INTRODUCTION TO SŪRAT Al-Anbiyā, 21.

The last Sūra dealt with the individual story of Moses and Aaron, and contrasted it with the growth of evil in individuals like Pharaoh and the Sāmīrī, and ended with a warning against Evil, and an exhortation to the purification of the soul with prayer and praise. This Sūra begins with the external obstacles placed by Evil against such purification, and gives the assurance of Allah’s power to defend men, illustrating this with reference to Abraham’s fight against idolatry, Lot’s fight against injustice and failure to proclaim Allah’s glory by making full use of man’s God-given faculties and powers, that of Job against impatience and want of self-confidence, that of Iṣmā‘īl, Idrīs, and Zul-kifl against want of steady perseverance, that of Zūn-nūn against hasty anger, that of Zakariyā against isolation, and that of Mary against the lusts of this world. In each allusion there is a special point about the soul’s purification. The common point is that the Prophets were not, as the disbelievers suppose, just irresistible men. They had to win their ground inch by inch against all kinds of resistance from evil.

The chronology of this Sūra has no particular significance. It probably dates from the middle of the Makkan period of inspiration.

Summary.—Man treats, as he has always treated, the serious things of life with jest or contempt; but the Judgment must come, and Truth must triumph (xxi. 1-29).

Unity of Design, and certainty of Allah’s Promise: Allah’s protection and mercy, and His justice (xxi. 30-50).

How Abraham triumphed over idols, as did others among Allah’s chosen ones over various forms of evil (xxi. 51-93).

Work righteousness while it is yet time, for the Judgment will come, and only the righteous will inherit (xxi. 94-112).
Al-Anbiyaa, or The Prophets

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.

1. Closer and closer to mankind\(^{2662}\)
Comes their Reckoning: yet they
Heed not and they turn away.

2. Never comes (aught) to them
Of a renewed Message\(^{2663}\)
From their Lord, but they
Listen to it as in jest,–

3. Their hearts toying as with
Trifles. The wrong-doers conceal\(^{2664}\)
Their private counsels, (saying),
"Is this (one) more than
A man like yourselves?
Will ye go to witchcraft
With your eyes open?"\(^{2665}\)

---

2662. Every minute sees them nearer to their doom, and yet they are sadly heedless, and even actively turn away from the Message that would save them.

2663. In each age, when the Message of Allah is renewed, the very people who should have known better and welcomed the renewal and the sweeping away of human cobwebs, either receive it with amused self-superiority, which later turns to active hostility, or with careless indifference.

2664. Allah’s Message is free and open, in the full light of day. His enemies plot against it in secrecy, lest their own false motives be exposed. Their jealousy prevents them from accepting a “man like themselves” as a teacher or warner or guide.

2665. Literally, “in a state in which you (actually) see (that it is witchcraft)”. When Allah’s Messenger is proved to be above them in moral worth, in true insight, in earnestness and power of eloquence, they accuse him of witchcraft, a word which may mean nothing, or perhaps some mysterious deceitful arts.
4. Say:2666 “My Lord
Knoweth (every) word (spoken)2667
In the heavens and on earth:
He is the One that heareth
And knoweth (all things).”

5. “Nay,” they say, “(these are)
Medleys of dreams!—Nay,
He forged it!—Nay,
He is (but) a poet!2668
Let him then bring us
A Sign like the ones
That were sent to
(Prophets) of old!”

6. (As to those) before them,
Not one of the towns
Which We destroyed believed:
Will these believe?2669

2666. Notice that in the usual Arabic texts (that is, according to the Qiraat of Hafs) the word qāla is here and in xxi. 112 below, as well as in xxiii. 112, spelt differently from the usual spelling of the word in other places (e.g. in xx. 125-126). Qul is the reading of the Basra Qirāat, meaning, “Say thou” in the imperative. If we construe “he says”, the pronoun refers to “this (one)” in the preceding verse, viz.: the Prophet. But more than one Commentator understands the meaning in the imperative, and I agree with them. The point is merely one of verbal construction. The meaning is the same in either case. See n. 2948 to xxiii. 112.

2667. Every word, whether whispered in secret (as in xxi. 3 above) or spoken openly, is known to Allah. Let not the wrong-doers imagine that their secret plots are secret to the Knower of all things.

2668. The charges against Allah’s inspired Messenger are heaped up, “Magic!” says one: that means, “We don’t understand it!” Says another, “Oh! but we know! he is a mere dreamer of confused dreams!” If the “dreams” fit in with real things and vital experiences, another will suggest, “Oh yes! why drag in supernatural agencies? he is clever enough to forge it himself!” Or another suggests, “He is a poet! Poets can invent things and say them in beautiful words!” Another interposes, “What we should like to see is miracles, like those we read of in stories of the Prophets of old!”

2669. If such miracles as you read of failed to convince Unbelievers of old, what chance is there that these Unbelievers will believe? Miracles may come, but they are no cures for Unbelief.
7. Before thee, also, the messengers We sent were but men, To whom We granted inspiration: If ye know this not, ask Of those who possess the Message. 2670

8. Nor did We give them Bodies that ate no food, Nor were they immortals. 2671

9. Then We fulfilled To them Our promise, And We saved them And those whom We willed But We destroyed those Who transgressed beyond bounds. 2672

10. We have revealed for you (O men!) a book which Will give you eminence. Will ye not then understand?

SECTION 2.

11. How many were the towns. We utterly destroyed because Of their iniquities, setting up In their places other peoples?

2670. See xvi. 43 and n. 2069. This answers the Unbelievers' taunt, "he is just a man like ourselves!" True, but all messengers sent by Allah were men, not angels or another kind of beings, who could not understand men or whom men could not understand.

2671. As men they were subject to all the laws governing the physical bodies of men. They ate and drank, and their bodies perished in death.

2672. But, however difficult (or impossible) their mission may have appeared to them, or to the world at first, they won through eventually, even those who seemed to have been defeated. Examples are given in the latter part of this Sūra, especially in xxi. 51-93. They were delivered from the Wrath which overtook the Unbelievers, as were those with them who accepted Allah's Message and placed themselves in conformity with His Will and Plan. That is the meaning of "whom We willed."
12. Yet, when they felt
Our Punishment (coming),
Behold, they (tried to) flee
From it.\textsuperscript{2673}

13. Flee not, but return to
The good things of this life
Which were given you,
And to your homes,
In order that ye may
Be called to account.\textsuperscript{2674}

14. They said: "Ah! woe to us!
We were indeed wrong-doers!"

15. And that cry of theirs
Ceased not, till We made
Them as a field
That is mown, as ashes
Silent and quenched.\textsuperscript{2675}

\textsuperscript{2673} When they had every chance of repentance and reform, they rejected Allah's Message, and perhaps even put up an open defiance. When they actually began to feel the Wrath coming, they began to flee, but it was too late! Besides, where could they flee to from the Wrath of Allah? Hence the ironical appeal to them in the next verse: better go back to your luxuries and what you thought were your permanent homes! Cf. Christ's saying in the present Gospel of St. Matthew (iii. 7): "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the Wrath to come?"

\textsuperscript{2674} See last note. 'You thought your homes so comfortable: why don't you go back to them? You will be called to account. Perhaps there may be rewards to be given you, who knows? This irony is itself the beginning of the Punishment. But the ungodly now see how wrong they had been. But their signs and regrets now avail them nothing. It is too late. They are lost, and nothing can save them.

\textsuperscript{2675} The two similes present two different aspects of the lamentation of the ungodly. When they really see the Wrath to come, there is a stampede, but where can they go to? Their lamentation is now the only mark of their life. But it dies away, as corn vanishes from a field that is being mown, or as a dying fire is slowly extinguished! They do not die. They wish they were dead! (lxxviii. 40).
16. Not for (idle) sport did We\textsuperscript{2676} create the heavens and the earth
And all that is between!

17. If it had been Our wish
To take (just) a pastime,
We should surely have taken
It from the things nearest
To Us, if We would
Do (such a thing).\textsuperscript{2677}

18. Nay, We hurl the Truth
Against falsehood, and it knocks
Out its brain, and behold,
Falseness doth perish!
Ah! woe be to you
For the (false) things
Ye ascribe (to Us).\textsuperscript{2678}

19. To Him belong all (creatures)
In the heavens and on earth:
Even those who are
With Him are not\textsuperscript{2679}
Too proud to serve Him,
Nor are they (ever) weary
(Of His service):

---

\textsuperscript{2676}. The Hindu doctrine of \textit{Lila}, that all things were created for sport, is here negatived. But more: with Allah we must not associate any ideas but those of Truth, Righteousness, Mercy, Justice, and the other attributes implied in His Beautiful Names. He does not jest nor play with His creatures.

\textsuperscript{2677}. If such an idea as that of play or pastime had been possible with regard to Allah, and if He had wished really to indulge in pastime, He would have done it with creatures of Light nearest to Him, not with the lowly material creation that we see around us.

\textsuperscript{2678}. Such as that (1) Allah has partners (xxi.22), or (2) that He has begotten a son (xxi.26), or (3) has daughters (xvi. 57), or any other superstitions derogatory to the dignity and glory of Allah.

\textsuperscript{2679}. The pure angelic hosts, whom we imagine to be glorious creatures of light, high in Heavens, near the Throne of Allah Himself, are yet His creatures, and serve Him without ceasing, and are proud to do so. Such is the majesty of Allah Most High.
20. They celebrate His praises
   Night and day, nor do they
   Ever flag or intermit.

21. Or have they taken
    (For worship) gods from the earth
    Who can raise (the dead)?

22. If there were, in the heavens
    And the earth, other gods
    Besides Allah, there would
    Have been ruin in both!
    But glory to Allah,
    The Lord of the Throne:
    (High is He) above
    What they attribute to Him!

23. He cannot be questioned
    For His acts, but they
    Will be questioned (for theirs).

24. Or have they taken
    For worship (other) gods

2680. The different kinds of false gods whom people raise from their imagination are now referred to. In verses 21-23, the reference is to the gods of the earth, whether idols or local godlings, or deified heroes, or animals or trees or forces of the nature around us, which men have from time to time worshipped. These, as deities, have no life except what their worshippers give to them.

2681. The answer of course is "no". No one but Allah can raise the dead to life. The miracle in the story of Jesus (iii. 49 and v. 113) was "by Allah's leave". It was a miracle of Allah, not one of Jesus by his own power or will.

2682. After the false gods of the earth (verse 21), are mentioned the false gods in the heavens and the earth, like those in the Greek Pantheon (verse 22), who quarrelled and fought and slandered each other and made their Olympus a perfect bear-garden!

2683. Allah is Self-Subsisting. All His creatures are responsible to Him and dependent on Him there is no other being to whom He can be responsible or on whom He can be dependent.

2684. See above. n. 2682, where two kinds of false worship are noted. Now we are warned against a third danger, the worship of false gods of any sort. Pagan man is prolific of creating abstract images for worship, including Self or abstract Intelligence or Power. In verse 26 below is mentioned a fourth kind of false worship, which imagines that Allah begets sons or daughters.
Besides Him? Say, "Bring Your convincing proof: this Is the Message of those With me and the Message Of those before me."[^2685] But most of them know not The Truth, and so turn away.

25. Not a messenger did We Send before thee without This inspiration sent by Us To him: that there is No god but I; therefore Worship and serve Me.

26. And they say: "The Most Gracious has taken[^2686] A son." Glory to Him! They are (but) servants raised To honour.

27. They speak not before[^2687] He speaks, and they act (In all things) by His command.

[^2685]: This verse should be read with the next. All reason revolts against the idea of conflicting gods, and points to Unity in Creation and Unity in Godhead. This is not only the Message of Islam ("those with me") but the message of all prophets who came before the holy Prophet Muhammad ("those before me"), and the line of prophets was closed with him. The Message given to every prophet in all ages was that of Unity as the fundamental basis of Order and Design in the world, material, moral, and spiritual.

[^2686]: This refers both to the Trinitarian superstition that Allah has begotten a son, and to the Arab superstition that the angels were daughters of Allah. All such superstitions are derogatory to the glory of Allah. The prophets and the angels are no more than servants of Allah: they are raised high in honour, and therefore they deserve our highest respect, but not our worship.

[^2687]: They never say anything before they receive Allah's command to say it, and their acts are similarly conditioned. This is also the teaching of Jesus as reported in the Gospel of St. John (xii. 49-50): "For I have not spoken of myself: but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." If rightly understood, "Father" has the same meaning as our "Rabb", Sustainer and Cherisher, not Begetter or Progenitor.
28. He knows what is before them, 
And what is behind them, 
And they offer no intercession 
Except for those with whom 
He is well-pleased\textsuperscript{2688} 
And they\textsuperscript{2689} stand 
In awe and reverence 
Of His (glory).

29. If any of them should say, 
"I am a god besides Him", 
Such a one We should 
Reward with Hell: thus 
Do We reward those 
Who do wrong.

SECTION 3.

30. Do not the Unbelievers see 
That the heavens and the earth 
Were joined together (as one\textsuperscript{2690} 
Unit of Creation), before 
We clove them asunder?

\textsuperscript{2688} Cf. xx. 109. Those who have conformed to the Will of Allah and obeyed His Law, thus winning the stamp of His approval.

\textsuperscript{2689} They: the usual interpretation refers the pronoun to the servants of Allah who intercede: it may also refer to those on whose behalf intercession is made: they do not take it as a matter of course, but stand in due awe and reverence of Allah's great glory and mercy.

\textsuperscript{2690} The evolution of the ordered worlds as we see them is hinted at. As man's intellectual gaze over the physical world expands, he sees more and more how Unity is the dominating note in Allah's wonderful Universe. Taking the solar system alone, we know that the maximum intensity of sun-spots corresponds with the maximum intensity of magnetic storms on this earth. The universal law of gravitation seems to bind all mass together. Physical facts point to the throwing off of planets from vast quantities of diffused nebular matter, of which the central condensed core is a sun.
We made from water,²⁶⁹¹
Every living thing. Will they
Not then believe?

31. And We have set on the earth
Mountains standing firm,²⁶⁹²
Lest it should shake with them,
And We have made therein
Broad highways (between mountains)
For them to pass through:
That they may find their way.²⁶⁹³

32. And We have made
The heavens as a canopy
Well guarded:²⁶⁹⁴ yet do they

²⁶⁹¹. About 72 per cent of the surface of our Globe is still covered with water, and it has been estimated that if the inequalities on the surface were all levelled, the whole surface would be under water, as the mean elevation of land sphere-level would be 7,000–10,000 feet below the surface of the ocean. This shows the predominance of water on our Globe. That all life began in the water is also a conclusion to which our latest knowledge in biological science points. Apart from the fact that protoplasm, the original basis of living matter, is liquid or semi-liquid and in a state of constant flux and instability, there is the fact that land animals, like the higher vertebrates, including man, show, in their embryological history, organs like those of fishes, indicating the watery origin of their original habitat. The constitution of protoplasm is about 80 to 85 per cent of water.

²⁶⁹². Cf. xvi. 15 and n. 2038. Lest it should shake with them: here "them" refers back to "they" at the end of the preceding verse, meaning "Unbelievers". It might be mankind in general, but the pointed address to those who do not realise and understand Allah's mercies is appropriate, to drive home to them the fact that it is Allah's well-ordered providence that protects them normally from cataclysms like earthquakes, but that they could for their iniquities be destroyed in an instant, as the 'Ad and the Thamūd were destroyed before them. As pointed out in n. 2691 above, if the surface of the earth were levelled up, it would all be under water, and therefore the firm mountains are a further source of security of life which has evolved in terrestrial forms. Though the mountains may seem impassable barriers, yet Allah's providence has provided broad passes between them to afford highways for human communications.

²⁶⁹³. In both the literal and the figurative sense. Literally these natural mountain highways direct men in the way they should go. Figuratively, these wonderful instances of Allah's providence should turn men's thoughts to the true guidance of Allah in life.

²⁶⁹⁴. Canopy well guarded: the heavens form a canopy that is secure from falling down: they also form a sublime spectacle and a Mystery that man can only faintly reach. Cf. also xv. 17.
33. It is He Who created
The Night and the Day,
And the sun and the moon:
All (the celestial bodies)
Swim along, each in its\textsuperscript{2695}
Rounded course.

34. We granted not to any man
Before thee permanent life\textsuperscript{2696}
(Here): if then thou shouldst die,
Would they live permanently?

35. Every soul shall have
A taste of death:\textsuperscript{2697}
And We test you
By evil and by good
By way of trial.
To Us must ye return.

36. When the Unbelievers see thee,
They treat thee not except
With ridicule. "Is this,"
(They say), "The one who talks\textsuperscript{2698}

\textsuperscript{2695} I have indicated, unlike most translators, the metaphor of swimming implied in the original words: how beautiful it is to contemplate the heavenly bodies swimming through space (or ether) in their rounded courses before our gaze!

\textsuperscript{2696} Life on this planet without death has not been granted to any man. The taunt of the Unbelievers at the holy Prophet was therefore futile. Could any of them live without death at some time or other? Could they name any one who did?

\textsuperscript{2697} Cf. iii. 185, and n. 491. The soul does not die, but when it separates from the body at the death of the body, the soul gets a taste of death. In our life of probation on this earth, our virtue and faith are tested by many things: some are tested by calamities, and some by the good things of this life. If we prove our true mettle, we pass our probation with success. In any case all must return to Allah, and then will our life be appraised at its true value.

\textsuperscript{2698} To the godly man the issue between false worship and true worship is a very serious matter. To the sceptics and unbelievers it is only a joke. They take it lightly, and laugh at the godly man. They not only laugh at him, but they blaspheme when the name of the One True God is mentioned. The reply to this is in the next verse.
Of your gods?” And they Blaspheme at the mention Of The Most Gracious!

37. Man is a creature of haste: Soon (enough) will I show You My Signs; So Ask Me not To hasten them!

38. They say: “When will this Promise come to pass, If ye are telling the truth?”

39. If only the Unbelievers Knew (the time) when they Will not be able To ward off the Fire From their faces, nor yet From their backs, and (when) No help can reach them!

40. Nay, it may come to them All of a sudden and confound Them: no power will they Have then to avert it, Nor will they (then) Get respite.

2699. Haste is in the very bone and marrow of man. If he is granted respite for his own sake, in order that he may have a further chance of repentance and coming back to Allah, he says impatiently and incredulously: “Bring on the Punishment quickly, that I may see if what you say is true!” Alas, it is too true! When the Punishment actually comes near and he sees it, he will not want it hastened. He will want more time and further delay! Poor creature of haste!

2700. They would not be so unreasonable if they only realised the terrible future for them! The Fire will envelop them on all sides, and no help will then be possible. Is it not best for them now to turn and repent? The Punishment may come too suddenly, as is said in the next verse.
41. Mocked were (many)
Messengers before thee;
But their scoffers
Were hemmed in
By the thing that they mocked.

**SECTION 4.**

42. Say, "Who can keep
You safe by night and by day
From (the Wrath of) The
Most Gracious?" Yet they
Turn away from the remembrance
Of their Lord.

43. Or have they gods that
Can guard them from Us?
They have no power to aid
Themselves, nor can they
Be defended from Us.

44. Nay, We gave the good things
Of this life to these men
And their fathers until
The period grew long for them;
See they not that We

2701. The same verse occurs at vi. 10, where see n. 843. 'What they are mocking at now will be in a position to mock them in due time.'

2702. 'Allah is most Gracious: if, in spite of His great mercy, you are so rebellious and depraved as to incur His Wrath, who is there who can save you? His Wrath can descend on you at any time, by night or by day.'

2703. *Ashhaba*: to join as companion: with 'an or min it has also the meaning of to defend or remove from someone. The full signification can only be got by a long paraphrase: 'they are not fit to be mentioned in the same breath with Us, nor can they be defended from Us.'

2704. 'Umur or Umur: age, generation, period, time, life. Here "period" is most appropriate, as it covers many generations, "these men and their fathers."

2705. The particular signification is that Islam spread from the outer borders, social and geographical, gradually inwards. The social fringe was the humbler people, such as slaves and poor men. The geographical reference is to Madinah and tribes away from the =
Gradually reduce the land
(In their control) from
Its outlying borders? Is it
Then they who will win?

45. Say, “I do but warn you
According to revelation”:
But the deaf will not hear
The call, (even) when
They are warned. 2706

46. If but a breath of the Wrath
Of thy Lord do touch them
They will then say, “Woe
To us! we did wrong indeed!”

47. We shall set up scales
Of justice for the day
Of Judgment, so that
Not a soul will be dealt with
Unjustly in the least.
And if there be
(No more than) the weight
Of a mustard seed, 2707

= Makkah centre. The proud and unbelieving Quraish were the last to come in when the circle was gradually drawn tighter and tighter around them. The general signification applies to all times. Allah’s Truth makes its way first among the poor and the lowly, those whose minds are unsoiled by prejudices of false pride or false knowledge, but it gradually hems in the obstinate, until it prevails in the end.

2706. According to the English saying, “none is so deaf as those who will not hear”. When they deliberately shut their ears to warning from the Merciful Allah, meant for their own good, the responsibility is their own. But their cowardice is shown in the next verse by their behaviour when the first breath of the Wrath reaches them.

2707. Not the smallest action, word, thought, motive, or predilection but must come into the account of Allah. Cf. Browning (in Rabbi Ben Ezra): “But all, the world’s coarse thumb And finger failed to plumb, So passed in making up the main account; All instincts immature. All purposes unsure. That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man’s account; Thoughts hardly to be packed Into a narrow act. Fancies that broke through language and escaped; All I could never be, All, men ignored in me, This, I was worth to God, Whose wheel the pitcher shaped.”
48. In the past We granted To Moses and Aaron The Criterion (for judgment). And a Light and a Message For those who would do right,—

49. Those who fear their Lord In their most secret thoughts, And who hold the Hour (Of Judgment) in awe.

2708. The literalism of Sale has here excelled itself: he translates, “and there will be sufficient accountants with us”? What is meant is that when Allah takes account, His accounting will be perfect: there will be no flaw in it, as there may be in earthly accountants, who require other people’s help in some matters of account which they do not understand for want of knowledge of that particular department they are dealing with. Allah’s knowledge is perfect, and therefore His justice will be perfect also; for He will not fail to take into account all the most intangible things that determine conduct and character. See last note. There is no contradiction between this and xviii. 104-105, where it is said that men of vain works, i.e., shallow hypocritical deeds, will have no weight attached to their deeds. In fact the two correspond.

2709. Cf. ii. 53 and n. 68, where the meaning of Furqân is discussed. Here three things are mentioned as given to Moses and Aaron: (1) The Criterion for judgment: this might well be the wonderful Proofs they saw of Allah’s goodness and glory from which they could have no doubt as to Allah’s will and command; (2) the Light; this was the inner enlightenment of their soul, such as comes from inspiration: and (3) the Message, the Book, the original Book of Moses, which Aaron as his lieutenant would also use as a guide for his people.

2710. Note the three kinds of fear mentioned in xxi. 48-49. Taqwâ is the fear of running counter to the will of Allah; it is akin to the love of Him; for we fear to offend those we love; it results in right conduct, and those who entertain it are “those who would do right”. Then there is Khashyat, the fear of Allah, lest the person who entertains it may be found, in his inmost thoughts, to be short of the standard which Allah wishes for him; this is also righteous but in a less high degree than Taqwâ which is akin to love. And thirdly, there is the fear of consequences on the Day of Judgment (ishfâq); this also may lead to righteousness, but is on a still lower plane. Perhaps the three correspond to the Criterion, the Light, and the Message (or Warning) of the last verse.
SECTION 5.

50. And this is a blessed Message which We have Sent down: will ye then Reject it? 2711

51. We bestowed aforetime On Abraham his rectitude 2712 Of conduct, and well were We Acquainted with him. 2713

52. Behold! he said To his father and his people, 2714 “What are these images, To which ye are (So assiduously) devoted?”

53. They said, “We found Our fathers worshipping them.”

54. He said, “Indeed ye Have been in manifest Error—ye and your fathers.”

55. They said, “Have you Brought us the Truth,

2711. Here is a Prophet and a Book, greater than Moses and his Book. Are you going to reject him and it?

2712. Rushd: right conduct, corresponding in action to the quality expressed in the epithet Hanif (sound or true in Faith) applied to Abraham in ii. 135 and elsewhere.


2714. Reference is made to Abraham in many places. In xix. 42-49 it was with reference to his relations to his father: the problem was how a righteous man should deal with his father, when his duty to his father conflicts with his duty to Allah. Here the problem is: how a righteous man should deal with evil and overcome it; how he should fight against evil, and if he is subjected to the fire of persecution, how his firmness draws Allah’s Mercy, and the very troubles he is placed in become his comfort and joy.
Or are you one
Of those who jest?”

56. He said, “Nay, your Lord
Is the Lord of the heavens
And the earth, He Who
Created them (from nothing): And I am a witness
To this (truth).

57. “And by Allah, I will certainly
Plan against your idols—
After ye go away
And turn your backs”...

58. So he broke them to pieces,
(All) but the biggest of them,
That they might turn
(And address themselves) to it.

59. They said, “Who has
Done this to our gods?
He must indeed be
One of the unjust one.

2715. Abraham looked at life with a serious eye, and his people took it light-hearted. He was devoted to Truth, and they cared more for ancestral custom. In the conflict he seemed to be in their power. But he was fearless, and he triumphed by Allah’s Grace.

2716. For the various words for “creation” see n. 120 to ii. 117, where *fatara* is explained and differentiated from other words of similar meaning.

2717. He wants to convince them of the powerlessness of their idols. But he does not do it underhand. He tells them that he is going to do something when once they are gone and their backs are turned to the idols,—as much as to say that the idols are dependent on their care and attention. Apparently the people are amused and want to see what he does. So they leave him to his own devices.

2718. He was enacting a scene, to make the people ashamed of worshipping senseless stocks and stones. He left the biggest idol untouched and broke the others to pieces, as if a fight had taken place between the idols, and the biggest had smashed the others. Would they turn to the surviving idol and ask him how it all happened?
60. They said, “We heard
A youth talk of them:\(^{2719}\)
He is called Abraham.”

61. They said, “Then bring him
Before the eyes of the people,
That they may bear witness:”

62. They said, “Art thou
The one that did this
With our gods, O Abraham?”\(^{2720}\)

63. He said: “Nay, this
Was done by this
The biggest one!
Ask them, if they
Can talk.”

64. So they turned to themselves
And said, “Surely ye
Are the ones in the wrong!”\(^{2721}\)

---

2719. Different groups of people are speaking. Those who were not present at Abraham’s speech in verse 57 ask, “who has done this?” Those who were, at once name him, whereupon a formal council of the people was held, and Abraham was arraigned.

2720. They asked him the formal question. There was no mystery about it. He had already openly threatened to do something to the idols, and people who had heard his threats were there. He now continues his ironic taunt to the idol-worshippers. ‘You ask me! Why don’t you ask the idols? Doesn’t it look as if this big fellow has smashed the smaller ones in a quarrel?’ If they do not ask the idols, they confess that the idols have not intelligence enough to answer! This argument is developed in verses 64-67. Note that while the false worshippers laughed at his earnestness, he pays them out by a grim practical joke, which at the same time advances the cause of Truth.

2721. Abraham’s biting irony cut them to the quick. What could they say? They turned to each other. Some among them thought he had the best of the argument. They were not keen on idolatry, and they told their fellows that it was useless arguing with Abraham. They all hung their heads in shame. But presently they thought they would face out Abraham, and take his words literally. They said, “You know quite well that idols do not speak!” This was precisely what Abraham wanted them to say, and he delivered his final blow! See n. 2723 below.
65. Then were they confounded\textsuperscript{2722} With shame: (they said), “Thou knowest full well that These (idols) do not speak!”

66. (Abraham) said, “Do ye then Worship, besides Allah, Things that can neither Be of any good to you Nor do you harm?

67. “Fie upon you, and upon\textsuperscript{2723} The things that ye worship Besides Allah! Have ye No sense?”...

68. They said, “Burn him And protect your gods, If ye do (anything at all)!”

69. We said, “O Fire!\textsuperscript{2724} Be thou cool, And (a means of) safety For Abraham!”\textsuperscript{2725}

---

\textsuperscript{2722} Literally, “they were turned down on their heads” which may suggest a metaphorical somersault, \textit{i.e.}, they recovered from their dawning shame for idolatry and were prepared to argue it out with the youth Abraham. But I think there is better authority for the interpretation I have adopted.

\textsuperscript{2723} As soon as they admitted in so many words that the idols could not speak, Abraham delivered his final attack: “Then why do you worship useless impotent creatures?” After that, there remains nothing but the argument of violence, which they proceed to exercise, being the party in power. ‘Burn him at the stake’ is an easy cry! But it was not Abraham that suffered: it was his persecutors (xxi. 70).

\textsuperscript{2724} The nature of fire, by all the physical laws of matter, is to be hot. The fire became cool, and a means of safety for Abraham.

\textsuperscript{2725} Can we form any idea of the place where he passed through the furnace, and the stage in his career at which this happened? He was born in Ur of the Chaldees, a place on the lower reaches of the Euphrates, not a hundred miles from the Persian Gulf. This was the cradle, or one of the cradles, of human civilisation. Astronomy was studied here in very ancient times, and the worship of the sun, moon, and stars was the prevailing form of religion. Abraham revolted against this quite early in life, and his argument is referred to in vi. 74-82. They also had idols in their temples, probably idols representing =
70. Then they planned Against him: but We Made them the Greater losers.\textsuperscript{2726}

71. But We delivered him And (his nephew) Lût (And directed them) to the land\textsuperscript{2727} Which We have blessed For the nations.

72. And We bestowed on him Isaac And, as an additional gift.\textsuperscript{2728}

heavenly bodies and celestial winged creatures. He was still a youth (xxi. 60) when he broke the idols. This was stage No. 2. After this he was marked down as a rebel and persecuted. Perhaps some years passed before the incident of his being thrown into the Fire (xxi. 68-69) took place. Traditionally the Fire incident is referred to a king called Nimrûd, about whom see n. 1565 to xi. 69. If Nimrûd’s capital was in Assyria, near Nineveh (site near modern Mosul), we may suppose either that the king’s rule extended over the whole of Mesopotamia, or that Abraham wandered north through Babylonia to Assyria. Various stratagems were devised to get rid of him (xxi. 70), but he was saved by the mercy of Allah. The final break came when he was probably a man of mature age and could speak to his father with some authority. This incident is referred to in xix. 41-48. He now left his ancestral lands, and avoiding the Syrian desert, came to the fertile lands of Aram or Syria, and so south to Canaan, when the incident of xi. 69-76 took place. It is some years after this that we may suppose he built the Ka’ba with Ismâ’il (ii. 124-29), and his prayer in xiv. 35-41 may be referred to the same time. His visit to Egypt (Gen. xii. 10) is not referred to in the Qur-ân.

\textsuperscript{2726} As they could not get rid of him by open punishment, they tried secret plans, but were foiled throughout. It was not he that lost, but they. On the contrary he left them and prospered and became the progenitor of great peoples.

\textsuperscript{2727} The land of Aram or Syria, which in its widest connotation includes Canaan or Palestine. Syria is a well-watered fertile land, with a Mediterranean sea-coast, on which the famous commercial cities of Tyre and Sidon were situated. Its population is very mixed, as it has been a bone of contention between all the great kingdoms and empires of Western Asia and Egypt, and European interest in it dates from the most ancient times.

\textsuperscript{2728} \textit{Nāfilat} has many meanings: (1) booty; (2) extra work or prayer; (3) extra or additional gift; (4) grandson. The two last significations are implied here. Not only was Abraham given a son in his old age; he was given not only Isaac, but several sons, the chief being Ismâ’il and Isaac, who both joined in burying him (Gen. xxv. 9); and he also saw grandsons. Ismâ’il is specially mentioned later (xxi. 85) apart from Isaac’s line, on account of his special importance for Islam.
(A grandson), Jacob, and We
Made righteous men of every one
(Of them).

73. And We made them
Leaders, guiding (men) by
Our Command, and We
Inspired them
To do good deeds,
To establish regular prayers,
And to Give zakat
And they constantly served
Us (and Us only).\textsuperscript{2729}

74. And to Lût, too,
We gave Judgment and Knowledge,
And We saved him
From the town which practised
Abominations: truly they were
A people given to Evil,
A rebellious people.\textsuperscript{2730}

75. And We admitted him
To Our Mercy: for he
Was one of the Righteous.

SECTION 6.

76. (Remember) Noah, when
He cried (to Us) aforetime:\textsuperscript{2730A}

\textsuperscript{2729} The spiritual lesson from this passage may be recapitulated. The righteous man
makes no compromise with evil. If the votaries of evil laugh at him he pays them in their
own coin, but he stands firmly by his principles. His firmness causes some confusion
among the followers of evil, and he openly declares the faith that is in him. They try,
openly and secretly, to injure or kill him, but Allah protects him, while evil perishes from
its own excesses.

\textsuperscript{2730} Lot's people were given to unspeakable abominations. His mission was to
preach to them. He withstood Evil, but they rejected him. They were punished, but he
and his followers were saved. See xv. 61-74; xi. 77-82; and vii. 80-84.

\textsuperscript{2730-A} The date of Noah was many centuries before that of Abraham.
We listened to his (prayer)  
And delivered him and his  
Family from great distress.\(^{2731}\)

77. We helped him against  
People who rejected Our Signs:  
Truly they were a people  
Given to Evil: so We  
Drowned them (in the Flood)  
All together.

78. And remember David  
And Solomon, when they  
Gave judgment in the matter  
Of the field into which  
The sheep of certain people  
Had strayed by night:  
We did witness their judgment.

79. To Solomon We inspired\(^{2732}\)  
The (right) understanding  
Of the matter: to each

\(^{2731}\) The contemporaries of Noah were given to Unbelief, oppression of the poor,  
and vain disputations. He carried Allah’s Message to them, and standing fast in faith,  
built the Ark, in which he was saved with his followers from the Flood, while the wicked  
were drowned. See xi. 25-48.

\(^{2732}\) The sheep, on account of the negligence of the shepherd, got into a cultivated  
field (or vineyard) by night and ate up the young plants or their tender shoots, causing  
damage, to the extent of perhaps a whole year’s crop. David was king, and in his seat  
of judgment he considered the matter so serious that he awarded the owner of the field  
the sheep themselves in compensation for his damage. The Roman law of the Twelve  
Tables might have approved of this decision, and on the same principle was built up the  
Deodand doctrine of English Law, now obsolete. His son Solomon, a mere boy of eleven,  
thought of a better decision, where the penalty would better fit the offence. The loss was  
the loss of the fruits or produce of the field of vineyard: the corpus of the property was  
not lost. Solomon’s suggestion was that the owner of the field or vineyard should not  
take the sheep altogether but only detain them long enough to recoup his actual damage,  
from the milk, wool, and possibly young of the sheep, and then return the sheep to the  
shepherd. David’s merit was that he accepted the suggestion, even though it came from  
a little boy: Solomon’s merit was that he distinguished between corpus and income, and  
though a boy, was not ashamed to put his case before his father. But in either case it  
was Allah Who inspired the true realisation of justice. He was present and witnessed the  
affair, as He is present all the time.
(Of them) We gave Judgment
And Knowledge; it was
Our power that made
The hills and the birds
Celebrate Our praises,
With David: it was We
Who did (all these things).

80. It was We Who taught him
The making of coats of mail
For your benefit, to guard
You from each other's violence:
Will ye then be grateful?

81. (It was Our power that
Made) the violent (unruly)
Wind flow (tamely) for Solomon,
To his order, to the land
Which We had blessed:
For We do know all things.

2733. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth celebrates the praises of Allah: xvii. 44; lvii. 1; xvi. 48-50. Even the "thunder repeateth His praises": xiii. 13. All nature ever sings the praises of Allah. David sang in his Psalms, cxlviii. 7-10: "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye...mountains and all hills;...creeping things and flying fowl!" All nature sings to Allah's glory, in unison with David, and angels, and men of God. Cf. xxxiv. 10 and xxxviii. 18-19.

2734. The making of coats of mails is attributed to David. It is defensive armour, and therefore its discovery and supply is associated with deeds of righteousness in xxxiv. 10-11, in contrast with the deadly weapons which man invents for offensive purposes. Indeed, all fighting, unless in defence of righteousness, is mere "violence."

2735. David's good work then was: (1) he was open to learn wisdom wherever it came from; (2) he sang the praises of Allah, in unison with all nature; (3) he made defensive armour. But all these things he did, because of the faculties which Allah had given him, and we must be grateful for this and for all things to Allah.

2736. Cf. xxxiv. 12, and xxxviii. 36-38. This has been interpreted to mean that Solomon had miraculous power over the winds, and he could make them obey his order. In any case the power behind was, and is, from Allah, Who has granted man intelligence and the faculties by which he can tame the more unruly forces of nature.

2737. Evidently Palestine, in which was Solomon's capital, though his influence extended for north in Syria.
82. And of Satans
Were some who dived
For him, and did other work.\(^{2738}\)
Besides; and it was We
Who guarded them.

83. And (remember) Job, when
He cried to his Lord
"Truly distress has seized me.\(^{2739}\)
But Thou art the Most
Merciful of those that are
Merciful."

84. So We listened to him:
We removed the distress
That was on him,
And We restored his people
To him, and doubled
Their number,--as a Grace

---

\(^{2738}\). It was Allah's power ultimately, Who granted him wisdom. Solomon tamed the jinns with Wisdom.

\(^{2739}\). Job (\*Ayāb\*) was a prosperous man, with faith in Allah, living somewhere in the north-east corner of Arabia. He suffers from a number of calamities: his cattle are destroyed, his servants slain by the sword, and his family crushed under his roof. But he holds fast to his faith in Allah. As a further calamity he is covered with loathsome sores from head to foot. He loses his peace of mind, and he curses the day he was born. His false friends come and attribute his afflictions to sin. These "Job's comforters" are no comforters at all, and he further loses his balance of mind, but Allah recalls to him all His mercies, and he resumes his humility and gives up self-justification. He is restored to prosperity, with twice as much as he had before; his brethren and friends come back to him; he had a new family of seven sons and three fair daughters. He lived to a good old age, and saw four generations of descendants. All this is recorded in the Book of Job in the Old Testament. Of all the Hebrew writings, the Hebrew of this Book comes nearest to Arabic. The account given in the Biblical sources and the image that it projects of Prophet Job is decidedly different from that found in the Qur'ān and the Hadith, which present him as a prophet and brilliant example of dignified patience becoming of a great Prophet of Allah ever trustful in Him and His promises. Nothing could be farther from truth than saying that he lost his peace of mind or resorted to curses during the period of his trial.
From Ourselves, and a thing
For commemoration, for all
Who serve Us. 2740

85. And (remember) Ismā‘īl, 2741
Idrīs, 2742 and Zul-kifl 2743 all
(Men) of constancy and patience;

86. We admitted them to
Our Mercy: for they
Were of the Righteous ones.

2740. Job is the pattern of humility, patience, and faith in Allah. It was with these
weapons that he fought and conquered evil.

2741. Ismā‘īl is mentioned specially, apart from the line which descended through
Isaac (xxi. 72), as he was the founder of a separate and greater Ummat. His sufferings
began in infancy (see n. 160 to ii. 158); but his steady constancy and submission to the
will of Allah were specially shown when he earned the title of “Sacrifice to Allah” (see
n. 2506 to xix. 54). That was the particular quality of his constancy and patience.

2742. For Idrīs see n. 2508 to xix. 56. He was in a high station in life, but that did
not spoil him. He was sincere and true, and that was the particular quality of his
constancy and patience.

2743. Zu/-kifl would literally mean “possessor of, or giving, a double requital or
portion”; or else, “one who used a cloak of double thickness,” that being one of the
meanings of Kifl. The Commentators differ in opinion as to who is meant, why the title
is applied to him, and the point of his being grouped with Ismā‘īl and Idrīs for constancy
and patience. I think the best suggestion is that afforded by Karsten Niebuhr in his
Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien, Copenhagen, 1778, ii. 264-266, as quoted in the
Encyclopaedia of Islam under “Dhul-Kifl”. He visited Meshad ‘Ali in ‘Iraq, and also the
little town called Kefil, midway between Najaf and Hilla (Babylon). Kefil, he says, is the
Arabic form of Ezekiel. The shrine of Ezekiel was there, and the Jews came to it on
pilgrimage.

If we accept “Zul-kifl” to be not an epithet, but an Arabised form of “Ezekiel”,
it fits the context, Ezekiel was a prophet in Israel who was carried away to Babylon by
Nebuchadnezzar after his second attack on Jerusalem (about B.C. 599). His Book is
included in the English Bible (Old Testament). He was chained and bound, and put into
prison, and for a time he was dumb (Ezekiel, iii. 25-26). He bore all with patience and
constancy, and continued to reprove boldly the evils in Israel. In a burning passage he
denounces false leaders in words which are eternally true: “Woe be to the shepherds of
Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock? Ye eat the fat,
and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock.
The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick,
neither have ye bound up that which was broken...”, etc. (Ezekiel, xxxiv. 2-4).

Zul-kifl is again mentioned in xxxviii. 48 along with Ismā‘īl and Elisha.
2744. Ẓun-nūn, "the man of the Fish or the Whale", is the title of Jonah (Yūnus), because he was swallowed by a large Fish or Whale. He was the prophet raised to warn the Assyrian capital Nineveh. For Nineveh see n. 1478 to x. 98. His story is told in xxxvii. 139-149. When his first warning was unheeded by the people, he denounced Allah's wrath on them. But they repented and Allah forgave them for the time being. Jonah, meanwhile, departed in wrath, discouraged at the apparent failure of his mission. He should have remained in the most discouraging circumstances, and relied on the power of Allah; for Allah had power both over Nineveh and over the Messenger He had sent to Nineveh. He went away to the sea and took a ship, but apparently the sailors threw him out as a man of bad omen in a storm. He was swallowed by a big Fish (or Whale), but in the depth of the darkness, he cried to Allah and confessed his weakness. The "darkness" may be interpreted both physically and spiritually; physically, as the darkness of the night and the storm and the Fish's body; spiritually as the darkness in his soul, his extreme distress in the situation which he had brought on himself. Allah Most Gracious forgave him. He was cast out ashore; he was given the shelter of a plant in his state of mental and physical lassitude. He was refreshed and strengthened, and the work of his mission prospered. Thus he overcame all his disappointment by repentance and Faith, and Allah accepted him.

2745. See xix. 2-15, and iii. 38-41. Zakariyā was a priest; both he and his wife were devout and punctilious in their duties. They were old, and they had no son. He was troubled in mind, not so much by the vulgar desire to have a son to carry on his line, but because he felt that his people were not unselfishly devout, and there would be no sincere work for Allah unless he could train up someone himself. He was given a son Yahyā (John the Baptist), who added to the devout reputation of the family, for he is called "noble, chaste, and a prophet," (iii. 39). All three, father, mother, and son, were made worthy of each other, and they repelled evil by their devout emulation in virtue.
2746. "O my Lord! leave me not
Without offspring, though Thou
Art the best of inheritors." 2746

90. So We listened to him:
And We granted him
Yahyā: We cured his wife’s
(Barrenness) for him. These (three)
Were ever quick in doing
In good works: they used
To call on Us in yearning and awe.
And humble themselves
Before Us.

91. And (remember) her who
Guarded her chastity:
We breathed into her
From Our spirit, and We
Made her and her son
A Sign for all peoples.

92. Verily, this Ummah
Of yours is a single Ummah 2749

2746. 'It is not that I crave a personal heir to myself: all things go back to Thee, and Thou art the best of inheritors: but I see no one around me sincere enough to carry on my work for Thee; wilt Thou give me one whom I can train?'

2747. Aslaha = to improve to mend, to reform, to make better. Here, with reference to Zakariyya’s wife, the signification is twofold: (1) that her barrenness would be removed, so that she could become a mother; and (2) her spiritual dignity should be raised in becoming the mother of John the Baptist; and by implication his also, in becoming the father of John.

2748. Mary the mother of Jesus. Chastity was her special virtue: with a son of virgin birth, she and Jesus became a miracle to all nations. That was the virtue with which they (both Mary and Jesus) resisted evil.

2749. Ummat: this is best translated by Brotherhood here. “Community”, “race”, and “nation,” and “people” are words which import other ideas and do not quite correspond to “Ummat”. “Religion” and “Way of Life” are derived meanings, which could be used in other passages, but are less appropriate here. Our attention has been drawn to people of very different temperaments and virtues, widely different in time, race, language, surroundings, history, and work to be performed, but forming the closest brotherhood as being men and women united in the highest service of Allah. They pre-figure the final and perfected Brotherhood of Islam.
And I am your Lord
And Cherisher: therefore
Serve Me (and no other).

93. But (later generations) cut off their affair (of unity).
One from another: (yet)
Will they all return to Us.

SECTION 7.

94. Whoever works any act
Of Righteousness and has Faith,-
His endeavour will not
Be rejected: We shall
Record it in his favour.

95. But there is a ban
On any population which
We have destroyed: that they shall not return.

96. Until the Gog and Magog (people) Are let through (their barrier).
And they swiftly swarm From every hill.

2750. Allah's Message was and ever is one; and His Messengers treated it as one. It is people of narrower views who come later and trade on the earlier names, that break up the Message and the Brotherhood into jarring camps and sects.

2751. Allah gives credit for every act of righteousness, however small: when combined with sincere Faith in Allah, it becomes the stepping stone to higher and higher things. It is never lost.

2752. But when wickedness comes to such a pass that the Wrath of Allah descends, as it did on Sodom, the case becomes hopeless. The righteous were warned and delivered before the Wrath descended. But those destroyed will not get another chance, as they flouted all previous chances. They will only be raised at the approach of the Day of Judgment.

2753. For Gog and Magog see n. 2439 to xviii. 92. The name stands for wild and lawless tribes who will break their barriers and swarm through the earth. This will be one of the prognostications of the approaching Judgment.
97. Then will the True Promise
   Draw nigh (of fulfilment):
   Then behold! the eyes
   Of the Unbelievers will\textsuperscript{2754}
   Fixedly stare in horror: "Ah!
   Woe to us! we were indeed
   Heedless of this; nay; we
   Truly did wrong!"

98. Verily ye, (Unbelievers),
   And the (false) gods that
   Ye worship besides Allah,
   Are (but) fuel for Hell!
   To it will ye (surely) come!

99. If these had been gods,
    They would not have got there!\textsuperscript{2755}
    But each one will abide
    Therein.

100. There, sobbing will be
     Their lot, nor will they
     There hear (aught else).

101. Those for whom
     The Good from Us
     Has gone before, will be
     Removed far therefrom.\textsuperscript{2756}

102. Not the slightest sound
     Will they hear of Hell:
     What their souls desired,
     In that will they dwell.

\textsuperscript{2754} Cf. xiv. 42.

\textsuperscript{2755} The ultimate proof of Truth and Falsehood will be that Truth will endure and come to its own, while Falsehood will be destroyed. And so the men who worshipped Truth will come to their own, while those who worshipped Falsehood will be in a Fire of Punishment they could scarcely have imagined before. In that state there will be nothing but regrets and sighs and groans, and these evil sounds will drown everything else.

\textsuperscript{2756} In contrast to the misery of those who rejected Truth and Right, will be the happiness of those who accepted it. The good will not hear the least sound of the groans of evil. Their true soul's desires will be fulfilled—not temporarily as in this world, but in a permanent form.
103. The Great Terror will\textsuperscript{2757}  
Bring them no grief:  
But the angels will meet them  
(With mutual greetings):  
“This is your Day,–  
(The Day) that ye were promised.”

104. The Day that We roll up  
The heavens like a scroll  
Rolled up for books (completed):–  
Even as We produced  
The first Creation, so  
Shall We produce\textsuperscript{2758}  
A new one: a promise  
We have undertaken:  
Truly shall We fulfil it.

105. Before this We wrote  
In the Psalms,\textsuperscript{2759} after the Message  
(Given to Moses):\textsuperscript{2760} “My servants  
The righteous, shall inherit  
The earth.”

106. Verily in this (Qur-\textsuperscript{ān})  
Is a Message for people

\textsuperscript{2757} The Judgment and balancing of accounts will be a mighty Terror to the evil-doers. But it will cause, to the righteous, not grief or anxiety, but hope and happiness, for now they will be in a congenial atmosphere, and will see the fulfilment of their ideals in the meeting and greeting of the angels, preparatory to their enjoyment of the supreme Bliss—seeing the Face of Allah.

\textsuperscript{2758} The world—the universe—as we know it, will be folded up like a scroll of parchment, for it will have done its work. If Allah created all this world out of nothing, He can create an entirely new heaven and a new earth, on a plane of which we can form no conception in our present life. And He will do so, for that is His promise.

\textsuperscript{2759} Zabūr: the Book of the Psalms of David. The name of David is expressly mentioned in connection with the Zabūr in iv. 163 and xvii. 55, although there the indefinite article is applied to the word as meaning a Book of Scripture. See Psalms xxv. 13, “his seed shall inherit the earth”; xxxvii. 11, “the meek shall inherit the earth” (quoted by Jesus in Matt. v.3); and xxxvii. 29, “the righteous shall inherit the land.”

\textsuperscript{2760} The same promise occurs in the Pentateuch, Exod. xxxii. 13.
2761. The culmination of Allah's Revelation is in the Qur-an, which confirms previous scriptures, corrects the errors which men introduced into them, and explains many points in detail for all who seek for right worship and service to Allah—whether they inherit the previous Books (“People of the Book”) or not. It is a universal Message.

2762. There is no question now of race or nation, of a “chosen people” or the “seed of Abraham”; or the “seed of David”; or of Hindu Arya-varta; of Jew or Gentile, Arab or ‘Ajam (non-Arab), Turk or Tājik, European or Asiatic, White or Coloured; Aryan, Semitic, Mongolian, or African; or American, Australian, or Polynesian. To all men and creatures other than men who have any spiritual responsibility, the principles universally apply.

2763. 'Not my God only, but also your God; for there is but One God, the Universal Lord, Who made and loves and cherishes all.'

2764. 'If you do not realise the significance of the Message, I at least have done my duty. I have given the Good News for the Righteous and the Warning for the Unjust, without favour or partiality, and without abating one jot of the truth, openly and squarely for all. Do not ask me when the Good News and the Warning will be fulfilled. That is for Allah to decide, not for me or for you to know.'
2165. The Messenger of Allah freely and impartially teaches all how to carry out Allah's Will and live a good life. If some of them are hypocrites and come into the Ummat (Brotherhood) from baser motives and not the pure motives of the love of Allah, their motives and conduct will be judged by Allah and not by men.

2766. In the same way if men who come into the Brotherhood from pure motives and yet feel aggrieved that those outside are better off from a worldly point of view, they are wrong. It may be that the fleeting enjoyment of this world's goods is but a trial, and they should be grateful for being saved from temptation.

2767. See above, n. 2666 to xxi. 4. The better reading is “Say” in the imperative, rather than “He (the Prophet) said (or says)” in the indicative mood. Note that, on that construction, there are three distinct things which the Prophet is asked to say: viz.: (1) the statement in verses 109-11, addressed to those who turn away from the Message; (2) the prayer addressed to Allah in the first part of verse 112; and (3) the advice given indirectly to the Believers, in the second part of verse 112. I have marked these divisions by means of inverted commas.

2768. That is, Allah's judgment as between the Teacher and those who refuse his Message, or between the righteous and those who taunt them for their poverty, will be the true one, and both the Teacher and the Ummat must leave the judgment to Allah.

2769. Blasphemy is a dreadful sin. We must guard ourselves from it. But as regards others, if we cannot prevent it, we must pray to Allah for assistance and not rely upon carnal weapons.