INTRODUCTION TO SŪRAT Yūnus, 10

Chronologically this Sūra and the five that follow (Sūras xi, xii, xiii, xiv, and xv) are closely connected, and were revealed in the late Makkān period, as the great event of the Hijrat was gradually approaching down the stream of Time. But their chronology has no particular significance.

On the other hand their arrangement in the gradation of Quranic teaching fits in with the subject-matter. S. viii. and S. ix. were mainly concerned with the first questions that arose on the formation of the new and organised Community of Islam in its conflict with those who wished to suppress or destroy it or use force to prevent its growth and the consolidation of its ideals. See Introductions to those Sūras. The present group leads us to the questions that face us when external hostility has been met, and our relations to Allah have to be considered from a higher stand-point than that of self-preservation. How does revelation work? What is the meaning of divine grace and its withdrawal? How do the Messengers of Allah deliver their Message? How should we receive it?

All these questions revolve round the revelation of the Qurān and each Sūra of this group except the 13th has the Abbreviated Letters A.L.R. attached to it. S. xiii. has the letters A.L.M.R., and we shall discuss this variation when we come to S. xiii.

Let us now consider Sūra x. alone. The central theme is that Allah's wonderful Creation must not be viewed by us as a creation of material things only, once made and finished with. Most wonderful of all is how He reveals Himself to men through Prophets and Scriptures; how prophets are rejected by men, and the Message disbelieved until it is too late for repentance; and how, as in the case of Yūnus (Jonah) and his people, even the rejection (when repentance supervenes) does not prevent Allah's grace and mercy from working, and how far that working is beyond man's comprehension.

Summary.—The wonderful working of the Creator through man by revelation seems like magic to men; yet they could find Signs and Messages from Him in the sun and the moon and the constantly varying yet regular phenomena of nature, from which man should take a lesson of constancy and Faith (x. 1-20).

All the goodness or beauty that man meets in the life around him proceeds from Allah. Yet man is blind and will not understand (x. 21-40).

As all things and beings proceed from Allah, so will they return to Him,
and He is ever true. Why then does ungrateful man make untrue phantoms for himself instead of rejoicing in the good news which He sends? (x. 41-70).

Allah revealed Himself through Noah, but Noah's people rejected him and perished. He spoke through Moses to Pharaoh, but Pharaoh was stiff necked and arrogant, and when he repented at all, it was too late (x. 71-92).

Everywhere want of faith causes people to perish. But the people of Yûnus repented, and Allah saved them by His wonderful grace. So Allah will deliver the Believers. When the Truth comes from Allah, follow it and be patient, for Allah is the most righteous of Judges (x. 93-109).
Yūnus, or Jonah.

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

1. A. L. R.\(^{1381}\)

These are the Ayats\(^{1382}\) Of the Book of Wisdom.

2. Is it a matter
Of wonderment to men
That We have sent
Our inspiration to a man
From among themselves?\(^{1383}\)

That he should warn mankind
(Of their danger), and give
The good news to the Believers
That they have before their Lord
The good actions they have
advanced\(^{1384}\)

(But) say the Unbelievers:
"This is indeed
An evident sorcerer!"

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1381. For the Abbreviated Letters generally see Appendix I.

1382. َأَيَّاتٍ = Signs, or Verses of the Qur'ān. Here both meanings are to be understood. Each verse is a nugget of wisdom. And in the verses immediately following, e.g., x. 3-6, examples are given of the wonders of Allah's material Creation. If the starry heavens impress us with their sublimity as signs of Allah's wisdom and power, how much more wonderful is it that He should speak to lowly man through His Messengers, in man's language, so that he can understand?

1383. Is it not still more wonderful that the inspired man should be one of ourselves? The Arabs had known Muhammad in other relations and conditions, and when the mighty Message came through his mouth—the message of Wisdom and Power, such as no man could speak as from himself, least of all a man not instructed in human learning—they could only in their wonder attribute it to magic and sorcery. They failed to understand that magic and sorcery were projections of their own mind, while here was solid, enduring Truth from Allah!

1384. Allah's Message was and is not all smooth and agreeable. The first thing is to convince us of our wrong-doing, and warn us of our danger. If we have Faith, we then learn what a high rank we obtain in the sight of Allah. According to another view the word "qadama" here refers to the fact that the acts of a person precede him to his Lord. The word *sidq* qualifies these acts with sincerity and genuineness.
3. Verily your Lord is Allah,
Who created the heavens
And the earth in six Days.  \(^{1385}\)
Then He established Himself\(^ {1386}\)
On the Throne.
Regulating and governing all things.
No intercessor (can plead with Him)
Except after His leave
(Hath been obtained). This
Is Allah your Lord; Him therefore
Serve ye; will yet not
Receive admonition?\(^ {1387}\)

4. To Him will be your return–
Of all of you. The promise
Of Allah is true and sure.\(^ {1388}\)
It is He who beginneth
The process of creation,\(^ {1389}\)
And repeateth it, that He
May reward with justice
Those who believe
And work righteousness;
But those who reject Him

\(^{1385}\) See note 1031 to vii. 54.

\(^{1386}\) Istawâ, with the preposition ilâ after it, means He turned to or He directed Himself by His will to as in ii-29. With the preposition 'alâ after it, as here and in vii. 54 and elsewhere, the meaning seems to be "to mount or ascend," and to be firmly established, to sit firm and unshaken, beyond question. "The Throne represents many ideas: e.g., (1) that God is high above all His Creation; (2) that He regulates and governs it, as a king does, whose authority is unquestionably recognised; (3) that He is not, therefore, like the gods of Greece, and paganism, who were imagined to be in a world apart, careless of mankind, or jealous of mankind, but on the contrary. He (4) disposes of their affairs and all affairs continuously and with justice; (5) that the authority of His prophets, ministers, and messengers is derived from Him, and such intercession as they can make is by His will and permission.

\(^{1387}\) Cf. vi. 80.

\(^{1388}\) Haqq: true, right, for just ends, in right proportions, sure and certain: all these ideas are implied.

\(^{1389}\) Cf. n. 120 to ii. 117. Allah's creation is not a simple act, once done and finished with. It is continuous, and there are many stages, not the least important of which is the Hereafter, when the fruits of our life will be achieved.
Will have draughts\textsuperscript{1390} of boiling fluids, and a Chastisement grievous, because they did reject Him.

5. It is He who made the sun to be a shining glory\textsuperscript{1391} and the moon to be a light (of beauty), and measured out stages for it, that ye might know the number of years and the count (of time).

Nowise did Allah create this but in truth and righteousness\textsuperscript{1392}. (Thus) doth He explain His Signs in detail, for those who know!\textsuperscript{1393}

6. Verily, in the alternation of the Night and the Day, and in all that Allah hath created, in the heavens and the earth, are Signs for those who fear Him.\textsuperscript{1394}

7. Those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us.

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\textsuperscript{1390} Hamim: boiling fluid: it is associated as in xxxviii. 57, with gassāq, a dark, murky, or intensely cold fluid; both indicative of the grievous penalty that results from rebellion against Allah.

\textsuperscript{1391} The fitting epithet for the sun is dhi‘a, “splendour and glory of brightness”, and for the moon is “a light” (of beauty), the cool light that illuminates and helps in the darkness of the night. But the sun and moon also measure time. The simplest observation can keep pace with the true lunar months and lunar years, which are all that is required by a pastoral people. For agriculture solar years are required, as they indicate the changes of the seasons, but ordinary solar years are never exact; even the solar year of 365\frac{1}{4} days requires correction by advanced astronomical calculation.

\textsuperscript{1392} Everything in Allah’s creation has use and purpose, and fits into a Design. It is true in every sense of the word and it is good and just. It is not merely a matter of sport or freak (xxi. 16). Though so varied, it proclaims Allah’s Unity; though a limited free-will is granted to creatures, the results of evil (which is rebellion) are neutralised and harmony is restored. Cf. iii. 191.

\textsuperscript{1393} Cf. ix. 11.

\textsuperscript{1394} Cf. ii. 164.
But are pleased and satisfied
With the life of the Present.
And those who heed not
Our Signs,—

8. Their abode is the Fire,
Because of the (evil)
They earned.

9. Those who believe,
And work righteousness.—
Their Lord will guide them
Because of their Faith.­
Beneath them will flow
Rivers in Gardens of Bliss.

10. (This will be) their prayer therein:
“Glory to Thee, O Allah!”
And “Peace” will be their
greeting therein
And the end of their prayer,
Will be: “Praise be to Allah,
The Cherisher and Sustainer
Of the Worlds!”

SECTION 2.

11. If Allah were to hasten for men
The ill (they have earned)

1395. Those who fall from Grace are described by three epithets: (1) the meeting with Allah is not the object of their hope and earnest desire, but something else, viz. (2) the material good of this world, which not only attracts them but apparently gives them complete satisfaction, so that there is no glow of the Future in their horizon, and (3) they are deaf and dead to the resounding and living Message of Allah, (1) and (2) refer to the extinction of Faith in them, and (3) to their falling a prey to the evils of this world in their conduct. They are contrasted in x. 9 with the Faith and the Righteousness of those who accept Grace.

1396. Their Faith is the cause as well as the instrument of their Guidance,—the Kindly Light which leads them as well as the Joy which fills their Soul.

1397. A beautiful piece of spiritual melody! They sing and shout with joy, but their joy is in the Glory of Allah! The greetings they receive and the greetings they give are of Peace and Harmony! From first to last they realise that it is Allah Who cherished them and made them grow, and His rays are their Light.
As they would fain hasten on
The good.—then would
Their respite be settled at once. 1398
But We leave those
Who rest not their hope
On their meeting with Us.
In their trespasses, wandering
In distraction blindly.

12. When trouble toucheth a man.
He crieth unto Us
(In all postures)—lying down 1399
On his side, or sitting.
Or standing. But when We
Have removed his affliction,
He passeth on his way as if
He had never cried to Us
For the affliction that touched him!
Thus do the deeds of transgressors
Seem fair in their eyes. 1400

13. Generations before you
We destroyed when they
Did wrong: their Messengers
Came to them with Clear Signs,
But they would not believe!
Thus do We requite
Those who sin!

1398. Those who have no hope for the Future grasp at any temporary advantage, and in their blindness even mockingly ask for immediate punishment for their sins (viii. 32), thus vainly challenging Allah, in Whom they do not believe. If the beneficent Allah were to take them at their word, they would have no chance at all. Their doom would be sealed. But even the respite they get they use badly. They merely wander about distractedly like blind men, to and fro. Cf. ii. 15.

1399. Not only do men fail to use their respite: even those who have a superficial belief in Allah call on Him in their trouble but forget Him when He has relieved their trouble. Their Faith is not strong enough to make them realise that all good proceeds from Allah. But in moments of trouble they use every position, literally and figuratively, to appeal to Him.

1400. Those without Faith are selfish, and are so wrapped up in themselves that they think every good that comes to them is due to their own merits or cleverness. That is itself a cause of their undoing. They do not see their own faults.
14. Then We made you heirs
In the land after them,
To see how ye would behave.¹⁴⁰¹

15. But when Our Clear Signs
Are rehearsed unto them,
Those who rest not their hope
On their meeting with Us,
Say: "Bring us a Qurʾān"¹⁴⁰²
Other than this, or change this."
Say: "It is not for me,
Of my own accord,
To change it: I follow
Naught but what is revealed
Unto me: if I were
To disobey my Lord,
I should myself fear the Chastisement
Of a Great Day (to come)."

16. Say: "If Allah had so willed,
I should not have rehearsed it
To you, nor should He
Have made it known to you.¹⁴⁰³
A whole life-time before this
Have I tarried amongst you:

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¹⁴⁰¹. This is addressed to the Qurаish in the first instance, for they had succeeded to the 'Ād and the Thamūd heritage. But the application is universal, and was true to the 'Abbāsī Empire in the time of Hārūn-ar-Rashid, or the Muslim Empire in Spain or the Turkish Empire in its palmiest days, and indeed, to the Muslims and non-Muslims of our own days.

¹⁴⁰². Reading: in the Arabic, the word is "Qurʾān", which may mean Reading or in the special sense, the Qurʾān. The duty of Allah's Messenger is to deliver Allah's Message as it is revealed to him, whether it please or displease those who hear it. Selfish men want to read their own desires or fancies into religious precepts, and thus they are often willing to use Religion for their own ends. Most of the corruptions of Religion are due to this cause. But Religion is not to be so prostituted.

¹⁴⁰³. It is in Allah's Plan that He should reveal Himself in certain ways to His creatures, and His Messengers are the instruments that carry out His will. It is in itself gracious Mercy that He should thus make His Will known. We should be grateful for His guidance instead of carping at it.
17. Who doth more wrong
Than such as forge a lie
Against Allah, or deny
His Signs? But never
Will prosper those who sin.

18. They serve, besides Allah,
What can hurt them not
Nor profit them, and they say:
“These are our intercessors
With Allah.” Say: “Do ye
Indeed inform Allah of something
He knows not, in the heavens
Or on earth?—Glory to Him!
And far is He above the partners
They ascribe (to Him)?”

19. Mankind was but one nation,
But differed (later). Had it not
Been for a Word

1404. Muḥammad Al-Muṣṭafā had lived his whole life of purity and virtue amongst his people, and they knew and acknowledged it before he received his mission. They knew he loved his nation and was loyal to it. Why should they turn against him when he had to point out under inspiration all their sins and wrong-doing? It was for their own good. And he had to plead again and again with them: “Will you not understand, and see what a glorious privilege it is for you to receive true guidance from Allah?”

1405. When we shut our eyes to Allah’s glory and goodness, and go after false gods, we give some plausible excuse to ourselves, such as that they will intercede for us. But how can stocks and stones intercede for us? And how can men intercede for us, when they themselves have need of Allah’s Mercy? Even the best and noblest cannot intercede as of right, but only with His permission (x. 3). To pretend that there are other powers than Allah is to invent lies and to teach Allah. There is nothing in heaven or earth that He does not know, and there is no other like unto Him.

1406. Cf. ii 213. All mankind was created one, and Allah’s Message to mankind is in essence one, the Message of Unity and Truth. But as selfishness and egotism got hold of man, certain differences sprang up between individuals, races, and nations, and in His infinite Mercy He sent them messengers and messages to suit their varying mentality, to test them by His gifts, and stir them up to emulation in virtue and piety (v. 48).

1407. Cf. vi. 115. ix 40, and iv. 171. “Word” is the Decree of Allah, the expression of His Universal Will or Wisdom in a particular case. When men began to diverge from one another (see last note), Allah made their very differences subserve the higher ends by increasing their emulation in virtue and piety, and thus pointing back to the ultimate Unity and Reality.
That went forth before
From thy Lord, their differences
Would have been settled
Between them.

20. They say: “Why is not
A Sign sent down to him
From his Lord?” Say:
“The Unseen is only
For Allah (to know).
Then wait ye: I too
Will wait with you”.¹⁴⁰⁸

SECTION 3.

21. When We make mankind
Taste of some mercy after
Adversity hath touched them,
Behold! they take to plotting
Against Our Signs! Say:
“Swifter to plan is Allah!”
Verily, Our messengers record
All the plots that ye make!”¹⁴⁰⁹

22. He it is who enableth you
To traverse through land
And sea; till when ye even board
Ships;—they sail with them
With a favourable wind,
And they rejoice thereat;

¹⁴⁰⁸. Their demand for a Sign is disingenuous. All nature and revelation furnishes
them with incontestable Signs. What they want is the Book of the Unseen opened out
to them like the physical leaves of a book. But they forget that a physical Book is on
a wholly different plane from Allah’s Mysteries, and that their physical natures cannot
apprehend the mysteries. They must wait. Truth will also wait. But the waiting in the
two cases is in quite different senses. Cf. vi. 158 and ix. 52.

¹⁴⁰⁹. Man turns his thoughts in adversity to Allah. But as soon as the trouble is
past, he not only forgets Him but actually strives against His cause. But such people are
poor ignorant creatures, not realising that the Universal Plan of Allah is swifter to stop
their petty plans, and that though they fail, the record of them remains eternally against
them.
1410. All the great inventions and discoveries on which man prides himself are the fruit of that genius and talent which Allah has freely given of His grace. But the spirit of man remains petty, as is illustrated by the parable from the sea. How the heart of man rejoices when the ship goes smoothly with favourable winds! How in adversity it turns, in terror and helplessness, to Allah, and makes vows for deliverance! and how those vows are disregarded as soon as the danger is past! Cf. vi. 63.

23. But when he delivereth them, Behold! they transgress Insolently through the earth In defiance of right! O mankind! your insolence Is against your own souls,— An enjoyment of the life Of the Present: in the end, To Us is your return, And We shall show you The truth of all that ye did.

24. The likeness of the life Of the Present is As the rain which We Send down from the skies: By its mingling arises The produce of the earth—Which provides food

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1411. In our insolence and pride we do not see how small and ephemeral is that part of us which is mortal. We shall see it at last when we appear before our Judge. In the meantime our ridiculous pretensions only hurt ourselves.

1412. Another beautiful Parable, explaining the nature of our present life. The rain comes down in drops and mingles with the earth. Through it, by Allah's matchless artistry, the womb of the earth is made fruitful. All kinds of good, useful, and beautiful grains, vegetables, and fruits are produced for men and animals. The earth is covered in its bravery of green and gold and all kinds of colours. Perhaps the "owner" takes all the credit to himself, and thinks that this will last eternally. A hailstorm or a blast, a
For men and animals:
(It grows) till the earth
Is clad with its golden
Ornaments and is decked out
(In beauty): the people to whom
It belongs think they have
All powers of disposal over it:
There reaches it Our command
By night or by day,
And We make it
Like a harvest clean-mown.
As if it had not flourished
Only the day before!
Thus do We explain
The Signs in detail
For those who reflect.

25. But Allah doth call
To the Home of Peace:⁴¹⁴³
He doth guide whom He pleaseth
To a Way that is straight.

26. To those who do right
Is a goodly (reward)—
Yea, more (than in measure)!⁴¹⁴⁴
No darkness nor abasement
Shall cover their faces!⁴¹⁴⁵

= frost or a volcanic eruption, comes and destroys it, or it may be even normally, that the
time of harvest comes, and the fields and orchards are stripped bare by some blight or
disease. Where is the beauty and bravery of yesterday? All that is left is dust and ashes!
What more can we get from this physical material life?

1413. In contrast with the ephemeral and uncertain pleasures of this material life,
there is a higher life to which Allah is always calling. It is called the Home of Peace.
For there is no fear, nor disappointment nor sorrow there. And all are called, and those
will be chosen who have sought, not material advantages, but the Good Pleasure of Allah.
Salūm, Peace, is from the same root as Islām, the Religion of Unity and Harmony.

1414. The reward of the righteous will be far more than in proportion to their merits.
For they will have the supreme bliss of being near to Allah, and "seeing His face".

1415. The face is the symbol of the Personality, the inner and real Self, which is
the antithesis of the outer and ephemeral Self. It will be illuminated with Allah's Light,
behind which is no shadow or darkness. All its old shortcomings will be blotted out, with
their sense of shame, for there will be Perfection, as in Allah's sight.
They are Companions of the Garden;  
They will abide therein  
(For aye)!

27. But those who have earned  
Evil will have a reward  
Of like evil:  
Ignominy  
Will cover their (faces):  
No defender will they have  
From (the wrath of) Allah:  
Their faces will be covered,  
As it were, with pieces  
From the depth of the darkness  
Of Night: they are Inhabitants  
Of the Fire: they will  
Abide therein (for aye)!

28. One Day shall We gather them  
All together. Then shall We say  
To those who joined gods (with Us):  
"To your place! ye and those  
Ye joined as 'partners'."  
We shall separate them,  
And their "partners" shall say:  
"It was not us  
That ye worshipped!"

29. "Enough is Allah for a witness  
Between us and you: we

1416. Note that the evil reward is for those who have "earned" evil, i.e., brought it on themselves by the deliberate choice of evil. Further, in the justice of Allah, they will be required with evil similar to, and not greater in quantity or intensity, than the evil they had done,—unlike the good, who, in Allah's generosity, get a reward far greater than anything they have earned or could possibly earn.

1417. Night is the negation of Light and metaphorically of joy and felicity. The intensive is indicated by "the depth of the darkness of Night."

1418. The false gods are not real: they are only the figments of the imaginations of those who indulged in the false worship. But the prophets or great or good men whose names were vainly taken in competition with the name of Allah, and the personified Ideas or Idols treated in the same way would themselves protest against their names being used in that way, and show that the worship was paid not to them, but to the ignorance or superstition or selfish lusts of the false worshippers.
Certainly knew nothing
Of your worship of us!1419

30. There will every soul see
(The fruits of) the deeds
It sent before1420: they will
Be brought back to Allah
Their rightful Lord,
And their invented falsehoods
Will leave them in the lurch.1421

SECTION 4.

31. Say: “Who is it that
Sustains you (in life)
From the sky and from the earth?1422
Or who is it that
Has power over hearing1423
And sight? And who
Is it that brings out
The living from the dead
And the dead from the living?1424

1419. See last note. They did not even know that they were being falsely worshipped
in that way.

1420. Cf. ii. 95, where the verb used is qaddama. The verb aslafa, used here, is nearly
synonymous.

1421. Instead of their false ideas helping them, they will desert them and leave them
in the lurch. Cf. vi. 24.

1422. Sustenance may be understood in the sense of all the provision necessary for
maintaining physical life as well as mental and spiritual development and well-being.
Examples of the former are light and rain from heaven and the produce of the earth and
facilities of movement on land and sea and in air. Examples of the latter are the moral
and spiritual influences that come from our fellow-men, and from the great Teachers and
Prophets.

1423. Just two of our ordinary faculties, hearing and sight, are mentioned, as
examples of the rest. All the gifts of Allah, physical and spiritual, are enjoyed and
incorporated by us by means of the faculties and capacities with which He has endowed
us.

1424. Cf. iii. 27 and n. 371; vi. 95 and n. 920; and xxx. 19.
This is the general summing-up of the argument. The government of the whole
Creation and its maintenance and sustenance is in the hands of Allah. How futile then
would it be to neglect His true worship and go after false gods?

The wonderful handiwork and wisdom of Allah having been referred to, as the
real Truth, as against the false worship and false gods that men set up, it follows that
to disregard the Truth must lead us into woeful wrong, not only in our beliefs but in
our conduct. We shall err and stray and be lost. How then can we turn away from the
Truth?

Disobedience to Allah brings its own terrible consequences on ourselves. The
Law, the Word, the Decree, of Allah must be fulfilled. If we go to false gods, our Faith
will be dimmed, and then extinguished. Our spiritual faculties will be dead.

The argument is now turned in another direction. The false gods can neither
create out of nothing nor sustain the creative energy which maintains the world. Nor can
they give any guidance which can be of use for the future destiny of mankind: on the
contrary they themselves (assuming they were men who were deified) stand in need of
such guidance. Why then follow vain fancies, instead of going to the source of all
knowledge, truth, and guidance, and worship, serve, and obey Allah, the One True God?
Can give any guidance Towards Truth?" Say: "It is Allah Who gives guidance Towards Truth. Is then He Who gives guidance to Truth More worthy to be followed, Or he who finds not guidance (Himself) unless he is guided? What then is the matter With you? How judge ye?

36. But most of them follow Nothing but conjecture: truly Conjecture can be of no avail Against Truth. Verily Allah Is well aware of all That they do.

37. This Qur-ān is not such As can be produced By other than Allah; On the contrary it is A confirmation of (revelations) That went before it, And a fuller explanation\(^{1429}\) Of the Book–wherein There is no doubt– From the Lord of the Worlds.

38. Or do they say, "He forged it"? Say: "Bring then A Sūra like unto it, And call (to your aid) Anyone you can, Besides Allah, if it be Ye speak the truth!"\(^{1430}\)

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\(^{1429}\) The Book: Cf. iii. 23 and n. 366. Allah’s revelation throughout the ages is one. The Qur-ān confirms, fulfils, completes, and further explains the one true revelation, which has been sent by the One True God in all ages.

\(^{1430}\) Cf. ii. 23 and n. 42.
39. Nay, they charge with falsehood
That whose knowledge they
Cannot compass, even before
The interpretation thereof ᵃ¹⁽⁴⁾ hath reached them: thus
Did those before them
Make charges of falsehood:
But see what was the end
Of those who did wrong! ᵃ²⁽⁴⁾

40. Of them there are some
Who believe therein,
And some who do not:
And thy Lord knoweth best
Those who are out for mischief.

SECTION 5.

41. If they charge thee
With falsehood, say:
"My work to me,
And yours to you!" ᵃ³⁽⁴⁾
Ye are free from responsibility
For what I do, and I
For what ye do!"

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1431. Taawul: elucidation, explanation, final fulfilment. Cf., vii. 53. The Message of Allah not only gives us rules for our every-day conduct, but speaks of high matters of religious significance, which require elucidation in two ways: (1) by experience from the actual facts of life, and (2) by the final fulfilment of the hopes and warnings which we now take on trust through our Faith. The Unbelievers reject Allah's Message simply because they cannot understand it and without giving it even a chance of elucidation in any of these ways.

1432. Wrong-doers always came to grief ultimately. The true course of history shows it from a broad standpoint. But they are so headstrong that they prejudge issues in their ignorance before they are decided.

1433. When the Prophet of Allah is rejected and charged with falsehood, he does not give up his work, but continues to teach and preach his Message. He can well say to those who interfere with him: "Mind your own business: supposing your charge against me is true, you incur no responsibility: I have to answer for it before Allah: and if I do my duty and deliver my Message, your rejection does not make me liable for your wrong-doing: you will have to answer before Allah."
42. Among them are some who
  (Pretend to) listen to thee:
  But canst thou make the deaf
  To hear,—even though
  They are without understanding\textsuperscript{1434}

43. And among them are some
  Who look at thee:
  But canst thou guide
  The blind,—even though
  They will not see?

44. Verily Allah will not deal
  Unjustly with man in aught:
  It is man that wrongs
  His own soul.\textsuperscript{1435}

45. And on the day when He will
  Gather them together:
  (It will be) as if
  They had tarried\textsuperscript{1436}
  But an hour of a day:
  They will recognise each other:\textsuperscript{1437}
  Assuredly those will be lost
  Who denied the meeting
  With Allah and refused
  To receive true guidance.

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\textsuperscript{1434} Cf. vi. 25, 36, 39 and notes. Hypocrites go to hear and see some great Teacher, but they get no profit out of it because they are not sincerely seeking the truth. They are like the blind, or the deaf, or the imbeciles. It is impossible to guide them, because they have not the will to be guided.

\textsuperscript{1435} Allah cannot be blamed for man’s evil, nor will He deal unjustly with man. He has given him faculties and means of guidance. If man goes wrong, it is because he wrongs himself.

\textsuperscript{1436} In eternity our life on this earth will look as if it had been just a little part of our little day, and so also will appear any interval between our death and the call to Judgment.

\textsuperscript{1437} We shall retain some perception of our mutual relations on earth, so that the righteous judgment which will be pronounced will be intelligible to us, and we shall be convinced of its righteousness.
46. Whether We show thee
(Realised in thy life-time)
Some part of what We Promise them,—or We Take thy soul
(Before that),—in any case,
To Us is their return:
Ultimately Allah is witness\textsuperscript{1438}
To all that they do.

47. To every people (was sent) A Messenger: when their Messenger\textsuperscript{1439}
Comes (before them), the matter Will be judged between them With justice, and they Will not be wronged.

48. They say: “When Will this promise Come to pass,— If ye speak the truth?”

49. Say: “I have no power\textsuperscript{1440}
Over any harm or profit To myself except as Allah

\textsuperscript{1438} The Prophet is assured that the end of evil is evil, just as the end of good is good. Whether this result is made plain before his very eyes in his own life-time or afterwards, makes no difference. The wicked should not rejoice if they are given rope and seem to have the upper hand for a time, nor should the righteous lose heart: for Allah’s promise is sure and must come to pass. And in any case, the scales can only be partially, if at all, adjusted in this life. There is the final and complete adjustment on the Day of Judgment. Allah is All-Knowing, and all truth will be before Him.

\textsuperscript{1439} Every people or generation or nation had its Message or Messenger: Allah revealed Himself to it in some way or another. If that Messenger was ignored or rejected, or his Message was twisted or misused, the Day of Reckoning will come, when perfect justice will be done and the whole Truth revealed. The Unbelievers mockingly say: “If that is true, pray tell us when that Day will come!” The answer of the Messenger is: “It will come in good time: no one can either hasten or retard it. If you want me then to save you or if you fear that I shall harm you for your treatment of me, know that this matter is in the hands of Allah alone, Who will do perfect justice. Even in regard to myself, any harm or good that befalls me is by the command and in the power of Allah”.\textsuperscript{1440}

\textsuperscript{1440} Cf. vii. 188.
Willeth. To every People\textsuperscript{1441} Is a term appointed: When their term is reached, Not an hour can they cause Delay, not (an hour) can they Advance (it in anticipation)."

50. Say: Do ye see,- If His punishment should come To you by night or by day,\textsuperscript{1442} What portion of it Would the Sinners Wish to hasten?

51. "Would ye then believe in it At last, when it actually cometh To pass? (It will then be said:) 'Ah! now? and ye wanted (Aforetime) to hasten it on!'

52. "At length will be said To the wrong-doers: 'Taste ye The enduring punishment!'\textsuperscript{1443}

\textsuperscript{1441} This repeats vii. 34, but the significance is different in the two contexts. Here the reply is to the Unbelievers' mocking incredulity (see n. 1439) as to whether there is such a thing as a Hereafter: they suggest to the Prophet of Allah that if his claim to inspiration from Allah is true, he should get them punished at once for rejecting him. In vii. 34 the reference is to the punishment of iniquity as described in vii. 33: sin is not necessarily punished at once: every People or generation gets a chance; when their term is fulfilled, the final adjustment is made.

\textsuperscript{1442} The mockery of Unbelievers will be turned into panic when the wrath of Allah descends on them. It may do so suddenly, by night or by day, when they least expect it. Will they then say of any bit of it: "Let it be hastened"?

\textsuperscript{1443} This will be the final doom, and they will themselves have brought it on themselves!

The psychology of the Unbelievers is here analysed and exposed. This particular argument begins at x. 47 and ends at x. 53. It begins with the general statement that every People has had due warning and explanation by means of a Prophet specially sent to them: that Prophet will be a relevant witness at the final Judgment, when the matter will be judged in perfect equity. Then follows a dialogue. The Unbelievers mock and say, "Why not bring on the Punishment now?" The reply to the Unbelievers is, "It will come in Allah's good time". The Believers are told to watch and see how the sinners would take it if the Punishment were to come at once. Would they not think it too sudden? When it actually comes, their panic will be indescribable. "Is that true?" say the Unbelievers. "It is the very truth," is the answer, "and nothing can ward it off".
53. They seek to be informed
By thee: “Is that true?”
Say: “Aye! by my Lord!
It is the very truth!
And ye cannot frustrate it!”

SECTION 6.

54. Every soul that hath sinned,
If it possessed all
That is on earth,
Would fain give it in ransom:1444
They would declare (their)
repentance1445
When they see the Chastisement:
But the judgment between them
Will be with justice,
And no wrong will be done
Unto them.

55. Is it not (the case) that to Allah
Belongeth whatever is
In the heavens and on earth?
Is it not (the case) that
Allah’s promise is assuredly true?
Yet most of them do not know.

56. It is He who giveth life
And who taketh it,
57. O mankind! there hath come To you an admonition from your Lord And a healing for the (diseases) In your hearts,—and for those Who believe, a Guidance And a Mercy.

58. Say: “In the Bounty of Allah. And in His Mercy,—in that Let them rejoice”: that is better Than the (wealth) they hoard.

59. Say: “See ye what things Allah hath sent down to you For sustenance? Yet ye Hold forbidden some things Thereof and (some things) lawful.” Say: “Hath Allah indeed Permitted you, or do ye forge (Things) to attribute to Allah?”

60. And what think those Who forge lies against Allah, On the Day of Judgment? Verily Allah is full of Bounty

1446. Those who do wrong have a disease in their hearts, which will cause their spiritual death. Allah in His Mercy declares His Will to them, which should direct their lives and provide a healing for their spiritual disease. If they accept Faith, the remedy acts; they find themselves in right guidance and receive Allah's forgiveness and mercy. Surely those are far better gifts than material advantages, wealth, or possessions.

1447. “Sustenance” is to be taken in both the literal and the metaphorical sense. In the literal sense, what fine and varied things Allah has provided for us on land and in sea and air, in the vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdoms? Yet narrow minds put artificial barriers against their use. In the metaphorical sense, what enchanting fields of knowledge and spiritual endeavour are provided in our individual and social lives? And who is to say that some are lawful and others forbidden? Supposing they were so in special circumstances, it is not right to attribute artificial restrictions of that kind to Allah and falsely erect religious sanctions against them.

1448. People who lie in Religion or invent false gods, or false worship,—have they any idea of the Day of Judgment, when they will be called to account, and will have to answer for their deeds?
SECTION 7.

61. In whatever business thou mayest be, and whatever portion thou mayest be reciting from the Qur'an, and whatever deed ye (mankind) may be doing, we are Witnesses thereof when ye are deeply engrossed therein. Nor is hidden from the Lord (so much as) the weight of an atom on the earth or in heaven. And not the smallest and not the greatest of these things but are recorded in a clear Record.

62. Behold! verily on the friends of Allah there is no fear, nor shall they grieve.

1449. Allah is most kind, and gracious, and generous with His gifts of all kinds, material and spiritual. But men do not understand, and are ungrateful in forgetting the Giver of all and setting up false objects of worship and false standards of pride.

1450. There is nothing that men can do but Allah is a witness to it. We may be deeply engrossed in some particular thing and for the time being be quite unconscious of other things. But Allah's knowledge not only comprehends all things, but has all things actively before it. Nothing is hidden from Him. And His knowledge has another quality which human knowledge has not. Human knowledge is subject to time, and is obliterated by time. Allah's knowledge is like a Record and endures for ever. And His Record has a further quality which human records have not. The most permanent human record may be quite intelligible to those who make it but may be ambiguous to others and may become unintelligible with the progress of time, as happens almost invariably to the most enduring inscriptions from very ancient times: but in Allah's "Record" or knowledge there is no ambiguity, for it is independent of time, or place, or circumstance. This is the force of Mubin ("clear") here.

1451. Allah's all-embracing knowledge and constant watchful care over all His creatures, may be a source of fear to sinners, but there is no fear for those whom He honours with His love and friendship, neither in this world nor in the world to come.
63. Those who believe
   And (constantly) guard
   Against evil;—

64. For them are Glad Tidings,
   In the life of the Present
   And in the Hereafter:
   No change can there be
   In the Words of Allah.
   This is indeed
   The supreme Triumph

65. Let not their speech\textsuperscript{1452}
   Grieve thee: for all power
   And honour belong to Allah:
   It is He Who heareth
   And knoweth (all things).

66. Behold! verily to Allah
   Belong all creatures,
   In the heavens and on earth.
   What do they follow
   Who worship as His “partners”
   Other than Allah? They follow
   Nothing but conjecture, and
   They do nothing but lie.\textsuperscript{1453}

67. He it is that hath
   Made you the Night
   That ye may rest therein,
   And the Day to make
   Things visible (to you).\textsuperscript{1454}
   Verily in this are Signs

\textsuperscript{1452} Sometimes the words of the unrighteous or their revilings hurt or grieve the righteous man, but there is no occasion for either anger or sorrow: they have no power and they can do no real dishonour, for all power and honour are from Allah.

\textsuperscript{1453} All creatures are subject to Allah. If, therefore, any false worship is set up, the false gods—so called “partners”—are merely creatures of imagination or false inventions.

\textsuperscript{1454} Our physical life—and our higher life in so far as it is linked with the physical—is sustained by the alternation of rest and activity, and the fit environment for this alternation is the succession of Nights and Days in our physical world. The Day makes the things “visible to us”—a beautiful symbol, not only of the physical work for which =
1456. The reference to Noah's story here is only incidental, to illustrate a special point. The fuller story will be found in xi. 25-48, and in many other passages, e.g., vii. 59-64, xxiii 23-32, xxvi, 105-122, and xxxvii, 75-82. At each place there is a special point in the context. The special point here is that Noah's very life and preaching among his wicked people was a cause of offence to them. But he feared nothing, trusted in Allah, delivered his message, and was saved from the Flood.

68. They say, "Allah hath begotten A son!"—Glory be to Him! He is Self-Sufficient! His Are all things in the heavens And on earth! No warrant Have ye for this! Say ye About Allah what ye know not?

69. Say: "Those who forge A lie against Allah Will never prosper." 1455

70. A little enjoyment In this world!— And then, to Us Will be their return. Then shall We make them Taste the severest Chastisement For their disbelief.

SECTION 8.

71. Relate to them the story 1456 Of Noah. Behold! he said To his People: "O my People,

1455. In Quranic language "prosperity" refers both to our every-day life and to the higher life within us,—to the Present and the Future,—health and strength, opportunities and resources, a spirit of contentment, and the power of influencing others. Here there seems to be an extra touch of meaning. A liar not only deprives himself of prosperity in all senses, but his "lie" itself against Allah will not succeed: it will and must be found out.

1456. The reference to Noah's story here is only incidental, to illustrate a special point. The fuller story will be found in xi. 25-48, and in many other passages, e.g., vii. 59-64, xxiii 23-32, xxvi, 105-122, and xxxvii, 75-82. At each place there is a special point in the context. The special point here is that Noah's very life and preaching among his wicked people was a cause of offence to them. But he feared nothing, trusted in Allah, delivered his message, and was saved from the Flood.
If it be hard on your (mind) 
That I should stay (with you) 
And remind (you) the Signs 
Of Allah,—yet I put 
My trust in Allah 
Get ye then an agreement 
About your plan and among 
Your Partners, so your plan

Be not to you dark and dubious. 
Then pass your sentence on me, 
And give me no respite.

72. But if ye turn back, (consider): 
No reward have I asked Of you: my reward is only 
Due from Allah, and I Have been commanded to be 
Of those who submit To Allah's Will (in Islam)."

73. They rejected him. 
But We delivered him. 
And those with him, 
In the Ark, and We made 
Them inherit (the earth). 
While We drowned 
In the Flood those 
Who rejected Our Signs. Then see what was the end 
Of those who were warned (But heeded not)!

74. Then after him We sent 
(Many) messengers to their Peoples:

1457. Firm in his sense of Truth from Allah. Noah plainly told his people to condemn him to death if they liked, openly and in concert, so that he should at least know who would listen to his Message and who would not. He wanted them to be frank and direct, for he feared nothing.

1458. The Prophet of Allah preaches for the good of his people. But he claims no reward from them, but on the contrary is reviled, persecuted, banished, and often slain.

1459. Cf. vii. 64.
They brought them Clear Signs,  
But they would not believe  
What they had already rejected\textsuperscript{1460}  
Beforehand. Thus do We seal  
The hearts of the transgressors.

75. Then after them sent We  
Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh\textsuperscript{1461}  
And his chiefs with Our Signs.  
But they were arrogant:  
They were a wicked people.

76. When the Truth did come  
To them from Us, they said:  
“This is indeed evident sorcery!”

77. Said Moses: “Say ye (this)  
About the Truth when  
It hath (actually) reached you?  
Is it sorcery (like) this?  
But sorcerers will not prosper.”\textsuperscript{1462}

78. They said: “Hast thou  
Come to us to turn us  
Away from the ways  
We found our fathers following,--  
In order that thou and thy brother

---

\textsuperscript{1460} I understand the meaning to be that there is a sort of spiritual an influence descending from generation to generation, among the Unbelievers as among the men of Faith. In history we find the same problems in many ages,--denial of Allah’s grace, defiance of Allah’s law, rejection of Allah’s Message. These influences cause the hearts of the contumacious to be sealed and impervious to the Truth Cf. ii. 7 and notes. What they do is to prejudge the issues even before the Prophet explains them.

\textsuperscript{1461} The story of Moses, Aaron, and Pharaoh is fully told in vii. 103-137, and there are references to it in many places in the Qur-\textsuperscript{a}n. The incidental reference here is to illustrate a special point, viz., that the wicked are arrogant and bound up in their sin, and prefer deception to Truth: they do not hesitate to charge the men of Allah, who work unselfishly for them, with mean motives, such as would actuate them in similar circumstances!

\textsuperscript{1462} Sorcery is the very opposite of Truth,—being deception of plausible shows by the powers of evil. But these cannot succeed or last permanently, and Truth must ultimately prevail.
May have greatness in the land? But not we shall believe in you!"

79. Said Pharaoh: “Bring me Every sorcerer well versed.”

80. When the sorcerers came, Moses said to them: “Throw ye what ye (wish) To throw!”

81. When they had had their throw, Moses said: “What ye Have brought is sorcery: Allah will surely make it Of no effect: for Allah Prospereth not the work Of those who make mischief.

82. “And Allah by His Words Doth prove and establish The Truth, however much The Sinners may hate it!”

SECTION 9.

83. But none believed in Moses Except some children of his People.

1463. Notice how they attribute evil motives to the men of Allah, motives of ambition and lust of power, which the men of Allah had been sent expressly to put down. The same device was used against Al-Muṣṭafā.

1464. When they threw their rods, the rods became snakes by a trick of sorcery, but Moses’s miracles were greater than any tricks of sorcery, and had real Truth behind them.

1465. Allah’s Words or Commands have real power, while Sorcerers’ tricks only seem wonderful by deceiving the eye.

1466. The pronoun “his” in “his People” is taken by some Commentators to refer to Pharaoh. The majority of Pharaoh’s people refused to believe at the time, but the sorcerers believed (vii. 120), and so did Pharaoh’s wife (lxvi. 11), and ultimately Pharaoh himself, though too late (x. 90). If we took “his” to refer to Moses, it would mean that the Israelites were hard-hearted and grumbled (vii. 129) even when they were being delivered from Egypt, and only a few of them had any real faith in Allah’s providence and the working of His Law, and they feared Pharaoh even more than they feared Allah.
Because of the fear of Pharaoh
And his chiefs, lest they
Should persecute them; and certainly
Pharaoh was mighty on the earth
And one who transgressed all bounds.

84. Moses said: “O my People!
If ye do (really) believe
In Allah, then in Him
Put your trust if ye
Submit (your will to His).”

85. They said: “In Allah
Do we put our trust.
Our Lord make us not
A trial for those 467
Who practise oppression;

86. “And deliver us by Thy Mercy
From those who reject (Thee).”

87. We inspired Moses and his brother
With this Message: “Provide 468
Dwellings for your People
In Egypt, make your dwellings
Into places of worship,
And establish regular prayers:
And give Glad Tidings
To those who believe!”

88. Moses prayed: “Our Lord!
Thou hast indeed bestowed

1467. A trial for those who practise oppression: the various meanings of FUnat have been explained in n. 1198 to viii. 25. The prayer is that the righteous people, being weak, should be saved from being used as objects of oppression or punishment at the hands of powerful enemies. Weakness tempts Power to practise oppression, and is thus an occasion of trial for the oppressors.

1468. This instruction, we may suppose, was given when the sorcerers were brought to faith, and some of the Egyptians believed. Moses was for a little while to remain in Egypt, so that his Message should have time to work, before the Israelites were led out of Egypt. They were to make their houses into places of prayer (Qibla), as Pharaoh would not probably allow them to set up public places of prayer, and they were now to be only sojourners in Egypt. These were the glad tidings (the Gospel) of Islam, which was preached under Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, and completed under Muhammad.
On Pharaoh and his Chiefs
Splendour and wealth in the life.\footnote{1469}
Of the Present, and so,
Our Lord they mislead (men)
From Thy Path. Deface
Our Lord the features of their
And send hardness to their hearts,
So they will not believe
Until they see
The grievous Chastisement.”

89. Allah said: “Accepted is
Your prayer (O Moses and Aaron)!
So stand ye straight,
And follow not the path
Of those who know not.”\footnote{1471}

90. We took the Children
Of Israel across the sea:
Pharaoh and his hosts followed them
In insolence and spite.\footnote{1472}
At length, when overwhelmed
With the flood, he said:

\footnote{1469. Moses’s prayer, in which Aaron joined, for he was always with him, may be paraphrased thus: “O Allah! we understand that the glitter and the wealth of the Egyptians are not to be envied. They are but the ephemeral goods of this life. They are a disadvantage, in that in their pride of possessions the Egyptians mislead themselves and others. Let their pride be their undoing! Turn their wealth into bitterness and their hearts into hardness, for they reject Thee, and they will not believe until they actually see the Punishment of their sins!”}

\footnote{1470. A terrible curse! Let their wealth and splendour become so defaced in their features, that instead of being objects of desire, they become objects of loathing! The heart is the seat of affections and joy: let it be so hardened by their unbelief that it becomes the seat of hatred and grief! It is when they see the Penalty that they will believe!}

\footnote{1471. Be not dazzled by their splendour, but stand out straight for Truth, for that is your salvation! Addressed in form to Moses and Aaron, in substance it is addressed to the Israelites.}

\footnote{1472. Notice the swiftness of the action in the narrative. The execution of poetic justice could not have been described in fewer words.}
1473. That is, in the One True God. This was death-bed repentance, and even so it was forced by the terror of the catastrophe. So it was not accepted (cf. iv. 18) in its entirety. Only the body was saved from the sea, and presumably, according to Egyptian custom, it was embalmed and the mummy was given due rites of the dead. But the story commemorated for ever Allah's working, in mercy for His people, and in just punishment of oppressors.

1474. After many wanderings the Israelites were settled in the land of Canaan, described as “a land flowing with milk and honey” (Exod. iii. 8). They had a prosperous land; and they were supplied with spiritual sustenance by men sent to deliver Allah’s Message. They should have known better than to fall into disputes and schisms, but they did so. This was all the more inexcusable considering what bounties they had received from Allah. The schisms arose from selfish arrogance, and Allah will judge between them on the Day of Judgment.

SECTION 10.

91. (It was said to him:) “Ah now!—But a little while Before, wast thou in rebellion!—And thou didst mischief (and violence)!

92. “This day shall We save thee In thy body, that thou Mayest be a Sign to those Who come after thee! But verily, many among mankind Are heedless of Our Signs!”

93. We settled the Children Of Israel in an honourable Dwelling-place, and provided For them sustenance of the best: It was after knowledge had been Granted to them, that they Fell into schisms. Verily...
Allah has given frequent warnings against Evil and want of Faith in all ages. through Signs and through inspiration.—the latter (“the Word”) being even more direct and personal than the former. Those who did not heed the warning found to their cost that it was true, and they perished. Such contumacy in the rejection of Truth only yields when the actual penalty is in sight. Belief then is induced by irresistible facts: it is not efficacious as Faith, as was proved against Pharaoh. See x. 90 and n. 1473.

1475. Allah’s Truth is all one, and even in different forms men sincere in Religion recognise the oneness. So sincere Jews like ‘Abdullāh ibn Salām, and sincere Christians like Warāqa or the Nestorian monk Bahira, were ready to recognise the mission of Muḥammad Al-Muṣṭafā. “The Book” in this connection is Revelation generally, including pre-Islamic revelations.

1476. Cf. iii. 60 and n. 399.

1477. If thou wert in doubt As to what We have revealed Unto thee, then ask those Who have been reading The Book from before thee:1475 The Truth hath indeed come To thee from thy Lord: So be in no wise Of those in doubt.1476

95. Nor be of those who reject The Signs of Allah, Or thou shalt be of those Who perish

96. Those against whom the Word Of thy Lord hath been verified1477 Would not believe—

97. Even if every Sign was brought Unto them,—until they see (For themselves) the Chastisement Grievous.

98. If only there had been A single township (among those We warned), which believed,—
So its Faith should have Profited it, except the People\textsuperscript{1478} Of Jonah? When they believed, We removed from them The Chastisement of Ignominy In the life of the Present, And permitted them to enjoy (Their life) for a while.\textsuperscript{1479}

99. If it had been thy Lord’s Will, They would all have believed,— All who are on earth! Wilt thou then compel mankind, Against their will, to believe!\textsuperscript{1480}

\textsuperscript{1478} Allah in His infinite Mercy points out the contumacy of Sin as a warning, and the exceptional case of Nineveth and its Prophet Jonah is alluded to. The story of Jonah is told in xxxvii. 139-148, which would be an appropriate place for further comments. Here it is sufficient to note that Nineveth was a very ancient town which is now no longer on the map. Its site is believed to be marked by the two mounds on the left bank of the Tigris, opposite the flourishing city of Mosul on the right bank, about 230 miles north-north-west of Bagdad. One of the mounds bears the name of “the Tomb of Nabi Yūnus.” Archaeologists have not yet fully explored its antiquities. But it is clear that it was a very old Sumerian town, perhaps older than 3500 B.C. It became the capital of Assyria. The first Assyrian Empire under Shalmaneser I, about 1300 B.C., became the supreme power in Western Asia. Babylon, whose tributary Assyria had formerly been, now became tributary to Assyria. The second Assyrian Empire arose about 745 B.C., and Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) beautified the town with many Public Works. It was destroyed by the Scythians (so-called Medes) in 612 B.C. If the date of Jonah were assumed to be about 500 B.C., it would be between the First and the Second Assyrian Empire; when the City was nearly destroyed for its sins, but on account of its repentance was given a new lease of glorious life in the Second Empire.

\textsuperscript{1479} The point of the allusion here may be thus explained. Nineveth was a great and glorious City. But it became, like Babylon, a city of sin. Allah sent the prophet Yūnus (Jonah) to warn it. Full of iniquities though it was, it listened to the warning, perhaps in the person of a few just men. For their sakes, the All-Merciful Allah spared it, and gave it a new lease of glorious life. According to the chronology in the last note the new lease would be for about two centuries, after which it perished completely for its sins and abominations. Note that its new lease of life was for its collective life as a City, the life of the Present, \textit{i.e.}, of this World. It does not mean that individual sinners escaped the spiritual consequences of their sin, unless they individually repented and obtained Allah’s mercy and forgiveness.

\textsuperscript{1480} If it had been Allah’s Plan or Will not to grant the limited Free-will that He has granted to man, His omnipotence could have made all mankind alike; all would then have had Faith, but that Faith would have reflected no merit on them. In the actual world as it is, man has been endowed with various faculties and capacities, so that he should strive and explore, and bring himself into harmony with Allah’s Will. Hence Faith =
100. No soul can believe, except By the Will of Allah. And He will place Abomination on those Who will not understand.

101. Say: “Behold all that is In the heavens and on earth”; But neither Signs nor Warners Profit those who believe not.

102. Do they then expect (Anything) but the like of (what happened In) the days of the men Who passed away before them? Say: “Wait ye then: For I, too, will wait with you.”

= becomes a moral achievement, and to resist Faith becomes a sin. As a complementary proposition, men of Faith must not be impatient or angry if they have to contend against Unfaith, and most important of all, they must guard against the temptation of forcing Faith, i.e., imposing it on others by physical compulsion. Forced faith is no faith. They should strive.

1481. To creatures endued with Will, Faith comes out of an active use of that Will. But we must not be so arrogant as to suppose that that is enough. At best man is weak, and is in need of Allah's grace and help. If we sincerely wish to understand, He will help our Faith; but if not, our doubts and difficulties will only be increased. This follows as a necessary consequence, and in Quranic language all consequences are ascribed to Allah.

1482. Rijs (from rajisa, yarjasu, or rajusa, yarjusu) has various meanings: e.g., (1) filth, impurity, uncleanness, abomination, as in ix. 95; (2) hence, filthy deeds, foul conduct, crime, abomination, thus shading off into (1), as in v. 90; (3) hence punishment for crime, penalty, as in vi. 125; (4) a form of such punishment, viz., doubt, obscurity, or unsettlement of mind, anger, indignation, as in ix. 125, and here, but perhaps the idea of punishment is also implied here.

1483. If Faith results from an active exertion of our spiritual faculties or understanding, it follows that if we let these die, Allah's Signs in His Creation or in the spoken Word which comes by inspiration through the mouths of His Messengers will not reach us any more than music reaches a deaf man.

1484. Cf. x. 20 and n. 1408. The argument about Allah's revelation of Himself to man was begun in those early sections of this Sûra and is being now rounded off towards the end of this Sûra with the same formula.
103. In the end We deliver
Our messengers and those who believe:
Thus is it fitting on Our part
That We should deliver
Those who believe!

SECTION II.

104. Say: "O ye men!
If ye are in doubt
As to my religion, (behold!) I worship not what ye
Worship other than Allah!
But I worship Allah—
Who will take your souls (At death): I am commanded To be (in the ranks)
Of the Believers,

105. "And further (thus): set thy face Towards Religion with true piety,
And never in any wise
Be of the Unbelievers;

106. "Nor call on any,
Other than Allah;—
Such can neither profit thee
Nor hurt thee: if thou dost.

1485. Other people may hesitate, or doubt, or wonder. But the righteous man has no doubt in his own mind, and he declares his Faith clearly and unambiguously to all, as did Al-Mustafâ.

1486. The worship of the One and True God is not a fancy worship, to be arrived at merely by reasoning and philosophy. It touches the vital issues of life and death—which are in His hands and His alone.

1487. Nor is the worship of One God an invention of the Prophet. It comes as a direct command through him and to all.

1488. Individual Faith is good, but it is completed and strengthened by joining or forming a Righteous Society, in which the individual can develop and expand. Islam was never a religion of monks and anchorites. It laid great stress on social duties, which in many ways test and train the individual’s character.
1491. When, in spite of all the efforts of the Prophets of Allah, people do not accept Truth, and evil seems to flourish for a time, we must wait and be patient, but at the same time we must not give up hope or persevering effort. For thus only can we carry out our part in the Plan of Allah.

1489. Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Even when we suffer under trials and tribulations, it is for our good, and no one can remove them except He, when, in His Plan. He sees it to be best for all concerned. On the other hand, there is no power that can intercept His blessings and favours, and His bounty flows freely when we are worthy, and often when we are not worthy of it.

1490. The Qur'an, the Criterion between right and wrong, has been sent to us from Allah. If we accept guidance, it is not as if we confer favours on those who bring us guidance. They suffer unselfishly for us, in order that we may be guided for our own good. On the other hand, if we reject it, it is our own loss. We have a certain amount of free-will, and the responsibility is ours and cannot be shifted to the Prophets sent by Allah.

1491. When, in spite of all the efforts of the Prophets of Allah, people do not accept Truth, and evil seems to flourish for a time, we must wait and be patient, but at the same time we must not give up hope or persevering effort. For thus only can we carry out our part in the Plan of Allah.