INTRODUCTION TO SÚRAT Az-Zukhruf, 43.

This is the fourth Sûra of the Hâ-Mîm series of seven Sûras. For their chronology and general theme see the Introduction to S. xl.

This Sûra deals with the contrasts between the real glory of Truth and Revelation and the false glitter of what people like to believe and worship. It cites the examples of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, as exposing the False and holding up the Truth. The key-word (Zukhruf, Gold Adornments) occurs in verse 38, but the idea occurs all through the Sûra.

Summary.—The Book of Revelation makes things clear, even though the ignorant and foolish mock at it and ignore Allah’s Signs: it will last, while its rejecters will perish (xliii. 1-25).

Abraham exposed the falsehood of traditional worship: the glitter and adornments of this world will not last: what was the end of Pharaoh in his arrogant fight with Moses? (xliii. 26-56).

Jesus was a servant of Allah, but his sectarian followers raised false disputations about him: all is known to Allah, Whose Truth will shine, in spite of unfaith (xliii. 57-89).
Az-Zukhruf, or Gold Adornments.

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

1. Ha-Mim. 4604

2. By the Book that makes things clear,—

3. We have made it a Qur-\'-\n\nán in Arabic,4605 That ye may be able To understand.

4. And verily, it is In the Mother of the Book, 4606 With Us, high (In dignity), full of wisdom.

5. Shall We then 4607 Turn away the Reminder From you altogether, For that ye are a people Transgressing beyond bounds?

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4604. Abbreviated Letters: see Introduction to S. xl.

4605. Cf. xlii. 7, n. 4533.

4606. Cf. iii. 7, n. 347: and xiii. 39, n. 1864. The Mother of the Book, the Foundation of Revelation, the Preserved Tablet (Lauh Mahfuz, lxxv. 22), is the core or essence of revelation, the original principle or fountain-head of Allah's Eternal and Universal Law. From this fountain-head are derived all streams of knowledge and wisdom, that flow through Time and feed the intelligence of created minds. The Mother of the Book is in Allah's own Presence, and its dignity and wisdom are more than all we can think of.

4607. In vouchsafing Revelation, what an inestimable Mercy has Allah conferred on mankind! Yet so many deluded souls are ungrateful, and ignore or oppose its teaching. If it were not for His attributes of Forgiveness and Forbearing He would be justified in withdrawing that Light, but He continues to shed it, that all who will may come and be blessed by it.
6. But how many were the prophets We sent Amongst the peoples of old?
7. And never came there A prophet to them But they mocked him.
8. So We destroyed men— Stronger in power than these;— And (thus) has passed on The example of the peoples Of old.
9. If thou wert To question them, ‘Who created The heavens and the earth?’ They would be sure to reply, ‘They were created by (Him), The Exalted in Power, Full of Knowledge;’
10. (Yea, the same that) Has made for you

4608. In spite of, or because of, man’s obstinate and rebellious nature, Allah sent prophet after prophet to the peoples of old, but there was among them always a party that ridiculed them and treated Allah’s Signs as naught.

4609. The result of rebellion was destruction. And the pagan Makkan generation contemporary with the Prophet are reminded that the peoples of old who were destroyed were, many of them, more powerful than they, and that they, in disobeying Allah’s Law, were inviting the same fate for themselves. The events of the past have become examples for the present and the future.

4610. Cf. xxix. 61 and n. 3493; and xxxi. 25 and n. 3613. This class of men acknowledge Allah’s Power and Allah’s Knowledge or Wisdom, but do not realise Allah’s infinite Mercy and care for His creatures.

4611. Note the beautiful rhetorical figure of speech here. The reply of the inconsistent men who do not follow Allah’s Law is turned against themselves. When they acknowledge Allah’s Power and Knowledge, their speech is interrupted, and the concomitant qualities of Allah’s Mercy and care of His creatures, with pointed reference to the inconsistent ones themselves, is set out in eloquent terms, as completing what they themselves had said, and the right course of conduct is pointed out to them (verses 10-14).

4612. See last note.
The earth\textsuperscript{4613}
Spread out, and has made
For you roads (and channels)
Therein, in order that ye
May find guidance (on the way);

11. That sends down
(From time to time)
Rain from the sky
In due measure;\textsuperscript{4614}
And We raise to life
Therewith a land that is
Dead; even so will ye
Be raised (from the dead);\textsuperscript{4615}

12. That has created pairs\textsuperscript{4616}
In all things, and has made
For you ships and cattle\textsuperscript{4617}
On which ye ride,

13. In order that ye may
Sit firm and square
On their backs, and when
So seated, ye may

\textsuperscript{4613} Cf. xx. 53 and n. 2576. \textit{Mihād}, a carpet or bed spread out, implies not only freedom of movement but rest also. The ‘roads and channels’ carry out the idea of communications and include land routes, sea routes, and airways.

\textsuperscript{4614} \textit{In due measure}: i.e., according to needs, as measured by local as well as universal considerations. This applies to normal rainfall: floods and droughts are abnormal conditions, and may be called unusual manifestations of His power, fulfilling some special purpose that we may or may not understand.

\textsuperscript{4615} The clause ‘And We raise...(from the dead)’ is parenthetical. Cf. xxxv. 9, n. 3881. Note the transition from the third to the first person, to mark the Resurrection as a special act of Allah as distinguished from the ordinary processes of nature ordained by Allah.

\textsuperscript{4616} Cf. n. 2578 to xx. 53. Also see xxxvi. 36, n. 3981.

\textsuperscript{4617} By analogy all means of transport, including horses, camels, ships, steamers, railways, aeroplanes, airships, etc. The domestication of animals as well as the invention of mechanical means of transport require a skill and ingenuity in man, which are referred to Allah as His gifts or endowments to man.
Remember the (kind) favour<sup>4618</sup> of your Lord, and say, “Glory to Him Who has subjected these to our (use), for we could never be able to do it. And to our Lord, surely<sup>4619</sup>, must we turn back!”

Yet they attribute<sup>4620</sup> to some of His servants a share with Him. Truly is man clearly unthankful.

SECTION 2.

16. What! Has He taken<sup>4621</sup> daughter out of what He Himself creates, and granted to you sons for choice?

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4618. See last note. People of understanding attribute all good to its true and original source <i>viz.</i>: Allah.

4619. Men of understanding, every time they take a journey on earth, are reminded of that more momentous journey which they are taking on the back of Time to Eternity. Have they tamed Time to their lawful use, or do they allow Time to run away with them wildly to where they know not? Their goal is Allah, and their thoughts are ever with Allah.

4620. As a contrast to the men of true understanding are the ungrateful blasphemous creatures, who offer a share to others besides Allah! They imagine sons and daughters to Allah, and forget the true lesson of the whole of Creation, which points to the Unity of Allah. This theme is further developed in the following Section.

4621. To imagine goddesses (female gods) or mothers or daughters to Allah was particularly blasphemous in the mouths of people who held the female sex in contempt. Such were the pagan Arabs, and such (it is to be feared) are some of the moderns. They wince when a daughter is born to them and hanker after sons. With that mentality, how can they attribute daughters to Allah?
17. When news is brought\(^{4622}\)
   To one of them of (the birth
   Of) what he sets up
   As a likeness to (Allah)
   Most Gracious, his face
   Darkens, and he is filled
   With inward grief!

18. Is then one brought up\(^{4623}\)
   Among trinkets, and unable
   To give a clear account
   In a dispute (to be
   Associated with Allah)?

19. And they make into females
   Angels who themselves serve\(^{4624}\)
   Allah. Did they witness
   Their creation? Their evidence
   Will be recorded, and they
   Will be called to account!

20 ("Ah!") they say, "If
   It had been the Will\(^{4625}\)
   Of The Most Gracious,

4622. Cf. xvi. 57-59 and notes. With scathing irony it is pointed out that what they
   hate and are ashamed of for themselves they attribute to Allah!

4623. The softer sex is usually brought up among trinkets and ornaments, and, on
   account of the retiring modesty which for the sex is a virtue, is unable to stand up boldly
   in a fight and give clear indications of the will to win. Is that sort of quality to be
   associated with Allah?

4624. Angels for grace and purity may be compared to the most graceful and the
   purest forms we know. But it is wrong to attribute sex to them. They are servants and
   messengers of Allah and so far from being rivals seeking worship, are always engaged
   in devotion and service. If any persons invent blasphemies about Allah, such blasphemies
   will form a big blot in their Book of Deeds, and they will be called to account for them.

4625. Worsted in argument they resort to a dishonest sarcasm. 'We worship these
   deities: if Allah does not wish us to do so, why does He not prevent us?' In throwing
   the responsibility on Allah, they ignore the limited free-will on which their whole life is
   based. They are really playing with truth. They are arguing against their own knowledge.
   They have no authority in any scripture, and indeed they are so slippery that they hold
   fast to no scripture at all.
We should not have Worshipped such (deities)!
Of that they have No knowledge! They Do nothing but lie! "

21. What! have We given them A Book before this, To which they are Holding fast?

22. Nay! they say: “We found Our fathers following A certain religion, And we do guide ourselves By their footsteps.”

23. Just in the same way, Whenever We sent a Warner Before thee to any people, The wealthy ones among them Said: “We found our fathers Following a certain religion, And we will certainly Follow in their footsteps.”

24. He said: “What!” Even if I brought you Better guidance than that


4627. Then comes the argument about ancestral custom, which was repudiated by Abraham (see verses 26-28 below). Indeed a good reply to ancestral custom in the case of the Arabs was the example of Abraham, the True in Faith, for Abraham was the common ancestor of the Arabs and the Israelites.

4628. It is some privileged position, and not ancestral custom, which is really at the bottom of much falsehood and hypocrisy in the world. This has been again and again in religious history.

4629. The Warner or messenger pointed out the merits and the truth of his teaching, and how superior it was to what they called their ancestral customs. But they denied his mission itself or the validity of any such mission. In other words they did not believe in inspiration or revelation, and went on in their evil ways, with the inevitable result that they brought themselves to destruction.
SECTION 3.

26. Behold! Abraham said⁴⁶³⁰To his father and his people:
   “I do indeed clear myself
   Of what ye worship:

27. “(I worship) only Him
   Who originated me, and He
   Will certainly guide me.”

28. And he left it
   As a Word⁴⁶³¹
   To endure among those
   Who came after him,
   That they may turn back
   (To Allah).

⁴⁶³⁰. The plea of ancestral ways is refuted by the example of Abraham, in two ways:
   (1) he gave up the ancestral cults followed by his father and people, and followed
   the true Way, even at some sacrifice to himself; and (2) he was an ancestor of the Arabs,
   and if the Arabs stood on ancestral ways, why should they not follow their good ancestor
   Abraham, rather than their bad ancestors who fell into evil? See n. 4627 above. The
   incident in Abraham’s story referred to here will be found in xxi. 51-70.

⁴⁶³¹. A Word: i.e., the Gospel of Unity, viz.,: “I worship only Him who originated
me”, as in verse 27. This was his teaching, and this was his legacy to those who followed
him. He hoped that they would keep it sacred, and uphold the standard of Unity. Cf.
xxxvii. 108-111.
29. Yea, I have given The good things of this life To these (men) and Their fathers, until the Truth Has come to them, And a Messenger Making things clear.

30. But when the Truth came To them, they said: “This is sorcery, and we Do reject it.”

31. Also, they say: “Why Is not this Qurān sent Down to some leading man In either of the two (Chief) cities?”

32. Is it they who would portion out The Mercy of thy Lord?

4632. Note the first person singular, as showing Allah’s personal solicitude and care for the descendants of Abraham in both branches. The context here refers to the prosperity enjoyed by Makkah and the Makkans until they rejected the truth of Islam when it was preached in their midst by a messenger whose Message was as clear as the light of the sun.

4633. When the pagan Makkans could not understand the wonderful power and authority with which the holy Prophet preached, they called his God given influence sorcery!

4634. The world judges by its own low standards. From a worldly point of view, the holy Prophet was poor and an orphan. Why, they thought, should he be so richly endowed in spiritual knowledge and power? If such a gift had to come to a man among them, it was the right (they foolishly said) of one of the chiefs in either the sacred city of Makkah, or the fertile garden-city of Taif!

4635. That is, spiritual gifts, those connected with Revelation. What audacity or folly in them to claim to divide or distribute them among themselves? They may think they are distributing the good things of this world among themselves. In a sense that may be true, even here, their own power and initiative are very limited. Even here it is Allah’s Will on which all depends. In His wisdom Allah allows some to grow in power or riches, and command work from others, and various relative gradations are established. Men scramble for these good things of this world, but they are of no value compared to the spiritual gifts.
It is We Who portion out Between them their livelihood In the life of this world: And We raise some of them Above others in ranks, So that some may command Work from others. But the Mercy of thy Lord Is better than the (wealth) Which they amass.

33. And were it not that\footnote{4636} (All) men might become One community We would provide, For everyone that blasphemes Against The Most Gracious, Silver roofs for their houses, And (silver) stair-ways On which to go up,

34. And (silver) doors To their houses, and couches (Of silver) on which They could recline,

35. And also adornments\footnote{4637} Of gold. But all this Was nothing but enjoyment Of the present life:

\footnotetext{4636}{So little value is attached in the spiritual world to silver or gold, or worldly ranks or adornments, that they would freely be at the disposal of everyone who denied or blasphemed Allah, were it not that in that case there would be too great temptation placed in the way of men, for they might all scramble to sell their spiritual life for wealth! They might have silver roofs and stair-ways, silver doors and thrones, and all kinds of adornments of gold. But Allah does not allow too great a temptation to be placed in the path of men. He distributes these things differently, some to unjust men, and some to just men, in various degrees, so that the possession of these is no test either of an unjust or a just life. His wisdom searches out motives far more subtle and delicate than any we are even aware of.}

\footnotetext{4637}{Adornments of gold: the keyword to this Sūra. All false glitter and adornments of this world are as naught. They more often hinder than help.}
The Hereafter, in the sight
Of thy Lord, is
For the Righteous.

SECTION 4.

36. If anyone withdraws himself\textsuperscript{4638}
From remembrance
Of The Most Gracious,
We appoint for him
A Satan, to be
An intimate companion to him.

37. Such (Satans) really
Hinder them from the Path,\textsuperscript{4639}
But they think that they
Are being guided aright!

38. At length, when (such a one)\textsuperscript{4640}
Comes to Us, he says
(To his evil companion):
“Would that between me
And thee were the distance

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4638. If men deliberately put away the remembrance of Allah from their minds, the natural consequence, under Allah’s decree, is that they join on with evil. Like consorts with like. We can generalise evil in the abstract, but it takes concrete shape in our life-companions.

4639. The downward course in evil is rapid. But the most tragic consequence is that evil persuades its victims to believe that they are pursuing good. They think evil to be their good. They go deeper and deeper into the mire, and become more and more callous. “Them” and “they” represent the generic plural of anyone who “withdraws himself from...Allah” (see last verse).

4640. If ever the presence of Allah is felt, or at the time of Judgment, a glimmering of truth comes to the deceived soul, and it cries to its evil companion in its agony, “Would that I had never come across thee! Would that we were separated poles apart!” But it cannot shake off evil. By deliberate choice it had put itself in its snare.
Of East and West!** Ah! Evil is the companion (indeed)!

39. When ye have done wrong,** It will avail you nothing, That day, that ye shall be Partners in punishment!

40. Canst thou then make** The deaf to hear, or give Direction to the blind Or to such as (wander) In manifest error?**

41. Even if We take thee** Away, We shall be sure To exact retribution from them,

42. Or We shall show thee That (accomplished) which We Have promised them: For verily We have power over them.

4641. Distance of East and West: literally, ‘distance of the two Easts’. Most Commentators understand in this sense, but some construe the phrase as meaning the distance of the extreme points of the rising of the sun, between the summer solstice and the winter solstice. Cf. n. 4034 to xxxvii. 5. A good equivalent idiom in English would be “poles apart”, for they could never meet.

4642. All partners in evil will certainly share in the punishment, but that is no consolation to any individual soul. Evil desires the evil of others, but that does not diminish its own torment, or get rid of the personal responsibility of each individual soul.

4643. Cf. xxx. 52-53. The evil go headlong into sin, and sink deeper and deeper until their spiritual faculties are deadened, and no outside help can bring them back. Allah’s grace they have rejected.

4644. There is hope for a person who wanders in quest of truth, and even for one who wanders through mistake or by weakness of will. But there is none for one who, by deliberate choice, plunges into “manifest error”, i.e., error which any one can see.

4645. Cf. viii. 30: “how the Unbelievers plotted against thee, to keep thee in bonds, or slay thee, or get thee out (of thy home)”. They were always plotting against the holy Prophet in his Makkah period. But even if their plots had succeeded against human beings, they could not defeat Allah’s Plan, nor escape the just punishment of their deeds. Cf. also x. 46, and n. 1438.
43. So hold thou fast
To the Revelation sent down
To thee: verily thou
Art on a Straight Way.

44. The (Qurān) is indeed
A Reminder for thee
And for thy people;
And soon shall ye
(All) be brought to account.

45. And question thou our
messengers
Whom We sent before thee;
Did We appoint any deities
Other than The Most Gracious,
To be worshipped?

SECTION 5.

46. We did send Moses
Aforetime, with Our Signs,
To Pharaoh and his Chiefs:
He said, “I am a messenger
Of the Lord of the Worlds.”

4646. Let the wicked rage, say what they like, or do their worst: the prophet of Allah is encouraged to go forward steadfastly in the Light given him, for he is on a Path that leads straight to Allah.

4647. Zikr: Message, Remembrance, Cause of remembrance, Memorial. Title for remembrance to posterity. Thus two meanings emerge, not necessarily mutually exclusive.
(1) The Qurān brings a Message of Truth and Guidance to the Prophet, and his people;
(2) the revelation of the Qurān raises the rank of the Prophet, and the people among whom, and in whose language, it was promulgated, making them worthy of remembrance in the world’s history for all time. But the honour also carried its responsibilities. All who hear it must give an account of how far they profit by it spiritually.

4648. That is, by examining their Message, and asking the learned among their real followers. It will be found that no Religion really teaches the worship of other than Allah.

4649. For the story of Moses in detail, see vii. 103-137, but especially vii. 104, 130-136.
47. But when he came to them
With Our Signs, behold,
They laughed at them.\footnote{4650}

48. We showed them Sign\footnote{4651}
After Sign, each greater
Than its fellow, and We
Seized them with Punishment,
In order that they
Might turn (to Us).

49. And they said, “O thou\footnote{4652}
Sorcerer! Invoke thy Lord
For us according to
His covenant with thee;
For we shall truly
Accept guidance.”

50. But when We removed
The Chastisement from them,
Behold, they broke their word.

51. And Pharaoh proclaimed
Among his people, saying:
“O my people! Does not
The dominion of Egypt
Belong to me, (witness)\footnote{4653}

\footnote{4650. For the mockery of Moses and his Signs see xvii. 101; also below, xliii. 49, 52-53.}

\footnote{4651. Moses showed them nine Clear Signs: see n. 1091 to vii. 133; also xvii. 101. Each one of them in its own setting and circumstances was greater than any of its “sister” Signs. The object was if possible to reclaim as many Egyptians as possible from their defiance of Allah.}

\footnote{4652. This speech is half a mockery, and half a ruse. In spite of their unbelief, they had fear in their minds, and in order to stop the plagues, one after another, they promised to obey Allah, and when the particular plague was removed, they again became obdurate. See vii. 133-135.}

\footnote{4653. The \textit{wāw} here in Arabic is the \textit{Wāw ḫaliya}: the abundant streams from the Nile flowing beneath his palace being evidence of his power, prosperity, and sovereignty. The Nile made (and makes) Egypt, and the myth of the god Osiris was a compound of the myths of the Nile and the sun. The Pharaoh, therefore, as commanding the Nile, commanded the gods who personified Egypt. He boasted of water, and he perished in water,—a fitting punishment!}
These streams flowing
Underneath my (palace)? What!
See ye not then?

52. "Am I not better
Than this (Moses), who
Is a contemptible wretch\textsuperscript{4654}
And can scarcely
Express himself clearly?

53. "Then why are not\textsuperscript{4655}
Gold bracelets bestowed
On him, or (why)
Come (not) with him
Angels accompanying him
In procession?"

54. Thus did he make
Fools of his people,
And they obeyed him:
Truly were they a people
Rebellious (against Allah).

55. When at length they\textsuperscript{4656}
Provoked Us, We exacted
Retribution from them, and
We drowned them all.\textsuperscript{4657}

\textsuperscript{4654}. Being a despised Israelite in any case, and having further an impediment in his speech. See xx. 27, and notes 2552-53.

\textsuperscript{4655}. Gold bracelets and gold chains were possibly among the insignia of royalty. In any case they betokened wealth, and the materialists judge a man's worth by his wealth and his following and equipage. So Pharaoh wanted to see Moses, if he had any position in the spiritual kingdom, invested with gold bracelets, and followed by a great train of angels as his Knight-companions! The same kind of proofs were demanded by the materialist Quraish of our holy Prophet. These were puerilities, but such puerilities go down with the crowd. Barring a few Egyptians who believed in Allah and in the Message of Moses, the rest of Pharaoh's entourage followed Pharaoh in his pursuit of revenge, and were drowned in the Red Sea.

\textsuperscript{4656}. Allah is patient, and gives many and many opportunities to the most hardened sinners for repentance. But at length comes a time when His justice is provoked, and the inevitable punishment follows.

\textsuperscript{4657}. Cf. vii. 136.
56. And We made them (A People) of the Past
And an Example
To later ages.

SECTION 6.

57. When (Jesus) the son of Mary is held up
Of Mary is held up
As an example, behold
Thy people raise a clamour
Thereat (in ridicule)!

58. And they say, “Are
Our gods best, or he?”
This they set forth
To thee, only by way
Of disputation: yea, they
Are a contentious people.

59. He was no more than
A servant: We granted
Our favour to him,
And We made him
An example to the Children
Of Israel.

4658. Pharaoh and his hosts were blotted out, and became as a tale of the past. Their story is an instructive warning and example to future generations.

4659. Jesus was a man, and a prophet to the Children of Israel, “though his own received him not.” Some of the churches that were founded after him worshipped him as “God” and as “the son of God”, as do the Trinitarian churches to the present day. The orthodox churches did so in the time of the holy Prophet. When the doctrine of Unity was renewed, and the false worship of others besides Allah was strictly prohibited, all false gods were condemned, e.g., at xxi. 98. The pagan Arabs looked upon Jesus as being in the same category as their false gods, and could not see why a foreign cult, or a foreign god, as they viewed him, should be considered better than their own gods or idols. There was no substance in this, but mere mockery, and verbal quibbling. Jesus was one of the greater prophets: he was not a god, nor was he responsible for the quibbling subtleties of the Athanasian Creed.

4660. A reference to the limited mission of the prophet Jesus, whose Gospel to the Jews only survives in uncertain fragmentary forms.
60. And if it were Our Will,
   We could make angels
   From amongst you, succeeding
   Each other on the earth.

61. And (Jesus) shall be
   A Sign (for the coming
   Of) the Hour (Of Judgment):
   Therefore have no doubt
   About the (Hour), but
   Follow ye Me: this
   Is a Straight Way.

62. Let not Satan
   Hinder you: for he is
   To you an enemy avowed.

63. When Jesus came
   With Clear Signs, he said:
   "Now have I come
   To you with Wisdom,
   And in order to make
   Clear to you some
   Of the (points) on which
   Ye dispute: therefore fear Allah
   And obey me.

4661. If it were said that the birth of Jesus without a father sets him above other prophets, the creation of angels without either father or mother would set them still higher, especially as angels do not eat and drink and are not subject to physical laws. But angels are not higher.

4662. This is understood to refer to the second coming of Jesus in the Last Days before the Resurrection, when he will destroy the false doctrines that pass under his name, and prepare the way for the universal acceptance of Islam, the Gospel of Unity and Peace, the Straight Way of the Qur-an.

4663. True wisdom consists in understanding the unity of the Divine purpose and the Unity of the Divine Personality. The man Jesus came to reconcile the jarring sects in Israel, and his true teaching was just the same as that which was expounded in a wider form by Islam. He did not claim to be God: why should not the Christians follow the doctrine of Unity rather than what has become their ancestral and traditional custom?
64. "For Allah, He is my Lord\textsuperscript{4664}
And your Lord: so worship
Ye Him: this is
A Straight Way."

65. But sects from among
Themselves fell into disagreement:
Then woe to the wrong-doers,
From the Chastisement
Of a Grievous Day!

66. Do they only wait\textsuperscript{4665}
For the Hour— that it
Should come on them
All of a sudden,
While they perceive not?

67. Friends on that Day\textsuperscript{4666}
Will be foes, one
To another,— except
The Righteous.

\textsuperscript{4664} In verses 26-28 an appeal is made to the pagan Arabs, that Islam is their own religion, the religion of Abraham their ancestor; in verses 46-54, an appeal is made to the Jews that Islam is the same religion as was taught by Moses, and that they should not allow their leaders to make fools of them; in verses 57-65 an appeal is made to the Christians that Islam is the same religion as was taught by Jesus, and that they should give up their sectarian attitude and follow the universal religion, which shows the Straight Way.

\textsuperscript{4665} Cf. xii. 107. What is there to wait for? The Hour of Judgment may come at any moment. It will come all of a sudden before they realise that it is on them. They should make up their minds to give up misleading disputations and come to the Straight Path.

\textsuperscript{4666} The hatred and spite, which are associated with evil, will be felt with peculiar intensity in that period of agony. That itself would be a punishment, from which the righteous will be free. The righteous will have passed all perils of falling into wrong frames of mind.
SECTION 7.

68. My devotees!\[4667\]

No fear shall be
On you today
Nor shall ye grieve,—

69. Those who have believed
In Our Signs and submitted (to Us).

70. Enter ye the Garden,\[4668\]

Ye and your wives,
In (beauty and) rejoicing.

71. To them will be passed\[4669\]

Round, dishes and goblets
Of gold: there will be
There all that the souls
Could desire, all that
The eyes could delight in:
And ye shall abide
Therein (for aye).

72. Such will be the Garden
Of which ye are made\[4670\]
Heirs for your (good) deeds
(In life).

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4667. The devotion and service to Allah result in the soul being made free from all fear and sorrow, as regards the past, present, and future, if we may take an analogy from Time for a timeless state. Such devotion and service are shown by (1) believing in Allah's Signs, which means understanding and accepting His Will, and (2) by merging our will completely in His universal Will, which means being in tune with the Infinite, and acting in all things to further His Kingdom.

4668. The Garden is the type of all that is beautiful to eye, mind, and soul, all that is restful and in tune, a complete state of bliss, such as we can scarcely conceive of in this troubled world. Several metaphors indicate how we can try to picture that bliss to ourselves in "this muddy vesture of decay."

4669. We shall have all our near and dear ones ("wives") with us: perfected Love will not be content with Self, but like a note of music will find its melody in communion with the others. The richest and most beautiful vessels will minister to our purified desires, and give complete and eternal satisfaction to our souls in every way.

4670. We shall be there, not as strangers, or temporary guests, but as heirs—made heirs in eternity because of the good lives we had led on earth.
73. Ye shall have therein Abundance of fruit,⁴⁶⁷¹ from which Ye shall eat.⁴⁶⁷²

74. The Sinners will be In the Punishment of Hell, To dwell therein (for aye):

75. Nowise will the (punishment) Be lightened for them, And in despair will they Be there overwhelmed.

76. Nowise shall We⁴⁶⁷³ Be unjust to them: But it is they who Have been unjust themselves.

77. They will cry: "O Malik!⁴⁶⁷⁴ Would that thy Lord Put an end to us!" He will say, "Nay, but Ye shall abide!"⁴⁶⁷⁵

⁴⁶⁷¹. The “fruit” here links on with the last words in the last verse (72), “ye are made heirs for your (good) deeds (in life)”.

⁴⁶⁷². “Shall eat”. But the word akala is used in many places in the comprehensive sense of “enjoy”, “have satisfaction”. For example, see n. 776 to v. 69. Cf. also vii. 19 and n. 1004.

⁴⁶⁷³. The wrong-doers suffer not because Allah is unjust or cruel, nor as a deterrent to others, for the probationary period will then have passed, but because their evil deeds must bear their inevitable fruit. Allah’s Grace was ever ready to offer opportunities for Repentance and Forgiveness. But they rejected them. They were unjust to themselves. This is complementary to the doctrine of works and their fruits, as explained in n. 4671 above.

⁴⁶⁷⁴. Malik: The name of the Angel in charge of Hell.

⁴⁶⁷⁵. Cf. xx. 74. Annihilation is better than agony. But wrong-doers cannot destroy the “fruits” of their actions, by asking for annihilation.
78. Verily We have brought\(^{4676}\) The Truth to you:
But most of you
Have a hatred for Truth.

79. What! Have they settled\(^{4677}\)
Some Plan (among themselves)?
But it is We Who
Settle things.

80. Or do they think\(^{4678}\)
That We hear not
Their secrets and their
Private counsels? Indeed
(We do), and Our Messengers
Are by them, to record.

81. Say: “If The Most Gracious
Had a son, I would\(^{4679}\)
Be the first to worship.”

82. Glory to the Lord
Of the heavens and the earth,
The Lord of the Throne\(^{4680}\)
He is free from the things
They attribute (to Him)!

4676. We come back now to the Present,—primarily to the time when Islam was being preached in Makkah, but by analogy the present time or any time. Truth is often bitter
to the taste of those who live on Falsehoods, and Shams and profit by them. They hate
the Truth, and plot against it. But will they succeed? See next verse and note.

4677. Men cannot settle the high affairs of the universe. If they plot against the
Truth, the Truth will destroy them, just as,
if they accept the Truth, the Truth will make
them free. It is Allah Who disposes of affairs.

4678. However secretly men may plot, everything is known to Allah. His Recording
Angels are by, at all times and in all places, to prepare a Record of their Deeds for
their own conviction when the time comes for Judgment.

4679. The prophet of Allah does not object to true worship in any form. But it must
be true: it must not superstitiously attribute derogatory things to Allah, or foster false
ideas.

4680. Cf. vii. 54 and n. 1032. All Power, Authority, Knowledge, and Truth are with
Allah. He neither begets nor is begotten. Glory to Him!
83. So leave them to babble
And play (with vanities)
Until they meet that Day\(^\text{4681}\)
of theirs, which they
Have been promised.

84. It is He Who is God
In heaven and God on earth;
And He is Full
Of Wisdom and Knowledge.

85. And blessed is He\(^\text{4682}\)
To Whom belongs the dominion
Of the heavens and the earth,
And all between them:
With Him is the knowledge
Of the Hour (of Judgment):
And to Him shall ye
Be brought back.

86. And those whom they invoke
Besides Allah have no power
Of intercession;—only he\(^\text{4683}\)
Who bears witness to the Truth,
And with full knowledge.

87. If thou ask them, Who\(^\text{4684}\)
Created them, they will
Certainly say, Allah: how
Then are they deluded
Away (from the Truth)?

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4681. *That Day of theirs*: they had their Day on earth; they will have a different sort of Day in the Hereafter, according to the promise of Allah about the Resurrection and Judgment, or perhaps about Retribution in this very life! So leave them to play about with their fancies and vanities. Truth must eventually prevail!

4682. We glorify Allah, and we call His name blessed, because He has not only supreme power and authority, but because we shall return to Him and see “the Light of His Countenance” (xxx. 38).

4683. While idols and false gods have no power of intercession, persons like Jesus, who is falsely worshipped by his misguided followers, but who himself preached the Gospel of Unity with full understanding will have the power of intercession.

4684. Cf. xxxi. 25, and n. 3613; and xxxix. 38, and n. 4299.
88. (Allah has knowledge)\textsuperscript{4685}
Of the (Prophet's) cry,
"O my Lord! Truly
These are a people
Who believe not!"\textsuperscript{4686}

89. But turn away from them,
And say "Peace!"\textsuperscript{4687}
But soon shall they know!

\textsuperscript{4685}. Commentators are divided in opinion as to the construction. The best opinion is that which I have adopted, referring back qilihi as a genitive governed by 'ilm in verse 85.

\textsuperscript{4686}. The Prophet was much troubled in mind by the Unfaith of the Quraish: xviii. 6. He is here told to leave them alone for a time, for the Truth must soon prevail.

\textsuperscript{4687}. Cf. xxv. 63, and n. 3123.