INTRODUCTION TO SŪRAT Al-Anfāl, 8.

In the previous Introductions to the Sūras we have shown how each Sūra is a step or gradation in the teaching of the Qurān. The first seven Sūras, comprising a little less than one-third of the Qurān, form a gradation, sketching the early religious history of man and leading up to the formation of the new Ummat or Community of the Holy Messenger. Now we begin another gradation, consolidating that Ummat and directing us as to various phases in our new collective life.

In this chapter we have the lessons of the Battle of Badr enforced in their larger aspects: (1) the question of war booty; (2) the true virtues necessary for fighting the good fight; (3) victory against odds; (4) clemency and consideration for one's own and for others in the hour of victory.

As regards booty taken in battle, the first point to note is that that should never be our sole aim in war. It is only an accidental circumstance, a sort of windfall. Secondly, no soldier or troop has any prior right to it. A righteous war is a community affair, and any accessions resulting from it belong to Allah. Thirdly, certain equitable principles of division should be laid down to check human greed and selfishness. A fifth share goes to the Imam; and he can use it at his discretion; for his own expenses, and for the relief of the poor and suffering, and the orphans and widows (viii. 41). The remainder was divided, according to the Prophet's practice, not only among those who were actually in the fight physically, but all who were in the enterprise, young and old, provided they loyally did some duty assigned to them. Fourthly, there should be no disputes, as they interfere with internal discipline and harmony.

As regards the military virtues, which are the types of virtues throughout life, we are shown by an analysis of the incidents of Badr how against the greatest odds, Allah's help will give the victory if men are fighting not for themselves but for the sacred Cause of Allah. And directions are given for the treatment of prisoners and for maintaining the solidarity of the Muslim community.

The date of this Sūra is shortly after the battle of Badr, which was fought on Friday, the 17th of Ramadān in the second year of the Hijra. A short account of the battle is given in n. 352 to iii. 13.

Summary.—All booty is really at the disposal of Allah's Messenger under directions from Allah. Men of faith accept and obey these directions with cheerfulness. Victory and the prize of victory come from Allah, as was proved at Badr (viii. 1-19).
Obedience and intelligent discipline, zeal, faith, and gratitude to Allah, are the true passports to success and protection from the assaults of evil. Evil will be piled up with evil and destroyed (viii. 20-37).

The battle of Badr was a testing time, and showed how virtue and valour can conquer against odds. Steadfastness and obedience; faith, courage, and fearlessness: due preparation and free expenditure of resources and energy:—these are expected from you by Allah, and His help is all-sufficient (viii. 38-64.)

Even tenfold odds against you do not count if you are fighting for truth and faith against enemies of truth and faith; but remember clemency and consideration in the hour of victory (viii. 65-75.)
1. They ask thee\textsuperscript{1178} concerning (Things taken as) spoils of war. Say: "(Such) spoils are At the disposal of Allah\textsuperscript{1179} And the Messenger: so fear Allah, and keep straight The relations between yourselves: Obey Allah and His Messenger, If ye do believe."

2. For, Believers are those Who, when Allah is mentioned, Fell a tremor in their hearts, And when they hear His revelations rehearsed, find Their faith strengthened, And put (all) their trust In their Lord;

3. Who establish regular prayers And spend (freely) out of The gifts We have given Them for sustenance:\textsuperscript{1180}

\textsuperscript{1178} The occasion was the question of the division of the booty after the battle of Badr. See Introduction to this Sûra.

\textsuperscript{1179} Booty taken in a lawful and just war. It belongs to the Cause, in this case the Cause of Allah, as administered by His Messenger. The chief thing is to remain staunch to the Cause of Allah, and have no differences among those who stand for the Cause. Our internal relations must be kept straight: they must not be disturbed by cupidity or worldly considerations of gain, for any windfalls of this kind should be outside our calculations.

\textsuperscript{1180} Sustenance: The object is to warn off from the love of booty. To all true Believers Allah gives generous sustenance in any case.
4. Such in truth are the Believers:
   They have grades of dignity
   With their Lord, and forgiveness,
   And generous sustenance:

5. Just as thy Lord ordered thee
   Out of thy house in truth,
   Even though a party among
   The Believers disliked it,

6. Disputing with thee concerning
   The truth after it was made
   Manifest, as if they were
   Being driven to death
   While they see it.1182

7. Behold! Allah promised you
   One of the two parties,1183
   That it should be yours:
   Ye wished that the one

1181. *Just as*: the comparison takes us back to the first clause in verse 4: “such in truth are the Believers”-just as thy Lord also is just and true in ordering thee out to fight against heavy odds, when the alternative was to fight against the unarmed caravan which would have given thee abundant booty almost without a fight. To appreciate the full meaning, remember that the word *haqq*, translated “truth” means also “right,” “just,” “what is becoming.” The true Believers believe in truth and do right in obedience to Allah’s command. So Allah also, in asking them to fight against odds, is not asking them to rush to destruction, but is providing them with an opportunity of vindicating the truth in scorn of worldly advantage. And He made good His promise by giving them victory.

1182. In verse 6 we have again the word “truth”: some of the Believers disputed concerning “the truth”: they did not feel sure that the course recommended was the right course. They thought it would be certain destruction: they saw death almost staring them in the face.

1183. Just before Badr there were two alternatives before the Muslims in Madinah to save themselves from being overwhelmed by the Makkah Quraish with all their resources from the rich Syrian trade. One, which had least danger for the time being, and also promised much booty, was to fall upon the Quraish caravan returning from Syria to Makkah richly laden, and led by Abu Sufyan with only 40 men unarmed. From a worldly point of view this was the safest and most lucrative course. The other alternative, was to leave the booty out boldly against the well-armed and well-equipped Quraish army of 1,000 men coming from Makkah. The Muslims had no more than 300 men, ill-armed, to oppose this force. But if they could defeat it, it would shake the selfish autocracy which was in possession of Makkah. By Allah’s help they won a splendid victory, and the standard of Truth was established, never to be lowered again.
Section 2

10. Allah made it but a message Of hope, and an assurance To your hearts: (in any case) There is no help Except from Allah: And Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise.

11. Remember He covered you With drowsiness, To give you calm as from Himself, and he caused

1184. Cf. iii. 123, 125, 126. The number of angels, a thousand at Badr and three thousand and five thousand at Uhud, is equal to the strength of the enemy.

1185. All help comes ultimately from Allah. In special cases it may take special forms to put heart into us, and to fit in with our feelings and our psychology.

1186. Cf. iii. 154 for Uhud. Calm (presence of mind) is essential in battle and in all posts of danger. If the mind is too much in a state of excitement, it cannot carry out a well-considered or well-concerted plan. This spirit of calm confidence on the part of the Muslims won against the blustering violence of the Quraish.
Rain to descend on you\textsuperscript{1187}
From heaven, to clean you
Therewith, to remove from you
The stain of Satan,\textsuperscript{1188}
To strengthen your hearts,
And to plant your feet
Firmly therewith.

12. Remember thy Lord inspired
The angels (with the message):
“I am with you: give
Firmness to the Believers:
I will instil terror
Into the hearts of the Unbelievers:
Smite ye above their necks
And smite all their
Finger-tips off them.”\textsuperscript{1189}

13. This because they contended
Against Allah and His Messenger:
If any contend against Allah
And His Messenger, Allah
Is strict in punishment.

14. Thus (will it be said): “Taste ye
Then of the (punishment):
For those who reject
Is the chastisement of the Fire.”

\textsuperscript{1187} The rain was welcome for many reasons. (1) Water was scarce both for drinking and ablutions; (2) the muslim band, without baggage or equipment or comforts, found that their thirst aggravated their fatigue; (3) the sand was loose, and the rain consolidated it and enabled them “to plant their feet firmly.”

\textsuperscript{1188} “Stain of Satan”. Dirt is physically a symbol of evil, and the Muslims were particular about ablutions before prayer. But the rain also refreshed their spirits and removed any lurking doubts in their minds (suggestions of the Evil) that victory might be impossible in such adverse circumstances.

\textsuperscript{1189} The vulnerable parts of an armed man are above the neck. A blow on the neck, face or head, finishes him off. If he has armour it is difficult to get at his heart. But if his hands are put out of action, he is unable to wield his sword or lance or other weapon, and easily becomes a prisoner.
1190. The laws of Jihād are exactly similar to those enforced by military virtue and discipline. Meet your enemy fairly and squarely, not rashly, but after due preparation. *Zahfan* in the text (*meeting in hostile array*) implies a slow and well-planned proceeding towards a hostile army. When once in combat, carry it through: there is no room for second thoughts. Death or victory should be the motto of every soldier: it may be death for himself individually, but if he has faith, there is triumph in either case for his cause. Two exceptions are recognised: (1) *reculer pour mieux s’aller*, to go back in order to jump forward; or to deceive the enemy by a feint; (2) if an individual or body is, by the chances of battle, isolated from his own force, he can fall back on his force in order to fight the battle. There is no virtue in mere single-handedness. Each individual must use his life and his resources to the best advantage for the common cause.

1191. When the battle began, the Holy Prophet prayed, and threw a handful of dust or sand at the enemy, which, as described in traditions, struck the eyes of the enemy. This had a great psychological effect.

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15. O ye who believe!
   When ye meet
   The Unbelievers
   In hostile array,1190
   Never turn your backs
   To them.

16. If any do turn his back
   To them on such a day—
   Unless it be in a stratagem
   Of war, or to retreat
   To a troop (of his own)—
   He draws on himself
   The wrath of Allah,
   And his abode is Hell,—
   An evil refuge (indeed)!

17. It is not ye who
   Slew them; it was Allah:
   When thou throwest (a handful)1191
   Of dust), it was not
   Thy act, but Allah’s:
   In order that He might
   Confer on the Believers
1192. Numerically the odds against the Muslims were three to one. In other ways they were at a disadvantage: of arms and equipment they had but little, while the enemy were well-found: they were inexperienced, while the Quraish had brought their foremost warriors. In all this there was a test. but the test was accompanied by gracious favours of countless value: their Commander was one in whom they had perfect faith, and for whom they were ready to lay down their lives; the rain refreshed them; their spirit was unshaken; and they were fighting in Allah's cause. Thus the trial or test became itself a blessing.

19. (O Unbelievers!) if ye prayed For victory and judgment, Now hath the judgment Come to you: if ye desist (From wrong), it will be Best for you: if ye return (To the attack), so shall We. Not the least good Will your forces be to you Even if they were multiplied: For verily Allah Is with those who believe!

SECTION 3.

20. O ye who believe! Obey Allah and His Messenger, And turn not away from him When ye hear (him speak).

1193. *Fathi* = victory, decision, judgment. The Quraish in Makkah had prayed for victory: they were confident that their superior numbers, equipment, and experience would be decisive. With a play on the word, they are told that the decision had come, and the victory—but not in the sense they had hoped for!
21. Nor be like those who say, “We hear,” but listen not.\textsuperscript{1194}

22. For the worst of beasts
   In the sight of Allah
   Are the deaf and the dumb,\textsuperscript{1195}
   Those who understand not.

23. If Allah had found in them
   Any good, He would indeed
   Have made them listen:
   (As it is), if He had made them
   Listen, they would but have
   Turned back and declined (faith).

24. O ye who believe!
   Give your response to Allah
   And His Messenger, when He
   Calleth you to that which
   Will give you life;\textsuperscript{1196}
   And know that Allah
   Cometh in between a man\textsuperscript{1197}
   And his heart, and that
   It is He to Whom
   Ye shall (all) be gathered.

\textsuperscript{1194}. Cf. ii. 93.
\textsuperscript{1195}. Cf. ii. 18.

\textsuperscript{1196}. There are two points to note. (1) Note that after Allah and His Messenger
   are mentioned, the pronoun and verb in the next clause are singular: everything that
   Allah’s Messenger put forward as an injunction came by inspiration from Allah: the
   Messenger made his will coincide completely with Allah’s will. (2) We are asked actively
   to give our response in deed and life to the call of duty and conscience; for that call
   leads to real life, the life eternal, even though it may apparently mean in this world the
   loss of things that make life dear or the loss of life itself. If we refer this to Jihad, i.e.,
   fighting in and for the Cause, both literally and metaphorically, the meaning becomes
   quite clear.

\textsuperscript{1197}. If the human heart is refractory and refuses to obey the call of Allah, that
   is not the end of the matter. Allah has to be reckoned with. The refusal may be because
   there was some pet human scheme which the heart of man was not willing to give up
   for Allah’s Cause. Will that scheme come to fruition by refusing to serve the higher
   Cause? By no means. Man proposes, but God disposes. If the scheme or motive was
   perfectly secret from men, it was not secret from Allah. The heart is the innermost seat
   of man’s affections and desires: but Allah intervenes between man and his heart.
25. And fear the trial\textsuperscript{1198} Which affecteth not in particular (Only) those of you who do wrong: And know that Allah Is strict in punishment.

26. Call to mind when ye Were a small (band), Deemed weak through the land, And afraid that men might Despoil and kidnap you;\textsuperscript{1199} But He provided a safe asylum For you, strengthened you With His aid, and gave you Good things for sustenance: That ye might be grateful.

27. O ye that believe! Betray not the trust Of Allah and the Messenger, Nor misappropriate knowingly Things entrusted to you.\textsuperscript{1200}

\textsuperscript{1198} Fi\textsuperscript{na} has many meanings: (1) the root meaning is trial or temptation, as in ii. 102 and viii. 28; (2) an analogous meaning is trial or punishment, as in v. 71; (3) tumult or oppression, as in ii. 193, and here: and in viii. 39 (4) there is here (viii. 25) the further shade of meaning suggested, discord, sedition, civil war.

This warning against internal discord or tumult was very necessary in the Civil Wars of early Islam, and was never more necessary than it is now. For it affects innocent and guilty alike.

\textsuperscript{1199} On the immediate occasion the Muslims were reminded that they were a small band in Makkah despised and rejected; living in a state of insecurity for their persons, their lives, their property, and those of their dependants, persecuted and exiled and how by the grace of Allah they found a safe asylum in Madinah how they found friends and helpers, how their many needs were cared for, and how at length they gathered strength and numbers enough to defeat the forces of godlessness, injustice, and oppression.

\textsuperscript{1200} Trusts may be of various kinds: (1) property, goods, credit, etc.; (2) plans, confidences, secrets, etc.; (3) knowledge, talents, opportunities, etc., which we are expected to use for our fellowmen. Men may betray the trust of Allah and His Prophet by misusing property, or abusing the confidence reposed in them, or the knowledge or talents given to them. On that special occasion, when the plans for the protection of Allah’s worshippers against annihilation were of special importance, the Prophet’s trust and confidence had to be guarded with special care. Occasions for scrupulously respecting
28. And know ye
That your possessions
And your progeny
Are but a trial:1201
And that it is Allah
With whom lies
Your highest reward.

SECTION 4.

29. O ye who believe!
If ye fear Allah,
He will grant you a Criterion1202
(To judge between right and wrong).
Remove from you (all) evil deeds
And forgive you:
For Allah is the Lord
Of grace unbounded.

30. Remember how the Unbelievers
Plotted against thee, to keep
Thee in bonds, or slay thee,
Or get thee out (of thy home).1203

= the trust and confidence of our fellow-men occur every day in our life, and few of us
can claim perfection in this respect. Hence the special distinction of the Prophet of Allah,
who earned the title of Al-Amin, the one who was true to every trust reposed in him.

1201. A big family—many sons—was considered a source of power and strength: iii.
10, 116. So in English, a man with many children is said to have his “quiver full”: C.f.
Psalms, cxxvii. 4-5: “As arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, so are the children
of thy youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; they shall not be
ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.” So with property and
possessions: they add to a man’s dignity, power, and influence. But both possessions and
a large family are a temptation and a trial. They may turn out to be a source of spiritual
downfall, if they are mishandled, or if the love of them excludes the love of Allah.

1202. C.f. ii. 53 and ii. 185. The battle of Badr is called the Furfûn in Muslim
theology, because it was the first trial of strength by battle, in Islam, between the powers
of good and evil. Evil was defeated, and those who had real faith were tested and sorted
out from those who had not faith enough to follow the banner of Faith. See also viii.
41 and n. 1210.

1203. The plots against Al-Muṣṭafâ in Makkah aimed at three things. They were not
only foiled, but Allah’s wonderful working turned the tables, and brought good out of
evil in each case. (1) They tried to hold the Prophet in subjection in Makkah by putting =
They plot and plan,
And Allah too plans,
But the best of planners is Allah.

31. When Our Signs are rehearsed
To them, they say: “We
Have heard this (before):
If we wished, we could
Say (words) like these:
These are nothing
But tales of the ancients.”

32. Remember how they said:
“O Allah! if this is indeed
The Truth from Thee,
Rain down on us a shower
Of stones from the sky,
Or send us a grievous
chastisement.”

= pressure on his uncles, relatives, and friends. But the more they persecuted, the more
the little Muslim community grew in faith and numbers. (2) They tried to injure or slay
him. But the wonderful example of his humility, perseverance, and fearlessness furthered
the cause of Islam. (3) They tried to get him and his followers out of their homes. But
they found a new home in Madinah from which they eventually reconquered not only
Makkah but Arabia and the world.

1203-A. Cf. iii. 54.
1204. Cf. vi. 25.
1205. This was actually a challenge thrown out by the Infidels in Makkah not
seriously but as a taunt. The answer is in the two following verses. Allah punishes in
His own good time, not according to the foolish and frivolous taunts of the Unbelievers.
While the Holy Prophet was with them, he—the Mercy of the Worlds—conferred a certain
amount of immunity to them. There were also other Muslims, just men who asked for
forgiveness. And Allah keeps the door of repentance and forgiveness open to all as long
as they make it possible. But let them not be puffed up with pride, or think that they
have lasting immunity. What became of Abū Jahl? He and some of his greatest warriors
were slain at Badr. The little autocratic clique that prevented Muslims from access to the
Sacred Mosque had their punishment not long afterwards. They pretended to be its
guardians. But were they? Could they be? Only the righteous could be true guardians
to Allah’s places of worship, and particularly to the Central House of the Ka‘ba. It was
to be a place of pure worship, while their idolatrous worship was mere mummery,—
whistling and clapping of hands. All false worship advertises itself by noise and unseemly
riot: it is said that the Pagans used to go naked round the Ka‘ba.
1206. It is only when matters are brought to an issue that evil is separated distinctly from the good. Then evil consorts with evil, and good with good. The evil will be piled into a heap. When the cup is full, the punishment will come. There will be no mistake about it. The good should not be discouraged, because in fighting against them, all forces of evil join together and pool their resources together. The more they do so, the easier is the final arbitration. It is all in Allah's Plan.

33. But Allah was not going to send them a Chastisement: Whilst thou wast amongst them; Nor was He going to send it Whilst they could ask for pardon.

34. But what plea have they That Allah should not punish Them, when they keep out (Men) from the Sacred Mosque— And they are not its guardians? No men can be its guardians Except the righteous; but most Of them do not understand.

35. Their prayer at the House (Of Allah) is nothing but Whistling and clapping of hands: (Its only answer can be), “Taste ye the Chastisement Because ye blasphemed.”

36. The Unbelievers spend their wealth To hinder (men) from the path Of Allah, and so will they Continue to spend; but In the end they will have (Only) regrets and sighs; At length they will be overcome: And the Unbelievers will be Gathered together to Hell;—

37. In order that Allah may separate The impure from the pure. Put the impure, one on another, Heap them together, and cast them
Into Hell. They will be
The ones to have lost.

SECTION 5.

38. Say to the Unbelievers,
If (now) they desist (from Unbelief),
Their past would be forgiven them;
But if they persist, the punishment
Of those before them is already
(A matter of warning for them).

39. And fight them on
Until there is no more
Persecution,
And religion becomes
Allah's in its entirety
But if they cease, verily Allah
Doth see all that they do.

40. If they refuse, be sure
That Allah is your Protector—
The Best to protect
And the Best to help.

41. And know that out of
All the booty that ye
May acquire (in war),
A fifth share is assigned

1207. Cf. ii. 193 and n.

1208. If they cease from fighting and from the persecution of truth, Allah judges them by their actions and their motives, and would not wish that they should be harassed with further hostility. But if they refuse all terms, the righteous have nothing to fear: Allah will help and protect them.

1209. The rule is that a fifth share is set apart for the Imam (the Commander) and the rest is divided among the forces. The fifth share reserved is expressed to be for Allah and the Prophet, and for charitable purposes for those to whom charity is due. Ultimately everything is at the disposal of Allah and His Prophet: viii. 1: but four-fifths are divided, and only one-fifth is retained for the special purposes. The Imam has discretion as to the mode of division. In the Prophet's life-time a certain portion was assigned to him and his near relatives.
To Allah,—and to the Messenger,
And to near relatives,
Orphans, the needy,
And the wayfarer,—
If ye do believe in Allah
And in the revelation
We sent down to our Servant
On the Day of Discrimination—
The Day of the meeting
Of the two forces.
For Allah hath power
Over all things.

42. Remember ye were
On the hither side
Of the valley, and they
On the farther side,
And the caravan
On lower ground than ye.
Even if ye had made
A mutual appointment
To meet, ye would certainly
Have failed in the appointment:

1210. Testing: Fûrûqûn: Criterion between right and wrong, decision between the forces of faith and unbelief. The battle of Badr is called by this name. See viii. 29 and n. 1202.

1211. Allah’s power is shown in the events detailed in the three verses following (vv. 42-44), leading to the complete victory of the Muslims over the pagan Quraish.

1212. The little Islamic force from Madinah went out to meet the big Makkkan army, and they met on the two sides of a valley at Badr, while the Quraish caravan was on lower ground towards the sea, about 3 miles from Badr.

1213. They were all at cross purposes. The caravan was making for Makkah, but scarcely thought it could get there. The Quraish force was trying to save the caravan and then annihilate the Muslims. The Muslims had decided to attack the Quraish army from Makkah which turned out to be big, more than three times their number. Yet the two forces met, precisely at the spot and at the time when a decisive battle should take place and the Muslims dispose of the pretensions of the Makkans. If they had carefully planned a mutual appointment, they could not have carried it out more precisely.

On the Muslim side the few martyrs knew that the victory was theirs and those who survived the battle enjoyed the fruits of the victory. On the pagan side, both those who died and those who lived knew fully the issue joined. Even psychologically both sides went in with full determination to decide the issue.
1214. The Muslim army though they knew their worldly disadvantage, did not realise the full odds against them. The Makkans came exulting in any case, and they despised the contemptible little force, opposed to them. Even though they thought the Muslim force was twice as great as it was (iii. 13), still that number was contemptible, when taken with its poor equipment. Both these psychological visions subserved the main Plan, which was to bring the matter to a decisive issue, whether the Pagans of Makkah were to continue their arrogant oppression, or the religion of Allah was to be established in freedom and honour.
SECTION 6.

45. O ye who believe!
   When ye meet a force,
   Be firm, and call Allah
   In remembrance much (and often):
   That ye may prosper:

46. And obey Allah and His Messenger;
   And fall into no disputes,
   Lest ye lose heart
   And your power depart;
   And be patient and persevering:
   For Allah is with those
   Who patiently persevere.\(^\text{1215}\)

47. And be not like those
   Who started from their homes
   Insolently and to be seen of men,
   And to hinder (men)
   From the path of Allah.\(^\text{1216}\)
   For Allah compasseth
   All that they do.

48. Remember Satan made
   Their (sinful) acts seem
   Alluring to them, and said:
   “No one among men
   Can overcome you this day,
   While I am near to you”:\(^\text{1215}\)
   But when the two forces
   Came in sight of each other,
   He turned on his heels,
   And said: “Lo! I am clear
   Of you; lo! I see
   What ye see not;

\(^{1215}\) A fine description of the Muslim virtues which make for success and whose loss brings about humiliation and failure. "\textit{Power}": literally, "wind",-the favourable wind for a sailing ship.

\(^{1216}\) A true description of the Makkan army which met its doom.
Lo! I fear Allah; for Allah Is strict in punishment. 1217

SECTION 7.

49. Lo! the Hypocrites and those In whose hearts is disease: 1218 Say: "these people,-their religion Has misled them." But If any trust in Allah, behold! Allah is Exalted in might, Wise.

50. If thou couldst see, When the angels take the souls Of the Unbelievers (at death), 1219 (How) they smite their faces And their backs, (saying): "Taste the chastisement of the blazing Fire-

51. This is "because of (the deeds) which 1220 Your (own) hands sent forth. For Allah is never unjust To His servants."

1217. It is the way with the leaders of evil, when they find their cause lost, that they wash their hands of their followers and leave them in the lurch. They see more clearly than their dupes. They are not simpletons: they know the consequences of the wrath of Allah. Satan’s “fear” of Allah is terror combined with hatred,—the very opposite of the feeling which is described in Taqwa, viz., the desire to avoid doing anything against Allah’s will, such desire being founded on trust in Allah and the love of Allah.

1218. Cf. ii. 10 “disease in the heart.”

Trust in Allah brings its own reward: our eyes are opened, and we see how great, good, and wise is the Cherisher of the Worlds. Others may sneer and despise. But the blessing of Allah keeps our minds fresh and our hearts contented.

1219. In contrast to the taunt against those who trust in Allah, “that their religion has misled them.” is shown the terrible punishment, after death, of those who laughed at Faith.

1220. The punishment is shown to be due to their own deeds of wrong, because Allah is never unjust to the least of His servants.
1221. Allah bestows His grace freely, but He never withdraws it arbitrarily. Before He changes their state and circumstances, an actual state of rebellion and contumacy has arisen in their own souls, which brings about its inevitable punishment.

1222. Note that in verse 51, the words were that they rejected the Signs of Allah and were punished: here the words are that they treated the Signs as false and were destroyed—a higher degree of guilt deserved a severer punishment.

1223. In viii. 22 we were warned against “the worst of beasts in the sight of Allah,” who do not make use of their faculties of hearing, speaking and understanding, in the service of Allah, and in fact misuse their faculties to blaspheme Allah. The same brute creatures are shown here in another light: they are faithless both to Allah and man.
SECTION 8.

56. They are those with whom
Thou didst make a covenant, But they break their covenant
Every time, and they have not
The fear (of Allah).

57. If ye gain the mastery
Over them in war,
Disperse, with them, those
Who follow them,
That they may remember. 1224-A

58. If thou fearest treachery
From any group, throw back
(Their Covenant) to them, (so as to be) on equal terms:
For Allah loveth not the treacherous.

59. Let not the Unbelievers
Think that they have escaped,
They will never frustrate (them).

60. Against them make ready
Your strength to the utmost
Of your power, including 1225

1224. The immediate occasion was the repeated treachery of the Banū Quraiza after their treaties with the Muslims. But the general lesson remains, as noted in the two following verses. Treachery in war is doubly wrong, for it endangers so many lives. Such treachery should be punished in such a way that it gets no chance again. Not only the actual perpetrators but those who follow their standard should be rendered powerless. And the broken treaty should be denounced so that the innocent party can at least fight on equal terms. From actual physical warfare we can carry the same lesson to spiritual warfare. A truce or understanding is possible with those who respect definite principles, not with those who have no principles and are merely out for oppression and wickedness.

1224-A. The purpose of the verse is to urge Muslims to act against their enemies described above with a severity and resoluteness which would serve as a deterrent to other enemies of Islam who might be inclined to follow their example and act treacherously towards Muslims.

1225. The immediate occasion of this injunction was the weakness of cavalry and appointments of war in the early fights of Islam. But the general meaning follows. In every fight, physical, moral, or spiritual, arm yourself with the best weapons and the best arms against your enemy, so as to instil wholesome respect into him for you and the Cause you stand for.
Steeds of war, to strike terror
Into (the hearts of) the enemies,
Of Allah and your enemies,
And others besides, whom
Ye may not know, but whom\textsuperscript{1226}
Allah doth know. Whatever
Ye shall spend in the Cause
Of Allah, shall be repaid
Unto you, and ye shall not
Be treated unjustly.\textsuperscript{1227}

61. But if the enemy
Incline towards peace,
Do thou (also) incline
Towards peace, and trust
In Allah: for He is the One
That heareth and knoweth
(All things).\textsuperscript{1228}

62. Should they intend
To deceive thee.—verily Allah
Sufficeth thee: He it is
That hath strengthened thee
With His aid and
With (the company of)
The Believers,\textsuperscript{1229}

63. And (moreover) He hath put
Affection between their hearts:

\textsuperscript{1226}. There are always lurking enemies whom you may not know, but whom Allah
knows. It is your duty to be ready against all, for the sacred Cause under whose banner
you are fighting.

\textsuperscript{1227}. Be always ready and put all your resources into your Cause. You do not do
so in vain. Allah's reward will come in various forms. He knows all, and His reward will
always be more generous than you can possibly think of.

\textsuperscript{1228}. While we must always be ready for the good fight lest it be forced on us, even
in the midst of the fight we must always be ready for peace if there is any inclination
towards peace on the other side. There is no merit merely in a fight by itself. It should
be a joyful duty not for itself, but to establish the reign of peace and righteousness and
Allah's Law.

\textsuperscript{1229}. In working for peace there may be a certain risk of treachery on the other
side. We must take that risk: because the men of Faith have Allah's aid to count upon
and the strength of the united body of the righteous.
SECTION 9.

O Prophet! Sufficient unto thee is Allah, and unto those who follow thee among the Believers.

64. On the immediate occasion, the greatest miracle and most wonderful working of Allah’s grace was the union of hearts produced among the jarring, war-like, excitable elements of Arabia under the gentle, firm, and wise guidance of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah. At all times we must pray to Allah for this gift above all—union, understanding, and pure and sincere affection among those who take Allah’s name. With it there is strength and success. Without it there is humiliation, slavery, and moral degradation. There may be many causes of difference and dispute. The reconciliation can only come from the glory and wisdom of Allah.

The Believers: mere lip-profession of belief, or even the kind of belief that does not result in action, is not enough. To those whose belief is so sincere that it results in complete trust in Allah and in fearless action in His service, the consequences on this earth do not matter. Allah’s good pleasure is enough for them.

In a fight, odds of ten to one against anyone are appalling. But they do not daunt the men of faith. Whether they personally win or die, their Cause prevails. They are sure to win: because (1) they have divine aid, and (2) even humanly speaking, those who take up arms against truth and righteousness are fools, and their seeming power is but a broken reed.
66. For the present, Allah
Hath lightened your (burden),
For He knoweth that there is
A weak spot in you: 1233
But (even so), if there are
A hundred of you, patient
And persevering, they will
Vanquish two hundred, and if
A thousand, they will vanquish
Two thousand, with the leave
Of Allah: for Allah is with those
Who patiently persevere.

67. It is not fitting
For a Prophet
That he should have
Prisoners of war until
He hath thoroughly subdued 1234
The land. Ye look
For the temporal goods
Of this world; but Allah
Looketh to the Hereafter:
And Allah is Exalted in might, Wise.

1233. Given equal conditions, Muslims on account of their faith could win against odds of ten to one. But where their organization and equipment are weak, as was the case about the time of Badr, they were set a lighter task, and asked to tackle no more than odds of two to one against them. As a matter of fact at Badr they won through against odds of more than three to one.

1234. An ordinary war may be for territory or trade, revenge or military glory—all "temporal goods of this world." Such a war is condemned. But a Jihad is fought under strict conditions laid down by Islam, and solely for the cause of Allah. All baser motives, therefore are strictly excluded. The gain in the shape of ransom from captives has no place in such warfare.

At the same time, if there has been heavy loss of life already, captives may be taken, and it would be for the Imam to exercise his discretion as to the time when it was safe to release them, and whether the release should be free or on parole or on a fine by way of punishment. Destruction and slaughter, however repugnant to a gentle soul like that of Muḥammad, were inevitable where evil tried to suppress the good. Even Jesus, whose mission was more limited, had to say: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword." (Matt. x. 34).

Seventy captives were taken at Badr, and it was decided to take ransom for them. While the general principle of fighting for the purpose of taking captives in order to get their ransom is condemned, the particular action in this case was approved in vv. 68-71.
68. Had it not been for a previous ordainment\textsuperscript{1235} From Allah, a severe punishment Would have reached you For the (ransom) that ye took.

69. But (now) enjoy\textsuperscript{1236} what ye took In war, lawful and good: But fear Allah: for Allah Is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

SECTION 10.

70. O Prophet! say to those Who are captives in your hands: "If Allah findeth any good\textsuperscript{1237} In your hearts, He will Give you something better Than what has been taken From you, and He will Forgive you: for Allah Is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful."

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1235. Though any motive of worldly gain, which may have been in the minds of some among the victorious Muslim army, is condemned as worthy of a severe penalty, what actually happened is ascribed to the Plan of Allah, which was pre-ordained. Among the prisoners taken were the Prophet’s uncle ‘Abbās and Ḥadhrat ‘Alī’s brother, Aqīl, who afterwards became Muslims. ‘Abbās was an ancestor of the founder of the celebrated ‘Abbāsi Dynasty which played such a notable part in Islamic history. In his case the promise made in verse 70 was amply fulfilled. In the case of all prisoners, if there was any good in their hearts, their very fight against Islam and their capture led to their being blessed with Islam. Thus does Allah’s Plan work in a marvellous way, and evolve good out of seeming evil.


1237. This is a consolation to the prisoners of war. In spite of their previous hostility, Allah will forgive them in His mercy if there was any good in their hearts, and confer upon them a far higher gift than anything they have ever lost. This gift in its highest sense would be the blessing of Islam, but even in a material sense, there was great good fortune awaiting them.

Note how comprehensive is Allah’s care. He encourages and strengthens the Muslims, at the same time condemning any baser motives that may have entered their minds. He consoles the prisoners of war and promises them better things if there is any good in them at all. And He offers comfort to those who have left their homes in His Cause, and knits them into closer fellowship with those who have helped them and sympathised with them.
71. But if they have
Treacherous designs against thee,
(O Messenger!), they have already
Been in treason against Allah,\textsuperscript{1238}
And so hath He given
(Thee) power over them.
And Allah is He who hath
(Full) knowledge and wisdom.

72. Those who believed,
And emigrated
And fought for the Faith,
With their property
And their persons,
In the Cause of Allah,
As well as those
Who gave (them) asylum\textsuperscript{1239}
And aid,—these are (all)
Friends and protectors,
One of another.
As to those who believed
But did not emigrate
Ye owe no duty
Of protection to them

\textsuperscript{1238}. If the kindness shown to them is abused by the prisoners of war when they are released, it is not a matter for discouragement to those who showed the kindness. Such persons have in their treachery shown already their treason to Allah, in that they took up arms against Allah's Prophet, and sought to blot out the pure worship of Allah. The punishment of defeat, which opened the eyes of some of their comrades, evidently did not open their eyes. But Allah knows all, and in His wisdom will order all things for the best. The Believers have done their duty in showing such clemency as they could in the circumstances of war. For them "Allah sufficeth" (viii. 62).

\textsuperscript{1239}. The reference is to the \textit{Muhājirīn} and the \textit{Ansār}, the Emigrants and the Helpers, the people who forsook their homes and adopted voluntary exile from Makkah in company with their beloved Leader, and their good friends in Madinah, who gave them asylum and every kind of assistance, moral and material. Under the magnetic personality of the Holy Prophet these two groups became like blood-brothers, and they were so treated in matters of inheritance during the period when they were cut off from their kith and kin.
Until they emigrate;\(^{1240}\)
But if they seek
Your aid in religion,
It is your duty
To help them,
Except against a people
With whom ye have
A treaty of mutual alliance.\(^{1241}\)
And (remember) Allah
Seeth all that ye do.

73. The Unbelievers are
Protectors, one of another:
Unless ye do this.
(Protect each other),
There would be
Tumult and oppression
On earth, and great mischief.\(^{1242}\)

74. Those who believe,
And emigrate,
And fight for the Faith,
In the Cause of Allah,

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\(^{1240}\) The Believers (Muslims) were entitled to all assistance in matters of religion. But if they were not strong enough to suffer voluntary exile on behalf of the Cause and make the personal sacrifices which their more ardent brethren in faith made, they could not reasonably ask for political or military assistance or protection.

\(^{1241}\) If a community suffers voluntary exile on account of persecution and oppression, and some of its weaker brethren stay behind, holding fast to faith but not prepared for the higher sacrifice, the exiles have still a duty to help their weaker brethren in matters of religion. The exiles, being at open war against the State which oppressed them, would be free to fight against such State. But if the weaker brethren are in a State in mutual alliance with the Community, the Community cannot in honour interfere with that State, whether it is Muslim or not. Presumably the alliance implies that the grievances of the weaker brethren will be redressed by the State itself. But it is not honourable to embarrass your own ally.

\(^{1242}\) Evil consorts with evil. The good have all the more reason for drawing together and not only living in mutual harmony, but being ready at all times to protect each other. Otherwise the world will be given over to aggressions by unscrupulous people, and the good will fail in their duty to establish Allah’s Peace and to strengthen all the forces of truth and righteousness.
1243. Believers who make all sacrifices in the Cause of Allah have given the best possible proof of their Faith by their actions. They have loved Allah much, and much will be forgiven them. What they sacrificed was, perhaps, judged by universal standards, of small value, but its value will be estimated by the precious love behind it, and its reward will be of no ordinary kind. It will not be a reward in the ordinary sense at all, for a reward is given once for all. It will be a provision which last for ever, and is on the most generous scale.

1244. Those who come into the fold last are none the less brethren in the fullest acceptation of the term. But any special provisions made in the special circumstances of the first martyrs for the Cause will not of course apply to them as the special circumstances which made them necessary have ceased to exist. See next note.

1245. The Book of Allah, i.e., the Eternal Decree, the Preserved Tablet (lxxv. 22). Blood-relationship and its rights and duties do not depend on special circumstances of a temporary nature. Any temporary rights of mutual inheritance established between the early Emigrants and Helpers (n. 1239) would not apply after the revelation of this verse any more.

As well as those
Who give (them) asylum
And aid,—these are (all)
In very truth the Believers:
For them is the forgiveness
Of sins and a provision
Most generous. 1243

75. And those who
Accept Faith subsequently, 1244
And emigrate,
And fight for the Faith
In your company,—
They are of you.
But kindred by blood
Have prior rights
Against each other
In the Book of Allah. 1245
Verily Allah is well-acquainted
With all things.

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