INTRODUCTION TO SURA Al-Jumu'a, 62.

This is the sixth Sura in the Madinah series of short Suras which began with S. lvii.

The special theme here is the need for mutual contact in the Community for worship and understanding: for the spirit of the Message is for all, ignorant and learned, in order that they may be purified and may learn wisdom.

The date has no special significance: it may be placed in the early Madinah period, say between A.H. 2 and 5.

Summary.—The Revelation has come among unlearned men, to teach purity and wisdom not only to them but to others, including those who may have an older Message but do not understand it: meet solemnly for the Assembly (Friday) Prayer, and let not worldly interests deflect you therefrom. (lxii. 1-11).
Al-Jumu’a, or the Assembly (Friday) Prayer.

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

1. Whatever is In the heavens and On earth, doth declare5449 The Praises and Glory Of Allah—the Sovereign,5450 The Holy One, the Exalted In Might, the Wise.

2. It is He Who has sent Amongst the Unlettered5451 A messenger from among Themselves, to rehearse To them His Signs,5452 To purify them, and To instruct them in The Book5453

5449. See n. 5408 to lix. 24, where I have explained the difference in signification between sabbaha and yusabbihu. The latter form is used here, to express an actual fact. 'Everything declares the Praises and Glory of Allah, because Allah’s mercies extend to all His creatures: He sends His Revelation for the benefit of the ignorant and unlettered as well as for those who have learning in their midst, especially as the latter are apt, by the very weight of their ponderous learning, to miss the real point and spirit of Allah’s Message.'

5450. See lix. 23, and n. 5402. Here we have two of the divine attributes repeated from lix. 23 and two from the end of lix. 24, implying a reminiscence of all the beautiful divine attributes mentioned in that passage.

5451. The Unlettered: as applied to a people, it refers to the Arabs, in comparison with the People of the Book, who had a longer tradition of learning, but whose failure is referred to in verse 5 below. As applied to individuals, it means that Allah’s Revelation is for the benefit of all men, whether they have worldly learning or not.

5452. His Signs: Allah’s wonderful Signs in His Creation and in His ordering of the world. It may include the Verses of the Qur-an, but they are more specifically referred to as “Book” in the next line but one.

5453. Cf. ii. 129, and n. 129. Read again the attributes in the last verse. Allah is full Sovereign, and therefore cares for all His subjects, including the meanest and most ignorant, and sends His prophets or messengers to them. He is the Holy One, and therefore purifies and sanctifies those who were steeped in superstition and wickedness.
And Wisdom,—although they had been, before, in manifest error;—

3. Along with others of them, who have not already joined them: And He is Exalted in Might, Wise.

4. Such is the Bounty of Allah, which He bestows on whom He will: And Allah is the Lord of the highest bounty.

5. The similitude of those who were entrusted with the (obligations of) Taurat, but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is that of a donkey.

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5454. Previous ignorance or error is no bar to a person or nation receiving the blessings of Allah’s revelation, provided such person or nation has the will to come to Allah and the capacity to bear His Message. For an instance of incapacity through arrogance, see verse 6 below.

5455. Others of them: i.e., others than those among whom the holy Prophet came as a messenger. In other words his Message is for his Arab people and his non-Arab contemporaries as well as those who live in other ages, and have no personal contact with him or his Companions.

5456. That is, according to His wise Will and Plan, and also as a result of His unbounded generosity to all.

5457. The Children of Israel were chosen as special vehicles for Allah’s Message early in history. When their descendants corrupted the Message and became guilty of all the abominations against which prophets like Isaiah inveighed with such zeal and fire, they merely became like beasts of burden that carry learning and wisdom on their backs but do not understand or profit by it.
Which carries huge tomes  
(But understands them not).  
Evil is the similitude  
Of people who falsify  
The Signs of Allah:  
And Allah guides not  
People who do wrong.

6. Say: "O ye of Jewry!5458  
If ye think that ye  
Are friends to Allah,  
To the exclusion of  
(Other) men, then express  
Your desire for Death,  
If ye are truthful!"5459

7. But never will they  
Express their desire  
(For Death), because of  
The (deeds) their hands  
Have sent on before them!  
And Allah knows well  
Those that do wrong!

8. Say: "The Death from which  
Ye flee will truly  
Overtake you: then will  
Ye be sent back  
To the Knower of things  
Secret and open: and He

5458. Of Jewry is a very different thing from following the Law and Will of Allah.  
An arrogant claim to be a chosen people, to be the exclusive possessors of divine  
teaching, to be exempt from any punishment for breaches of the divine law, (cf. ii. 88),  
is presumptuous blasphemy. It may be Judaism, but it is not in the spirit of Moses.

5459. Cf. ii. 94-96. If they claimed to be special friends of Allah, why do they not  
eagerly desire death, which would bring them nearer to Allah? But of all people they are  
the most tenacious of this life and the good things of this life! And they know that their  
grasping selfish lives have run up a score of sin against them, which will meet its  
recompense.
9. O ye who believe!
When the call is proclaimed
To prayer on Friday (The Day of Assembly),
Hasten earnestly to the Remembrance
Of Allah, and leave off
Business (and traffic):"
That is best for you
If ye but knew.\(^{5463}\)

10. And when the Prayer
Is finished, then may ye
Disperse through the land,
And seek of the Bounty
Of Allah: and
Remember Allah frequently
That ye may prosper.\(^{5464}\)

11. But when they see
Some bargain or some
Pastime, they disperse
Headlong to it, and leave
Thee standing. Say:
“That which Allah
Has is better than
Any pastime or bargain!
And Allah is the Best
To provide (for all needs).”\(^{5465}\)

\(^{5463}\) The immediate and temporal worldly gain may be the ultimate and spiritual loss, and vice versa.

\(^{5464}\) Prosperity is not to be measured by wealth or worldly gains. There is a higher prosperity,—the health of the mind and the spirit.

\(^{5465}\) Do not be distracted by the craze for amusement or gain. If you lead a righteous and sober life, Allah will provide for you in all senses, better than any provision you can possibly think of.