

203 And remember Allāh during the appointed days.^a Then whoever hastens off in two days, it is no sin for him; and whoever stays behind, it is no sin for him,^b for one who keeps his duty. And keep your duty to Allāh, and know that you will be gathered together to Him.

وَ اذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ فِيْ اَيّٰمِهٖ مَّعْدُوْدٰتٍ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِيْ يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا اِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَاَخَّرَ فَلَا اِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ لِمَنِ اتَّقٰى وَ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَ اعْلَمُوْا اَنَّكُمْ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

204 And of men is he whose speech about the life of this world pleases thee, and he calls Allāh to witness as to that which is in his heart, yet he is the most violent of adversaries.^a

وَ مِنْ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللّٰهَ عَلَىٰ مَا فِيْ قَلْبِهٖ وَ هُوَ اَكْبَرُ الْخٰصِمِ ﴿٣٤﴾

205 And when he holds authority, he makes effort in the land to cause mischief in it and destroy tilth and offspring; and Allāh loves not mischief.

وَ اِذَا تَوَلّٰى سَعٰى فِي الْاَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيْهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَ اللّٰهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفٰسَادَ ﴿٣٥﴾

206 And when it is said to him, Be careful of thy duty to Allāh, pride carries him off to sin — so hell is sufficient for him. And certainly evil is the resting-place.^a

وَ اِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللّٰهَ اخَذَتْهُ الْعِصْرَةُ بِالْاِثْمِ فَحَسْبُهَا جَهَنَّمُ وَ لَيْسَ الْبِهَادُ ﴿٣٦﴾

207 And of men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allāh. And Allāh is Compassionate to the servants.

وَ مِنْ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّشْرِيْ نَفْسَهُ لِبِئْسَ اٰتٍ بَدَا وَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ وَ اللّٰهُ سَرُوْفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿٣٧﴾

203a. The appointed days are the three days following the day of Sacrifice, and are called the days of *Tashriq*.

203b. Ordinarily pilgrims leave on the afternoon of the last day of *Tashriq* days, but they are allowed to leave on the evening of the second day.

204a. Various conjectures have been made as to the particular person meant, but the best authorities agree that no particular person is meant (Rz). The context also shows that the words relate to mischief-makers, who assured the Prophet of their sympathy with him, but who were really waiting for an opportunity to inflict loss upon the Muslims.

206a. *Mihād* (resting-place) means a *cradle*, and also *what a man has prepared for himself* (LL). Both these significances illustrate the nature of hell. It is a thing which a man prepares for himself; and for a new spiritual growth in the Hereafter in the case of those who retarded that growth here by their engrossment in the world or by pursuing an evil course, it serves the same purpose as the cradle for a child. Elsewhere hell is called an *umm* or *mother* (101:9).

208 O you who believe, enter into complete peace^a and follow not the footsteps of the devil. Surely he is your open enemy.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً
وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ
عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾

209 But if you slip after clear arguments have come to you, then know that Allāh is Mighty, Wise.

فَإِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْكُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ
فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٠٩﴾

210 They wait for naught but that Allāh should come to them in the shadows of the clouds with angels, and the matter has (already) been decided. And to Allāh are (all) matters returned.^a

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ
مِنَ الْغَمَامِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ
رَبِّهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَرَجِعُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٢١٠﴾

SECTION 26: Trials and Tribulations

211 Ask of the Children of Israel how many a clear sign We gave them! And whoever changes the favour of Allāh after it has come to him, then surely Allāh is Severe in requiting (evil).^a

سَأَلْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ كَمَا آتَيْنَاهُمُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا
بَيِّنَاتٍ وَمَنْ يَبْدِلْ عِزَّةَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ
مَا جَاءَتْهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢١١﴾

208a. Here the Muslims are told that Truth cannot be established unless they work for it whole-heartedly. The word *silm* means *peace* as well as *submission* (R). In fact, complete submission to God is synonymous with complete peace.

210a. The coming of Allāh stands for the execution of His command or the coming of the threatened punishment for those who wanted to annihilate Islām. *The matter has already been decided*, we are told, because it was repeatedly made clear in the earliest revelations that all opposition to Islām would be brought to naught. Elsewhere it is said: "Await they aught, but that the angels should come to them or that thy Lord's command should come to pass". And it is added: "So the evil of what they did afflicted them and that which they mocked encompassed them" (16:33, 34). The same phrase is used to indicate the execution of the Divine punishment in 59:2, where the Jews, who were ultimately banished on account of their mischiefs, are spoken of: "...while they thought that their fortresses would defend them against Allāh, but Allāh came to them from a place they expected not". In the *shadows of the clouds* there is a reference to the coming down of rain in the battle of Badr (8:11) which was one of the causes of the destruction of the enemy.

211a. By *the favour of Allāh* is here meant the *Qur'an* and its *change* implies its *rejection*. Compare the buying of error for guidance in v. 16 and elsewhere. The clear signs which were given to the Israelites include the prophecies of the advent of the Prophet, which were repeatedly made known to them through their prophets, as well as the clear arguments of the truth of the Prophet's mission, which were clearly convincing when compared with the arguments they possessed of the truth of their own prophets.

212 The life of this world is made to seem fair to those who disbelieve, and they mock those who believe. And those who keep their duty will be above them on the Day of Resurrection. And Allāh gives to whom He pleases without measure.^a

رَبِّينَ لِلدُّنْيَا وَكَفَرُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَ
يَسْخَرُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ
اتَّقُوا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ
مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣١﴾

213 Mankind is a single nation.^a So Allāh raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the Book with truth, that it might judge between people concerning that in which they differed.^b And none but the very people who were given it differed about it after clear arguments had come to them, envying one another.^c So Allāh

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ
النَّبِيِّنَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ
مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ
فِيمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا
الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ
بِغَيِّبَاتٍ بَيْنَهُمْ فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا أَلَمْ

212a. The Emigrants, having left everything behind and being thus reduced to the last straits of poverty, were mocked by the wealthy Jews, whose trade of lending money at usurious rates brought to them the riches of other peoples. The concluding words not only show that moral worth which raised a man above another did not depend on wealth, but also contain a prophetic reference to the time when those who were mocked at on account of their poverty would have abundance even of the provisions of this life.

213a. The word *kāna* does not necessarily refer to the past, but is often used in the Holy Qur'ān to convey the idea of a general truth, or to express what is like an attribute of a thing (R). *Kān al-insānu kafūr-an* (17:67) does not mean *man was ungrateful* but *man is ever ungrateful* or that the quality of ungratefulness is met with in him very frequently. Similarly, the Divine attributes are often expressed by the use of *kāna*, as in *kān-Allāhu 'Azīz-an Ḥakīm-an* (48:7) which means not that *Allāh was Mighty, Wise*, but that *Allāh is ever Mighty, Wise*; or *kān-Allāhu Ghafūr-an Raḥīm-an* (48:14) which means *Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful*. Hence the significance adopted. *The oneness of humanity* is a truth on which the Qur'ān lays the greatest stress. They are sometimes told that they have all been "created of a single being" (4:1); again that they are all descended from the same parents (49:13); still again that they are as it were dwellers in one home, having the same earth as a resting-place and the same heaven as a canopy (v. 22). It thus lays down the principle of the oneness of humanity in the clearest words. Hence also the conclusion that prophets were raised among all nations which is conveyed in the words that follow.

213b. A universal law of Divine Revelation has been disclosed in these words. As all people are a single nation, God, too, has been revealing Himself to all. This Law of Divine Revelation has, we are told, found expression through prophets, to every one of whom a revealed Book was given to show them the right way.

213c. The universal law given expression to in this part of the verse is that corruption followed guidance. As time passed on, the very people to whom the Book was given so that they might follow it, went against it. Thus, though a prophet had been raised in every

has guided by His will those who believe to the truth about which they differed.^d And Allāh guides whom He pleases to the right path.

214 Or do you think that you will enter the Garden,^a while there has not yet befallen you the like of what befell those who have passed away before you. Distress and affliction befell them and they were shaken violently, so that the Messenger and those who believed with him said: When will the help of Allāh come? Now surely the help of Allāh is nigh!^b

215 They ask thee as to what they should spend. Say: Whatever wealth you spend, it is for the parents and the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer. And

اٰخْتَلَفُوْا فِيْهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِاٰذِنَةِ وَاللّٰهِ
يَهْدِيْ مَنْ يَّشَاءُ اِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿١١٣﴾

اَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ اَنْ تَدْخُلُوْا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ
مَثَلُ الَّذِيْنَ حَكَمُوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَّا سَأَلُوْهُمُ
الْبَاسُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَرَزَقُوْا حَتّٰى يَقُوْلُوْا
الرَّسُوْلُ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهُ مَتٰى نَصُرَ
اللّٰهُ اَكْرَهًا نَصَرَ اللّٰهُ قَرِيْبٌ ﴿١١٤﴾

يَسْأَلُوْنَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُوْنَ هُوَ قُلْ مَا اَنْفَقْتُمْ
مِّنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلّٰهِ الدِّيْنُ وَالْاَقْرَبِيْنَ وَالْيَتٰمٰى
وَالْمَسْكِيْنَ وَالْبَنِي السَّبِيْلِ وَمَا تَقَعَلُوْا

nation, yet every nation had forsaken the right way, and acted against the very directions which had been given to it. Thus differences again arose, which necessitated the advent of another prophet. Hence it was necessary to raise a prophet who should show the right way to all nations, and this is what is stated in the words that follow.

213d. Allāh's guiding those who believe refers to the raising of the Prophet Muḥammad, through whom the Muslims were guided to the right path, to the truth, regarding which differences had arisen among all people. If a prophet was needed by every nation to settle its own differences, one was surely now needed to settle the differences of the various nations, for the truth which had been shown to different nations by different prophets had again become obscured. Thus among the different national religions of the world, Islām occupies the position of an international religion.

214a. The Garden stands for triumph in this life and Paradise in the next. The concluding words of the verse, *the help of Allāh is nigh*, make the reference to the triumph of the cause of Truth very clear. Truth will only triumph when the upholders of the cause of Truth make sacrifices for it and undergo the severest trials for its sake.

214b. This verse inculcates faith and perseverance under the hardest trials and is an indication of the Prophet's own unequalled endurance and faith. It refers not only to the great trials and the hardships which the Muslims had already suffered at Makkah and the privations which they had to undergo in their exile, but more particularly to the hardships which were yet in store for them, and which they could clearly see in the massing of all forces that could be used to annihilate them. As regards the trials and tribulations of the former prophets, the case of Jesus Christ crying "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani" on the cross was the most recent in the history of prophets.

whatever good you do, Allāh surely is Knower of it.^a

مَنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٠﴾

216 Fighting is enjoined on you, though it is disliked by you; and it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you; and Allāh knows while you know not.^a

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾

SECTION 27: Miscellaneous Questions

217 They ask thee about fighting in the sacred month. Say: Fighting in it

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْقِتَالِ فِيهِ

215a. As the fund for the defence of the Muslim society was also utilized for the help of the parents of some and relatives of others, and the fatherless children and the poor men who had not the means to quit their homes, who were still being oppressed at Makkah by the unbelievers, and for the wayfarer who had no security, the Muslims are told that what they spent on wars was really for the good of their own helpless relatives and brethren.

216a. Let those ponder who think that the Muslims fought for plunder! They were too weak to carry on the struggle against the mighty forces that were bent upon their destruction, and they disliked the war. Only a diseased brain could come to the conclusion that the Prophet "had now determined to resort to the sword to accomplish what his preaching had failed to do". Where were the military forces with which the Prophet was going to convert the proud and warring Arabs who had not listened to his word? His first army at Badr, when the Quraysh of Makkah were marching upon Madinah with a thousand of their most experienced warriors, was 313, including boys of thirteen years of age. Could any sensible man say that the Prophet was now going to convert the hundreds of thousands of Arab warriors with his 313 unequipped and inexperienced followers? And do not the very words of the verse give the lie to this most irrational conclusion? A picture of distresses and afflictions to which the few converts to Islām were subjected is drawn in v. 214. They were few in numbers, poor, exiled, and distressed, yet it became inevitable that they should fight in self-defence or they would be destroyed. It was their utter weakness and the enormous disparity of numbers that made them dislike the fighting. And I may add that not a single instance is recorded in the whole of the Prophet's history showing the conversion of an unbeliever under pressure of the sword, not a single case is met with of an expedition undertaken to convert a people. If ever in the world's history a people were compelled to fight in the defence of a great cause, no nobler instance of it could be given than that of the Prophet with his few faithful followers braving the whole of Arabia, with enemies on all sides who had taken up the sword to annihilate them. If ever there was a just cause for war, there never was one more just than the cause of humanity at large, the combined cause of the Christian church, of the Jewish synagogue, of the Sabian's house of worship, and of the Muslim mosque, which the early Muslims set before themselves (22:40). Read along with this verse what is stated in v. 190 and 22:39, and the conditions under which this injunction was given will become clear. It was an injunction to fight against those who took up the sword first and turned the Muslims out of their homes. It was an injunction to fight to end persecution and to establish religious freedom, and to save the houses of worship of every religion from being ruined.

is a grave (offence). And hindering (men) from Allāh's way and denying Him and the Sacred Mosque and turning its people out of it, are still graver with Allāh; and persecution is graver than slaughter. And they will not cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can.^a And whoever of you turns back from his religion, then he dies while an unbeliever — these it is whose works go for nothing in this world and the Hereafter. And they are the companions of the Fire: therein they will abide.^b

218 Those who believed and those who fled (their homes) and strove hard in Allāh's way — these surely

قُلْ قَاتِلُوا فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَنْ سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ وَكَفْرًا بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ وَإِخْرَاجَ
أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَالْفِتْنَةُ
أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ
حَتَّى يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَنْ دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوا
وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَبِمَتَّ وَ
هُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي
الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢١٧﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَ
جَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ يَرْجُونَ

217a. The opening words of this verse prohibit fighting in the sacred months (the reasons for which are given in v. 189), except by way of reprisal (see v. 194). But at the same time the unbelievers are told that the wrongs they inflicted on the Muslims, never caring for the sacred months and the sacred territory, were worse than slaughter. Then we are told that the unbelievers took up the sword to force the Muslims back into unbelief and that they were determined to carry on the war until they gained this end. Note the words *they will not cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can*, which give the lie direct to the assertion that the Muslims started war to convert the unbelievers by force.

217b. The persons spoken of in this passage are the apostates. A wrong impression exists among non-Muslims, and among many Muslims as well, that the Holy Qur'ān requires those who apostatize from Islām to be put to death. This is not true. One Christian writer has gone so far as to misconstrue the word *fa-yamut* as meaning *he shall be put to death*, while even a beginner knows that the significance of these words is *then he dies*. What is stated here is that the opponents of Islām exerted themselves to their utmost to turn back the Muslims from their faith by their cruel persecutions, and therefore if a Muslim actually went back to unbelief he would be a loser in this life as well as in the next, because the desertion of Islām would not only deprive him of the spiritual advantages which he could obtain by remaining a Muslim, but also of the physical advantages which must accrue to the Muslims through the ultimate triumph of Islām. Neither here nor anywhere else in the Holy Qur'ān is there even a hint at the infliction of capital or any other punishment on the apostate.

The only report which records a case of death being inflicted on apostates is that of the party of 'Ukl, who, after professing Islām, feigned that the climate of Madinah was insalubrious, and, being told to go to the place where the herds of camels belonging to the state were grazed, murdered the keepers and drove the herds along with them. The facts of the case clearly show that capital punishment in this case was not inflicted for change of faith, but on account of the crime of murder and dacoity. This case is generally cited by the

hope for the mercy of Allāh. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

رَحِمَتَ اللّٰهِ وَاللّٰهُ عَفُوٌّ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿٢١٨﴾

219 They ask thee about intoxicants^a and games of chance.^b Say: In

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ

commentators under 5:33, which speaks of the punishment of dacoits. There is no other case showing that the punishment of death was ever inflicted on apostasy from Islām.

It may, however, be added that after the first eighteen months of their residence at Madinah, the Muslims were in a state of constant warfare with the Quraish and the Arab tribes, and apostasy, under these circumstances, meant the desertion of the cause of the Muslims and joining their enemies. Even if death had been prescribed for the apostates, it would have been on the ground of their joining the enemy forces, not on the ground of change of religion. In the matter of religion, the Qur'ān gives perfect freedom to everyone to adopt whatever religion he likes: "Say: The Truth is from your Lord; so let him who please believe, and let him who please disbelieve" (18:29).

219a. "Khamr means *wine* or *grape-wine*. ... It has a common application to *intoxicating expressed juice of anything* (Q, T) or *any intoxicating thing that clouds or obscures* (lit., *covers*) *the intellect*, as some say ... and the general application is the more correct, because *khamr* was forbidden when there was not in El-Madinah any *khamr* of grapes" (LL). It will thus be seen that the word *khamr* includes all intoxicating substances, and therefore I make a departure in translating it as *intoxicants*, and not as *wine* or *intoxicating liquors*. The prohibition of intoxicants in connection with the mention of war shows that Islām wanted to inspire true courage into its followers and disliked the reckless daring which a man shows under the influence of intoxicating liquors and which has so often led to acts of butchery in wars. The prohibition spoken of here as regards both intoxicating liquors and games of chance is made plainer in 5:90: "O you who believe, intoxicants and games of chance ... are only an uncleanness, the devil's work; so shun it that you may succeed".

The change which these simple words brought about in Arabia will always remain a riddle to the social reformer. The constant fighting of Arab tribes, one against the other, had made the habit of drink second nature to the Arab, and wine was one of the very few objects which could furnish a topic to the mind of an Arab poet. Intoxicating liquors were the chief feature of their feasts, and the habit of drink was not looked upon as an evil, nor had there ever been a temperance movement among them, the Jews and the Christians being themselves addicted to this evil. Human experience with regard to the habit of drink is that of all evils it is the most difficult to be uprooted. Yet but one word of the Holy Qur'ān was sufficient to blot out all traces of it from among a whole nation, and afterwards from the whole of the country as it came over to Islām. History cannot present another instance of a wonderful transformation of this magnitude brought about so easily, yet so thoroughly. It may also be added here that Sale's remark that "the moderate use of wine is allowed" and that only drinking to excess is prohibited, according to some, is absolutely without foundation. The companions of the Prophet never made use of a drop of wine after the prohibition was made known, and the Prophet is reported to have said: "A small quantity of anything of which a large quantity is intoxicating is prohibited" (AD. 25:5). Nor does Kf say what Sale attributes to him, for the words which give rise to Sale's misconception deal with, not wine, but another preparation regarding which there is a difference of opinion among the jurists.

219b. The original word is *maisir*, derived from *yasara*, meaning *he divided anything into parts or portions*. *Maisir* was a game of hazard with the Arabs, and in the legal language of Islām includes all *games of chance*. Some derive it from *yusr*, meaning *ease* because of the ease with which wealth could be attained by it. Wine and gambling

both of them is a great sin and (some) advantage for men, and their sin is greater than their advantage. And they ask thee as to what they should spend. Say: What you can spare. Thus does Allāh make clear to you the messages that you may ponder,

فِيهِمَا أَنْتُمْ كَٰبِرُونَ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِنَّهُمْ
أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَّفْعِهَا ط وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ ط
قُلِ الْعَفْوَ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آٰلَاتِ
عَلَّامَاتٍ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١١٩﴾

220 On this world and the Hereafter. And they ask thee concerning the orphans.^a Say: To set right their (affairs) is good; and if you mix with them, they are your brethren. And Allāh knows him who makes mischief from him who sets right. And if Allāh pleased, He would have made matters difficult for you.^b Surely Allāh is Mighty, Wise.

فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآٰخِرَةِ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتٰمٰى
قُلْ اِصْلَاحُهُمْ خَيْرٌ وَّ اِنْ تَخَاطَبُوهُم فَاِخْوَانُكُمْ
وَ اللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ ط وَّلَوْ شَاءَ
اللّٰهُ لَاعْتَضَبَكُمُ وَّ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٢٠﴾

221 And marry not the idolatresses until they believe; and certainly a believing maid is better than an idolatress even though she please you. Nor give (believing women) in marriage to idolaters until they believe, and certainly a believing slave is better than an idolater, even though he

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكٰتِ حَتّٰى يُؤْمِنَنَّ وَّلَا مَنَةً
مُّؤْمِنَةً حَتّٰى يَخْبِرَنَّ مِنْ مَّشْرِكٰتِهِنَّ وَّلَوْ اَعْجَبَتْكُمْ
وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتّٰى يُؤْمِنُوْا وَّلَعَبَدُ
مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَّلَوْ اَعْجَبَكُمْ اُولٰٓئِكَ
يَدْعُوْنَ اِلَى السَّآءِ وَّ اللّٰهُ يَدْعُوْا اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ

are both declared in 5:91 as causing “enmity and hatred among you”, and a society the members of which are imbued with feelings of hatred and enmity towards each other could never prosper.

220a. In consequence of the fighting, it was inevitable that many children would be left orphans, so an injunction regarding the care of orphans is added here. But it may be added that the earliest revelations of the Holy Qur’ān always speak of the orphans, the needy, and the slave in the kindest words, and lay special stress on helping and feeding them. See 90:11–16 and other places.

220b. The word used here is *ukhālīqū-hum* which carries a double significance: (1) *Mix or associate with them*, (2) *Join with them in their affairs*, i.e., become co-partners with them. So orphans are not to be treated as a separate class, and they should not be treated as living on the charity of others, which would develop an inferiority complex in them; they must be treated as brethren, as plainly stated here. And further, co-partnership with an orphan is expressly allowed here, because when strict injunctions were given regarding the safeguarding of orphans’ property, some men thought that it was a sin to have anything to do with it (Rz). The concluding words of the verse show that the object in allowing co-partnership with them is simply to facilitate matters. If a person aims at mischief, he cannot escape God’s punishment.

please you.^a These invite to the Fire and Allāh invites to the Garden and to forgiveness by His will^b and He makes clear His messages to men that they may be mindful.

وَالْمَعْفِرَةِ بِأَذْنِهِ وَيَسِّرُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

SECTION 28: Divorce

222 And they ask thee about menstruation.^a Say: It is harmful;^b so keep aloof from women during menstrual discharge and go not near them until they are clean. But when they have cleansed themselves, go in to them as Allāh has commanded you. Surely Allāh loves those who turn

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَذَىٌّ
فَاعْتَرِلُوا الْبَسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرُبُوهُنَّ
حَتَّى يَطْهُرْنَ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ
حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَابِينَ

221a. The questions dealt with in this section arose in connection with the war. The previous verse speaks of the orphans whose numbers were no doubt to be greatly increased by the wars. This verse deals with intermarriages with idolaters. The war with the idolaters, who were now not a people differing in religious views only but enemies bent upon the destruction of the Muslims, had brought new conditions into existence. Intermarriages with those who were warring upon the Muslims could have led to serious troubles and numerous complications. A reference to 60:10 will show that even the marital relations already existing with these people had to be ended on account of the war. Hence the prohibition of such intermarriages. The subject of intermarriages with non-Muslims generally is fully dealt with in 5:5b.

221b. The reference in these words is not only to the religious beliefs of the two parties, the idolater and the believer in the Unity of God, but also to the constant struggle which would be going on in such a household. The outlook on life of the Muslim and the idolater are poles asunder and the harmony and the mutual love between husband and wife which marriage aims at can never be attained. Moreover such a union would mean ruination of the offspring which would have to be brought up in such an atmosphere.

222a. Just as war made many children orphans, it made many women widows, but questions relating to widowhood and divorce being somewhat analogous, the two questions are treated together in this section and the two that follow. In fact war conditions also necessitated divorce in certain cases, for which see 60:10. The subject of monthly courses of women comes in as a preliminary to the question of divorce, for which see 65:1. As the answer shows, the question relates to relations with women during the monthly courses.

222b. *Adh-an* signifies a slight evil, slighter than what is termed *qarar* (LL), or anything that causes a slight harm (LL). It is not, however, the menstrual discharge that is called harmful here but having sexual relations while the woman is in that condition. The Jewish law contains a similar prohibition in Lev.18:19 and 20:18, though Jewish practice rendered it necessary that the separation between husband and wife should be complete. In Islām, it is limited to the cessation of sexual intercourse.

much (to Him), and He loves those who purify themselves.

وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

223 Your wives are a tilth for you, so go in to your tilth when you like,^a and send (good) beforehand for yourselves. And keep your duty to Allāh, and know that you will meet Him. And give good news to the believers.

رَسَائِلُكُمْ حَرْتٌ لَكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرَثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ وَوَقِدْ مَوَاقِفَكُمْ وَأَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَعَلِمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلْقَوْنَ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

224 And make not Allāh by your oaths a hindrance to your doing good and keeping your duty and making peace between men.^a And Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَأُصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٣٣﴾

225 Allāh will not call you to account for what is vain in your oaths, but He will call you to account for what your hearts have earned. And Allāh is Forgiving, Forbearing.^a

لَا يَزِيدُكُمْ اللَّهُ بِأَلْعَابِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَزِيدُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبْتُمْ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٣٤﴾

223a. *Annā* means either *matā*, i.e., *when*, or *kaifa*, i.e., *how* (AH). As the previous verse prohibits certain relations when the woman has her courses on, this one states that keeping that prohibition in view, a man may go in to his wife when he likes and as he likes.

The Qur'ān contains directions for the physical as well as the moral and spiritual welfare of man, and it deals with the most delicate questions in language unapproached in its purity in any other law dealing with similar questions. Many of the phrases dealing with the delicate relations of the sexes were introduced by the Holy Qur'an itself, and its literature is therefore one which brings no shudder to the fair reader, unlike many of the descriptions contained in the Bible. The comparison of the woman to the tilth is simply to show that it is she who brings up the children and through whom is made the character of the man, and to show that the real object of conjugal relations is not simply the satisfaction of carnal desires.

224a. This verse introduces another preliminary to the subject of divorce. *Ilā'* was a way of temporarily putting off the wife, for which see 226a, and this was effected by an oath in Allāh's name not to go in to one's wife, the result of which was that the husband considered himself free from all marital obligations. The first step to bring about a reform in the relations of husband and wife was that this practice was abolished. It is in reference to this that the taking of oaths against the doing of good to others is prohibited. The fulfilment of marital obligations is thus referred to as *the doing of good and observance of duty and making peace between men*. But the subject is generalized and the taking of all oaths to forbid oneself the doing of good or fulfilment of obligations is prohibited.

225a. By *vain oaths* are meant *unintentional* or *thoughtless oaths* in ordinary conversation, and by *what the hearts have earned* is meant *an oath intentionally taken*.

226 Those who swear that they will not go in to their wives^a should wait four months; then if they go back, Allāh is surely Forgiving, Merciful.^b

الَّذِينَ يَذُكَّرُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ
أَشْهُرٍ فَإِنْ فَاءُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

227 And if they resolve on a divorce,^a Allāh is surely Hearing, Knowing.

وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا الطَّلَاقَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

228 And the divorced women should keep themselves in waiting for three courses.^a And it is not lawful

وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ
وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتَسِبْنَ مَا حَلَّ لِلَّهِ فِي

226a. *Īlā'* signifies an oath that one shall not go in to one's wife. In the days of ignorance the Arabs used to take such oaths frequently, and as the period of suspension was not limited, the wife was compelled sometimes to pass her whole life in bondage, having neither the position of a wife nor that of a divorced woman free to marry elsewhere. The Qur'an declares that if the husband does not reassert conjugal relations within four months, the wife shall be divorced. Cases in which husbands desert wives, having neither conjugal relations with them nor divorcing them, are similar to the case of *ilā'*, and must be dealt with practically as amounting to *ilā'*, so that after four months the wife should be set free if she wants a divorce.

226b. By *going back* is meant the re-establishing of conjugal relations.

227a. *Ṭalāq* is an infinitive noun from *ṭalaqat*, said of a woman, meaning *she was left free to go her way or become separated from her husband*, and signifies the dissolving of the marriage tie (LL). The subject of divorce, which is introduced here, is dealt with in this and the following two sections, and further on in the 4th, 33rd and 65th chapters.

Divorce is one of the institutions of Islām regarding which much misconception prevails, so much so that even the Islamic law as administered in the courts, is not free from these misconceptions. The chief features of the Islamic law of divorce, as dealt with in the Holy Qur'an, are discussed in vv. 228–233 and 236; the procedure is laid down in 4:35, while further questions are dealt with in 33:49 and 65:1–7. The Islamic law has many points of advantage as compared with both the Jewish and Christian laws as formulated in Deut. and Matt. The chief feature of improvement is that the wife can claim a divorce according to the Islamic law, neither Moses nor Christ conferring that right on the woman, though it is to be regretted that this very feature is the one that is not recognized now even in some Muslim countries. Another feature of the Islamic law of divorce is that it is elastic and does not strictly limit the causes of divorce. In fact, if the civilized nations of Europe and America, who own the same religion, are at the same stage of advancement and have an affinity of feelings on most social and moral questions, cannot agree as to the causes of divorce, how could a universal religion like Islām, which was meant for all ages and all countries, for people in the lowest grade of civilization as well as those at the top, limit those causes, which must vary with the varying conditions of humanity and society?

It may also be added here that, though divorce is allowed by Islām if sufficient reason exists, yet the right is to be exercised under exceptional circumstances. The Qur'an itself approves of the Prophet insisting on Zaid not divorcing his wife notwithstanding a dissension of a sufficiently long standing (33:37). And the Prophet's memorable words, *of all things which have been permitted divorce is the most hated by Allāh* (AD. 13:3), will always act as a strong check on any loose interpretation of the words of the Holy Qur'an.

228a. The period of waiting, or *'iddat*, forms the first condition in the Islamic law of divorce. But for cases in which marriage is not consummated, no period of waiting is necessary; see 33:49.

for them to conceal that which Allāh has created in their wombs, if they believe in Allāh and the Last Day. And their husbands have a better right to take them back in the meanwhile if they wish for reconciliation.^b And women have rights similar to those against them in a just manner,^c and men are a degree above them.^d And Allāh is Mighty, Wise.

أَسْرَحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَبَعُولَتِهِنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرُدْوَتِهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا
إِصْلَاحًا وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

SECTION 29: Divorce

229 Divorce may be (pronounced) twice;^a then keep (them) in good fel-

الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَيْنِ فَإِمْسَاكَهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحُهُنَّ

228b. These words give a clear right to the parties to effect a reconciliation and re-establish conjugal relations within the period of waiting. No special procedure is necessary for this but both the divorce and the reconciliation must take place in the presence of witnesses (IM. 10:5). If, however, the *'iddat* is over and no reconciliation has been effected, the relation of husband and wife can be re-established by re-marriage, which right is given to the parties by v. 232.

The period of waiting is really a period of temporary separation during which conjugal relations may be re-established as clearly stated in the words that follow. This period of temporary separation serves as a check upon divorce. If there is any love in the union, its pangs would assert themselves during the period of temporary separation, bringing about a reconciliation, and the differences would sink into insignificance. This is the best safeguard against a misuse of divorce, for in this way only such unions would be ended by divorce as really deserve to be ended, being devoid of the faintest spark of love. A conjugal union without love is a body without a soul, and the sooner it is ended the better.

228c. The rights of women against their husbands are here stated to be similar to those which the husbands have against their wives. The statement must, no doubt, have caused a stir in a society which never recognized any rights for the woman. The change in this respect was really a revolutionizing one, for the Arabs hitherto regarded women as mere chattels. Women were now given a position equal in all respects to that of men, for they were declared to have rights similar to those which were exercised against them. This declaration brought about a revolution not only in Arabia but in the whole world, for the equality of the rights of women with those of men was never previously recognized by any nation or any reformer. The woman could no longer be discarded at the will of her "lord", but she could either claim equality as a wife or demand a divorce.

228d. The statement that "men are a degree above them" does not nullify the rights asserted in the previous passage. The words are added simply to show that superior authority to run the house must be given to either the husband or the wife, and it is given to the husband for reasons stated in 4:34; see 4:34a.

229a. The divorce spoken of here is the revocable divorce of v. 228, after which a reconciliation may be effected in the waiting period. In the days of ignorance a man used to divorce his wife and take her back within the prescribed time, even though he

lowship or let (them) go with kindness.^b And it is not lawful for you to take any part of what you have given them,^c unless both fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allāh. Then if you fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allāh, there is no blame on them for what she gives up to become free thereby.^d

بِإِحْسَانٍ وَلَا يَجِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا
 أَنْتُمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُعْطَا حُدُودَ
 اللَّهِ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَلَا
 جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ طِئْسَتْ
 حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ

might do this a thousand times. Islām reformed this practice by allowing a revocable divorce on two occasions only, so that the period of waiting in each of these two cases might serve as a period of temporary separation during which conjugal relations could be re-established. As shown in 228b, even re-marriage of the same parties is allowed after the lapse of the waiting period.

229b. The husband must make his choice after the second divorce either to retain the wife permanently or to bring about a final separation. The object of a true marriage union is indicated in the simple words *keep them in good fellowship*. Where the union is characterized by quarrels and dissensions instead of good fellowship, and two experiences of a temporary separation show that there is no real love in the union, and good fellowship is therefore entirely absent; the only remedy that remains is to let the woman *go with kindness*. It is both in the interests of the husband and the wife and in the interests of society itself that such a union should be brought to a termination, so that the parties may seek a fresh union. But even in taking this final step the woman must be treated kindly.

229c. The full payment of the dowry to the woman is another condition relating to the Islamic law of divorce, and it serves as a very strong check upon the husband in resorting to unnecessary divorce.

229d. These words give the wife a right to claim a divorce. It is one of the distinguishing characteristics of Islām that it gives the wife the right to claim a divorce, if she is willing to forgo the whole or part of her dowry. The case of Jamilah, wife of Thābit Ibn Qais, is one that is reported in numerous reports of the highest authority. Here it was the wife who was dissatisfied with the marriage. There was not even a quarrel, as she plainly stated in her complaint to the Prophet: "I do not find any fault with him on account of his morals (i.e., his treatment) or his religion". She only hated him. And the Prophet had her divorced on condition that she returned to her husband the orchard which he had made over to her as her dowry (B. 68:12). It is even said that the husband's love for the wife was as intense as her hatred for him (Rz). If, then, a woman could claim a divorce for no reason other than the unsuitableness of the match, she had certainly the right to claim one if there was ill-treatment on the part of the husband or any other satisfactory reason, and among the early Muslims it was an established right. Even now it is a right which is maintained in many Muslim countries. Technically such a divorce is called *Khul'*.

It will be noted that though this verse forms the basis of the law relating to *Khul'*, the words indicate an unwillingness on the part of both spouses to continue the marriage relation — *unless both fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allāh*. This is explained as meaning their inability to perform towards each other their marital obligations and to maintain good fellowship (B. 68:13). The reason for this, apparently, is that the passage follows one requiring a permanence of relationship that can no more

These are the limits of Allāh, so exceed them not; and whoever exceeds the limits of Allāh, these are the wrongdoers.

230 So if he divorces her (the third time),^a she shall not be lawful to him afterwards until she marries another husband. If he divorces her, there is no blame on them both if they return to each other (by marriage), if they think that they can keep within the limits of Allāh.^b And these are the limits of Allāh which He makes clear for a people who know.

حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٣٠﴾

فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ حَتَّى تَتَكَرَّرَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٠﴾

be broken when the husband has adopted this choice after a second divorce, so that the relation can only be broken if the wife finds it unbearable. Another reason seems to be that the woman is usually the last to be willing to break up the marriage relationship.

The words *if you fear* evidently refer to the properly constituted authorities and this shows that the authorities can interfere in the matter. Cases are actually on record in which a wrong done by an unjust divorce was mended by the authorities.

230a. The words refer to the “putting off with kindness” of the previous verse, and hence by *divorce* here is meant the irrevocable divorce pronounced a third time, i.e., after there has been a divorce and a restitution of conjugal rights twice.

230b. When the wife has been divorced twice, after each of which reconciliation has been effected and has failed, the third divorce becomes irrevocable, and the husband cannot remarry the divorced wife until she has been married elsewhere and divorced. The verse abolishes the immortal custom of *halālah*, or temporary marriage gone through with no other object than that of legalizing the divorced wife for the first husband, a custom prevalent in the days of Ignorance, but abolished by the Prophet, according to a report which speaks of his having cursed those who indulge in the evil practice (Tr. 9:25). There must be a genuine marriage and a genuine divorce.

This restriction makes the third divorce a very rare occurrence, and thus acts as another check against frequent divorce. Muir’s remarks as to the hardship which this rule involves not only for “the innocent wife” but also for the “innocent children”, for “however desirous the husband may be of undoing the wrong, the decision cannot be recalled”, are totally unjustified. The irrevocable divorce cannot be pronounced until a temporary separation has taken place twice and both experiences have shown that the marriage relationship cannot be continued. It is not simply by repeating the pronouncement of divorce thrice that the third pronouncement becomes irrevocable. A divorce should actually have taken place twice, followed each time by reconciliation, then and only then the third divorce becomes irrevocable. It would, in fact, be very rare. The case of Rukānah affords an illustration. He divorced his wife in the time of the Prophet thrice but this was counted as a single divorce, and he took back his wife by the Prophet’s order. Then he divorced her in the time of ‘Umar and reconciliation was again effected, and finally he divorced her in the time of ‘Uthmān (AD. 13:3).

231 And when you divorce women and they reach their prescribed time, then retain them in kindness or set them free with kindness and retain them not for injury^a so that you exceed the limits. And whoever does this, he indeed wrongs his own soul. And take not Allāh's messages for a mockery,^b and remember Allāh's favour to you, and that which He has revealed to you of the Book and the Wisdom, admonishing you thereby. And keep your duty to Allāh, and know that Allāh is the Knower of all things.

وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ
فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ
بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوا
وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ وَلَا
تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا وَالَّذِينَ هُزُوا
اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
وَالْحِكْمَةِ يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ وَالْتَفُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَأَطِيعُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

SECTION 30: Remarriage of Divorced Women and Widows

232 And when you divorce women and they end their term, prevent them not from marrying their husbands if they agree among themselves in a lawful manner.^a With this is admonished he among you who believes in

وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ
فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ
إِذَا تَرَاضَوْا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ذَلِكَ يُوعِظُ
بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ

231a. Hence, if the husband is proved to give injury to the wife, he cannot retain her, and she can claim a divorce. Injury to the wife may be of a general nature or one given with the object of compelling her to remit the whole or part of her dowry to obtain a divorce. This practice was resorted to by the pre-Islamic Arabs, and the words are meant to abolish the evil (Rz). It is for the judge to see that the husband is not taking undue advantage of his position. On the other hand, the husband is enjoined to show liberality to the divorced wife, and the judge would no doubt see that the injunctions of the Holy Book were observed. It is made clear in 4:35 that decision in matters of divorce rests with the judges appointed, not with the husband or the wife.

231b. The injunctions relating to the kind treatment of women must not be taken lightly, we are told here. Retaining women to cause them injury has already been declared to be a transgression and emphasis is now laid on the proper observance of these injunctions by stating that these are most serious matters relating to the welfare of society as a whole.

232a. It has already been stated that when a divorce is pronounced, the conjugal relations can be re-established within the period of waiting. Here it is stated that if the period of waiting has elapsed, even then the former husband can remarry the divorced wife. The sister of Ma'qil ibn Yasār was divorced by her husband and when the 'iddah was over, the husband again approached Ma'qil to give her in marriage to him. She was willing but Ma'qil did not agree. Then this verse was revealed (B. 65:ii, 40). Thus the

Allāh and the Last Day. This is more profitable for you and purer. And Allāh knows while you know not.

233 And mothers^a shall suckle their children for two whole years, for him who desires to complete the time of suckling. And their maintenance and their clothing must be borne by the father according to usage. No soul shall be burdened beyond its capacity. Neither shall a mother be made to suffer harm on account of her child, nor a father on account of his child; and a similar duty (devolves) on the (father's) heir.^b But if both desire weaning by mutual consent and counsel, there is no blame on them. And if you wish to engage a wet-nurse for your children, there is no blame on you so long as you pay what you promised according to usage. And keep your duty to Allāh and know that Allāh is Seer of what you do.

234 And (as for) those of you who die and leave wives behind, such women should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days;^a when they reach their term, there is no blame on you for what they do for themselves in a lawful

الْأَخِيرُ ذَلِكُمْ أَنْزَلْنَا لَكُمْ وَأَظْهَرَ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٣﴾
وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ
كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُنْفِقَ الرِّضَاعَةَ
وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا
تُضَارُّ وَالِدَةُ بَوْلِكَهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهَا
بَوْلِكَهَا وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ فَإِنْ
أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا
أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَأَلْتُمْ مَتَى
أَتَيْتُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا
أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٤﴾

وَالَّذِينَ يُوَفُّونَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَوْلَادًا
يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا
فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا
فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا

marriage of a divorced woman with her former husband is clearly allowed, and going through the mock ceremony of marriage with another person is an innovation.

233a. By *mothers* here are meant in particular, as the context shows, *women who have been divorced having children to suckle*.

233b. In case the father dies before the child is weaned, the heir is bound to pay the expenses.

234a. The period of waiting in the case of a widow is four months and ten days. But in case a divorced woman or a widow is with child, the period of waiting is extended to the time of delivery (65:4).

manner.^b And Allāh is Aware of what you do.

تَعْلَمُونَ خَيْرٌ ﴿١٢٥﴾

235 And there is no blame on you respecting that which you speak indirectly in the asking of (such) women in marriage or keep (the proposal) concealed within your minds. Allāh knows that you will have them in your minds, but give them not a promise in secret unless you speak in a lawful manner. And confirm not the marriage tie until the prescribed period reaches its end.^a And know that Allāh knows what is in your minds, so beware of Him; and know that Allāh is Forgiving, Forbearing.

وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خُطْبَةِ النِّسَاءِ أَوْ كَتَمْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَلِيمَ اللَّهِ أَنْتُمْ سَتَدُرُّوهُنَّ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُؤَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّا أَنْ تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا وَلَا تَعْرِمُوا عَقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابَ أَحْكَامَهُ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ ذَلِيلٌ ﴿١٢٥﴾

SECTION 31: Provision for Divorced Women and Widows

236 There is no blame on you if you divorce women while yet you have not touched them, nor appointed for them a portion. And provide for them, the wealthy according to his means and the straitened according to his means, a provision according to usage. (This is) a duty on the doers of good.^a

لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ أَوْ لَمْ يَرْصُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَمِمَّا عَوَّدْتُمُ عَلَى الْمَوْسِعِ قَدَرَهُ وَعَلَى الْمُقْتَدِرِ قَدَرَهُ مِمَّا عَمَّا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

237 And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have appointed for them a portion, (pay) half of what you have appointed unless they forgo or he forgoes in

وَأِنْ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنَصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُوا أَوْ يَعْفُوَ الَّذِي

234b. The meaning is that the widow may look out for a husband and remarry.

235a. The word *kitāb*, lit. *writing*, means here *the period of waiting written down* for women, so that a marriage contracted during that period is illegal.

236a. The *farīdah* or *the portion* is the dowry, so that even when no dowry has been agreed upon, and marriage has not been consummated, liberality must be shown to the divorced wife, and some provision should be made for her, even though the husband may be in straitened circumstances.

whose hand is the marriage tie.^a And it is nearer to dutifulness that you forgo. Nor neglect the giving of free gifts between you.^b Surely Allāh is Seer of what you do.

238 Guard the prayers and the most excellent prayer, and stand up truly obedient to Allāh.^a

239 But if you are in danger (say your prayers) on foot or on horseback. And when you are secure, remember Allāh as He has taught you what you knew not.^a

بِيَدِهِ عَقْدَةُ الزَّكَاءِ ط وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا
أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى ط وَلَا تَسُوا الْفَضْلَ
بَيْنَكُمْ ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

حَفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى
وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا
أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَا لَمْ
تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

237a. The husband is the person in whose hand is the marriage tie. His forgoing his due is equivalent to not claiming the half of the dowry which he is entitled to by this verse. Note that forgoing on the part of husbands is here stated to be the more commendable course.

237b. By *faḍl* is meant here *the doing of an act of grace or bounty*, that which one is not in duty bound to do; and therefore what is implied is the giving of free gifts.

238a. *Wasaʿ*, of which *wustā* is the comparative form, means both *middle* and *excellent*, for *wasāʿ* refers sometimes to place and sometimes to degree (R). *Al-Ṣalāt al-wustā* means *the best* or *the most excellent* prayer, not the *middle* prayer, because *wustā* is in the comparative degree, and *middle* does not admit of comparison. In Ḥadīth the later afternoon prayer, 'Asr, is spoken of as *Al-Ṣalāt al-wustā* (B. 56:98). This name may have been given to it because from the point of the businessman it is the busiest part of the day and hence he finds it most difficult to find time for it. But there are several other suggestions regarding what is meant by it, and maybe it does not refer to any particular prayer and means simply attending to prayer in the most excellent form. The guarding of prayers is not simply the observance of the outward form; it is both the form and the spirit to which attention is drawn. Prayers are to be said at stated times and a particular method is to be observed, for if regularity and method had not been adopted, the institution of prayer which is so helpful in keeping alive a true faith in God in the heart of a Muslim would have passed into mere idealism as in other religions. The fact is that to keep the spirit of man in touch with the Divine Spirit, an external form was necessary, and it is absurd to jump to the conclusion that because Islām requires an external form to be kept up, the Islamic prayer is devoid of spirit. The external form is needed to bring the inner faculty into exercise. As regards the spirit of prayer, attention is called to it again and again in the Holy Qur'ān. On this very occasion, the injunction to guard the prayers is followed by the words: *Stand up truly obedient to Allāh*. That is the spirit which prayer aims at generating, the spirit of obedience to God. Elsewhere we are told: "Prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil" (29:45). In fact, the Qur'ān condemns prayers which are devoid of spirit (107:4-6).

239a. The reference to danger is danger from the enemy, who might make an onslaught on the Muslims if they neglected their defence when attending to prayer. There

240 And those of you who die and leave wives behind, should make a bequest in favour of their wives of maintenance for a year without turning (them) out. Then if they themselves go away, there is no blame on you for what they do of lawful deeds concerning themselves. And Allāh is Mighty, Wise.^a

وَالَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَدْرُونَ
أَنْزُولِ الْجَاهِ وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَاعًا إِلَى
الْحَوْلِ غَيْرِ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ
مِنْ مَعْرُوفٍ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾

241 And for the divorced women, provision (must be made) in kindness. This is incumbent on those who have regard for duty.^a

وَالْمُطَلَّقاتِ مَتَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا
عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

242 Allāh thus makes clear to you His messages that you may understand.

كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

is thus a reversion here to the subject of fighting, which is really dealt with throughout this chapter. The laying of stress on prayers in the previous verse is also due to the fact that prayer was in danger of being neglected when fighting. It should also be noted that the question of widowhood, which is being dealt with here, is closely associated with fighting, because wars must increase the number of widows. The subject of fighting is plainly reverted to in the next section.

240a. There is nothing to show that this verse is abrogated by any other verse of the Holy Qur'ān. Neither v. 234, nor 4:12, contains anything contradicting this verse. The former of these speaks of the period of waiting for a widow, but here we have nothing about the period of waiting; it simply speaks of a bequest on the part of the husband that the widow should be given an additional benefit, a year's residence and maintenance. The latter portion of the verse plainly says that if the widow of her own accord leaves the house, she is not entitled to any further concession, and there is no blame on the heirs of the deceased husband for what the widow does of lawful deeds, i.e., if she remarries after her waiting period of four months and ten days is over. As regards 4:12, the fourth or eighth part of the property of the deceased husband is hers in addition to what she obtains under this verse, and 4:12 plainly says that anything which is to be paid under a will shall have precedence of the division of property into shares under that verse. Mujāhid's explanation of this verse is exactly the same: "Allāh gave her (i.e., the widow) the whole of a year, seven months and twenty days being optional under the bequest; if she desired she could stay according to the bequest (i.e., having maintenance and residence for a year), and if she desired she could leave the house (and remarry), as the Qur'ān says: *Then if they themselves go away, there is no blame on you*" (B. 65: ii, 41).

241a. Note that this provision is in addition to the dowry which must be paid to them. Just as in the previous verse the widow is given an additional benefit, here a provision in addition to her dowry is recommended for the divorced woman. This shows how liberal are the injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān regarding women.