



CHAPTER 73

Al-Muzzammil: The one covering himself up

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 sections; 20 verses)

This chapter receives its title from the Holy Prophet's description in the first verse as one who had *covered himself up*. The various significances of that word are given in the footnote on that verse, but, having regard to the subject-matter of this chapter, which enjoins prayer, the word *Muzzammil* signifies *One who has prepared himself for prayer*. The chapter opens with an injunction to the Holy Prophet to pass the night in prayer, ending with a general injunction to all believers to be ever mindful of prayer. The latter part of the first section enjoins the Holy Prophet to bear patiently the ill-treatment of his enemies, who would soon receive their due punishment, as did Pharaoh when he wanted to destroy Moses. The previous chapter promises protection to the Prophet, and the Prophet is here told to seek that protection through prayer, especially prayer during the night.

The revelation of this chapter belongs to the early Makkan period, and the commentators generally think it to be one of the earliest revelations, being, according to some, the third in order of revelation. General opinion, however, represents the last verse, which forms the second section of this chapter, to have been revealed at Madinah because fighting in the way of Allāh is mentioned there. But see 20*b*, where it is shown that the reference may be prophetic, and therefore that verse may also belong to the same early period.

SECTION 1: The Prophet enjoined to pray

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent,
the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1 O thou covering thyself up!^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ ۝

1a. *Zammala* means *he wrapped him in his garments*, and *tazammala*, *he wrapped himself up in his garments* (LL). The Prophet is here called *Muzzammil*, originally, *mutazammil*, *one who had wrapped himself up in his garments*. The ordinary explanation is that the Prophet wrapped himself up in his clothes on receiving the Call, his first revelation. He is reported to have come back home trembling after his first spiritual experience, and to have said to his wife *zammilū-nī*, *zammilū-nī*, *cover me, cover me* (B. 1:1). But various other explanations are given and some take it as an allusion to his preparation for prayers. The Prophet's own words, as recorded in *Bukhārī*, make it clear that the reference here is to his covering himself up on receiving the first revelation. He is in fact

2 Rise to pray by night except a little,

فُجِرَ اللَّيْلِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۝

3 Half of it, or lessen it a little,

تُصَفِّئُ أَوْ تُنْقِصُ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ۝

4 Or add to it, and recite the Qur'ān in a leisurely manner.

أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ

5 Surely We shall charge thee with a weighty word.^a

تَرْتِيلًا ۝

6 The rising by night is surely the firmest way to tread and most effective in speech.^a

إِنَّا سَأَلْنِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ۝

إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً

وَ أَقْوَمُ قِيلًا ۝

7 Truly thou hast by day prolonged occupation.

إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا ۝

8 And remember the name of thy Lord and devote thyself to Him with (complete) devotion.

وَ اذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَ تَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ

تَبْتِيلًا ۝

9 The Lord of the East and the West — there is no God but He — so take Him for Protector.

رَبِّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ

إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ۝

10 And bear patiently what they say and forsake them with a becoming withdrawal.

وَ اصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَ اهْجُرْهُمْ

هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا ۝

told that he should not fear or tremble on account of the tremendous responsibility placed on him of reforming humanity, but should seek the help of God, through prayer to Him, the most effective prayer being prayer in the night, when the world is asleep.

5a. Being burdened with the guidance of the whole world was indeed a weighty word, the weightiest word with which any human being has been charged in the whole history of humanity.

6a. The praying at night is here described as being firstly *the firmest way to tread* — to tread the way of *Life*, to tread upon all evil inclinations — and, secondly, *the most effective in speech* — what one says to other people becomes most effective. The speaker, the inviter to Truth, has his heart strengthened with force Divine through his lengthened devotions in the still of the night, and his word therefore carries the Divine force with it and enters the hearts of those who listen to him. Thus the night devotion, we are told, gives a man the strength to do the greatest deeds and makes him perfect, giving him at the same time strength to make others perfect because his words, coming out of a sincere heart, which bows to none but God, carry conviction to the hearts of others. Thus was the Prophet fortified doubly, in his deeds as well as in his words, to carry his message to other people, and thus should his true followers try to get strength from the same Divine source in the dead of night, when all veils between man and God are removed by utter silence prevailing everywhere, the only cry being the cry of the devotee. The Divine light in its full brilliance then illumines the heart of man and the heart of man reflects that light and illumines the world.

11 And leave Me and the deniers, possessors of plenty, and respite them a little.

وَذَرْنِي وَالْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُولِيَ النَّعْمَةِ
وَمَهْلُهُمْ فَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 Surely with Us are heavy fetters and a flaming Fire,

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَجَحِيمًا ﴿١٢﴾

13 And food that chokes and a painful chastisement.

وَطَعَامًا ذَا عِضْمَةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣﴾

14 On the day when the earth and the mountains quake and the mountains become (as) heaps of sand let loose.^a

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَكَانَتِ الْجِبَالُ كَثِيبًا مَّهِيلًا ﴿١٤﴾

15 Surely We have sent to you a Messenger, a witness against you, as We sent a messenger to Pharaoh.^a

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَاهِدًا عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا ﴿١٥﴾

16 But Pharaoh disobeyed the messenger, so We seized him with a violent grip.

فَقَطَعْنَا فِرْعَوْنَ الرَّسُولَ فَاخَذْنَاهُ أَخَذًا وَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 How, then, if you disbelieve, will you guard yourselves on the day which will make children grey-headed?

فَكَيْفَ تَتَّقُونَ إِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ يَوْمًا يَجْعَلُ الْوِلْدَانَ شِيبًا ﴿١٧﴾

18 The heaven being rent asunder thereby. His promise is ever fulfilled.^a

السَّمَاءُ مُنْفَطِرٌ بِهِ ط كَانَ وَعْدُهُ مَفْعُولًا ﴿١٨﴾

14a. Vv. 12–14 speak of the wretched condition in which the present possessors of ease and plenty would find themselves, and how the great obstacles to the spread of truth would be removed before the advance of Truth; see 20:105a.

15a. The Holy Prophet's likeness to Moses is stated in the clearest terms in this, one of the earliest revelations, and thus the Holy Prophet's claim to be the promised prophet of Deut. 18:18, who is expressly stated to be the "like" of Moses, is as old as his revelation.

18a. Note the clear and decided tone of these verses, which at so early a period warned the opponents of the evil fate which they were destined to meet. The horrors of that day are spoken of as *making children grey-headed* and *rending heaven asunder*. The commentators admit that it is an allegorical description of the horrors of the day, for you say, speaking of a terrible day, that it is *a day which makes grey the forelocks of children* (Rz). The coupling of this decidedly allegorical description with the *rending asunder of heaven* is conclusive proof that the latter description must also be taken allegorically; in fact, as such, the description is applicable to both the day of Resurrection and the doom of the opponents in this life. Such phrases as *the rolling up of heaven* (21:104), *the rending asunder of heaven* (as here and in 82:1), *the removing the covering of heaven* (81:11), and

19 Surely this is a Reminder; so let him, who will, take a way to his Lord.

إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ ۖ فَمَنْ شَاءَ
اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 2: Prayer enjoined on Muslims

20 Thy Lord knows indeed that thou passest in prayer nearly two-thirds of the night, and (sometimes) half of it, and (sometimes) a third of it, as do a party of those with thee. And Allāh measures the night and the day. He knows that (all of) you are not able to do it, so He has turned to you (mercifully);^a so read of the Qur'ān that which is easy for you. He knows that there are sick among you, and others who travel in the land seeking of Allāh's bounty, and others who fight in Allāh's way.^b So read as much of it as is easy (for you), and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and offer to Allāh a goodly gift. And whatever of good you send on beforehand for yourselves, you will find it with Allāh — that is best and greatest in reward. And ask forgiveness of Allāh. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ
مِن ثُلُثَيْ اللَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُ وَثُلُثَيْهِ
وَطَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ وَاللَّهُ
يُقَدِّرُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ عَلِمَ أَنْ لَنْ
تُحْصُوهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاقْرَءُوا
مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ ط عَلِمَ أَنْ
سَيَكُونُ مِنكُمْ مَّرْضَىٰ ۖ وَآخَرُونَ
يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِنْ
فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَآخَرُونَ يَقَاتِلُونَ فِي
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۖ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ
وَآفِيئُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ
وَاقْرَءُوا لِلَّهِ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا وَمَا
تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا ۖ وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا ط
وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

other similar phrases, all really speak of *the sweeping away of the old order of things to give place to a new*, attended by the necessary terrors and disasters, and hence the description applies to the doom of a nation in this world as well as to the entirely new order of things which will be ushered in with the Resurrection. See also 21:104a and 81:11a.

20a. The first portion of the verse simply states the fact that the Holy Prophet and those with him passed sometimes two-thirds, sometimes a half, and sometimes a third of the night in prayer; and hence it is meaningless to say that the first portion of the verse is abrogated by the second. The latter portion of the verse states that, though the Holy Prophet and his early zealous companions passed a great part of the night in prayer, all Muslims could not follow their example, and hence they are told that they might pray by night so long as it was easy to them and not a burden. By the reading of the Qur'ān is here meant its recital in the night-prayer called *tahajjud*.

20b. The mention here of fighting is very probably a prophetic statement, as we find in many other places in the Holy Qur'ān; hence the occurrence of the word is no argument that the verse was not revealed at Makkah.



CHAPTER 74

Al-Muddaththir: The one wrapping himself up

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 sections; 56 verses)

This chapter is by general consent admitted to be the second in the order of revelation. A period probably of six months had elapsed since the first revelation before the second was received, and this period is known as the *fatrah* or *intermission*. This period of *fatrah* pressed heavily on the Holy Prophet, and he was greatly grieved on account of this intermission. Once more, however, after the *fatrah* had passed away, the angel of the Lord appeared to him, and the Prophet sought to *wrap himself up* in clothes, hence the title. He is told not to seek seclusion but to arise and warn a people sunk low in vice and immorality. Thus, while the previous chapter tells the Prophet how to attain to perfection through prayer to God, here he is told to make others perfect by warning them of the evil consequences of their evil deeds.

SECTION 1: The Prophet is enjoined to Warn

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent,
the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

- 1 O thou who wrappest thyself up,^a
- 2 Arise and warn,^a
- 3 And thy Lord do magnify,
- 4 And thy garments do purify,^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ
قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ
وَسَبِّحْ فَكَبِّرْ
وَتَطَهَّرْ

1a. *Muddaththir* is originally *mutadaththir*, meaning one wearing a *dithār*, i.e., *any-one wrapping himself up in a dithār* or a garment (LL). Some take the word metaphorically, the meaning being *one clad in the garments of prophethood* or *one obscure*.

2a. Compare with the address contained in the last chapter. There the Prophet is commanded to engage himself in devotion so that he should attain to perfection; here he is commanded to convey the message and to warn, to make others perfect.

4a. Purification of the garments does not relate only to the outward act of purification, but also to the purification of the heart, as is shown in the next verse, which contains a command to shun every kind of uncleanness.

- 5 And uncleanness do shun, وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ ⑤
- 6 And do no favour seeking gain,^a وَلَا تَمُنْ نَسْتَكْثِرُ ⑥
- 7 And for the sake of thy Lord, be patient. وَإِلَيْكَ فَاصْبِرْ ⑦
- 8 For when the trumpet is sounded, فَإِذَا نُقِرَ فِي النَّاقُورِ ⑧
- 9 That will be — that day — a difficult day, فذَلِكَ يَوْمَ مِيزِ يَوْمٍ عَسِيرٍ ⑨
- 10 For the disbelievers, anything but easy. عَلَى الْكُفْرِينَ غَيْرُ يَسِيرٍ ⑩
- 11 Leave Me alone with him whom I created, ذُرْنِي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ⑪
- 12 And gave him vast riches, وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَا لَا مَمْدُودًا ⑫
- 13 And sons dwelling in his presence, وَبَنِينَ شُهُودًا ⑬
- 14 And made matters easy for him, وَمَهَّدْتُ لَهُ تَمْهِيدًا ⑭
- 15 And yet he desires that I should give more!^a ثُمَّ يَطْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ ⑮
- 16 By no means! Surely he is inimical to Our messages. كَلَّا ط إِنَّهُ كَانَ لِآيَاتِنَا عَنِيدًا ⑯
- 17 I will make a distressing punishment overtake him.^a سَأَرْهُقَهُ صَعُودًا ⑰

6a. The reference is in particular to the great favour which the Prophet did to others by warning them and guiding them to the right way. But the words are general; even when conferring a worldly benefit on another, there should be no intention to receive any return for it.

15a. This description is general, but the case of Walid ibn Mughīrah is specially noted by almost all commentators. Rz gives details of an occurrence in which Walid was specially concerned. Abū Jahl and other leaders in the persecution of the Holy Prophet assembled together to ponder what name to give to the Prophet. Somebody suggested that he was a poet, but Walid said that his word was not like that of a poet. Another suggested that he was a soothsayer, but Walid rejected this, too, on the ground that Muḥammad never spoke a lie, whereas the soothsayers often proved liars. A third suggestion was that he was a madman, but this too was found inconsistent with the circumstances of the Holy Prophet's life. Then Walid left the company, his comrades thinking that he was going over to Islām. Abū Jahl followed him to question him about the matter, and was told that, after pondering deeply on the question, he had come to the conclusion that the Prophet was a *sāḥir*, i.e., an *enchanter*, because, he said, "It is the enchanter who separates the father from the son, the brother from the brother, and the husband from the wife". Thereupon a proclamation was made in the streets of Makkah that the Prophet was a *sāḥir*.

17a. Three of Walid's sons became converts to Islām, and the rest perished, his wealth began to diminish, and ultimately he himself died in disgrace and poverty.

18 Surely he reflected and determined,

إِنَّهُ فَكَّرَ وَقَدَّرَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 But may he be destroyed how he determined!

فَقْتُلْ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Again, may he be destroyed how he determined!

ثُمَّ قَتِلْ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Then he looked,

ثُمَّ نَظَرَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Then frowned and scowled,

ثُمَّ عَبَسَ وَبَسَرَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Then turned back and was big with pride,

ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Then said: This is naught but magic from of old!

فَقَالَ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ بَدِئْتُمُ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 This is naught but the word of a mortal!

إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 I will cast him into hell.

سَأُصَلِّيهِ سَقَرَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And what will make thee realize what hell is?

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا سَقَرٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 It leaves naught, and spares naught.

لَا تُبْقِي وَلَا تَذَرُ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 It scorches the mortal.

لَوَاحٍ لِّلْبَشَرِ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Over it are nineteen.^a

عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And We have made none but angels wardens of the Fire, and We have not made their number but as a trial for those who disbelieve, that those who have been given the Book may be certain and those who believe may increase in faith, and those who have been given the Book and the believers may not doubt; and that those in whose hearts is a disease and the disbelievers may say: What does

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ إِلَّا مَلَائِكَةً
وَمَا جَعَلْنَا عَدَّتَهُمُ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا لِيَسْتَيْقِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
الْكِتَابَ وَيَزْدَادَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِيمَانًا
وَلَا يَرْتَابَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَلِيَقُولَ الَّذِينَ فِي
قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ وَالْكَافِرُونَ مَاذَا

30a. It should be noted that this is called a *parable* in the next verse: *what does Allāh mean by this parable?* All that the Qur'ān says is that *over it are nineteen*. The commentators think that nineteen angels, or nineteen classes, or nineteen ranks may be meant. The particular number is considered to be due to the misuse of nineteen faculties which are enumerated by the commentators (Rz).

Allāh mean by this parable? Thus Allāh leaves in error whom He pleases, and guides whom He pleases. And none knows the hosts of thy Lord but He. And this is naught but a Reminder to mortals.

أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا امْتِثَالًا كَذَلِكَ يُضِلُّ
اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَا
يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَمَا هِيَ
إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْبَشَرِ ﴿٥٦﴾

SECTION 2: The Warning

32 Nay, by the moon!

كَأَلَا وَالْقَمَرِ ﴿٥٧﴾

33 And the night when it departs!

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذْ أَدْبَرَ ﴿٥٨﴾

34 And the dawn when it shines!—

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا أَسْفَرَ ﴿٥٩﴾

35 Surely it is one of the gravest (misfortunes).

إِنَّهَا لِأَحَدَى الْأَكْبَرِ ﴿٦٠﴾

36 A warning to mortals,

نَذِيرًا لِلْبَشَرِ ﴿٦١﴾

37 To him among you who will go forward or will remain behind.^a

لِمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَتَقَدَّمَ أَوْ

38 Every soul is held in pledge for what it earns,

يَتَأَخَّرَ ﴿٦٢﴾

39 Except the people of the right hand.

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

40 In Gardens, they ask one another,

إِلَّا أَصْحَابَ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٦٤﴾

41 About the guilty:

فِي جَنَّاتٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

42 What has brought you into hell?

عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

43 They will say: We were not of those who prayed;

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ ﴿٦٧﴾

44 Nor did we feed the poor;^a

قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

45 And we indulged in vain talk with vain talkers;

وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمِ الْمُسْكِينِ ﴿٦٩﴾

وَكُنَّا نَحُضُّ مَعَ الْغَائِضِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

37a. The light of Truth would shine forth, we are told in the above verses, but not without a grave misfortune to those who refuse to go forward, and this is a warning. Those who go forward, on the other hand, will not be affected by that, the gravest of misfortunes, for the people of the right hand will be in Gardens, every soul being pledged for what it earns. The prophetic strain adopted here regarding the doom of the opponents is continued to the end of the chapter.

44a. Note the reply to v. 42 — *What has brought you into hell?* It is neglect of two chief duties: *we did not pray* and *we did not feed the poor*. These are thus the two pillars of faith, service of God and service of humanity.

46 And we called the day of Judgment a lie;

وَكُنَّا نَكْتُمُ الْيَوْمَ الرَّسْمَ ۝٥٦

47 Till the inevitable overtook us.

حَتَّىٰ آتَانَا الْيَقِينُ ۝٥٧

48 So the intercession of intercessors will not avail them.

فَمَا تَنْفَعُهُمْ شَفَاعَةُ الشَّافِعِينَ ۝٥٨

49 What is then the matter with them, that they turn away from the Reminder.

فَمَا لَهُمْ عَنِ التَّذْكَرَةِ مُعْرِضِينَ ۝٥٩
كَأَنَّهُمْ حُمُرٌ مُّسْتَنْفِرَةٌ ۝٦٠

50 As if they were frightened asses,

فَرَّتْ مِنْ قَسْوَرَةٍ ۝٦١

51 Fleeing from a lion?

52 Nay, everyone of them desires that he should be given pages spread out^a —

بَلْ يَرِيدُ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ يُؤْتَىٰ
صُحُفًا مِّنْشَرَّةٍ ۝٦٢

53 By no means! But they fear not the Hereafter.

كَلَّا بَلْ لَا يَخَافُونَ الْآخِرَةَ ۝٦٣

54 Nay, it is surely a Reminder.

كَلَّا إِنَّهُ تَذْكِرَةٌ ۝٦٤

55 So whoever pleases may mind it.

فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَرْهُ ۝٦٥

56 And they will not mind unless Allāh please.^a He is Worthy that duty should be kept to Him and Worthy to forgive.^b

وَمَا يَذْكُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ
هُوَ أَهْلُ التَّقْوَىٰ وَأَهْلُ الْغُفْرَةِ ۝٦٦

52a. Everyone of them would have a revelation granted to him direct from heaven. To this they gave expression repeatedly: Why does not Allāh speak to us? (2:118).

56a. In the Qurʾān God does not compel men to adopt one way or another. He points out the right course from the wrong and leaves it to the choice of the individual: *So whoever pleases may mind it* (v. 55); *We have truly shown him the way; he may be thankful or unthankful* (76:3). Similar verses abound in the Holy Qurʾān. What, then, does the statement, *and they will not mind unless Allāh please*, mean? This statement is subject to the Divine laws already explained. Allāh is pleased to guide those in the right way and to make those “mind” who open their hearts to receive it. Note how clearly the verses preceding it depict the peculiar condition of those who do not even listen to the Reminder: *What is then the matter with them, that they turn away from the Reminder, as if they were frightened asses, fleeing from a lion?* (vv. 49–51). For a similar statement occurring in 76:30, see 76:30a.

56b. God is Worthy that duty of Him should be observed and therefore whoever fails to observe that duty must suffer. But God is not a hard taskmaster; if man fails to observe his duty, God in His unbounded love comes to his help and covers his faults with His vast forgiveness. The epithet here used — *Worthy to forgive* — indicates that forgiveness is in His nature; even if man does not ask for forgiveness, He forgives.