

SPREAD KNOWLEDGE

THE
HOLY QURAN

ENGLISH TAFSEER
CHAPTER 48
SURAH AL-FATH

COMMENTARY & EXPLANATORY

By
ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

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HOLY QURAN

CHAPTER

048

SURAH AL-FATH

ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

Introduction and Summary

1. This is the second of the group of three Madinah Surahs describes in the introduction to Surah 47. Its date is fixed by the mention of Treaty of Hdaybiyah, Dhu al Qadah A.H. 6 i.e. February 628 (see n. 1261 to 9:13).
2. Hdaybiyah is a plain, a short day's march to the north Makkah, a little to the west of Madinah-Makkah road, as used in the Prophet's time. Six years had passed since the Prophet had left his beloved City, and it has been in the hands of the Pagan autocracy. But Islam had grown during

these six years. Its Qiblah was towards the Ka'bah. The Pagans had tried to attack Islam at various times and had been foiled. By Arab custom every Arab was entitled to visit the Sacred Enclosure unarmed, and fighting of any kind was prohibited during the Sacred Months (see n. 209 to 2:194), which included the month of Dhu al Qadah. In the Dhu al Qadah A.H. 8, therefore, the Prophet desired to perform the Umrah for lesser pilgrimage (n. 212 to 2:196), unarmed, but accompanied with his followers. A large following joined him, to the number of fourteen to fifteen hundred.

3. This was not to the liking of the Pagan autocracy at Makkah, which took alarm, and in breach of all Arab traditions and usage, prepared to prevent the peaceful party from performing the rites of pilgrimage. They marched out to fight the unarmed party. The Prophet turned a little to the west of the road, and encamped at Hdaybiyah, where negotiations took place. On the one hand, the Prophet was unwilling to give the Quraysh any pretended excuse for violence in the Sacred Territory; on the other, the Quraysh had learnt, by six years' bitter experience, that their power was crumbling in its powers of organisation and resistance. The enthusiasm with which the Covenant of Fealty was entered into under a tree in Hdaybiyah (48:18) by the great multitude united in devotion to their great leader, was evidence of the great power which he commanded even in a worldly sense if the Quraysh had chosen to try conclusions with him.
4. A peaceful Treaty was therefore concluded, known as the Treaty of Hdaybiyah. It stipulated:
 - (1) that there was to be peace between the parties for ten years;
 - (2) that any tribe or person was free to join either party or make an alliance with it;
 - (3) that if a Quraysh person from Makkah, under guardianship, should join the Prophet without the guardian's permission, he (or she) should be sent back to the guardian, but in the contrary case, they should not be sent back;; and

- (4) that the Prophet and his party were not to enter Makkah that year, but that they could enter unarmed the following year.
5. Item3, not being reciprocal, was objected to in the Muslim camp, but it really was of little importance Muslims under guardianship, sent back to Makkah, were not likely to renounce the blessings of Islam; on the the hand Muslims going to Makkah, would be centres of influence for Islam, and it was more important that should be allowed to remain there than that they should be sent back to Madinah. It was impossible to think that there would be apostates or renegades to Paganism! "Look on this picture, and on that!"
6. The Muslims faithfully observed the terms of Treaty. The following year (A.H. 7) they performed the lesser Pilgrimage in great state for three days. It is true that the Makkans later on broke the Peace in the attack which one of their allied tribes (the Banu Bakr) made on the Muslim Banu Khuzaah (who were in alliance with Prophet), but this led to the conquest of Makkah and the sweeping away of the autocracy. Meanwhile Hdaybiyah was a great victory, morally and socially, as well as politically, and its lessons are expounded in the Surah, as the lessons of Badr were expounded in *:42-48, and of Uhud in 3:121-129, 149-180.

Summary- Victory comes from cool courage, devotion, faith, and patience, as shown at Hdaybiyah; therefore remember Allah, and follow His Prophet (48:1-29, C. 222).

C.222 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

*Victory and Help go with calmness of mind,
Faith, fidelity, zeal, and earnestness,
Not with greed, lukewarmness, or timidity.
Discipline and obedience are essential
For service. The reward for service are not
To be measured by immediate results,
But accrue in countless hidden ways
For Patience and Restraint. Be strong*

*Against Evil, but kind and gentle amongst
Yourselves: the seed will grow and become
Strong, to your wonder and delight.*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا (١)

1. Verily We have granted thee a manifest Victory:

C4866. This is best referred to the Treaty of Hudaybiyah, for which see the Introduction to this Surah. By this Treaty the Makkan Quraish, after many years of unrelenting conflict with Islam, at length recognised Islam as (what they thought) an equal power with themselves.

In reality the door was then opened for the free spread of Islam throughout Arabia and thence through the world.

لِيُغْفِرَ لَكَ اللّٰهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ...

2. That Allah may forgive thee thy faults of the past and those to follow;

C4867. See n. 4428 to 40:55, and Cf. 47:19.

Any mistakes of the past were now rectified, and any future ones prevented by the free scope now offered, by the act of the Quraish Pagans themselves, to the recognition and free promulgation of Islam.

... وَيُتِمِّمَ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيكَ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا (٢)

fulfil His favor to thee; and guide thee on the Straight Way;

وَيَنْصُرَكَ اللّٰهُ نَصْرًا عَزِيزًا (٣)

3. And that Allah may help thee with powerful help.

C4868. Three objects or results of the Treaty are mentioned:

- forgiveness, which is equivalent to Mercy,

- fulfilment of the dignity of Prophethood with the dignity of an effective and recognised position in Arabia;
- opening up a straight way leading to Islam, by access to Makkah from next year, Makkah being the symbolic centre of Islam.

These three are summed up in the comprehensive phrase "**powerful (or effective) help**".

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ...

4. It is He who sent down Tranquility into the hearts of the Believers,

C4869. The results were achieved by tranquility, calmness, and cool courage among the 1400 to 1500 unarmed men who accompanied the Prophet to Hudaybiyah and who were threatened with violence by the excited Quraish leaders of Makkah.

... لِيَزِدُوا إِيمَانًا مَعَ إِيْمَانِهِمْ ...

that they may Add Faith to their Faith;

C4870. It is a casuistical question to ask.

Are there degrees in Faith?

The plain meaning is that believers will see one Sign of Allah after another, and with each their Faith is confirmed. During all the long years of persecution and conflict they had Faith, but when they see their old enemies actually coming out to negotiate with them, their Faith is justified, fulfilled, and confirmed: and they turn in gratitude to Allah.

... وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ...

for to Allah belong the Forces of the heavens and the earth;

C4871. There are visible forces which you see in the physical world. Men fight with armed forces, and the Muslims had to defend themselves with arms also, and not without success.

But social, moral, and spiritual forces were fighting for them under Allah's command, and they were the real

forces that established the Message of Islam and the position of its Leader and Preacher.

... وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا (٤)

and Allah is full of Knowledge and Wisdom;

لِيُدْخَلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ...

5. That He may admit the men and women who believe, to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein for aye,

C4872. This clause is coordinated to the previous clause, "That they may add Faith to their Faith".

The intervening words, "For to Allah ... and Wisdom" are parenthetical. The third coordinate clause comes in the next verse, "And that He may punish

The skeleton construction will be, -Allah sends down calm courage to Believers in order that they may be confirmed in their Faith; that they may qualify for the Bliss of Heaven; and that the evil ones may receive the punishment they deserve."

... وَيُكَفِّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ قَوْلًا عَظِيمًا (٥)

and remove their ills from them;

and that is, in the sight of Allah, the highest achievement (For man)

وَيُعَذِّبُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكَاتِ ...

6. And that He may punish the Hypocrites, men and women, and the Polytheists, men and women,

... الظَّالِمِينَ بِاللَّهِ ظَنَّ السَّوْءَ عَلَيْهِمْ دَائِرَةُ السَّوْءِ ...

who imagine an evil opinion of Allah. On them is a round of Evil:

C4873. They will be encircled (or hemmed in) by Evil.

... وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ...

the Wrath of Allah is on them:

... وَلَعَنَهُمْ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا (٦)

He has cursed them and got Hell ready for them: and evil is it for a destination.

C4874. That is, deprived them of His Grace, on account of their continued rejection of it.

وَلِلَّهِ جُنُودُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ...

7. For to Allah belong the Forces of the heavens and the earth;

C4875. These words are repeated (with a slight change) from the parenthetical clause in verse 4. to emphasize the assertion as a substantive proposition, that fighting and visible forces in the physical world are not the only forces with which Allah works out His Plan. invisible forces are more important as they were at Hdaybiyah.

The slight difference is instructive; in the parenthetical clause, Allah's Knowledge was emphasized, and in the substantive clause it is Allah's Power. Knowledge plans, and Power executes.

...وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا (٧)

and Allah is Exalted in Power, Full of Wisdom.

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا (٨)

8. We have truly sent thee as a witness, as a bringer of Glad Tidings, and as a Warner:

C4876. The Prophet came in order to establish Faith in Allah and true worship. We can view him in three capacities:

- as a witness to help the weak if they were oppressed and check the strong if they did wrong;
- as a giver of the Glad Tidings of Allah's Grace and Mercy to those who repented and lived good lives; and
- as one who warned sinners of the consequences of their sin.

لَتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ...

9. In order that ye (o men) may believe in Allah and His Messenger,

... وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا (٩)

that ye may assist and honor Him, and celebrate His praises morning and evening.

C4876a. Assist and honour Him: most commentators agree that the pronoun 'Him' refers to Allah, while a few believe it refers to the Holy Prophet. [Eds.]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ ...

10. Verily those who plight their fealty to thee do no less than plight their fealty to Allah:

C4877. In the Hodaybiyah negotiations, when it was uncertain whether the Quraish would treat well or ill the Prophet's delegate to Makkah, there was a great wave of feeling in the Muslim camp of 1400 to 1500 men. They came with great enthusiasm and swore their fealty to the Prophet, by placing hand on hand according to the Arab custom: see [paragraph 3 of the Introduction](#) to this Surah.

This in itself was a wonderful demonstration of moral and material strength, a true Victory: it is called **Baiat ur Ridhwan** (Fealty of Allah's Good Pleasure) in Islamic History. They placed their hands on the Prophet's hand, but the Hand of Allah was above them, and He accepted their Fealty.

...يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ...

the Hand of Allah is over their hands:

...فَمَنْ تَكَلَّمَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنْكُتُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ ...

Then anyone who violates His oath, does so to the harm of his own soul,

...وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (١٠)

and anyone who fulfills what he has covenanted with Allah, Allah will soon grant him a great Reward.

'Alaihu is an archaic form for 'Alaihi.

Section 2

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ شَغَلَتْنَا أَمْوَالُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا ...

11. The desert Arabs who lagged behind will say to thee: "We were engaged in (looking after) our flocks and herds, and our families;

C4878. When the Prophet started from Madinah on the Makkah journey which ended in Hudaibiyah, he asked all Muslims to join him in the pious undertaking, and he had a splendid response.

But some of the desert tribes hung back and made excuses. Their faith was but lukewarm, and they did not want to share in any trouble which the Makkah might give to the unarmed Muslims on pilgrimage. Their excuse that they were engaged in looking after their flocks and herds and their families was an after-thought, and in any case made after the return of the Prophet and his party with enhanced prestige to Madinah.

... فَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ...

do thou then ask forgiveness for us."

... يَقُولُونَ بِاللِّسَانِ مِمَّا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ ...

They say with their tongues what is not in their hearts.

C4879. They said this with their tongues, but no thought of piety was in their hearts.

... قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ ضَرًّا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًا ...

Say:

"Who then has any power at all (to intervene) on your behalf with Allah, if His will is to give you some loss or to give you some profit?

C4880. Their false excuse was based on a calculation of worldly profit and loss. But what about the spiritual loss in detaching themselves from the holy Prophet or spiritual profit in joining in the splendidly loyal feelings of service and obedience which were demonstrated at Hudaibiyah?

And in any case they need not think that all their real and secret motives were not known to Allah.

...بَلْ كَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا (١١)

but Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do.

بَلْ ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ لَنْ يَنْقَلِبَ الرَّسُولُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِيهِمْ أَبَدًا...

12. "Nay, ye thought that the Messenger and the Believers would never return to their families;

...وَزَيَّنَ ذَلِكَ فِي فُلُوبِكُمْ وَظَنَّتُمْ ظَنًّا سَوْءًا...

this seemed pleasing in your hearts, and ye conceived an evil thought,

C4881. Their faith was so shaky that they thought the worst would happen, and that the Makkan Quraish would destroy the unarmed band. In their heart of hearts they would not have been sorry, because they were steeped in wickedness and rejoiced in the sufferings of others. But such persons will burn in the fire of their own disappointment.

...وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا بُورًا (١٢)

for ye are a people lost (in wickedness)."

وَمَنْ لَمْ يُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَإِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَعِيرًا (١٣)

13. And if any believe not in Allah and His Messenger, We have prepared, for those who reject Allah, a Blazing Fire!

...وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ...

14. To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth:

...يَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ...

He forgives whom He wills, and He punishes whom He wills:

C4882. Evil must inevitably have its punishment, but there is one way of escape, viz., through repentance and the Mercy of Allah. Allah's Justice will punish, but Allah's Mercy will forgive; and the Mercy is the predominant feature in Allah's universe: "He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

...وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا (١٤)

but Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

سَيَقُولُ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ إِذَا انطَلَقْتُمْ إِلَى مَغَائِمٍ لِتَأْخُذُوهَا ذُرُونَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ ...

15. Those who lagged behind (will say), when ye (are free to) march and take booty (in war): "Permit us to follow you."

C4883. Now comes out another motive behind the minds of the laggards. The journey for pilgrimage had no promise of war booty. If at any future time there should be a promise of booty they would come! But that is to reverse Allah's law and decree. **Jihad** is not for personal gain or booty: see Surah 8. and Introduction to Surah 8., paragraph 2. On the contrary **Jihad** is hard striving, in war and peace, in the Cause of Allah.

...يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُبَدِّلُوا كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ...

They wish to change Allah's decree:

...قُلْ لَنْ تَتَّبِعُونَا كَذَلِكَ ...

Say: "Not thus will ye follow us:

C4884. Not thus: i.e., not on those terms; not if your object is only to gain booty.

... قَالَ اللَّهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ ...

Allah has already declared (this) beforehand":

C4885. See 8:1, and n. 1179.

...فَسَيَقُولُونَ بَلْ تَحْسُدُونَنَا ...

then they will say, "but ye are jealous of us."

C4886. The desert Arabs loved fighting and plunder and understood such motives for war. The higher motives seemed to be beyond them. Like ignorant men they attributed petty motives or motives of jealousy if they were kept out of the vulgar circle of fighting for plunder. But they had to be schooled, and they were schooled to higher ideas of discipline, self-sacrifice, and striving hard for a Cause.

...بَلْ كَانُوا لَا يَفْقَهُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (١٥)

Nay, but little do they understand (such things).

قُلْ لِلْمُخَلَّفِينَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ ...

16. Say to the desert Arabs who lagged behind:

C4887. While they are reproached for their supineness in the march which led to Hudaybiyah, where there was danger but no prospect of booty, they are promised, if they learn discipline, to be allowed to follow the Banner of Islam where (as happened later in the Persian and Byzantine Wars) there was real fighting with formidable and well- organized armies.

... سَنُذْعَوْنَ إِلَى قَوْمٍ أُولِي بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ ...

"Ye shall be summoned (to fight) against a people given to vehement war:

C4888. Cf. 27:33.

... تُقَاتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ يُسَلِّمُونَ ...

then shall ye fight, or they shall submit.

C4889. That is, you shall go forth to war if you learn discipline, not for booty, but for a great and noble Cause. For if your opponents submit to the Cause, there will be no fighting and no booty.

... فَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا يُؤْتِكُمُ اللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ...

Then if ye show obedience, Allah will grant you a goodly reward,

وَإِنْ تَنْتَوَلَوْا كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّن قَبْلُ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا (١٦)

but if ye turn back as ye did before, He will punish you with a grievous Penalty."

لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى

الْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ ...

17. No blame is there on the blind, nor is there blame on the lame, nor on one ill (if he joins not the war):

...وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ...

but he that obeys Allah and His Messenger, (Allah) will admit him to Gardens beneath which rivers flow;

C4890. There may be neither fighting nor booty. But all who obey the call to **Jihad** with perfect discipline will get the Rewards of the Hereafter.

The blind, the maimed, and the infirm will of course be exempted from active compliance with the Call, but they can render such services as are within their power, and then they will not be excluded from the reward.

...وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ يُعَذِّبْهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا (١٧)

and he who turns back, (Allah) will punish him with a grievous Penalty.

Section 3

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ...

18. Allah's Good Pleasure was on the believers ...

C4891. The noun from the verb **radhiya** is **Ridhwan** (Good Pleasure); hence the name of this **Baiat, Baiat ur Ridhwan**, the Fealty of Allah's Good Pleasure: see n. 4877 to 48:10.

... إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ ...

... when they swore Fealty to thee under the Tree:

C4892. The great ceremony of the Fealty of Allah's Good Pleasure took place while the holy Prophet sat under a tree in the plain of Hodaybiyah. (R).

...فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ ...

He **knew** what was in their hearts,

C4893. Or tested: see n. 4855 to 47:31.

... فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ ...

and He sent down tranquility to them,

C4894. Sakina = Peace, calm, sense of security and confidence, tranquility. Cf. above 48:4, and n. 4869.

The same word is used in connection with the battle of Hunain in 9:26, and in connection with the Cave of Thaur at an early stage in the Hijrah: 9:40.

... وَأَتَابَهُمْ فَتَحًا قَرِيبًا (١٨)

and He rewarded them with a speedy Victory;

C4895. The Treaty of Hdaybiyah itself was a "speedy Victory": it followed immediately after the Bayah.

وَمَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً يَأْخُذُونَهَا ...

19. And many gains will they acquire (besides):

...وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا (١٩)

and Allah is Exalted in Power, Full of Wisdom.

وَعَدَكُمُ اللَّهُ مَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً تَأْخُذُونَهَا ...

20. Allah has promised you many gains that ye shall acquire,

C4896. The gains so far seen from the Baiat and their calm and disciplined behaviour were certainly great: in the rapid spread of Islam, in the clearance from the Sacred House of the idolatrous autocracy, and in the universal acceptance of the Message of Allah in Arabia.

...فَعَجَلَ لَكُمْ هَذِهِ وَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَ النَّاسِ عَنْكُمْ ...

and He has given you these beforehand; and He has restrained the hands of men from you;

C4897. The first fruits of the Baiat were the victory or treaty of Hdaybiyah, the cessation for the time being of the hostility of the Makkan Quraish, and the opening out of the way to Makkah. These things are implied in the phrase, "He has restrained the hands of men from you."

...وَلِتَكُونَ آيَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيمًا (٢٠)

that it may be a Sign for the Believers, and that He may guide you to a Straight Path;

C4898. Hodaybiyah (in both the Bayah and the Treaty) was truly a sign-post for the Believers: it showed the solidarity of Islam, and the position which the Muslims had won in the Arab world.

وَأُخْرَى لَمْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهَا قَدْ أَحَاطَ اللَّهُ بِهَا ...

21. And other gains (there are), which are not within your power, but which Allah has compassed:

C4899. Other gains: these are usually referred to the later victories of Islam, but we must view them not merely in their political or material aspect, but chiefly in the rise of Islam as a world power morally and spiritually.

وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرًا (٢١)

and Allah has power over all things.

وَلَوْ قَاتَلَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوَلَّوْا الْأُدْبَارَ ...

22. If the Unbelievers should fight you, they would certainly turn their backs;

C4900. Their morale was now truly broken.

... ثُمَّ لَمْ يَجِدُوا لِيًّا وَلَمْ يَصِيرُوا (٢٢)

then would they find neither protector nor helper.

سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ ...

23. (Such has been) the practice. (Approved) of Allah already in the past:

C4901. Cf. 33:62.

... وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا (٢٣)

no change wilt thou find in the practice (approved) of Allah.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ بِبَطْنِ مَكَّةَ ...

24. And it is He who has restrained their hands from you and your hand from them in the midst of Mecca,

C4902. Little incidents had taken place that might have plunged the Quraish and the Muslims from Madinah into

a fight. On the one hand, the Quraish were determined to keep out the Muslims, which they had no right to do: and on the other hand, the Muslims, though unarmed, had sworn to stand together, and if they had counter-attacked they could have forced their entrance to the Ka'bah, the centre of Makkah. But Allah restrained both sides from anything that would have violated the Peace of the Sanctuary, and after the Treaty was signed, all danger was past.

...مِن بَعْدِ أَنْ أَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا (٢٤)

after that He gave you the victory over them. And Allah sees well all that ye do.

هُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْهَدْيِ مَعْكُوفًا
أَنْ يَبْلُغَ مَحِلَّهُ...

25. They are the ones who denied revelation and hindered you from the Sacred Mosque and the sacrificial animals, detained from reaching their place of sacrifice.

C4903. The Muslims from Madinah had brought the animals for sacrifice with them, and had put on the Ihram or pilgrim's garb (see n. 217 to 2:197), but they were not only prevented from entering Makkah, but were also prevented from sending the sacrificial animals to the place of sacrifice in Makkah, as they could have done under 2:196.

The sacrifice was therefore actually offered at Hudaybiyah.

...وَلَوْ لَأَنَّ رِجَالَ مُؤْمِنُونَ وَنِسَاءَ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ لَمْ تَعْلَمُوهُمْ أَنْ
تَطُؤُوهُمْ...

Had there not been believing men and believing women whom ye did not know that ye were trampling down

C4904. There were at the time in Makkah believing Muslims, men and women, and the faith of some of them was unknown to their brethren from Madinah. Had a fight taken place in Makkah, even though the Muslims

had been successful, they would unwittingly have killed some of these unknown Muslims, and thus would unwittingly have been guilty of shedding Muslim blood. This was prevented by the Treaty.

...فَأَنْصَبِيكُمْ مِنْهُمْ مَعْرَّةً بَغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ لِيُدْخَلَ اللَّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ...

and on whose account a crime would have accrued to you without (your) knowledge. (Allah would have allowed you to force your way, but He held back your hands) that He may admit to His mercy whom He will.

C4905. Allah works according to His wise and holy Will and Plan, and not according to what seems to us, in the excitement of human life, to be the obvious course of things. By preventing a fight He saved many valuable lives, not only of Muslims but also of some who became Muslims afterwards and served Islam.

He grants His Mercy on far higher standards than man in his limited horizon can see.

لَوْ تَرَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ لَعَذَّبْنَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا (٢٥)

If they had been apart, We should certainly have punished the Unbelievers among them with a grievous punishment.

C4906. If the party from Madinah could have distinguished Muslims from non-Muslims among the Makkans, they might have been allowed to enter and punish the pagan Quraish for their inordinate vanity and gross breach of the unwritten law of the land. But in the actual circumstances the best solution was the Treaty of Hudaibiyah.

إِذْ جَعَلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ ...

26. While the Unbelievers got up in their hearts heat and cant - the heat and cant of Ignorance,

C4907. While the Unbelievers were blustering and excited, and meticulously objected to introductory words such as "In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful (they did not like the titles), the Prophet remained calm and collected, and got the substance of

their demands embodied in the Treaty without worrying about words.

Even though the terms of the Treaty appeared to the companions, at first, to be unfair to Muslims, they remained faithful to their Leader and showed trust in his better judgment, a trust that was vindicated by the events that followed. (R).

... فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ ...

Allah sent down His tranquility

C4908. Cf. [above 48:18](#), and [n. 4894](#).

... عَلَى رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَى ...

to His Messenger and to the Believers, and made them stick close to the command of self-restraint;

...وَكَاثُوا أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا...

and well were they entitled to it and worthy of it.

C4909. **It** = Tranquility.

Their calmness amid much provocation was a gift of Allah; they had earned a right to it by their- obedience and discipline, and showed themselves well worthy of it.

...وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا (٢٦)

And Allah has full knowledge of all things.

Section 4

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّؤْيَا بِالْحَقِّ لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ إِنْ

شَاءَ اللَّهُ ...

27. Truly did Allah fulfil the vision for His Messenger:

Ye shall enter the Sacred Mosque, if Allah wills,

C4910. The Prophet had had a dream that he had entered the Sacred Mosque at Makkah, just before he decided on the journey which resulted in the Treaty of

Hudaybiyah. By it he and his people could enter next year without the least molestation and in the full customary garb, with head shaved or hair cut short, and all the customary minor rites of pilgrimage.

...آمِنِينَ مُحَلِّقِينَ رُؤُوسَكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ لَا تَخَافُونَ ...

- with minds secure,
- heads shaved,
- hair cut short,
- and without fear.

...فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا فَجَعَلَ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا (٢٧)

For He knew what ye knew not, and He granted, besides this, a speedy victory.

C4911. See above, [48:18](#), and [n. 4895](#).

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ عَلَىٰ الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ ...

28. It is He who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, to proclaim it over all religion:

...وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا (٢٨)

and enough is Allah for a Witness.

C4912. The divine disposition of events in the coming of Islam and its promulgation by the holy Prophet are themselves evidence of the truth of Islam and its all-reaching character; for there is nothing which it has not influenced.

See also [61:9](#), [n. 5442](#).

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ ...

29. Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah;
and those who are with him are strong against Unbelievers, (but) compassionate amongst each other.

C4913. Cf. [9:128](#).

The devotees of Allah wage unceasing war against evil, for themselves, and for others; but to their own brethren in faith-especially the weaker ones- they are mild and compassionate: they seek out every opportunity to sympathize with them and help them.

...بَرَّاهُمْ رُكْعًا سَجْدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا...

Thou wilt see them bow and prostrate themselves (in prayer), seeking Grace from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure.

C4914. Their humility is before Allah and His Apostle and all who have authority from Allah, but they yield no power or pomp, nor do they worship worldly show or glitter. Nor is their humility before Allah a mere show for men.

...سَيِّمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ...

On their faces are their marks, (being) the traces of their prostration.

C4915. The traces of their earnestness and humility are engraved on their faces, i.e., penetrate their inmost being, the face being the outward sign of the inner man.

If we take it in its literal sense, the traces might mean the marks left by repeated prostration on their foreheads.

Moreover, a good man's face alone shows in him the grace and light of Allah; he is gentle, kind and forbearing, ever helpful, relying on Allah and possessing a blessed Peace and Calmness (Sakina, 48:26, 48:18 n. 4894) that can come from no other source. (R).

... ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ ...

This is their similitude in the Torah;

C4916. In the Book of Moses, which is now found in a corrupt form in the Pentateuch, the posture of humility in prayer is indicated by prostration: e.g., Moses and Aaron "fell upon their faces", Num. 16:22.

...وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ...

and their similitude in the Gospel is:

C4917. The similitude in the Gospel is about how the good seed is sown and grows gradually, even beyond the expectation of the sower: "the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how; for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear": Mark. 4:27-28.

Thus Islam was preached by the holy Prophet;

the seed seemed to human eyes lost in the ground; but it put forth its shoot, and grew, and became strong, until it was able to stand on its own legs, and its worst enemies recognised its existence and its right to live.

Note how much more complete the parable is in the Quran. The mentality of the sowers of the seed is expressed in beautiful terms: its growth and strength filled them "with wonder and delight."

...كَزَّرَعٍ أُخْرِجَ شَطَأُهُ فَأَزْرَهُ فَاسْتَعْلَطَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سَوْقِهِ...

like a seed which sends forth its blade, then makes it strong; it then becomes thick, and it stands on its own stem,

...يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ...

(filling) the sowers with wonder and delight.

As a result, it fills the Unbelievers with rage at him.

C4918. 1 construe the particle "**ti**" as expressing not the object, but the result.

The result of the wonderful growth of Islam in numbers and strength was that its enemies were confounded, and raged furiously within their own minds, a contrast to the satisfaction, wonder, and delight of the Prophet and his Companions.

The pronoun in "**rage at them**" of course refers to the Prophet and his Companions, and goes back to the earlier-words, "**on their faces**" etc.

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا

عَظِيمًا (٢٩)

Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds Forgiveness, and a great Reward.