a spirit of rational enquiry and knowledge, and the recognition of the divine as covering not merely an isolated thing called "Religion" but the whole way of Life. Thought, and Feeling-this was and is the true Message of Islam and its mission. Its struggle-its fight-continues, but it is not without effect, as may be seen in the march of centuries in world history.

Summary- the ebb and flow of worldly power-as symbolized in the conflict of Persian and Roman Empire-are but outward events; the deeper meaning is in the working of Allah's Universe-how Good and Evil reach their final end (30:1-19, and C.180).

The changes and changing variety in Allah's Creation, physical, moral, and spiritual, yet point to Unity in Nature and Religion; man should not break away from that Unity, but glorify Him, the One, for there is none like unto Him (30:20-40, C. 181).

The hands of men have wrought corruption and mischief; but Allah purifies the moral world as He does the world of physical nature, strengthening the weak and pulling down the mighty in due season; wait therefore in patience and constancy, and be not depressed (30:41-60, and C.182).

C.180 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(30:1-19)

*Great Empires rise and fall, conquer
And are conquered, as happened
To Rome and Persia; but the true Decision
Is with Allah, Who will make the righteous
Rejoice. Men may see but the outward
Crust of things, but in truth the End
Of things is all-in-all. In His own
Good time He will separate good from evil;
Praise and glory to Him forever!*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

الم (١)

1. Alif Lam Mim.

C3504. See n. 25 to 2:1 and [Introduction to this Surah](#).

غَلَبَتِ الرُّومُ (٢)

2. The Roman Empire has been defeated --

C3505. The remarkable defeats of the Roman Empire under Heraclius and the straits to which it was reduced are reviewed in [Appendix VIII](#) (to follow this Surah).

It was not merely isolated defeats; the Roman Empire lost most of its Asiatic territory and was hemmed in on all sides at its capital, Constantinople.

فِي اَدْنَى الْاَرْضِ ...

3. In a land close by;

The defeat, "**in a land close by**" must refer to Syria and Palestine, Jerusalem was lost in 614-15 A.D., shortly before this Surah was revealed.

... وَهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَعْلُونَ (٣)

but they, (even) after (this) defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious

--

C3506. The Pagan Quraish of Makkah rejoiced at the overthrow of Rome by Persia. They were pro-Persian, and in their heart of hearts they hoped that the nascent movement of Islam, which at that time was, from a worldly point of view, very weak and helpless, would also collapse under their persecution.

But they misread the true Signs of the times. They are told here that they would soon be disillusioned in both their calculations, and it actually so happened at the battle of Issus in 622 (the year of Hijrah) and in 624, when Heradius carried his campaign into the heart of Persia (see [Appendix VIII](#)) and the Makkan Quraish were beaten off at Badr.

فِي بضع سنين...

4. Within a few years.

C3507. Bidh'un in the text means a short period—a period of from three to nine years.

The period between the loss of Jerusalem (614-15) by the Romans and their victory at Issus (622) was seven years, and that to the penetration of Persia by Heraclius was name years.

See last note.

... لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ بَعْدُ...

With Allah is the Decision, in the Past and in the Future:

... وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (٤)

on that Day shall the Believers rejoice --

C3508. See [n. 3506](#) and **C3508.** See [n. 3506](#) and [Appendix VIII](#).

The battle of Badr (2 A.H. i.e. 624 A.D.) was a real time of rejoicing for the Believers and a time of disillusionment for the arrogant Quraish, who thought

that they could crush the whole movement of Islam in Madinah as they had tried to do in Makkah. but they were signally repulsed.

See n. 352 to 3:13.

بِنَصْرِ اللَّهِ...

5. With the help of Allah.

... يَنْصُرُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ...

He helps whom He will,

C3509. "Whom He will." As explained elsewhere, Allah's Will or Plan is not arbitrary: it is full of the highest wisdom. His Plan is formed in mercy, so as to safeguard the interests of all his creatures, against the selfish aggrandizement of any section of them. And He is able to carry out His Plan in full, and there is no power that can stop or delay His Plan.

... وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ (٥)

and He is Exalted in Might, Most Merciful.

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ...

6. (It is) the promise of Allah.

C3510. The promise refers to the Decision of all things by the Command of Allah, Who will remove all troubles and difficulties from the path of His righteous Believers, and help them to rejoice over the success of their righteous Cause.

This refers to all times and all situations. The righteous should not despair in their darkest moments, for Allah's help will come.

Ordinarily men are puffed up if they score a seeming temporary success against the righteous, and do not realize that Allah's Will can never be thwarted.

... لَا يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (٦)

Never does Allah depart from His promise: but most men understand not.

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا...

7. They know but the outer (things) in the life of this world:

C3511. Men are misled by the outward show of things, though the inner reality may be quite different.

Many seeming disasters are really godsend if we only understood.

... وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ (٧)

but of the End of things they are heedless.

C3512. Akhirat: may refer to the End of things or enterprises in history as well as the Hereafter in the technical theological sense.

أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ...

8. Do they not reflect in their own minds?

... مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى...

Not but for just ends and for a term appointed, did Allah create the heavens and the earth, and all between them:

C3513. Cf. 15:85.

Here the argument is about the ebb and flow of worldly power, and the next clause is appropriately added, "**and for a term appointed**". Let not any one who is granted worldly power or advantage run away with the notion that it is permanent. It is definitely limited in the high Purpose of Allah, which is just and true. And an account will have to be given of it afterwards on basis of strict personal responsibility.

... وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ لَكَافِرُونَ (٨)

yet are there truly many among men who deny the meeting with their Lord (at the Resurrection)!

C3514. It is therefore all the more strange that there should be men who not only forget themselves but even **deny** that there is a return to Allah or an End or

Hereafter, when a full reckoning will be due for this period of probation.

They are asked to study past history, as in the next verse.

أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ...

9. Do they not travel through the earth, and see what was the End of those before them?

... كَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَثَارُوا الْأَرْضَ وَعَمَرُوهَا أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا عَمَرُوهَا...

They were superior to them in strength,

and they tilled the earth and populated it in greater numbers than these (pagans) have done,

... وَجَاءَهُمْ رَسُولُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ...

there came to them their apostles with Clear (Signs),

(which they rejected, to their own destruction):

C3515. Let not any generation think that it is superior to all that went before it. We may be "heirs to all the ages, in the foremost files of times." That is no reason for arrogance, but on the contrary adds to our responsibility.

When we realize what flourishing cities and kingdoms existed before, how they flourished in numbers and prosperity, what chances they were given, and how they perished when they disobeyed the law of Allah, we shall feel a sense of humility, and see that it was rebellion and self-will that brought them down. Allah was more than just. He was also merciful. But they brought about their own ruin.

... فَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ (٩)

it was not Allah Who wronged them but they wronged their own souls.

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ أَسَاءُوا السُّوَأَى...

10. In the long run evil in the extreme will be the End of those who do evil;

C3516. The Arabic superlative feminine, referring to the feminine noun **Aqibah**, I have translated by "Evil in the extreme".

In this life good and evil may seem to be mixed up, and it may be that somethings or persons that are evil get what seem to be good rewards or blessings, while the opposite happens to the good. But this is only a temporary appearance. In the long run Evil will have its own evil consequences, multiplied cumulatively. And this, because evil not only rejected Allah's Message of Good but laughed at Good and misled others.

... أَنْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا بِهَا يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ (١٠)

for that they rejected the Signs of Allah, and held them up to ridicule.

C3517. Nothing exists of its own accord or fortuitously. It is Allah Who originates all creation.

What appears to be death may be only transformation: for Allah can and does recreate. And His creative activity is continuous. Our death is but a phenomenal event. What we become after death is the result of a process of recreation by Allah, Who is both the source and the goal of all things.

When we are brought back to him, it will be as conscious and responsible beings, to receive the consequences of our brief life on this earth.

Section 2

اللَّهُ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ ...

11. It is Allah Who begins (the process of) creation;
then repeats it;

... ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (١١)

then shall ye be brought back to Him.

وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُبْلِسُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ (١٢)

12. On the Day that the Hour will be established, the guilty will be struck dumb with despair.

C3518. The Hour will be established: in due time the Hour will come when Judgment will be established, and the seeming disturbance of balance in this world will be redressed. Then the Good will rejoice, and the Guilty, faced with the Realities, will lose all their illusions and be struck dumb with despair.

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ مِّنْ شُرَكَائِهِمْ شُفَعَاءٌ...

13. No intercessor will they have among their "Partners,"

C3519. False worship will then appear in its true colors. Anything to which we offered the worship due to Allah alone, will vanish instead of being of any help.

Indeed the deluded false worshipers, whose eyes will now be opened, will themselves reject their falsehoods, as the Truth will now shine with unquestioned splendor.

... وَكَانُوا بِشُرَكَائِهِمْ كَافِرِينَ (١٣)

and they will (themselves) reject their "Partners."

وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُؤْمِنُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ (١٤)

14. On the Day that the Hour will be established, --
that Day shall (all men) be sorted out.

C3520. In the fullness of time good and evil will all **be sorted out** and separated.

- The good will reach their destination of felicity in rich and luscious, well-watered meadows, which stand as the type of all that is fair to see and pleasant to feel.
- The evil will no longer imagine that they are enjoying good fortune, for the testing time will be over, and the grim reality will stare them in the face.

They will receive their just Punishment. (R).

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَهُمْ فِي رَوْضَةٍ يُحْبَرُونَ (١٥)

15. Then those who have believed and worked righteous deeds, shall be made happy in a Mead of Delight.

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَلِقَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ...

16. And those who have rejected Faith and falsely denied Our Signs and the meeting of the Hereafter,

... فَأُولَئِكَ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُحَضَّرُونَ (١٦)

such shall be brought forth to Punishment.

فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ حِينَ تُمْسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ (١٧)

17. So (give) glory to Allah, when ye reach eventide and when ye rise in the morning;

C3521. The special times for Allah's remembrance are so described as to include all our activities in life,

- when we rise early in the morning, and when we go to rest in the evening;
- when we are in the midst of our work, at the decline of the sun, and in the late afternoon.

It may be noted that these are all striking stages in the passage of the sun through our terrestrial day, as well as stages in our daily working lives.

On this are based the hours of the five canonical prayers afterwards prescribed in Madinah; viz.

- early morning before sunrise (Fajr);
- when the day begins to decline, just after noon (Zuhr);
- in the late afternoon, say midway between noon and sunset ('Asr); and
- the two evening prayers, one just after sunset (Maghrib); and the other after the evening twilight has all faded from the horizon, the hour indicated for rest and sleep ('Isha).

Cf. 11:114, n. 1616, n. 1617;
17:78-79, n. 2275;
20:130. n. 2655.

وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ...

18. Yea, to Him be praise, in the heavens and on earth;

... وَعَشِيًّا وَحِينَ تُظْهِرُونَ (١٨)

and in the late afternoon and when the day begins to decline.

يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ...

19. It is He Who brings out the living from the dead, and brings out the dead from the living,

C3522. Cf. 10:31.

From dead matter Allah's creative act produces life and living matter, and even science has not yet been able to explain the mystery of life.

Life and living matter again seem to reach maturity and again die, as we see every day. No material thing seems to have perpetual life. But again we see the creative process of Allah constantly at work, and the cycle of life and death seems to go on.

... وَيُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا...

and Who gives life to the earth after it is dead:

C3523. Cf. 2:164.

The earth itself, seemingly so inert, produces vegetable life at once from a single shower of rain, and in various ways sustains animal life.

Normally it seems to die in the winter in northern climates, and in a drought everywhere, and the spring revives it in all its glory.

Metaphorically many movements, institutions, organizations, seem to die and then to live again, all under the wonderful dispensation of Allah. So will our

personality be revived when we die on this earth, in order to reap the fruit of this our probationary life.

... وَكَذَلِكَ نُخْرِجُكُمْ (١٩)

and thus shall ye be brought out (from the dead).

C.181 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(30:20-40)

*Allah's Signs are many, and so are His mysteries;
Yet each does point to His Unity, Goodness,
Power, and Mercy. There is none like
Unto Him. His teaching is one, and men
That split it up His standard Religion
Are but following their own lusts, Ungrateful
Are they to give part-worship to others,
When all worship and praise and glory
Are due to Him and Him alone,
In Whom we have our life and being!*

Section 3

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ تَنْتَشِرُونَ (٢٠)

20. Among His Signs is this, that He **created** you from dust; and then, behold, ye are men scattered (far and wide)!

C3524. Cf. 18:37 and n. 2379.

In spite of the lowly origin of man's body, Allah has given him a mind and soul by which he can almost compass the farthest reaches of Time and Space.

Is this not enough for a miracle or Sign?

From a physical point of view, see how man, a creature of dust, scatters himself over the furthest corners of the earth!

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا...

21. And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them,

C3525. This refers to the wonderful mystery of sex. Children arise out of the union of the sexes. And it is always the female sex that bring forth the offspring, whether female or male. And the father is as necessary as the mother for bringing forth daughters.

... وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً ...

and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts);

C3526. Cf. 7:189.

Unregenerate man is pugnacious in the male sex, but rest and tranquility are found in the normal relations of a father and mother dwelling together and bringing up a family.

A man's chivalry to the opposite sex is natural and Allah-given. The friendship of two men between each other is quite different in quality and temper from the feeling which unspoilt nature expects as between men and women. There is a special kind of love and tenderness between them. And as woman is the weaker vessel, that tenderness may from a certain aspect be likened to mercy, the protecting kindness which the strong should give to the weak.

... إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٢١)

verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَالْوَالِدَاتِ...

22. And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colors:

C3527. The variations in languages and colors may be viewed from the geographical aspect or from the aspect of periods of time.

All mankind were created of a single pair of parents; yet they have spread to different countries and climates and developed different languages and different shades of

complexions. And yet their basic unity remains unaltered. They feel in the same way, and are all equally under Allah's care.

Then there are the variations in time. Old languages die out and new ones are evolved. New conditions of life and thought are constantly evolving new words and expressions, new syntactical structures, and new modes of pronunciation. Even old races die, and new races are born.

... إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ (٢٢)

verily in that are Signs for those who know.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ مَنَامُكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَابْتِغَاؤُكُمْ مِّنْ فَضْلِهِ...

23. And among His Signs is the sleep that ye take by night and by day, and the quest that ye (make for livelihood) out of His Bounty:

C3528. If we consider deeply, sleep and dreams, the refreshment we get from sleep to wakefulness as well as from wakefulness to sleep, as also the state of our thoughts and feelings and sub-conscious self in these conditions, are both wonderful and mysterious.

Normally we sleep by night and do our ordinary work "in quest of the Bounty of Allah" by day. But sleep and rest may come and be necessary by day, and we may have to work by night. And our work for our livelihood may pass by insensible transitions to our work or thought or service of a higher and spiritual kind.

These processes suggest a background of things which we know but vaguely, but which are as much miracles as other Signs of Allah.

... إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ (٢٣)

verily in that are Signs for those who hearken.

C3529. From verse 20 to verse 25 are mentioned a series of Signs or Miracles, which should awaken our souls and lead us to true Reality if we try to understand Allah.

1. There is our own origin and destiny, which must necessarily be our subjective starting point: "I think; therefore I am":

no particular exertion of our being is here necessary (30:20).

2. The first beginnings of social life arise through sex and love:

see 4:1, and n. 506;

to understand this in all its bearing, we must "reflect" (30:21).

3. The next point is to understand our diversities in speech, color, etc., arising from differences of climate and external conditions; yet there is unity beneath that diversity, which we shall realize by extended knowledge (30:22).

4. Next we turn to our psychological conditions, sleep, rest, visions, insight, etc.; here we want teaching and guidance, to which we must hearken (30:23).

5. Next, we must approach the higher reaches of spiritual hopes and fears, as symbolized by such subtle forces of nature as lightning and electricity, which may kill the foolish or bring prosperity in its train by rain and abundant harvest; to understand the highest spiritual hopes and fears so symbolized, we want the highest wisdom (30:24).

6. And lastly, we may become so transformed that we rise above all petty, worldly, ephemeral things:

Allah calls to us and we rise, as from our dead selves to a Height which we can only describe as the Heaven of stability: here no human processes serve, for the Call of Allah Himself has come (30:25-27).

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ يُرِيكُمْ الْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ...

24. And among His Signs, He shows you the lightning, by way both of fear and of hope,

C3530. See last note, item 5. Cf. 13:12 .

To cowards lightning and thunder appear as terrible forces of nature:

lightning seems to kill and destroy where its irresistible progress is not assisted by proper lightning-conductors. But lightning is also a herald of rain-bearing clouds and showers that bring fertility and prosperity in their train.

This double aspect is also symbolical of spiritual fears and hopes, fears lest we may not be found receptive or worthy of the irresistible perspicuous Message of Allah, and hopes that we may receive it in the right spirit and be blessed by its mighty power of transformation to achieve spiritual well-being.

Note that the repetition of the phrase "gives life to the earth after it is dead" connects this verse, with [verse 19 above](#); in other words, the Revelation, which we must receive with wisdom and understanding, is a Sign of Allah's own power and mercy, and is vouchsafed in order to safeguard our own final Future.

... وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَيُحْيِي بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا...

and He sends down rain from the sky and with it gives life to the earth after it is dead:

... إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ (٢٤)

verily in that are Signs for those who are wise.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ تَقُومَ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ بِأَمْرِهِ...

25. And among His Signs is this, that heaven and earth stand by His Command:

C3531. In the physical world, the sky and the earth, as we see them, stand unsupported, by the artistry of Allah. They bear witness to Allah, and in

- that our physical life depends on them,
- the earth for its produce and the sky for rain, the heat of the sun, and other phenomena of nature,
- they call to our mind our relation to Allah Who made them and us.

How can we then be so dense as not to realize that our higher Future, our Ma'ad, is bound up with the call and the mercy of Allah?

...ثُمَّ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ دَعْوَةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ إِذَا أَنْتُمْ تَخْرُجُونَ (٢٥)

then when He calls you, by a single call, from the earth, behold, ye (straightway) come forth.

وَلَهُ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

26. To Him belongs every being that is in the heavens and on earth:

...كُلُّ لَّهُ قَانِتُونَ (٢٦)

all are devoutly obedient to Him.

C3532. All nature in Creation not only obeys Allah, but devoutly obeys Him, i.e., glories in its privilege of service and obedience.

Why should we not do likewise?

It is part of our original unspoilt nature, and we must respond to it, as all beings do, by their very nature.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ...

27. It is He Who begins (the process of) creation;

C3533. Cf. [30:11](#) above, where the same phrase began the argument about the beginning and end of all things being with Allah.

This has been illustrated by reference to various Signs in Creation, and now the argument is rounded off with the same phrase.

... ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ ...

then repeats it; and for Him it is most easy.

...وَلَهُ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَىٰ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

To Him belongs the loftiest similitude (We can think of) in the heavens and the earth:

C3534. Allah's glory and Allah's attributes are above any names we can give to them. Human language is not adequate to express them. We can only form some idea of them at our present stage by means of **Similitudes** and Parables.

But even so, the highest we can think of falls short of the true Reality. For Allah is higher and wiser than the highest and wisest we can think of.

...وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (٢٧)

for He is Exalted in Might, Full of Wisdom.

Section 4

ضَرَبَ لَكُمْ مَثَلًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ ...

28. He does propound to you a similitude from your own (experience):

C3535. One way in which we can get some idea of the things higher than our own plane is to think of Parables and Similitudes drawn from our own lives and experience. And such a Similitude or Parable is offered to us now about false worship.

See [next note](#).

...هَلْ لَكُمْ مِّنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنْ شُرَكَاءَ فِي مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ...

do ye have partners among those whom your right hands possess, to share as equals in the wealth We have bestowed on you?

C3536. Allah is far higher above His Creation than any, the highest, of His creatures can be above any, the lowest, of His creatures. And yet would a man share his wealth on equal terms with his dependants?

Even what he calls his wealth is not really his own, but given by Allah. It is "his" in common speech by reason merely of certain accidental circumstances.

How then can men raise Allah's creatures to equality with Allah in worship?

...فَأَنْتُمْ فِيهِ سَوَاءٌ تَخَافُونَهُمْ كَخِيفَتِكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ...

Do ye fear them as ye fear each other?

C3537. Men fear each other as equals in a state of society at perpetual warfare. To remove this fear they appoint an authority among themselves

a King or sovereign authority whom they consider just to preserve them from this fear and give them an established order.

But they must obey and revere this authority and depend upon this authority for their own tranquility and security.

Even with their equals there is always the fear of public opinion. But men do not fear, or obey, or revere those who are their slaves or dependents.

Man is dependent on Allah. And Allah is the Sovereign authority in an infinitely higher sense. He is in no sense dependent on us, but we must honor and revere Him and fear to disobey His Will or His Law.

"The fear of Allah is the beginning of wisdom."

...كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ (٢٨)

Thus do We explain the Signs in detail to a people that understand.

C3538. Cf. 6:55, and 7:32, 7:174. etc.

بَلِ اتَّبَعَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ...

29. Nay, the wrongdoers (merely) fellow their own lusts, being devoid of knowledge.

...فَمَنْ يَهْدِي مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ...

But who will guide those whom Allah leaves astray?

C3539. The wrong-doers-those who deliberately reject Allah's guidance and break Allah's Law-have put themselves out of the region of Allah's mercy. In this they have put themselves outside the pale of the knowledge of what is for their own good. In such a case

they must suffer the consequences of the personal responsibility which flows from the grant of a limited free-will.

Who can then guide them or help them?

وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ نَّاصِرِينَ (٢٩)...

To them there will be no helpers.

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا...

30. So set thou thy face steadily and truly to the Faith:

C3540. For **Hanif** see n. 134 to 2:135.

Here "true" is used in the sense in which we say, "the magnetic needle is true to the north."

Those who have been privileged to receive the Truth should never hesitate or swerve but remain constant, as men who know.

...فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا...

(Establish) Allah's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind:

...لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ...

no change (let there be) in the work (wrought) by Allah:

C3541. As turned out from the creative hand of Allah, man is innocent, pure, true, free, inclined to right and virtue, and endued with true understanding about his own position in the Universe and about Allah's goodness, wisdom, and power.

That is his true nature, just as the nature of a lamb is to be gentle and of a horse is to be swift.

But man is caught in the meshes of customs, superstitions, selfish desires, and false teaching. This may make him pugnacious, unclean, false, slavish, hankering after what is wrong or forbidden, and deflected from the love of his fellow-men and the pure worship of the One True God.

The problem before the Prophets is to cure this crookedness, and to restore human nature to what it should be under the Will of Allah.

ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ ...

by Allah: that is the standard Religion:

C3542. In 9:36, I translated **Din Qaiyim** as "straight usage." Here the meaning is wider, as it includes the whole life, thoughts and desires of man.

The "**standard Religion,**" or the Straight Way is thus contrasted with the various human systems that conflict with each other and call themselves separate 'religions' or "sects" (see [verse 32 below](#)).

Allah's standard Religion is one, as God is One.

... وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (٣٠)

but most among mankind understand not.

مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَاتَّقُوهُ ...

31. Turn ye back in repentance to Him, and fear Him:

C3543. "Repentance" does not mean sackcloth and ashes, or putting on a gloom pessimism.

It means giving up disease for health, crookedness (which is abnormal) for the Straight Way, the restoration of our nature as Allah created it from the falsity introduced by the enticements of Evil. To revert to the simile of the magnetic needle ([n. 3540 above](#)), if the needle is held back by obstructions, we must restore its freedom, so that it points true again to the magnetic pole.

... وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ ...

establish regular prayers,

... وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (٣١)

and be not ye among those who join gods with Allah, --

مِنَ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا...

32. Those who split up their Religion, and become (mere) Sects, --

...كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ (٣٢)

each party rejoicing in that which is with itself!

C3544. A good description of self-satisfied sectarianism as against real Religion.

See [n. 3542 above](#).

وَإِذَا مَسَّ النَّاسَ ضُرٌّ دَعَوْا رَبَّهُمْ مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ...

33. When trouble touches men, they cry to their Lord, turning back to Him in repentance:

C3545. Cf. 10:12.

It is trouble, distress, or adversity that makes men realize their helplessness and turns their attention back to the true Source of all goodness and happiness.

But when they are shown special Mercy -often more than they deserve- they forget themselves and attribute it to their own cleverness, or to the stars, or to some false ideas to which they pay court and worship, either to the exclusion of Allah or in addition to the lip-worship which they pay to Allah.

Their action in any case amounts to gross ingratitude; but in the circumstances it looks as if they had gone out of their way to show ingratitude.

...ثُمَّ إِذَا أذَاقَهُمْ مِنْهُ رَحْمَةً إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ (٣٣)

but when He gives them a taste of Mercy as from Himself, behold, some of them pay part-worship to other gods besides their Lord. --

لِيَكْفُرُوا بِمَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ...

34. (As if) to show their ingratitude for the (favours) We have bestowed on them!

...فَتَمَتَّعُوا فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ (٣٤)

Then enjoy (your brief day); but soon will ye know (your folly).

C3546. Cf. 16:54.

They are welcome to their fancies and false worship, and to the enjoyment of the pleasures of this Life, but they will soon be disillusioned. Then they will realize the true values of the things they neglected and the things they cultivated.

أَمْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا...

35. Or have We sent down authority to them,

...فَهُوَ يَنْكَلُمُ بِمَا كَانُوا بِهِ يُشْرِكُونَ (٣٥)

which points out to them the things to which they pay part-worship?

C3547. Their behavior is exactly as if they were satisfied within themselves that they were entitled or given a license to worship God and Mammon.

In fact the whole thing is their own invention or delusion.

وَإِذَا أَدَقْنَا النَّاسَ رَحْمَةً فَرِحُوا بِهَا...

36. When We give men a taste of Mercy, they exult thereat:

C3548. Cf. 30:33. In that passage the unreasonable behavior of men in sorrow and in affluence is considered with reference to their attitude to Allah: in distress they turn to Him, but in prosperity they turn to other things.

Here the contrast in the two situations is considered with reference to men's inner psychology:

- in affluence they are puffed up and unduly elated,
- and in adversity they lose all heart.

Both attitudes are wrong.

In prosperity men should realize that it is not their merits that deserve all the Bounty of Allah, but that it is given out of Allah's abundant generosity;

in adversity they should remember that their suffering is brought on by their own folly and sin, and humbly pray for Allah's grace and mercy, in order that they may be set on their feet again.

For, as the next verse points out, Allah gives opportunities, gifts, and the good things of life to every one, but in a greater or less measure, and at some time or other, according to His All-Wise Plan, which is the expression of His holy and benevolent Will.

...وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ إِذَا هُمْ يَقْنَطُونَ (٣٦)

and when some evil afflicts them because of what their (own) hands have sent forth, behold, they are in despair!

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ...

37. See they not that Allah enlarges the provision and restricts it, to whomsoever He pleases?

C3549. Cf. 28:82 and n. 3412. Also see last note.

Allah's grant of certain gifts to some, as well as His withholding of certain gifts from others, are themselves Signs (trials or warnings) to men of faith and understanding.

...إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ (٣٧)

Verily in that are Signs for those who believe.

فَاتِّبِذْ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ وَالْمِسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ...

38. So give what is due to kindred, the needy, and the wayfarer.

... ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ...

That is best for those who seek the Countenance, of Allah,

C3550. For **Wajh** (Face, Countenance), see n. 114 to 2:112.

Also see 6:52.

...وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (٣٨)

and it is they who will prosper.

C3551. In both this life and the next. See n. 29 to 2:5.

وَمَا آتَيْتُمْ مِّن رَّبًّا لِّيَرْبُوَ فِي أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُو عِنْدَ اللَّهِ...

39. That which ye lay out for increase through the property of (other) people, will have no increase with Allah:

C3552. Riba (literally 'usury' or 'interest') is prohibited, for the principle is that any profit which we should seek should be through our own exertions and at our own expense, not through exploiting other people or at their expense, however we may wrap up the process in the spacious phraseology of high finance or City jargon.

But we are asked to go beyond this negative precept of avoiding what is wrong. We should show our active love for our neighbor by spending of our own substance or resources or the utilization of our own talents and opportunities in the service of those who need them. Then our reward or recompense will not be merely what we deserve. It will be multiplied to many times more than our strict account.

According to Commentators this verse specially applies to those who give to others, whether gifts or services, in order to receive from them greater benefits in return. Such seemingly good acts are void of any merit and deserve no reward from Allah, since He knows the real intention behind such ostensibly good deeds. (R).

...وَمَا آتَيْتُمْ مِّن زَكَاةٍ تُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُضْعِفُونَ (٣٩)

but that which ye lay out for charity, seeking the Countenance of Allah, (will increase): it is these who will get a recompense multiplied.

C3553. Seeking the "**Face**" or "**Countenance**" of Allah, i.e., out of our pure love for the true vision of Allah's own Self.

See also [n. 3550](#) above.

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ...

40. It is Allah Who has created you: further, He has provided for your sustenance;

then He will cause you to die; and again He will give you life.

...هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَائِكُمْ مَن يَفْعَلُ مِنْ دَلِكُمْ مَن شَيْءٍ...

Are there any of your (false) "Partners" who can do any single one of these things?

C3554. The persons or things or ideas to which we give part-worship, while our whole and exclusive worship is due to Allah, are the "**Partners**" we set up.

Do we owe our existence to them?

Do they sustain our being?

Can they take our life or give it back to us?

Certainly not.

Then how foolish of us to give them part-worship!

...سُبْحَانَہُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ (٤٠)

Glory to Him! and High is He above the partners they attribute (to Him)!

C3555. Cf. x. 18 and similar passages.

C.182 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(30:41-60)

*The result of Evil is Evil. So
Mischief spreads, but Allah will restore
The balance in the End. He did create
All things pure, and will purge and purify,
As He does the physical world with Winds.
Destruction awaits those that break
His Harmony and Law; it will come when least
Expected. Let the righteous wait and endure*

*With constancy, for Evil is shaky,
With no faith in itself and no roots,
And is doomed to perish utterly.*

Section 5

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ...

41. Mischief has appeared on land and sea because of (the meed) that the hands of men have earned,

C3556. Allah's Creation was pure and good in itself. All the mischief or corruption was introduced by Evil, viz., arrogance, selfishness, etc. See [n. 3541 to 30:30](#) above.

As soon as the mischief has come in, Allah's mercy and goodness step in to stop it.

The consequences of Evil must be evil, and this should be shown in such partial punishment as "the hands of men have earned," so that it may be a warning for the future and an invitation to enter the door of repentance.

...لِيذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (٤١)

that (Allah) may give them a taste of some of their deeds: in order that they may turn back (from Evil).

C3557. The ultimate object of Allah's justice and punishment is to reclaim man from Evil, and to restore him to the pristine purity and innocence in which he was created.

The Evil introduced by his possession of a limited free-will should be eliminated by the education and purification of man's own will. For, with his will and motives purified, he is capable of much greater heights than a creature not endowed with any free-will.

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ...

42. Say:

"Travel through the earth and see what was the End of those before (you):

...كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُشْرِكِينَ (٤٢)

most of them worshipped others besides Allah."

C3558. If you contemplate history and past experience (including spiritual experience), you will find that evil and corruption tended to destroy themselves, because they had false idols for worship, false standards of conduct, and false goals of desire.

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ الْقَيِّمِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ...

43. But set thou thy face to the right Religion, before there come from Allah the Day which there is no chance of averting:

C3559. We should recover the balance that has been upset by Evil and Falsehood before it is too late. For a Day will surely come when true values will be restored and all falsehood and evil will be destroyed.

Nothing but repentance and amendment can avert the consequences of Evil. When the Day actually comes, repentance will be too late: for the impassable barrier between Evil and Good will have been fixed, and the chance of return to Allah's pattern will have been lost.

...يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصَّدَّعُونَ (٤٣)

on that Day shall men be divided (in two).

C3560. The sharp division will then have been accomplished between the unfortunate ones who rejected Truth and Faith and will suffer for their rejection, and the righteous who will attain Peace and Salvation: see next verse.

Note that the state of the Blessed will not be merely a passive state. They will actively earn and contribute to their own happiness.

مَنْ كَفَرَ فَعَلَيْهِ كُفْرُهُ...

44. Those who reject Faith will suffer from that rejection:

...وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِيَٰنْفُسِهِمْ يَمْهَدُونَ (٤٤)

and those who work righteousness will spread their couch (of repose) for themselves (in heaven):

لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ...

45. That He may reward those who believe and work righteous deeds, out of His Bounty:

C3561. Though the repose and bliss will have been won by the righteous by their own efforts, it must not be supposed that their own merits were equal to the reward they will earn.

What they will get will be due to the infinite Grace and Bounty of Allah.

...إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ (٤٥)

for He loves not those who reject Faith.

C3562. In form this clause is (here as elsewhere) negative, but it has a positive meaning:

Allah loves those who have faith and trust in Him, and will, out of His Grace and Bounty, reward them in abundant measure.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ الرِّيَّاحَ مُبَشِّرَاتٍ...

46. Among His Signs is this, that He sends the Winds, as heralds of Glad Tidings,

C3563. The theme of Allah's artistry in the physical and the spiritual world was placed before us above in [30:20-27](#).

Then, in verse [28-40](#), we were shown how man and nature were pure as they came out of the hand of Allah, and how we must restore this purity in order to fulfill the Will and Plan of Allah.

Now we are told how the restorative and purifying agencies are sent by Allah Himself, in both the physical and the spiritual world.

...وَلِيَذِيقَكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ...

giving you a taste of His (Grace and) Mercy, --

C3564. Cf. 7:57 and n. 1036 and 25:48 and n. 3104.

...وَلِتَجْرِيَ الْفُلُكُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ...

that the ships may sail (majestically) by His Command and that ye may seek of His Bounty:

C3565. In the physical world, the winds not only cool and purify the air, and bring the blessings of rain, which fertilizes the soil, but they help international commerce and intercourse among men through sea-ways and now by air-ways.

Those who know how to take advantage of these blessings of Allah prosper and rejoice, while those who ignore or fail to understand these Signs perish in storms.

So in the spiritual world: heralds of glad tidings were sent by Allah in the shape of Messengers: those who profited by their Message prospered and those who ignored or opposed the Clear Signs perished, see next verse.

...وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ (٤٦)

in order that ye may be grateful.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ رُسُلًا إِلَى قَوْمِهِمْ...

47. We did indeed send, before thee, apostles to their (respective) peoples,

...فَجَاءُوهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ...

and they came to them with Clear Signs:

... فَأَنْتَقَمْنَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا ...

then, to those who transgressed, We meted out Retribution:

...وَكَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (٤٧)

and it was due from us to aid those who believed.

اللَّهُ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَّاحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا...

48. It is Allah Who sends the Winds, and they raise the Clouds:

C3566. Again the Parable of the **Winds** is presented from another aspect, both physical and spiritual.

In the physical world, see their play with the Clouds:

how they suck up the moisture from terrestrial water, carry it about in dark clouds as needed, and break it up with rain as needed.

So Allah's wonderful Grace draws up men's spiritual aspirations from the most unlikely places and suspends them as dark mysteries, according to His holy Will and Plan: and when His Message reaches the hearts of men even in the smallest fragments, how its recipients rejoice, even though before it, they were in utter despair!

...فَيَبْسُطُهُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ...

then does He spread them in the sky as He wills,

...وَيَجْعَلُهُ كِسْفًا قَطْرَى الْوَدْقِ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِ...

and break them into fragments, until thou seest rain-drops issue from the midst thereof:

...فَإِذَا أَصَابَ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ...

then when He has made them reach such of his servants as He wills,

C3567. See [last note](#).

... إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ (٤٨)

behold, they do rejoice!

وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ أَنْ يُنزَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِهِ لُمُذِلِّينَ (٤٩)

49. Even though, before they received (the rain) -- just before this -- they were dumb with despair!

فَانظُرْ إِلَى آثَارِ رَحْمَتِ اللَّهِ كَيْفَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا...

50. Then contemplate (O man!) the memorials of Allah's Mercy! -- how He gives life to the earth after its death:

C3568. After the two Parables about the purifying action of the Winds and their fertilizing action, we now have the Parable of the earth that dies in winter or drought and lives again in spring or rain, by Allah's Grace:

so in the spiritual sphere, man may be dead and may live again by the Breath of Allah and His Mercy if she will only place himself in Allah's hands.

...إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لُمُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى...

verily the Same will give life to the men who are dead:

...وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (٥٠)

for He has power over all things.

وَلَيْنُ أَرْسَلْنَا رِيحًا فَرَأَوْهُ مُصْفَرًّا لَّظَلُّوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ يَكْفُرُونَ (٥١)

51. And if We (but) send a Wind from which they see (their tilth) turn yellow, behold, they become, thereafter, ungrateful (Unbelievers)!

C3569. Another Parable from the forces of nature.

We saw how the Winds gladdened, vivified, and enriched those who utilized them in the right spirit. But a wind might be destructive to tilth in certain circumstances: so the blessings of Allah may-by the wrongdoers resisting and blaspheming-bring punishment to the wrongdoers. Instead of taking the punishment in the right spirit-in the spirit in which Believers of Allah take their misfortunes,-the Unbelievers curse and deepen their sin!

فَإِنَّكَ لَا تَسْمِعُ الْمَوْتَى وَلَا تَسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ (٥٢)

52. So verily thou canst not make the dead to hear, nor canst thou make the deaf to hear the call, when they show their backs and turn away.

C3570. The marvels of Allah's creation can be realized in a general way by every one who has a disposition to allow such knowledge to penetrate his mind.

But if men, out of perversity, kill the very faculties which Allah has given them, how can they then understand?

Besides the men who deaden their spiritual sense, there are men who may be likened to the deaf, who lack one faculty but to whom an appeal can be made through

other faculties. such as the sense of sight; but if they turn their backs and refuse to be instructed at all. how can the Truth reach them?

وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهَادِي الْعُمَى عَنْ ضَلَالَتِهِمْ...

53. Nor canst thou lead back the blind from their straying:

C3571. See [last note](#).

Then there is the case of men about whom the saying holds true, that none are so blind as those who will not see. They prefer to stray in paths of wrong and of sense-pleasures. How can they be guided in any way?

The only persons who gain by spiritual teaching are those who bring a mind to it-who believe and submit their wills to Allah's Will.

This is the central doctrine of Islam.

...إِنْ تُسْمِعْ إِلَّا مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ (٥٣)

only those wilt thou make to hear, who believe in Our Signs and submit (their wills in Islam).

Section 6

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ ضَعْفٍ...

54. It is Allah Who created you in a state of (helpless) weakness,

... ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً...

then gave (you) strength after weakness,

... ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً...

then, after strength, give (you) weakness and a hoary head:

C3572. What was said before about the people who make Allah's teaching of "of none effect" does not mean that Evil will defeat Allah. On the contrary we are asked to contemplate the mysteries of Allah's wisdom with another Parable.

In our physical life we see how strength is evolved out of weakness and weakness out of strength. The helpless babe becomes a lusty man in the pride of his manhood, and then sinks to a feeble old age: and yet there is wisdom in all these stages in the Universal Plan. So Allah carries out His Plan in this world **"as He wills"**, i.e., according to His Will and Plan, and none can gainsay it. And His Plan is wise and can never be frustrated.

...يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْقَدِيرُ (٥٤)

He creates as He wills, and it is He Who has all knowledge and power.

وَيَوْمَ نَقُومُ السَّاعَةَ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لَبِئُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ...

55. On the Day that the Hour (of reckoning) will be established, the transgressors will swear that they tarried not but an hour:

C3573. Whatever the seeming inequalities may be now-when the good appear to be weak and the strong seem to oppress-will be removed when the balance will be finally redressed.

That will happen in good time,-indeed so quickly that the Transgressors will be taken by Surprise. They were deluded by the fact that what they took to be their triumph or their freedom to do what they liked was only a reprieve, a **"Term Appointed"**, in which they could repent and amend and get Allah's Mercy. Failing this, they will then be up against the Penalties which they thought they had evaded or defied.

...كَذَلِكَ كَانُوا يُؤْفَكُونَ (٥٥)

thus were they used to being deluded!

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوْتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَالْإِيمَانَ...

56. But those endued with knowledge and faith will say:

...لَقَدْ لَبِئْتُمْ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْبَعْثِ....

"Indeed ye did tarry, within Allah's Decree, to the Day of Resurrection,

C3574. The men of knowledge and faith knew all along of the true values-of the things of this ephemeral life and the things that will endure and face them at the End,- unlike the wrong-doers who were content with falsehoods and were taken by surprise, like ignorant men, when they faced the Realities.

...فَهَذَا يَوْمُ الْبَعْثِ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (٥٦)

and this is the Day of Resurrection: but ye -- ye were not aware!"

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَعذِرَتُهُمْ...

57. So on that Day no excuse of theirs will avail the Transgressors,

C3575. It will be no use for those who deliberately rejected the clearest warnings in Allah's Message to say: "Oh we did not realize this!"

The excuse will be false, and it would be unreasonable to suppose that they would then be asked to seek Grace by repentance. It will then be too late.

...وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ (٥٧)

nor will they be invited (then) to seek grace (by repentance).

وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ...

58. Verily We have propounded for men, in this Qur'án, every kind of Parable:

...وَلَئِنْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِآيَةٍ لَيَقُولَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا مُبْطِلُونَ (٥٨)

but if thou bring to them any Sign, the Unbelievers are sure to say,

"Ye do nothing but talk vanities."

C3576. Things of the highest moment have been explained in the Quran from various points of view. as in this Surah itself, by means of payables and similitudes drawn from nature and from our ordinary daily life.

But whatever the explanation, however convincing it may be to men who earnestly seek after Truth, those who deliberately turn their backs to Truth can find

nothing convincing. In their eyes the explanations are mere "vain talk" or false arguments.

كَذَلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (٥٩)

59. Thus does Allah seal up the hearts of those who understand not.

C3577. When an attitude of obstinate resistance to Truth is adopted, the natural consequence (by Allah's Law) is that the heart and mind get more and more hardened with every act of deliberate rejection.

It becomes more and more impervious to the reception of Truth, just as a sealed envelope is unable to receive any further letter or message after it is sealed.

Cf. also 2:7 and n. 31.

فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ...

60. So patiently persevere: for verily the promise of Allah is true:

...وَلَا يَسْتَخِفُّكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْقِنُونَ (٦٠)

nor let those shake thy firmness, who have (themselves) no certainty of faith.

C3578. The Prophet of Allah does not slacken in his efforts or feel discouraged because the Unbelievers laugh at him or persecute him or even seem to succeed in blocking his Message.

He has firm faith, and he knows that Allah will finally establish His Truth. He goes on in his divinely entrusted task, with patience and perseverance, which must win against the levity of his opponents, who have no faith or certainty at all to sustain them. (R).