

**124** When thou didst say to the believers: Does it not suffice you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels sent down?<sup>a</sup>

إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ  
يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلَاثَةِ آلْفٍ مِنَ  
الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنزَلِينَ ﴿٨﴾

**125** Yea, if you are steadfast and keep your duty, and they come upon you in a headlong manner, your Lord will assist you with five thousand of havoc-making angels.<sup>a</sup>

بَلَىٰ إِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُمُ  
فَؤُورِهِمْ هَذَا يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ  
آلْفٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ ﴿٩﴾

**126** And Allāh made it only as good news for you, and that your hearts might be at ease thereby. And help comes only from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise,

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ  
قُلُوبُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ  
اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿١٠﴾

**127** That He may cut off a part of those who disbelieve or abase them so that they should return in failure.<sup>a</sup>

لِيَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْ  
يَكْتَسِبُهُمْ فَيُقَلِّبُوا حَايِبِينَ ﴿١١﴾

124a. The enemy numbered only one thousand where one thousand angels are stated to have been sent (8:9). Now when the enemy was three thousand strong, the Muslims were promised the help of three thousand angels. The fulfilment of this promise is referred to in v. 152. What was the object of the coming of the angels? The matter is fully explained in the 8th chapter in connection with the promise of the coming of angels in the battle of Badr. As here, it is first stated there that the promise was given only “as good news, and that your hearts might be at ease thereby, and victory is only from Allāh” (8:10). The verse that follows makes the object clearer: “When He made slumber fall on you as a security from Him, and sent down upon you water from the clouds that He might thereby purify you and take away from you the uncleanness of the devil, and that He might fortify your hearts and making firm (your) feet thereby”. Hence the object was to strengthen the Muslims by improving their position in the field of battle and by strengthening their hearts, and this is expressed still more clearly further on: “When thy Lord revealed to the angels: I am with you, so make firm those who believe. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve” (8:12). The believers being thus strengthened while terror was cast into the enemy’s heart, the object of sending the angels was achieved, and the small Muslim force was able to defeat a powerful enemy that outnumbered them by three to one.

125a. The word used in the original is *musawwim* and not *musawwam*, and it is from *sawwama* ‘ala al-qaum meaning *he urged his horse against the people and made havoc among them*. Hence *musawwim* is *one who makes havoc*. The assistance of the angels stated in this verse refers to a third occasion, when the enemy came “in a headlong manner”, all the tribes uniting with the Quraish to crush the Muslims. This happened in the battle of *Aḥzāb*, or the Allies, when the Quraish, whose number was very likely about five thousand, with the help of strong allied forces — the total strength being near twenty thousand — suddenly attacked Madinah. The dispersal of such a large army when the Muslims were only about fourteen hundred was no doubt due to Divine help, sent through angelic hosts.

127a, see next page.

**128** Thou hast no concern in the matter whether He turns to them (mercifully) or chastises them; surely they are wrongdoers.<sup>a</sup>

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ  
أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

**129** And to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. He forgives whom He pleases and chastises whom He pleases. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ يُعْفِرُ  
لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ  
عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٩﴾

#### SECTION 14: What Success meant for the Muslims

**130** O you who believe, devour not usury, doubling and redoubling, and keep your duty to Allāh, that you may be successful.<sup>a</sup>

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا الرِّبَا  
أَضْعَافًا مُّضَاعَفَةً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

**131** And guard yourselves against the fire which has been prepared for the disbelievers.<sup>a</sup>

وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

127a. Notwithstanding that the object of the disbelievers in their war on the Muslims was their extirpation, the latter are told that the Divine object in punishing the disbelievers by war was not to extirpate them, but to cut off their ringleaders and chiefs. The word *ṭaraf* signifies a part or a portion of a thing (R), and hence it is applied to a company of men, and also to leading men. LL translates *aṭraf al-arḍ* as meaning *the exalted or the noble and the learned men of the earth*. When the leaders of mischief were cut off, the rest would be disappointed of attaining the object of extirpating Islām, and persecution would cease. The verses that follow corroborate this conclusion. The enemy's description as having returned in failure in this battle shows clearly that they were not successful or victorious in the battle. Their great general *Khālid* became a convert to Islām on his way to Makkah.

128a. "Ibn 'Umar said that he heard the Messenger of Allāh saying, when he raised his head after *rakū'* in the last *rakū'ah* of the morning prayer: 'O Allāh, curse such and such people ...' So Allāh revealed to him, Thou hast no concern in the matter ... Surely they are wrongdoers" (B. 64:22). As a mortal the Prophet might have sometimes desired a severe punishment for his enemies; but he is told that it was not his concern, for Allāh might as well forgive them, even though they deserved punishment. The all-comprehensiveness of the Divine mercy expressed in this verse is unapproached in sacred literature.

130a. It is not in temporal greatness and the accumulation of wealth that the Muslims' real success lies; hence usury which engenders love of wealth is forbidden. See 2:275a, where it is shown how the subject of usury is connected with war. It may be added that borrowing money on interest is also forbidden (Msh. 12:4). Not only individuals, but even Muslim kingdoms, have been ruined by borrowing large sums of money on interest, leading to foreign interference in their affairs.

131a, see next page.

132 And obey Allāh and the Messenger, that you may be shown mercy.<sup>a</sup>

وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

133 And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden, as wide as the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who keep their duty:

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

134 Those who spend in ease as well as in adversity and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men. And Allāh loves the doers of good (to others).<sup>a</sup>

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

135 And those who, when they commit an indecency or wrong their souls, remember Allāh and ask forgiveness for their sins. And who forgives sins but Allāh? And they persist not knowingly in what they do.

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرَ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ تَنَالُوا لِمَ يَصْرِفُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا هُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

136 Their reward is protection from their Lord, and Gardens wherein flow rivers, to abide in them. And excellent is the reward of the workers!

أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاءُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

137 Indeed there have been examples<sup>a</sup> before you; so travel in the

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا

131a. The fire in this case is excessive love of wealth, as plainly stated elsewhere: "Woe to every slanderer, defamer, who amasses wealth and counts it — he thinks that his wealth will make him abide ... It is the fire kindled by Allāh which rises over the hearts" (104:1–7).

132a. The loss suffered at Uḥud was due to disobedience in relation to a certain position which was forsaken against the orders of the Prophet. The retreating Makkan army turned upon the pursuers, among whom disorder had ensued, and several Muslims were slain, the Prophet himself being wounded. So they are told that they must obey God and His Messenger if they would have Divine mercy.

134a. Restraining of anger, pardoning, and doing good to each other, besides being great moral qualities, strengthen the bond of union which is so necessary for success. The verse has on many occasions inspired the noblest thoughts of toleration and charitableness. Ḥasan's servant having on one occasion upset a boiling hot dish on his master, obtained his liberty along with monetary help by reciting this verse. Thinking that he would be punished for his fault, he repeated the words; "Those who restrain their anger." Ḥasan said he was not angry. "And pardon men," added the servant. Ḥasan said: "I pardon you." "And Allāh loves the doers of good," concluded the offending slave. "I give you liberty and four hundred pieces of silver," was the response. "A noble instance of moderation and generosity," is Sale's comment upon this incident.

137a, see next page.

earth and see what was the end of the deniers.

**138** This is a clear statement for men, and a guidance and an admonition to those who would keep their duty.

**139** And be not weak-hearted, nor grieve, and you will have the upper hand if you are believers.

**140** If a wound has afflicted you, a wound like it has also afflicted the (disbelieving) people. And We bring these days to men by turns, that Allāh may know<sup>a</sup> those who believe and take witnesses from among you. And Allāh loves not the wrongdoers,

**141** And that He may purge those who believe and deprive the disbelievers of blessings.

**142** Do you think that you will enter the Garden while Allāh has not yet known those from among you who strive hard (nor) known the steadfast?

**143** And certainly you desired death before you met it. So indeed you have seen it now while you look (at it).<sup>a</sup>

فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ  
عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

هَذَا بَيِّنٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَ  
مَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ  
الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

إِن يَسِسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ  
قَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ  
مُدَّوِلِيَّا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ لِيَعْلَمَ  
اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَجْزِيَ  
مِنْهُمْ شَهَادَةً وَاللَّهُ لَا يَحِبُّ  
الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

وَلِيُبَخِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ  
آمَنُوا وَيَنْحَقَ الْكُفْرِينَ ﴿١٤٢﴾

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ  
وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ  
جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ  
الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ  
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْفُتَهُ فَمَّا  
رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

137a. *Sunan* is plural of *sunnah*, meaning a way or a rule or manner of acting or conduct or life or the like (LL). Hence the significance here is ways or examples of Allāh's dealing with the righteous and the wicked.

140a. That Allāh knows all that is seen or unseen and all that is manifest or concealed is asserted in numerous places in the Holy Qur'an. The *knowing* here and the *not knowing* in v. 142 refer to the knowledge of the event. Allāh knew who *would* prove themselves true believers, who *would* strive hard in His way, and who *would* be steadfast under trials; but who *did* prove themselves true believers, who *did* strive hard, and who *were* steadfast in suffering could only be said to be known when these things had happened.

143a. This refers to the desire of those who insisted that they should meet the enemy in the open field, while the Prophet's own desire was that the Muslims should defend themselves within Madinah. Their desire for fighting the enemy or for being slain in the cause of truth is called a desire for death.

## SECTION 15: Sufferings to be met with Perseverance

**144** And Muḥammad is but a messenger — messengers have already passed away before him.<sup>a</sup> If then he dies or is killed, will you turn back upon your heels? And he who turns back upon his heels will do no harm at all to Allāh. And Allāh will reward the grateful.<sup>b</sup>

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ  
قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ  
انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ  
عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَكُنْ بِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ شَاظًا  
وَسَيُجْزَى اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

**145** And no soul can die but with Allāh's permission — the term is fixed.<sup>a</sup> And whoever desires the reward of this world, We give him of it, and whoever desires the reward of the Hereafter, We give him of it. And We shall reward the grateful.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ  
كُنَّا مُؤْتَجِرِينَ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ  
مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ  
مِنْهَا وَسَنَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

**146** And how many a prophet has fought, with whom were many worshippers of the Lord.<sup>a</sup> So they did not

وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ نَبِيِّ قُتِلَ مَعَهُ رَبِّيؤُنَ  
كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ

144a. The Prophet received severe wounds in the battle of Uḥud; there was even a rumour that he was killed. It is to this that the verse refers. Even if the Prophet were killed, Islām was so far superior to all forms of faith that the Muslims could not give up Islām. Truth was truth, though its advocate might be killed in a battle; nor could falsehood and superstition be accepted, though their advocates might prevail for a time.

While this verse lays stress on the essential truth of Islām, it served another important purpose at the death of the Prophet. Some of the companions thought that the Prophet was not dead. Abū Bakr went in, and seeing that life had departed, ascended the pulpit and read this verse, which had a magical effect upon his hearers, all of them being convinced that the Prophet had passed away, as all prophets had passed away before him. The prophets were but mortals, and their span of mortal life must no doubt terminate like that of other mortals. This verse affords a conclusive proof that Jesus Christ was also dead; otherwise Abū Bakr's argument could not have silenced the doubters of the Prophet's death.

144b. The doing of harm to Allāh stands for the doing of harm to the Divine cause; i.e. the Truth, which was now represented by Islām.

145a. While the statement conveys a general truth which makes Muslims face death with complacency, the words seem to refer also to the death of the Prophet, giving an assurance to the Muslims that the time of his death had not yet come.

146a. For the meaning of *ribbi*, see 79a. It is a curious coincidence that Sale, Rodwell, and Palmer have all given a wrong translation of this verse: "How many prophets have encountered those who had many myriads of troops." This is Sale's rendering and the others are similar. I find no commentator lending any support to this significance, nor can the words bear this interpretation.

lose heart on account of that which befell them in Allāh's way, nor did they weaken, nor did they abase themselves. And Allāh loves the steadfast.

**147** And their cry was only that they said: Our Lord, grant us protection from our sins and our extravagance in our affair, and make firm our feet and grant us victory over the disbelieving people.

**148** So Allāh gave them the reward of the world and a good reward of the Hereafter. And Allāh loves the doers of good (to others).

اللَّهُ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا وَاللَّهُ  
يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا  
اعْفُ عَنَّا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَعِزَّنَا وَ  
ثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

وَأَنزَلْنَا اللَّهُ تَوَابًا لِّدُنْيَاكُمْ وَأَحْسَنَ تَوَابًا  
الْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

#### SECTION 16: Causes of Misfortune in Uhud Battle

**149** O you who believe, if you obey those who disbelieve, they will make you turn back upon your heels, so you will turn back losers.<sup>4</sup>

**150** Nay, Allāh is your Patron, and He is the Best of the helpers.

**151** We will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve<sup>a</sup> because they set up with Allāh that for which He has sent down no authority, and their abode is the Fire. And evil is the abode of the wrongdoers.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَطِيعُوا الَّذِينَ  
كَفَرُوا يَرُدُّوكُم عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ فَتَنفَلِقُوا  
خِيسِرِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

بَلِ اللَّهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْمَوْلِيَيْنِ ﴿٥٠﴾

سَنُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ  
بِمَا اشْرَكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانٌ  
وَمَا لَهُمْ النَّاصِرَ وَمَنْ مَتَّوَى الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

149a. The war was carried on only with the object of making the Muslims renounce their religion, and hence they could not think of accepting the disbelievers as their rulers.

151a. Notwithstanding the great disproportion in numbers, the Muslims being less than one-fourth of their opponents, being at the same time not so well equipped as their foes, and in spite of the disorder into which the Muslim forces had fallen, the enemy had to flee, leaving the Muslims in the field, not even making a show of attacking Madinah, which was quite defenceless. This clearly shows that they were terror-stricken even after they had inflicted some loss upon the Muslims, considering it safer to go back to Makkah while the Muslims were yet occupied with their own troubles and were unable to pursue them.

**152** And Allāh certainly made good His promise to you<sup>a</sup> when you slew them by His permission, until you became weak-hearted and disputed about the affair and disobeyed after He had shown you that which you loved.<sup>b</sup> Of you were some who desired this world, and of you were some who desired the Hereafter.<sup>c</sup> Then He turned you away from them that He might try you; and He has indeed pardoned you.<sup>d</sup> And Allāh is Gracious to the believers.

وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّوهُمُ  
بِإِذْنِهِ حَتَّى إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَزَّعْتُمْ فِي  
الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْبْتُمْ مِمَّنْ بَعْدَ مَا أَرْسَلَكُمْ مِمَّا  
تُحِبُّونَ مِنْكُمْ مِمَّنْ يَرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مِمَّنْ  
يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ  
لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو  
الْفَضْلِ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾

**153** When you went away far, and paid no heed to anyone, and the Messenger was calling you in your rear.<sup>a</sup> So He gave you (another) grief

إِذْ تَصْغِدُونَ وَلَا تَلْوَنَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنَ الرِّسَالِ  
يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أُخْرَاكُمْ فَأَثَابَكُمْ عَمَلًا بَعِيرًا  
لِيَكِيلًا تَحْزَنُوا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا فَاتَبَكُمْ

152a. The promise is contained in v. 124: "When thou didst say to the believers: Does it not suffice you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels?"

152b. It clearly shows that the Muslims had obtained a victory at Uhud, later incidents depriving them of the fruits of that victory. Though apparently all the fighters are spoken of here as becoming weak-hearted, the reference is only to that group of archers who disobeyed the Prophet's orders, as the words that follow show: *Of you were some who desired this world.* Nor did any of the Muslims show any weak-heartedness in fighting against the enemy. The weak-heartedness of a part of the archers who were placed in an important position to cut off the enemy's retreat consisted in their disobeying the clear orders of the Prophet: "If you see us overcoming the enemy leave not your position, and if you see the enemy overcoming us, leave not your position", the Prophet had told the archers. But they fell a prey to the love of the world and left their position to get a share in the booty when they saw the enemy fleeing before the Muslim onrush.

152c. These were the two parties of the body of archers. When the enemy was apparently routed, some of these archers were led by the love of plunder to leave their position, while their chief, 'Abd Allāh ibn Jubair, with only some ten men, stuck to their post. Muslims were required to fight in Allāh's way, and if any Muslim fought for plunder, he fought for the love of this world and not in Allāh's way.

152d. The enemy, who was being pursued, turned against the pursuers on seeing the important position of the archers vacated, and the result was that the Muslims who were now in disorder on account of the pursuit found themselves helpless against the enemy who turned back on them, and some of them who were cut off from the main body took to flight. We are, however, here told that God pardoned them as their flight was the result of circumstances which were beyond their control. 'Uthman is said to have been one of them.

153a. It refers to the Prophet's call, at whom the Muslims now saw that the attack of the enemy was directed. So they did not grieve for losing an opportunity of pursuing the enemy, but for the dangerous position in which they saw the Prophet. This is, in fact,

for (your) first grief that you might not grieve at what escaped you, nor (at) what befell you. And Allāh is Aware of what you do.

**154** Then after grief He sent down security on you, slumber overcoming a party of you,<sup>a</sup> while (there was) another party whom their own souls had rendered anxious — they entertained about Allāh thoughts of ignorance quite unjustly.<sup>b</sup> They said: Have we any hand in the affair?<sup>c</sup> Say: The affair is wholly (in the hands) of Allāh. They hide within their souls that which they would not reveal to thee. They say: Had we any hand in the affair, we would not have been slain here.<sup>d</sup> Say: Had you remained in your houses, those for whom slaughter was ordained would have gone forth to the places where they would be slain.<sup>e</sup> And (this happened) that

وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ أَمْنًا  
 نَوْمًا يَغْشَى طَائِفَةً مِنْكُمْ وَطَائِفَةٌ قَدْ  
 أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ  
 الْحَقِّ كُلِّ الْجَاهِلِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ هَلْ لَنَا  
 مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُ  
 لِلَّهِ يُخْفُونَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ مَا لَا يُبْدُونَ  
 لَكَ يَخْفَوْنَ لَوْ كَانُوا مِنْ الْأَمْرِ شَيْئًا  
 مَا قَاتَلْنَا هَهُنَا قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ  
 لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَى  
 مَضَاجِعِهِمْ وَلِيَبَيِّنَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ

plainly stated in what follows: “that you might not grieve at what escaped you,” i.e. the booty which they would have had by pursuing the fleeing enemy, “nor at what befell you,” i.e., the loss which they themselves suffered. *Athāba* sometimes conveys the idea of *giving one thing instead of another, the giving of a substitute* (LL). They forgot their own grief when they saw that it was the Prophet at whom the attack was directed now.

154a. *Nu'ās* means *slight sleep*; it is said that *nu'ās* here implies *calm and quiet* (R). It must have happened when the enemy departed. The slumber was a sign of security, for no army could have gone to rest while yet in the field of battle if it had the least anxiety as to its security.

154b. The persons spoken of here are the disaffected who took no part in fighting. They now gave vent to their hidden rancour against the Muslims. The evil thoughts which the hypocrites entertained about Allāh were that Allāh had not helped the Muslims.

154c. The hypocrites sided with the minority whose counsel was that the Muslims should not fight the enemy in the open field and should remain besieged in Madinah. The majority was, however, in favour of going out and meeting the enemy where it had encamped. The Prophet decided that the majority vote must be accepted. Hence the hypocrites' murmuring as to why their counsel was not accepted.

154d. Their contention was that the disaster would not have befallen the Muslims if their advice as to remaining within the town had been accepted. They took no part in fighting but they spoke of the loss of the Muslims as their own loss.

154e, see next page.

Allāh might test what was in your breasts and that He might purge what was in your hearts. And Allāh is Knower of what is in the breasts.<sup>f</sup>

وَلِيُمَيِّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ  
بِدَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٥٤﴾

**155** Those of you who turned back on the day when the two armies met, only the devil sought to cause them to make a slip on account of some deeds they had done, and certainly Allāh has pardoned them. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Forbearing.<sup>a</sup>

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ  
إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا  
وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٥﴾

### SECTION 17: Battle of Uḥud Afforded a Distinction

**156** O you who believe, be not like those who disbelieve and say of their brethren when they travel in the earth or engage in fighting: Had they been with us, they would not have died, or been slain,<sup>a</sup> that Allāh may make it to be a regret in their hearts. And Allāh gives life and causes death. And Allāh is Seer of what you do.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ  
كَفَرُوا وَقَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ إِذَا ضَرَبُوا فِي  
الْأَرْضِ أَوْ كَانُوا غُزًى لَوْ كَانُوا عِنْدَنَا  
مَا مَاتُوا وَمَا قُتِلُوا لِيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ  
حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ يُبْصِرُ  
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٥٦﴾

**157** And if you are slain in Allāh's way or you die, surely Allāh's

وَلَيَنْ قَتَلْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ مَاتُمْ  
كَسْفِرَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَحْمَةً خَيْرٌ مِمَّا

154e. Remaining in the houses here signifies meeting the enemy while remaining in Madinah. By *those for whom slaughter was ordained* are meant the martyrs of Uḥud. The murmurings of the hypocrites are met with the reply that even if the Muslims had defended themselves by remaining in Madinah, those who laid down their lives in the field of Uḥud would have laid them down in Madinah as well. Death was moreover a thing ordained.

154f. This explains Allāh's testing what is in the hearts. He knows it, and His testing it means making it manifest to others. The attitude of the hypocrites was made manifest by the fighting in Uḥud. It would have remained hidden if the battle had been fought in Madinah.

155a. The persons spoken of here are those who were unable to join the main Muslim army and fled to Madinah, or in some other direction. However pressed they may have been, it was not right on their part to leave the field of battle. Here it is spoken of as a slip on their part; it did not amount to intentional disobedience and God granted them a free pardon.

156a. By "their brethren" are meant their relatives who were sincere in their profession of Islām, and who had to lay down their lives in defence of their faith.

protection and (His) mercy are better than what they amass.

**158** And if you die or you are slain, to Allāh you are gathered.

**159** Thus it is by Allāh's mercy that thou art gentle to them. And hadst thou been rough, hard-hearted, they would certainly have dispersed from around thee.<sup>a</sup> So pardon them and ask protection for them, and consult them in (important) matters.<sup>b</sup> But when thou hast determined, put thy trust in Allāh.<sup>c</sup> Surely Allāh loves those who trust (in Him).

**160** If Allāh helps you, there is none that can overcome you; and if He forsakes you, who is there that

يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

وَلَيْنَ مُمْتَدًّا أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لَكَرِهُوا لِلَّهِ تَحْسِرُونَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

فِيمَا رَحِمَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ لَئِن تَ لِهْمَ وَكَو كُنْت  
فَطَا عَدِيظَ انْقَلَبَ لَانْفُسُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ  
فَاعْفُ عَنَّهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ  
فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

إِنْ يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ  
يَخُذْ لَكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرْكُم مِّنْ

159a. It is remarkable that the Holy Qur'ān calls attention to the Prophet's gentle dealing with those around him when speaking of his experience in the field of battle as a general, leading his men against overwhelming forces, a capacity which required him to be very strict in punishing any delinquency. But he was not a mere general. His ability in leading his men, in occupying positions of advantage in the field of battle, and in directing a handful of men to face three, four, and sometimes ten times their own number, marks him out as the ablest general the world has ever seen, yet his gentle manners and his practical forbearance in dealing with his friends as well as foes stand in remarkable contrast with his capacity as a commander in the field of battle. It is related that after the Uḥud trouble the Prophet did not speak even a harsh word to those who were guilty of disobeying his orders (Rz).

The Qur'ān is full of references to the Holy Prophet's gentleness and kind dealing with his fellow-men. The following verse gives us an insight into this trait of his character: "Certainly a Messenger has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling into distress, most solicitous for you, to the believers (he is) compassionate, merciful" (9:128).

159b. The Prophet had gone out to meet the enemy as the result of a consultation and against his own inclination, for he sided with the minority in the opinion that they should not meet the enemy in the open field. Apparently that council had brought about the present trouble, yet so firm was he in adhering to sound principles that at such a critical time he did not waver for a minute from the course of taking counsel in important matters, and just at this juncture we find Divine revelation clearly laying down the principle of adhering to counsel.

159c. It should be noted that trusting in Allāh does not imply inaction. Everything necessary is to be done, a course of action must be determined in the proper manner, and then in pursuing that course trust must be placed in Allāh, which clearly implies that a man should do his utmost and then leave the consequences to Allāh; that is, he must be resigned to what follows, taking the consequences with a cool mind.

can help you after Him? And in Allāh should the believers put their trust.

بَعْدِهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فليتوكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٦١﴾

**161** And it is not for a prophet to act dishonestly.<sup>a</sup> And whoever acts dishonestly will bring his dishonesty on the day of Resurrection. Then shall every soul be paid back fully what it has earned, and they will not be wronged.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغْلُظَ وَمَنْ يَغْلُظْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

**162** Is then he who follows the pleasure of Allāh like him who incurs Allāh's displeasure, and his abode is hell? And it is an evil destination.

أَفَمَنْ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ كَمَنْ بَاءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٦٣﴾

**163** There are grades with Allāh. And Allāh is Seer of what they do.

هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

**164** Certainly Allāh conferred a favour on the believers when He raised among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His messages and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the Wisdom, although before that they were surely in manifest error.

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَنُفَىٰ صَالِحِينَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

**165** What! When a misfortune befell you, and you had inflicted twice as much, you say: Whence is this? Say: It is from yourselves. Surely Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.<sup>a</sup>

أَوَلَمَّْا أَصَابَكُمْ مِّصِيبَةٌ قَدْ أَصَبْتُم مِّثْلَيْهَا قُلْتُمْ أَنَّىٰ هَٰذَا قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنفُسِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٦٦﴾

161a. The words may be taken in a general sense, the indication being that the disaster was not due to any wrongful act on the part of the Prophet, as a prophet cannot act wrongfully or dishonestly. Or, there may be a hint to some such idea lurking in the minds of the hypocrites or the disobeying archers. Prophets are raised to purify others as stated further on in v. 164, and they are therefore free from all impurities.

165a. The disbelievers had already suffered twice at the hands of the Muslims, once in the field of Badr and again in the early stages of the battle of Uḥud. In Badr alone they had inflicted on the disbelievers double the loss which they suffered in Uḥud. At the latter place they lost only seventy killed, while at Badr the disbelievers lost 140, seventy killed and seventy prisoners.

**166** And that which befell you on the day when the two armies met was by Allāh's permission, that He might know the believers,

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ النِّعَى الْجَمْعِينَ  
فِي إِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٦٦﴾

**167** And that He might know the hypocrites. And it was said to them: Come, fight in Allāh's way, or defend yourselves.<sup>a</sup> They said: If we knew fighting,<sup>b</sup> we would have followed you. They were on that day nearer to disbelief than to belief; they say with their mouths what is not in their hearts. And Allāh best knows what they conceal.

وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ نَاقَضُوا الْعَهْدَ وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ  
تَعَالَوْا قَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ ادْعُوا  
قَاتِلُوا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ قِتَالًا لَا تَبْعَثْكُمْ هُمْ  
لِلْكَفَى يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ  
يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ  
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿١٦٧﴾

**168** Those who said of their brethren whilst they (themselves) held back: Had they obeyed us, they would not have been killed. Say: Avert death from yourselves, if you are truthful.

الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ إِخْرَجْنَاهُمْ  
أَطَاعُوا مَا قَاتِلُوا أَطْلُقَ فَادْرَأُوا عَنْ  
الْأَنْفُسِ الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾

**169** And think not of those who are killed in Allāh's way as dead. Nay, they are alive being provided sustenance from their Lord,

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ  
أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

**170** Rejoicing in what Allāh has given them out of His grace, and they rejoice for the sake of those who, (being left) behind them, have not yet joined them, that they have no fear, nor shall they grieve.

فَرِحِينَ بِمَا أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ  
وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا  
بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

**171** They rejoice for Allāh's favour and (His) grace, and that Allāh wastes not the reward of the believers.

يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلِهِ  
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضَيِّعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾

167a. The words show clearly that in the language of the Qur'ān, *fighting in Allāh's way* carries the significance of *fighting in self-defence*.

167b. They feigned they did not know how to fight. Or the meaning may be, *if he knew that it was a fight*, the implication being that the Muslims were going, not to fight but to sure destruction with such a disparity of numbers.

## SECTION 18: UḤud No Gain to the Enemy

172 Those who responded to the call of Allāh and the Messenger after the misfortune had befallen them — for such among them who do good and keep their duty is a great reward.<sup>a</sup>

الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ مِنْ  
بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا  
مِنْهُمْ وَانْفَرُوا أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٢﴾

173 Those to whom men said: Surely people have gathered against you, so fear them; but this increased their faith, and they said: Allāh is sufficient for us and He is an excellent Guardian.

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ  
قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ  
إِيمَانًا ۖ وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ﴿١٧٣﴾

174 So they returned with favour from Allāh and (His) grace; no evil touched them, and they followed the pleasure of Allāh. And Allāh is the Lord of mighty grace.<sup>a</sup>

فَأَنْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَمْ  
يَمَسَّسْهُمْ سُوءٌ ۚ وَاتَّبَعُوا رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٧٤﴾

175 It is the devil who only frightens his friends, but fear them not, and fear Me, if you are believers.<sup>a</sup>

إِنَّمَا ذِكْرُ الشَّيْطَانِ يُخَفِّفُ أَوْلِيَائِهِ ۗ فَلَا  
تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُوا نِيَّيَ ۚ إِنَّ كُفْرَكُمْ مُمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾

176 And let not those grieve thee who run into disbelief precipitately; surely they can do no harm to Allāh. Allāh intends not to assign them any portion in the Hereafter; and for them is a grievous chastisement.

وَلَا يَحْزَنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ  
إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَصُدُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا طَيْرِيًّا ۗ اللَّهُ  
أَلَّا يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حَقًّا فِي الْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَ  
لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٦﴾

172a. The Makkan army was pursued the next day to a place known as *Hamrā' al-Asad*, under which name the expedition is known. Such was the spirit of invincibility of the Muslim army even after the loss suffered at Uḥud.

174a. Verses 173–175 refer to the expedition known as *Badr al-Ṣuḡhrā*, the smaller Badr, undertaken next year, because Abū Sufyān, commander of the Makkan army, announced, when leaving the field of Uḥud, that he would meet the Muslims the following year at Badr, but notwithstanding its threats the Makkan army never marched forth. The Muslims on the other hand gained much benefit by trading in a fair held there, as indicated in v. 174.

175a. As emissary, Nu'aim, was hired by the Makkans to spread terror among the Muslims, and he is the devil spoken of here (Rz). By the *devil's friends* are meant the hypocrites.

**177** Those who buy disbelief at the price of faith can do no harm to Allāh, and for them is a painful chastisement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ  
لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَكَرَهُمُ عَذَابُ الْآلِيمِ ﴿١٧٧﴾

**178** And let not those who disbelieve think that our granting them respite is good for themselves. We grant them respite only that they may add to their sins; and for them is an humiliating chastisement.

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّامَا نُنْصِي  
لَهُمْ خَيْرًا لَّا أَنْفُسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُنْصِي لَهُمْ  
لِيُزِيدُوا إِثْمًا وَكَرَهُمُ عَذَابُ مُهَيِّئِينَ ﴿١٧٨﴾

**179** Allāh will not leave the believers in the condition in which you are until He separates the evil from the good. Nor is Allāh going to make you acquainted with the unseen, but Allāh chooses of His messengers whom He pleases. So believe in Allāh and His messengers. And if you believe and keep your duty, you will have a great reward.

مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى مَا أَنْتُمْ  
عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى يُمَيِّرَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَمَا  
كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ  
يَجْتَبِي مِنْ رُسُلِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ فَأَمُّنُوا بِاللَّهِ  
وَرُسُلِهِ وَإِنْ تُؤْمِنُوا تَتَّقُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٩﴾

**180** And let not those who are niggardly in spending that which Allāh has granted them out of His grace, think that it is good for them. Nay, it is evil for them. They shall have a collar of their niggardliness on their necks on the Resurrection day. And Allāh's is the heritage of the heavens and the earth. And Allāh is Aware of what you do.<sup>a</sup>

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا أَنْهَمُ  
اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُمْ بَلْ  
هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخُلُوا  
بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَاللَّهُ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٨٠﴾

### SECTION 19: Carpings of People of the Book

**181** Allāh has certainly heard the saying of those who said: Allāh is

لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ

180a. The same idea, though in more general terms, as to the effect of deeds being bound to the neck, is expressed in 17:13: "And We have made every man's actions to cling to his neck, and We shall bring forth to him on the day of Resurrection a book which he will find wide open". Thus every man carries the effect of his deeds with him in this life, but on the day of Resurrection that effect will become clearly visible. Thus is the effect of niggardliness made to cling to the necks of the niggardly.

poor and we are rich. We shall record what they say, and their killing the prophets unjustly, and We shall say: Taste the chastisement of burning.<sup>a</sup>

**182** This is for that which your own hands have sent before, and because Allāh is not in the least unjust to the servants.

**183** Those who say: Allāh has enjoined us that we should not believe in any messenger until he brings us an offering which is consumed by the fire.<sup>a</sup> Say: Indeed there came to you messengers before me with clear arguments and with that which you demand. Why then did you try to kill them, if you are truthful?<sup>b</sup>

**184** But if they reject thee, so indeed were rejected before thee messengers who came with clear arguments and scriptures and the illuminating Book.<sup>a</sup>

اللَّهُ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ سَكَتْنَا  
مَا قَالُوا وَقَتَلْنَاهُمُ الْإِنِّيَاءِ بَعِيرِ حَيٍّ  
وَقَوْلُوا دُفُوعًا عَدَابِ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿١٨٢﴾

ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ  
لَيْسَ بِظَالِمٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَهْدَ إِلَيْنَا آلَا  
نُؤْمِنُ لِرُسُولٍ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَنَا بِقُرْبَانٍ  
تَأْكُلُهُ النَّارُ قُلْ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ  
مِّن قَبْلِي بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَبِالَّذِي قُلْتُمْ قَلِمٌ  
قَتَلْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّ كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٨٤﴾

فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ رَسُولٌ مِّن  
قَبْلِكَ جَاءُوا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ ﴿١٨٤﴾

181a. The Jews ridiculed the poverty of the Muslims and their borrowings from the Jewish money-lenders. They also ridiculed the raising of funds for the defence of the faith by subscriptions. See 5:64, 64a.

183a. The reference is to the burnt offerings of the Mosaic law, for which see Lev.1:9: "And the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire". And Deut. 33:10 where, blessing Israel, Moses says: "They shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar". Compare also Lev. 8:18. The demand of the Jews that the Prophet should bring to them an offering which the fire should consume is only a demand for the burnt-offering of the Israelite law, so that what they persisted in was that the promised prophet should be an Israelite and should revive the Israelite law.

183b. The carpers are here told that they even sought to kill those prophets who followed the Mosaic law, who came, "with that which you demand". Hence their rejection was due to the stubbornness of their hearts.

184a. The prophets are said to have come with three things — with arguments and with the *zukur* and the illuminating Book. *Zukur* is the plural of *zubah*, which means a *big piece of iron*, and of *zabūr*, which signifies a *written thing*. According to R, every book which is hard in writing is called a *zabūr*. According to LL, *zabūr* signifies a *Divine book which it is difficult to become acquainted with*. Zj says, every book full of wisdom is a *zabūr* (Rz). The commentators generally understand by the *zukur* the sacred scriptures of the prophets and by the *illuminating Book* the book containing the guidance which every prophet brought to his people, so that they should follow those directions.

**185** Every soul will taste of death. And you will be paid your reward fully only on the Resurrection day. Then whoever is removed far from the Fire and is made to enter the Garden, he indeed attains the object. And the life of this world is nothing but a provision of vanities.

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّقُونَ  
أَجْرَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ رُحِزَ عَنِ  
النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا  
الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعٌ الْعُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾

**186** You will certainly be tried in your property and your persons. And you will certainly hear from those who have been given the Book before you and from the idolaters much abuse.<sup>a</sup> And if you are patient and keep your duty, surely this is an affair of great resolution.

لَتَبْلُوَنَّ فِيْ أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ وَلَسْمَعَنَّ  
مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ  
الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَدْمَى كَثِيرًا وَإِن تَصْبِرُوا  
وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٨٦﴾

**187** And when Allāh took a covenant from those who were given the Book:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْفُرُوهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ

186a. This verse speaks of the sufferings which were yet in store for the Muslims. They had certainly been tried respecting their property and their persons at Makkah. They had been deprived of their property and turned out of their homes; they had been severely persecuted and even put to death for professing Islām. But this verse, revealed undoubtedly after the battle of Uḥud in the year 3 A.H., speaks of sufferings which were yet to come. It plainly speaks of the future, rather of the distant future, because Islām was now being firmly established in Arabia. The rise of Islām was, however, to be followed by a setback of which there are indications in the Qur'ān and the sayings of the Prophet. Thus we are told in a ḥadīth that Islām started its career as *gharīb* (as a stranger in a land or as a sufferer at the hands of others) and that it will once more (i.e. after rising to power) return to the state in which it began (IM. 35:15). The abuses which have been heaped on Islām in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries are indeed without a parallel, not only in the history of Islām but in the whole history of religion. The abusive language of the Christian, political, as well as missionary, press and the vituperations of their imitators in the Hindu press have outstepped all bounds. Thus both the People of the Book and the idolaters have joined hands in hurling the worst abuses at Islām and its Founder. But we are here told that the Muslims shall, in addition to the abuse of their religion, be made to suffer both respecting their property and their persons. If they have so often been turned out of their houses in the past century in Europe, and Muslim States have been wiped out of existence in many parts of the world, the twentieth century presents a yet ghastlier scene of their woes in India. In a country in which they have been living for over a thousand years, and where their population was no less than a hundred millions, they have been turned out of their homes mercilessly and the cruellest tortures known to human history have been inflicted on them in broad daylight and the civilized world has not yet raised a finger against this genocide and the perpetration of these brutalities. It is these calamities which are spoken of in this verse. The concluding words of the verse are the only hope of Islām in the present tribulations — to be steadfast and keep their duty to Islām.

You shall explain it to men and shall not hide it. But they cast it behind their backs and took a small price for it. So evil is that which they buy.

وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ تَمَتًّا قَلِيلًا  
فَبِئْسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

**188** Think not that those who exult in what they have done, and love to be praised for what they have not done — think not them to be safe from the chastisement; and for them is a painful chastisement.

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا آتَوْا  
وَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا  
فَلَا تَحْسَبْهُمْ بِمُفَارِقِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ  
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨٨﴾

**189** And Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ط وَاللَّهُ  
عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٨٩﴾

## SECTION 20: Ultimate Triumph of the Faithful

**190** In the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day, there are surely signs for men of understanding.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَإِخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٠﴾

**191** Those who remember Allāh standing and sitting and (lying) on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain! Glory be to Thee! Save us from the chastisement of the Fire.<sup>a</sup>

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَى  
جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا  
سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

**192** Our Lord, whomsoever Thou makest enter the Fire, him Thou

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَنْ تَدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ

191a. This chapter, like the one before it, ends with a prayer for the victory of Faith over disbelief and a prediction for its ultimate triumph. The first two verses of the section point out two distinguishing characteristics of the faithful. It is pointed out that they are neither recluses who retire to a corner of solitude for the remembrance of Allāh, nor yet do they pursue the conquest of nature without ever thinking of the Author and Lord of creation. On the one hand, they are described as remembering God in the midst of all worldly affairs and worldly pursuits, *standing and sitting and lying on their sides*, being thus fully conscious of the Divine presence everywhere and in all conditions; and, on the other, they set out for the conquest of nature with the full consciousness that *nothing has been created in vain* and that a purpose underlies the whole of creation. This is the grand object which Islām sets before its followers, to conquer self by remembrance of God and to conquer nature by pursuit of knowledge.

indeed bringest to disgrace. And there will be no helpers for the wrongdoers.

**193** Our Lord, surely we have heard a Crier calling to the faith, saying: Believe in your Lord. So we do believe. Our Lord, grant us protection from our sins and remove our evils and make us die with the righteous.

**194** Our Lord, grant us what Thou hast promised us by Thy messengers and disgrace us not on the day of Resurrection. Surely Thou never failest in (Thy) promise!

**195** So their Lord accepted their prayer, (saying): I will not suffer the work of any worker among you to be lost whether male or female, the one of you being from the other. So those who fled and were driven forth from their homes and persecuted in My way and who fought and were slain, I shall truly remove their evil and make them enter Gardens wherein flow rivers — a reward from Allāh. And with Allāh is the best reward.<sup>a</sup>

**196** Let not control in the land, of those who disbelieve, deceive thee.

**197** A brief enjoyment! Then their abode is hell. And evil is the resting-place.

**198** But those who keep their duty to their Lord, for them are Gardens wherein flow rivers, to abide therein;

أَخْرَجْتَهُ طُومًا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ﴿١٩٧﴾

رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا ۗ رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَقَّنَا مِنَ الْآبْرَارِ ﴿١٩٨﴾

رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَى رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْوَعْدَ ﴿١٩٩﴾

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ ۗ فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُوذُوا فِي سَبِيلِي وَقَتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا أَلَا كَفَرَانَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَا أُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

لَا يَغُرُّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿٢٠١﴾

مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ قَالُوا هُمْ جَاهِلُونَ بِسْمِ الْإِهَادِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

لِكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِنْ

195a. This is a promise which includes all those companions of the Holy Prophet who fled from their homes, and those who were persecuted, and those who fought in his company. The concluding words of the verse show that the promise to make them enter Gardens relates to this life as well, and its fulfilment was brought about in the worldly achievements of the Muslims. The reward of the Hereafter is separately spoken of in the words, with Allāh is the best reward.

and entertainment from their Lord. And that which Allāh has in store for the righteous is best.

عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّابْرَارِ ﴿٩٨﴾

**199** And of the People of the Book there are those who believe in Allāh and (in) that which has been revealed to you and (in) that which has been revealed to them, humbling themselves before Allāh — they take not a small price for the messages of Allāh. These it is that have their reward with their Lord. Surely Allāh is Swift to take account!

وَأَنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ  
وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ  
خُشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا يَشْتُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ  
شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ  
رَبِّهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٩٩﴾

**200** O you who believe, be steadfast and try to excel in steadfastness and guard (the frontiers). And keep your duty to Allāh that you may be successful.<sup>a</sup>

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَاصْبِرُوا  
وَرَاطِبُوا ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

200a. The last section, while predicting victory for the Muslims, requires them to be humble in the hour of triumph, as in the last chapter. The concluding verse speaks of three things as the key to success. The first is *ṣabr*, which conveys the significance of endurance and perseverance in trials and perseverance in the doing of good. The second is *muṣābarah*, which means *vying in ṣabr* or *steadfastness* with each other, or trying to excel the enemy in endurance. The third is *ribāt*, which means *guarding* or *stationing* the army *on the frontiers*, to guard it against the enemy. All three words carry a temporal as well as a spiritual significance. What is inculcated here is, on the one hand, showing endurance in wars, excelling the enemy in endurance and to remain in readiness on the frontiers of the Muslim territory to meet the enemy, and, on the other, remaining steadfast in keeping away from evil and keeping to obedience to God, trying to excel each other in the quality of endurance and to remain on guard against the Evil one on the frontiers. What is meant by the last is explained in a ḥadīth of the Prophet: “What is lawful is manifest and what is unlawful is manifest and between these two are doubtful things which many people do not know. So whoever guards himself against the doubtful things, he keeps his religion and his honour unsullied, and whoever falls into doubtful things is like the herdsman who grazes his cattle on the borders of a reserve — he is likely to enter it. Know that every king has a reserve and know that the reserve of Allāh in His land is what He has forbidden” (B. 2:38). The Qur’ān thus, while not neglecting the temporal needs of man, aims at his spiritual perfection.