

61 They said: We shall strive to make his father yield about him, and we are sure to do (it).

قَالُوا اسْتَرَوْا دُعَاهُ أَبَاهُ وَإِنَّا لَفَاعِلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

62 And he said to his servants: Put their money^a into their bags that they may recognize it when they go back to their family, so that they may come back.

وَقَالَ لِفِتْيَانِهِ اجْعَلُوا بِضَاعَهُمْ فِي رِحَالِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَعْرِفُونَهَا إِذَا انْقَلَبُوا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

63 So when they returned to their father, they said: O our father, the measure is withheld from us, so send with us our brother that we may get the measure, and we will surely guard him.

فَلَمَّا رَجَعُوا إِلَىٰ أَبِيهِمْ قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مَنَعَنَا الْكَيْلُ فَارْسِلْ مَعَنَا أَخَانَا نَكْتَلُ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

64 He said: Can I trust you with him, except as I trusted you with his brother before. So Allāh is the Best Keeper, and He is the most Merciful of those who show mercy.

قَالَ هَلْ أَمْنَكُم مَّعَهُ إِلَّا كَمَا أَمْنَكُم عَلَىٰ أَخِيهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ قَالَ اللَّهُ خَيْرُ حَفِظًا وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّحِيمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

65 And when they opened their goods, they found their money returned to them. They said: O our father, what (more) can we desire? This is our property returned to us, and we shall bring corn for our family and guard our brother, and have in addition the measure of a camel-load. This is an easy measure.

وَلَمَّا فَتَحُوا مَتَاعَهُمْ وَجَدُوا بِضَاعَتَهُمْ رُدَّتْ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مَا نَبْغِي هَذِهِ بِضَاعَتُنَا رُدَّتْ إِلَيْنَا وَنَبِئْ أَهْلَنَا وَحَفِظْ أَخَانَا وَتَزِدْهُ كَيْلًا كَيْلُكَ يُبْسِرُ ﴿٥٥﴾

66 He said: I will by no means send him with you, until you give me a firm covenant in Allāh's name that you will bring him back to me, unless you are completely surrounded. And when they gave him their covenant, he said: Allāh is Guardian over what we say.

قَالَ لَنْ أُرْسِلَهُ مَعَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ تُؤْتُونِ مَوْثِقًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَتَأْتُنَّنِي بِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يُحَاطَبَكُمْ فَلَمَّا اتَّوَدَّ مَوْثِقَهُمْ قَالَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا تَقُولُونَ وَكِيلٌ ﴿٥٦﴾

62a. *Biḍā'ah* means *merchandise*, or a *portion of one's property which one sends for traffic* (LL). *Money* is also called *biḍā'ah*, because it is a man's stock with which he can traffic.

67 And he said: O my sons, enter not by one gate but enter by different gates.^a And I can avail you naught against Allāh. Judgment is only Allāh's. On Him I rely, and on Him let the reliant rely.

68 And when they entered as their father had bidden them, it availed them naught against Allāh, but (it was only) a desire in the soul of Jacob, which he satisfied. And surely he was possessed of knowledge, because We had given him knowledge, but most people know not.^a

وَقَالَ يَبْنَئِي لَا تَدْخُلُوا مِنْ بَابٍ وَاحِدٍ
وَادْخُلُوا مِنْ أَبْوَابٍ مُتَفَرِّقَةٍ وَمَا
أُغْنِي عَنْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنَّا الْعُلَمَاءُ
إِلَّا اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَعَلَيْهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ
الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَهُمْ أَبُوهُمْ
مَا كَانَ يُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا
حَاجَةً فِي نَفْسِ يَعْقُوبَ قَضَاهَا وَإِنَّهُ
لُدُوْهُمْ لِيَأْخُذَهُمْ آلُ فِرْعَوْنَ لَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ
النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

SECTION 9: The Youngest Brother

69 And when they went in to Joseph, he lodged his brother with himself, saying: I am thy brother, so grieve not at what they do.

70 Then when he furnished them with their provision, (someone) placed the drinking-cup in his brother's bag.^a Then a crier cried out:^b O caravan, you are surely thieves!

وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَى يُوسُفَ أَوَى إِلَيْهِ أَخَاهُ
قَالَ إِنِّي أَنَا أَخُوكَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

فَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُمْ بِجَهَّازِهِمْ جَعَلَ السِّقَايَةَ
فِي رِجْلِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ أَيُّهَا
الْعَرَبُ إِنَّكُمْ لَسْرِقُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

67a. Jacob, it seems, had come to know by Divine revelation that Joseph was there, and therefore he ordered them to enter by different gates so that Joseph might find his brother. The next verse makes it clear when it says: *And surely he was possessed of knowledge because We had given him knowledge.*

68a. The Bible narrative represents Jacob as being quite ignorant in the matter.

70a. Though the Bible narrative ascribes the placing of the cup to Joseph, the Qur'ān does not say so. It is evident that the furnishing of provisions was not done by Joseph himself. It was somebody else who carried out the orders and furnished the provisions; from the preceding section it is clear that Joseph's servants did so, and when he had to return the money, he had to give an order to that effect to his servants. On this occasion no such order was given. And therefore it was by the king's servants that the king's drinking-cup was placed in the bag of Joseph's brother. It is not stated here whether it was done intentionally or was put there by mistake; the words may imply either.

Was it not one of Joseph's own brethren who did this act so that Benjamin might also be removed from Jacob? There is a clear hint to this possibility in v. 77, where

71 They said, while they turned towards them: What is it that you miss?

قَالُوا وَاقْبُلُوا عَلَيْنَا مَا ذَا نَفْقِدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 They said: We miss the king's drinking-cup, and he who brings it shall have a camel-load, and I am responsible for it.

قَالُوا نَفْقِدُ صَوْمَةَ الْمَلِكِ وَلِمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِ حِمْلُ بَعِيرٍ وَأَنَا بِهِ شَرِيعٌ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 They said: By Allāh! You know for certain that we have not come to make mischief in the land, and we are not thieves.

قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا جِئْنَا لِنَفْسِدَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا كُنَّا سَارِقِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 They said: But what is the penalty for this, if you are liars?

قَالُوا فَمَا جَزَاءُؤُهُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ كَذِبِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 They said: The penalty for this — the person in whose bag it is found, he himself is the penalty for it. Thus do we punish the wrongdoers.

قَالُوا جَزَاءُؤُهُ مَنْ وُجِدَ فِي سَرْحِلِهِ فَهُوَ جَزَاءُؤُهُ ط كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 So he began with their sacks before the sack of his brother,^a then he brought it out from his brother's sack. Thus did We plan for the sake of Joseph.^b He could not take his

فَبَدَأَ بِأُحِيَابِهِمْ قَبْلَ وِعَاءِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ اسْتَخْرَجَهَا مِنْ وِعَاءِ أَخِيهِ ط كَذَلِكَ كِدْنَا لِيُوسُفَ ط مَا كَانَ لِيَأْخُذَ أَخَاهُ فِي دِينِ

Joseph accuses them of having done some guilty deed: "You are in an evil condition", and a still clearer hint in v. 89, where Joseph says: "Do you know how you treated Joseph and his brother, when you were ignorant?" Besides the episode of the cup, there is nothing in the Holy Qur'ān to show that they were guilty of any mischief against Benjamin. I am therefore strongly of opinion that it was one of Joseph's own brethren who put the cup in Benjamin's bag, so as to get him involved in trouble, and remove him from the presence of Jacob, who loved him most after Joseph.

70b. It is a mistake to suppose that the crier was the very person who had placed the cup there. As v. 72 makes it clear, it was the king's drinking-cup; in other words it was not Joseph's personal property, but the property of the king, or government property. It is clear that the men who provided corn were different from those who had charge of the king's property.

76a. This was done out of respect for that brother, for they knew that Joseph had lodged him with himself.

76b. This makes it clear that this was not Joseph's plan, but a Divine plan. In other words, the circumstances were made to assist Joseph to keep his brother with him. Joseph's desire, no doubt, was to retain his brother Benjamin while the others returned; but he was unable to do so under the laws of Egypt, as is shown by what follows. This shows that one living under an alien government should abide by the laws of that government.

brother under the king's law, unless Allāh pleased. We raise in degree whom We please. And above everyone possessed of knowledge is the All-Knowing One.

77 They said: If he steal, a brother of his did indeed steal before.⁴ But Joseph kept it secret in his soul, and disclosed it not to them. He said: You are in an evil condition, and Allāh knows best what you state.

78 They said: O chief, he has a father, a very old man, so take one of us in his place. Surely we see thee to be of the doers of good.

79 He said: Allāh forbid that we should seize other than him with whom we found our property, for then surely we should be unjust!

السَّالِكِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ طَرَفَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ
مَنْ نَشَاءُ وَفَوْقَ كُلِّ ذِي عِلْمٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

قَالُوا إِنْ يَسْرِقْ فَقَدْ سَرَقَ أَخٌ لَهُ مِنْ
قَبْلُ فَأَسْرَهَا يُوسُفُ فِي نَفْسِهِ وَلَمْ
يُبْدِهَا لَهُمْ قَالَ أَنْتُمْ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا
وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَصِفُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

قَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الْعَزِيزُ إِنَّ لَهُ أَبًا شَيْخًا كَبِيرًا
فَخُذْ أَحَدًا مَكَانَهُ إِنَّا نَرَاكَ مِنَ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ أَنْ أَخُذَ إِلَّا مَنْ وَجَدْنَا
مَتَاعَنَا عِنْدَهُ إِنَّا إِذًا لَظَالِمُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

SECTION 10: Joseph Discloses his Identity

80 So when they despaired of him, they conferred together privately. The eldest of them said: Know you not that your father took from you a covenant in Allāh's name, and how you fell short of your duty about Joseph before? So I shall not leave this land, until my father permits me or Allāh decides for me; and He is the Best of the judges.

81 Go back to your father and say: O our father, thy son committed theft. And we bear witness only to

فَلَمَّا اسْتَيْسَسُوا مِنْهُ خَلَصُوا نَجِيًّا قَالَ
كَبِيرُهُمْ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ أَبَاكُمْ قَدْ أَخَذَ
عَلَيْكُمْ مَوَاقِفًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمِنْ قَبْلُ مَا
فَرَّطْتُمْ فِي يُوسُفَ فَلَنْ أَبْرَحَ الْأَرْضَ
حَتَّى يَأْذَنَ لِي أَبِي أَوْ يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ لِي ۗ
وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

إِرْجِعُوا إِلَىٰ آبَائِكُمْ فَقُولُوا يَا أَبَانَا إِنَّا
رَأَيْنَاكَ سَرَقْتَ وَمَا شَهِدْنَا إِلَّا بِمَا عَلَّمْنَا

77a. The brethren of Joseph made a false statement against Joseph to cast a veil over their own evil deeds. If Benjamin, they said, was a thief, so was his brother Joseph, as if they meant to say that this evil trait of character was due to the mother. There is probably a reference here to what is said in Gen. 31:19: "And Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's".

what we know, and we could not keep watch over the unseen.

82 And ask the town where we were, and the caravan with which we proceeded. And surely we are truthful.

83 He said: Nay, your souls have contrived an affair for you, so patience is good. Maybe Allāh will bring them together to me. Surely He is the Knowing, the Wise.

84 And he turned away from them, and said: O my sorrow for Joseph! And his eyes were filled^a (with tears) on account of the grief, then he repressed (grief).

85 They said: By Allāh! Thou wilt not cease remembering Joseph till thou art a prey to disease or thou art of those who perish.^a

86 He said: I complain of my grief and sorrow only to Allāh, and I know from Allāh what you know not.^a

87 O my sons, go and inquire about Joseph and his brother, and despair not of Allāh's mercy.^a Surely none

وَمَا كُنَّا لِلْغَيْبِ حَافِظِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

وَسَأَلِ الْقَرْيَةَ الَّتِي كُنَّا فِيهَا وَالْعِيرَ
الَّتِي أَقْبَلْنَا فِيهَا وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنْفُسُكُمْ أَهْرًا فَصَبِرُوا
جَمِيلًا عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَنِي بِهِمْ جَمِيعًا
إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٨٣﴾

وَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا سَفَى عَلَى يُوسُفَ
وَأَبْصَتَ عَيْنَهُ مِنَ الْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَاطِمٌ ﴿٨٤﴾

قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ لَتَنْتَوَى تَدْكُرُ يُوسُفَ حَتَّى تَلُوتَ
حَرَصًا أَوْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْهَالِكِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَشْكُو بَثِّي وَحُزْنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

يَا بَنِي إِدْهَبُوا فَتَحَسَّسُوا مِنْ يُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ
وَلَا تَأْسَؤْا مِنْ سُرُوحِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ

84a. *Ibyaḍḍa* and *bayyaḍa* convey almost identical significance, and under the latter we find *bayyaḍa al-siqā'a*, meaning *amla'a-hū*, i.e. *he filled the vessel* (T). LL also gives this significance of the words. I'Ab, too, interprets the words as meaning *the filling of eyes with tears* (Rz). Even if we accept the ordinary significance, *his eyes were whitened*, the meaning is that they were whitened with tears, which naturally came at the mention of Joseph.

85a. *Ḥaraḍ* is a person who is in a disordered and diseased state so that he is one from whom good is not expected. It also signifies one who falls down so that he is not able to rise again, or one affected by constant disease (LL).

86a. This shows clearly that Jacob knew by Divine revelation that Joseph was alive.

87a. Here the Holy Qur'ān again differs from the Bible and shows that Jacob was so certain of Joseph being alive because of the knowledge he received from God, that he sent his sons a third time to Egypt to ascertain about Joseph. It appears that he had an inkling also that Joseph was in Egypt.

despairs of Allāh's mercy except the disbelieving people.

88 So when they came to him, they said: O chief, distress has afflicted us and our family, and we have brought scanty money, so give us full measure and be charitable to us. Surely Allāh rewards the charitable.

89 He said: Do you know how you treated Joseph and his brother, when you were ignorant?

90 They said: Art thou indeed Joseph? He said: I am Joseph and this is my brother; Allāh has indeed been gracious to us. Surely he who keeps his duty and is patient — Allāh never wastes the reward of the doers of good.

91 They said: By Allāh! Allāh has indeed chosen thee over us, and we were certainly sinners.

92 He said: No reproof be against you this day.^a Allāh may forgive you, and He is the most Merciful of those who show mercy.

93 Take this my shirt and cast it before my father's face — he will come to know.^a And come to me with all your family.

مِنْ رَأْوِحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ قَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الْعَزِيزُ
مَسْنَا وَاهْلَانَا الصُّرَّ وَجِئْنَا بِبِضَاعَةٍ
مُرْتَضَىٰ قَاوِنٍ لِّنَا الْكَيْلَ وَتَصَدَّقْ
عَلَيْنَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْزِي الْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

قَالَ هَلْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ بِيُوسُفَ
وَآخِيهِ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ جَاهِلُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

قَالُوا بَلْ عَرَأْنَاكَ لَا نَتَّيُوسُفَ ط قَالَ أَنَا
يُوسُفَ وَهَذَا أَخِي زَقْنَا مِنَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا
إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا
يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَشْرَكَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَ
إِنْ كُنَّا لَخَطِيئِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾

قَالَ لَا تَتْرُوبُ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ
لَكُمْ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّحِيمِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

إِذْ هَبُوا بَقِيصِي هَذَا فَالْقُوَّةَ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِ
أَبِي يَأْتِ بِصَيْرٍ^{٩٤} وَأُنْزِلِي بِأَهْلِكُمْ
أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

92a. It is related that the Prophet took hold of the two sides of the gate of the Ka'bah on the day of the conquest of Makkah and said to the Quraysh: How do you think I should treat you? They said: We hope for good, a noble brother and the son of a noble brother. Then he said: I say as my brother Joseph said: "No reproof be against you this day" (Rz).

93a. *Baṣīr* means *one who sees things with the eyes*, as well as *one endowed with mental perception* or *one knowing* (LL). The Qur'ān does not say anywhere that Jacob had become blind. The shirt was sent as being a reminder of the torn shirt of Joseph, which Joseph's brethren had brought to Jacob (v. 18).

SECTION 11: Israel goes to Egypt

94 And when the caravan left (Egypt), their father said: Surely I scent (the power of) Joseph, if you call me not a dotard.^a

وَلَمَّا فَصَلَتِ الْعِيرُ قَالَ أَبُوهُمْ إِنِّي لَأَجِدُ رِيحَ يُوسُفَ لَوْلَا أَنْ تُفِتُّونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

95 They said: By Allāh! thou art surely in thy old error.

قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ إِنَّكَ لَفِي ضَلَالِكَ الْقَدِيمِ ﴿٩٥﴾

96 Then when the bearer of good news came, he cast it before his face so he became certain. He said: Did I not say to you that I know from Allāh what you know not?

فَلَمَّا أَنْ جَاءَ الْبَشِيرُ أَلْقَاهُ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ فَارْتَدَّ بَصِيرًا ۗ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ ۖ إِنِّي أَخْبَرُكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

97 They said: O our father, ask forgiveness of our sins for us, surely we are sinners.

قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا اسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا خَاطِئِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾

98 He said: I shall ask forgiveness for you of my Lord. Surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.

قَالَ سَوْفَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٩٨﴾

99 Then when they went in to Joseph, he lodged his parents^a with himself and said: Enter Egypt in safety, if Allāh please.

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَى يُوسُفَ أَدَّى إِلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَ قَالَ ادْخُلُوا أَرْضَنَا بِسَلَامٍ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمِينٌ ﴿٩٩﴾

100 And he raised his parents on the throne,^a and they fell prostrate for his sake.^b And he said: O my father, this

وَرَفَعَهُ آيَاتِهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَحَرُّوْا لَهُ سُجَّدًا ۗ وَقَالَ يَا أَبَتِ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ

94a. When the caravan in which were Joseph's brethren departed from Egypt, Jacob again received assurance from on high about Joseph, so he said to those about him that he scented the power of Joseph. Jacob knew that Joseph was alive and of this he informed his sons again and again, but he now told them further that he had received an assurance from God that Joseph occupied a high position.

99a. Leah was Rachel's elder sister and a wife of Jacob (Gen. 29:16–28). The fact that Rachel was dead in no way contradicts this statement, because Leah would be Joseph's mother in both capacities, as his mother's sister and as his father's wife.

100a. The royal throne is not meant here, for Joseph himself did not sit on the royal throne. Joseph raised his parents to his own raised seat; or the meaning may be that he placed them in a good position. Compare Gen. 47:11: "And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land".

100b. Seeing the highly dignified position to which Joseph had been raised in Egypt, they all fell prostrate before God as a mark of thanksgiving. Joseph speaks of

is the significance of my vision of old — my Lord has made it true. And He was indeed kind to me, when He brought me forth from the prison, and brought you from the desert after the devil had sown dissensions between me and my brethren. Surely my Lord is Benignant to whom He pleases. Truly He is the Knowing, the Wise.

رُدِّيَايَ مِنْ قَبْلِ نَقْدِ جَعَلَهَا سَرِيًّا
حَقًّا وَقَدْ أَحْسَنَ بِي إِذْ أَخْرَجْتَنِي مِنَ
السِّجْنِ وَجَاءَ بِكُمْ مِنَ الْبَدْوِ مِنْ بَعْدِ
أَنْ نَزَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ إِخْوَتِي ط
إِنِّي لَرَبِّي لَطِيفٌ لِمَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ
الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٠١﴾

101 My Lord, Thou hast given me of the kingdom and taught me of the interpretation of sayings. Originator of the heavens and the earth, Thou art my Friend in this world and the Hereafter. Make me die in submission and join me with the righteous.

رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي
مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ مَنْ أَنْتَ وَرَبِّي فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَأَلْحَقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

102 This is of the announcements relating to the unseen (which) We reveal to thee, and thou wast not with them when they resolved upon their affair, and they were devising plans.^a

ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ
وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ اتَّخَذُوا أَمْرَهُمْ
وَهُمْ يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

this, i.e. of the dignity to which he was raised, as the fulfilment of his vision. This is made clear in the verse that follows.

102a. Rodwell's remark that "Muhammad must at this period, while recasting and working up these materials, have entered upon a course of wilful dissimulation and deceit (although the end would justify to him the means employed) in claiming inspiration for them" is due to crass ignorance, if not to deep malice. It has already been noted how the Qur'ān, after relating that which befell the opponents of a prophet, immediately changes the subject, hinting that the same punishment was in store for the opponents of the Prophet, and throughout the Holy Qur'ān the *anbā' al-ghaib*, or the announcements relating to the unseen, signify not the ancient histories of past prophets, but a repetition of those histories in the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Take this case, for instance. The history of Joseph ends in the last verse with his prayer for being classed with the righteous at his death, and there is a reference in this verse to the similar events that must befall the Holy Prophet. It has already been shown how the events in the lives of the two prophets closely resemble each other. The reference in "when they resolved upon their affair and they were devising plans" is to the resolution of the Quraysh and their plans of either *killing the Prophet* or *banishing him* or *imprisoning him*; see 8:30. The two verses which follow and the whole of the next section show still more clearly that a change has been introduced with this verse. The Qur'ān does not relate stories for the sake of giving information of the past, but for the lessons which they afford for the future guidance of man. Compare 3:44a, 11:49a, and 12:3b.

103 And most men believe not, though thou desirest it eagerly. وَمَا أَكْثَرَ النَّاسَ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 And thou askest them no reward for it. It is nothing but a reminder for all mankind. وَمَا تَسْأَلُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

SECTION 12: A Lesson for the Prophet's Opponents

105 And how many a sign in the heavens and the earth do they pass by! yet they turn away from it. وَكَآيِنٌ مِّنْ آيَةٍ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ يَسُرُّوْنَ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 And most of them believe not in Allāh without associating others (with Him). وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِٱللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ مُّشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 Do they then feel secure from the coming to them of an all-encompassing chastisement from Allāh or from the coming to them of the hour suddenly, while they perceive not? أَفَأَمِنُوا أَن تَأْتِيَهُمْ غَاشِيَةٌ مِّنْ عَدَابِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 Say: This is my way: I call to Allāh, with certain knowledge — I and those who follow me. And glory be to Allāh! and I am not of the polytheists. قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى ٱللَّهِ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحٰنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

109 And We sent not before thee any but men, from the people of the towns, to whom We sent revelation. Have they not then travelled in the land and seen what was the end of those before them? And certainly the abode of the Hereafter is best for those who keep their duty. Do you not then understand? وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْقُرْءَانِ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَكَدَّ أُرُ ٱلْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 Until, when the messengers despaired and (the people) thought that they were told a lie, Our help came to them, and whom We pleased was delivered. And Our punishment is not averted from the guilty people.^a حَتَّىٰ إِذَا ٱسْتَيْسَسَ ٱلرُّسُلُ وَظَنُّوْا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ كُذِّبُوا جَاءَهُمْ نَصْرُنَا فَنُجِّى مَنْ شَاءَ وَلَا يَرُدُّ ٱبْسَاطَهُنَّ ٱلْقَوْمُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿١١٠﴾

111 In their histories there is certainly a lesson for men of understanding. It is not a narrative which could be forged, but a verification of what is before it, and a distinct explanation of all things, and a guide and a mercy to a people who believe.

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصصِهِمْ عِبْرَةً لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ
 مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ وَلَكِن تَصْدِيقَ
 الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ
 شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

110a. The personal pronouns, if not rightly understood, quite distort the sense of the passage. The messengers warn their people, but the latter are so stubborn that the messengers at length despair of their people benefiting by the warning. The people, on the other hand, deem, on account of the delay of the punishment, that what the prophets had spoken to them about the coming of the punishment was a lie. Then it is that the promised help for the prophets comes and the punishment with which the evildoers are threatened overtakes them. That the prophets never despair of Divine assistance coming to them, in accordance with Divine promise, is clear from what has already been said in v. 87: "Surely none despairs of Allāh's mercy except the disbelieving people."