



Tafheemul Quran in Colors Arabic English 019 Maryam Syed Abul Aala Maududi Evergreen Islamic Center

مَرْيَمَ Maryam

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Name

The Surah takes its name *Maryam* from Ayat 16.

Period of Revelation

It was revealed before the migration to Habash. We learn from authentic traditions that Jaafar recited Ayats 1-40 of this Surah in the court of Negus when he called the migrants to his court.

Historical Background

We have already briefly referred to the conditions of that period in the introduction to Surah Al-Kahf. Here we shall give full details of the same conditions, which will be helpful in grasping the meaning of this Surah and the other Surahs

of this period. When the chiefs of the Quraish felt that they had failed to suppress the Islamic movement by ridicule, sarcasm, and by holding out promises and threats and by making false accusations, they resorted to persecution, beating and economic pressure. They would get hold of the new Muslims of their clans and persecute them, starve them and would even inflict physical torture on them in order to coerce them to give up Islam. The most pitiful victims of their persecution were the poor people and the slaves and the proteges of the Quraish. They were beaten black and blue, were imprisoned and kept thirsty and hungry and were dragged on the burning sands of Makkah. The people would get work done from the professional laborers but would not pay them their wages. As an instance we give below the story of Khabbab bin Arat, which is given in Bukhari and Muslim: I used to work as a blacksmith in Makkah. Once I did some work for Aas bin Wail. When I went to ask for my wages, he said: I will not pay your wages unless you disown Muhammad.

In the same connection, Khabbab says: One day the Prophet (peace be upon him) was sitting in the shadow of the Kabah. I went to him and said, O Messenger of Allah, now persecution has gone to its extreme; why do you not pray to Allah (for relief)? At this the Prophet (peace be upon him) was greatly moved. He said: The believers before you were persecuted much more than you. Their bones were scraped with combs of iron and their heads were cut with saws, but still they did not give up their faith. I assure you that Allah will fulfill this mission, and there will come a

period of such peace that one would travel from Sanna to Hadramaut, and he will have no fear from anyone, save Allah. But you people have already become impatient. (Bukhari).

When the conditions became unbearable, the Prophet (peace be upon him), in the month of Rajab of the fifth year of Prophethood, gave advice to his companions to this effect: You may well migrate to Habash, for there is a king, who does not allow any kind of injustice to anyone, and there is good in his land. You should remain there till the time that Allah provides a remedy for your affliction.

Accordingly, at first, eleven men and four women left for Habash. The Quraish pursued them up to the coast but fortunately they got a timely boat for Habash at the seaport of Shuaibah, and they escaped arrest. Then after a few months, other people migrated to Habash and their number rose to eighty three men and eleven women of the Quraish and seven non Quraish. After this, only forty persons were left with the Prophet (peace be upon him) at Makkah.

There was a great hue and cry in Makkah after this migration, for every family of the Quraish was adversely affected by this. There was hardly a family of the Quraish which did not lose a son, a son in law, a daughter, a brother or a sister. For instance, there were among the migrants the near relatives of Abu Jahl, Abu Sufyan and other chiefs of the Quraish who were notorious for their persecution of the Muslims. As a result of this, some of them became even bitter in their enmity of Islam. While there were others who were so moved by this that they embraced Islam. For

instance, this migration left a deep mark on Umar. One of his relatives, Laila, daughter of Hathmah, says: I was packing my luggage for migration while my husband Amr bin Rabiya had gone out. In the meantime Umar came there and began to watch me, while I was engaged in preparation for the journey. He said: Are you also going to migrate? I answered: Yes by God, you people have persecuted us much. But the wide earth of Allah is open for us. Now we are going to a place where Allah will grant us peace. At this, I noticed such signs of emotion on the face of Umar as I had never seen before. He simply said: May God be with you and he went away.

After the migration, the Quraish held consultations, and decided to send Abdullah bin Abi Rabiya, half brother of Abu Jahl, and Amr bin Aas to Habash with precious gifts so as to persuade Negus to send the migrants back to Makkah. Umm Salmah (a wife of the Prophet), who was among the migrants, has related this part of the story in details. She says: When these two clever statesmen of the Quraish reached Habash, they distributed the gifts among the courtiers of the king and persuaded them to recommend strongly to him to send the migrants back. Then they saw Negus himself and, presenting rich gifts to him, said: Some headstrong brats of our city have come to your land and our chiefs have sent us to you with the request that you may kindly send them back. These brats have forsaken our faith and have not embraced your faith either, but have invented a new faith. As soon as they had finished their speech, all the courtiers recommended their case saying: We should

send such people back to their city for their people know them better. It is not proper for us to keep them here. At this the king was annoyed and said: I am not going to give them back without proper inquiry. As these people have put their trust in my country rather than in any other country and have come here to take shelter, I will not betray them. At first I will send for them and investigate into the allegations these people have made against them. Then I will make my final decision. Accordingly, the king sent for the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and asked them to come to his court.

When the migrants received the message of the king, they assembled and held consultations as to what they should say to the king. At last they came to this unanimous decision: We will present before the king the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) without adding anything to or withholding anything from them and leave it to him whether he lets us remain here or turns us out of his country. When they came to the court, the king put this problem abruptly before them: I understand that you have given up the faith of your own people and have neither embraced my faith nor any other existing faith. I would like to know what your new faith is. At this, Jafar bin Abi Talib, on behalf of the migrants, made an extempore speech to this effect: O King, we were sunk deep in ignorance and had become very corrupt; then Muhammad (peace be upon him) came to us as a Messenger of God, and did his best to reform us. But the Quraish began to persecute his followers, so we have come to your country in the hope that here we

will be free from persecution. After his speech, the king said: Please recite a piece of the revelation which has been sent down by God to your Prophet. In response, Jafar recited that portion of Surah Maryam which relates the story of Prophets John and Jesus (peace be upon them). The king listened to it and wept, so much so that his beard became wet with tears. When Jafar finished the recital, he said: Most surely this revelation and the message of Jesus (peace be upon him) have come from the same source. By God I will not give you up into the hands of these people.

Next day, Amr bin Aas went to Negus and said: Please send for them again and ask them concerning the creed they hold about Jesus (peace be upon him), the son of Mary, for they say a horrible thing about him. The king again sent for the migrants, who had already learned about the scheme of Amr. They again sat together and held consultations in regard to the answer they should give to the king, if he asked about the belief they held about Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him). Though this was a very critical situation and all of them were uneasy about it, they decided that they would say the same thing that Allah and His Messenger had taught them. Accordingly, when they went to the court, the king put to them the question that had been suggested by Amr bin Aas. So Jafar bin Abi Talib stood up and answered without the least hesitation: He was a Servant of Allah and His Messenger. He was a Spirit and a Word of Allah which had been sent to virgin Mary. At this the king picked up a straw from the ground and said, Bye God, Jesus was not worth this straw more than what you have said about him.

After this the king returned the gifts sent by the Quraish, saying: I do not take any bribe. Then he said to the migrants, you are allowed to stay here in perfect peace."

Theme and Subject

Keeping in view this historical background, it becomes quite obvious that this Surah was revealed to serve the migrants as a provision for their journey to Habash, as if to say: Though you are leaving your country as persecuted emigrants to a Christian country, you should not in the least hide anything from the teachings you have received. Therefore, you should plainly say to the Christians that Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was not the son of God. After relating the story of Prophets John and Jesus in Ayats 1-40, the story of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon them) has been related (Ayats 41-50) also for the benefit of the migrants for he also had been forced like them to leave his country by the persecution of his father, his family and his countrymen. On the one hand, this meant to console the emigrants that they were following the footsteps of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) and would attain the same good end as that Prophet did. On the other hand, it meant to warn the disbeliever of Makkah that they should note it well that they were in the position of the cruel people who had persecuted their forefather and leader, Abraham, while the Muslim emigrants were in the position of Prophet Abraham himself.

Then other Prophets have been mentioned in Ayats 51-65 with a view to impress that Muhammad (peace be upon him) had brought the same way of life that had been

brought by the former Prophets but their followers had become corrupt and adopted wrong ways.

In the concluding passage (Ayats 66-98), a strong criticism has been made of the evil ways of the disbelievers of Makkah, while the Believers have been given the good news that they would come out successful and become the beloved of the people, in spite of the worst efforts of the enemies of the truth.

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1. Kaf. Ha. Ya. A'in. Sad.

كَهَيِّعَصَ ٢١

2. A mention ^{*1} of the mercy of your Lord to His slave Zachariah. ^{*2}

ذِكْرُ رَحْمَتِ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُ زَكَرِيَّا ٢٢

^{*1} For comparison please see the story of Zachariah as given in Ayats 34-57 of Surah Aal-Imran and the E.Ns thereof.

^{*2} In order to understand the position held by Zachariah, a descendant of Prophet Aaron, one should be acquainted with the system of priesthood among the children of Israel. After the conquest of Palestine, the entire land was divided among the 12 tribes of the descendants of Prophet Jacob as inheritance, and the 13th tribe, the Levites, was entrusted with religious services and duties. Even among the Levites, the house that was separated to sanctify the most holy things, to burn incense before the Lord, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name forever was the house of Prophet Aaron. The other Levites were not allowed to enter

the Temple. Their duty was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the Lord, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the Lord in the Sabbaths, in the new moon, and on the set festivals. The descendants of Aaron were divided into 24 families, who came to serve the house of the Lord by turns. One of these families was of Abiah whose chief was Zachariah. Thus it was Zachariah's duty to go into the house on his family's turn and burn incense before the Lord. (For details, see 1 Chronicles, chapters 23, 24).

3. When he called to his Lord, a call in secret.

إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ نِدَاءً خَفِيًّا ﴿٣﴾

4. He said: "My Lord, indeed, have grown feeble my bones, and my head has glistened of old age, and I have not been in my supplication to You, my Lord, unblessed."

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاسْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ رَبِّ شَقِيًّا ﴿٤﴾

5. "And indeed, I fear my relatives after me. *3 And my wife is barren. So give me from Yourself an heir."

وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِنْ وَرَائِي وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا ﴿٥﴾

*3 That is, I see none among my kinsmen, the family of Abiah, who is religiously and morally sound and capable of carrying on the work of the mission that has been entrusted to me.

6. “Who shall inherit me and inherit from the family of Jacob. *4 And make him, my Lord, pleasing.”

يَرِثْنِي وَ يَرِثُ مِنْ آلِ يَعْقُوبَ وَ اجْعَلْهُ
رَبِّ رَاضِيًا

*4 That is, I do not pray for a successor to inherit me alone, but a successor who may inherit the good ways of the house of Jacob.

7. “O Zachariah, indeed, We give you the good tidings of a son whose name will be John. We have not assigned to any, before, this name.” *5

يَزَكِّرِيَا إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِعِلْمٍ نَّ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَىٰ
لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا

*5 In Luke the words are: There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. (1: 61).

8. He said: “My Lord, how will it be for me a son, while my wife has been barren, and I have reached in old age an extreme.”

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلْمٌ وَ كَانَتْ
أُمْرَاتِي عَاقِرًا وَ قَدْ بَلَغْتُ مِنَ الْكِبَرِ
عِتْيًا

9. He said: “So shall it be.” Said Your Lord: “That is for Me easy, and indeed I did create you before, and you were not anything.” *6

قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ
وَ قَدْ خَلَقْتُكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَ لَمْ تَكُ
شَيْئًا

*6 This dialogue is meant to impress that Allah is able to do whatever He wills and can make an impotent man and a barren woman give birth to a child, and likewise a virgin can be made to conceive a child.

10. He said: “My Lord, appoint for me a sign.” He said: “Your sign is that you shall not speak to people for three nights, having no bodily defect.”

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا ﴿١٠﴾

11. So he came out to his people from the sanctuary^{*7} and directed by gesture to them that glorify in the morning and the evening.^{*8}

فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ مِنَ الْمِحْرَابِ فَأَوْحَى إِلَيْهِمْ أَنْ سَبِّحُوا بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا ﴿١١﴾

*7 For the explanation of *mihrab* (sanctuary), see E.N. 36 of Aal-Imran.

*8 Below we reproduce the details of this event as given in Luke’s Gospel so that the reader may study and compare the Quranic version with the Christian version. The references and additions within the brackets are ours:

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, (see Surah Bani-Israil, E.N.9) a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abiah: and his wife was of the daughter of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest’s office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest’s office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were

praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; (there is no mention of Zacharias' prayer anywhere in the Bible) and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John (that is, Yahya). And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord (*Sayyidun*: a great leader according to the Quran, Surah Aal-Imran, Ayat 39), and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink (the Quranic version: *Taqiyyun*, pious and pure); and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb (the Quran says: We blessed him with judgment while he was yet a child). And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit of the power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. (This is different from the Quran, which gives it as a sign, whereas

according to Luke, it was a punishment. Moreover, the Quran mentions it as the silence for three consecutive days, but Luke says that Zacharias remained dumb till the birth of John). And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. (Luke 1: 5-22).

12. “O John, take the Book with might.”*⁹ And We gave him wisdom*¹⁰ while he was a child.

يُحْيِي خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ

صَبِيًّا

*⁹ The details regarding the birth of Prophet John (peace be upon him), according to the divine will, and his coming of age, have been left out. Here, in one sentence, the mission of Prophethood entrusted to him on attaining maturity has been stated, which was to observe and follow the Torah in letter and spirit, and to exhort the Israelites as well to do the same.

*¹⁰ The Arabic word *hukm* implies ability (1) to make decisions, (2) to form right opinions, (3) to interpret the divine law, (4) to solve problems, and (5) it also means authority from Allah to decide affairs.

13. And compassion*¹¹ from Us, and purity. And he was righteous.

وَءَحْسَانًا مِّنْ لَّدُنَّا وَ زَكْوَةً وَ كَانَ تَقِيًّا

۱۳

*¹¹ The Arabic word *hanan* is almost synonymous with mother’s love. In other words, Prophet John bore in his heart the same kind of intense love for Allah’s servants as a

mother has for her child.

14. And dutiful to his parents. And he was not arrogant, disobedient.

وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَيْهِ وَ لَمْ يَكُنْ جَبَّارًا
عَصِيًّا

15. And peace be upon him the day he was born, and the day he dies, and the day he is raised up to life. *12

وَسَلَامٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَ يَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَ
يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

*12 In order to have a full understanding of the mission and the pure character of Prophet John, about which brief references have been made in this Surah and Surah Aal-Imran, it will be useful to study this story as given in different Books of the New Testament in the following order: According to Luke, Prophet John was older than Prophet Jesus (peace be upon them) by six months and their mothers were cousins. He was appointed a Prophet at the age of 30 years, and according to the Gospel of John, he started his mission of inviting the people toward God in Jordan. He would say: I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord. (John, I: 23) According to Mark: John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. (Mark, I: 45). He thus came to be known as John the Baptist, and the Israelites held him as a prophet. (Mat. 21: 26). Prophet Jesus said about John: Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a

man greater than John the Baptist." (Mat. 11 : 11).

John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leather girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. (Mat. 3: 4). He would say: Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Mat. 3: 2). By this he meant that very soon Prophet Jesus was going to start his mission of Prophethood. The same thing has been said about him in the Quran: He (John) will come to confirm a command from Allah. (Surah Aal-Imran, Ayat 39). For the same reason he has been called a sign of or pointer to Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him).

He urged the people to observe the Fast and Prayers. (Mat. 9: 14, Luke, 5: 33, I1: 1). He would also tell them: He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. (Luke 3: 11). When the tax-collectors asked: Master, what shall we do? He said unto them: Exact no more than that what is appointed you. (12-13). And when the soldiers sought his guidance, he said: Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages. (Luke, 3: 14).

When the corrupt scholars, Pharisees and Sadducees of the Israelites, came to be baptized by him, he rebuked them, saying: O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Think not to say within yourselves: We have Abraham to our father, now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. (Mat-3 :7-10).

The Jewish ruler of his time, Herod Antipas, in whose

government he was performing his mission of inviting the people to the truth, had been so deeply influenced by the Roman civilization that he was causing sin and evil to spread freely in the land. He had kept Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, unlawfully in his house; when Prophet John reproved him for this and raised his voice against other evils being committed by him, Herod got him arrested and sent to jail. However, he held him in high esteem for his piety and righteousness and even feared him on account of the great respect he enjoyed among the people. On the contrary, Herodias thought that the moral consciousness that Prophet John was producing among the people was directly aimed at women like herself and pulling them down in the public eye. Thus she nursed a grudge against him and would have had him killed but could not. Soon an opportunity came her way. On the birthday banquet of Herod, her daughter danced and so delighted Herod and others that the king said to her: Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. The girl asked her mother what she should ask for. The mother said: Ask for the head of John the Baptist. The girl went back to the king and requested to have there and then the head of John the Baptist on a dish. Herod felt sorry to hear this, but could not reject the demand of the daughter of his beloved. He at once got Prophet John killed in the prison and presented his head on a dish to the dancing girl. (Mat. 14: 3-12, Mark, 6: 17-29, Luke, 3: 19-20).

16. And mention in the Book,
Mary. ^{*13} When she had

وَإِذْ كَرَّرْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذْ انْتَبَذَتْ

withdrawn from her family
to a place toward east.

مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا ۙ

*13 For comparison, see Surah Aal-Imran, Ayats 34-57, and Surah An-Nina, Ayat 156 and E.Ns thereof.

17. So she had chosen from
them seclusion. *14 Then We
sent to her Our Spirit. So
he appeared before her as a
perfect man.

فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا ۗ فَأَرْسَلْنَا
إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا

*14 The Sanctuary where she had retired for devotion was an eastern chamber in the Temple, and as was customary she had hung a curtain to conceal herself from the people. It cannot be Nazareth as some people have wrongly taken it to be, because Nazareth is to the north of Jerusalem.

18. She said: “Indeed, I seek
refuge in the Beneficent from
you, if you are righteous.”

قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ
كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا

19. He said: “I am only a
messenger from your Lord
that I may bestow on you a
pure son.”

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ ۖ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ
عُلْمًا زَكِيًّا

20. She said: “How can I
have a son, while has not
touched me any man, and I
have not been unchaste.”

قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي ۖ عُلْمٌ ۖ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي
بَشَرٌ ۖ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا

21. He said: “Thus shall it
be.” Said Your Lord “It is

قَالَ كَذَلِكَ ۖ قَالَ رَبُّكِ هُوَ عَلَيَّ

for Me easy. And that We may make of him a sign for mankind ^{*15} and a mercy from Us. And it is a matter decreed.”

هَيِّنْ وَ لِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَ رَحْمَةً
مِّنَّا وَ كَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا

***15** The word “Thus shall it be” are very significant as has been stated in E.N. 6. The plain meaning is this: A pure son shall be born to you just as your Lord has decreed, even though no man has touched you. The same was the response to prophet Zachariah as stated in Ayat 9 above. And it is a sheer perversion to interpret it as: So shall it be that a man will touch you and a son will be born to you. For, if it were to mean: You will bear a son like all other women of the world, the subsequent two sentences, Your Lord says: This is an easy thing for Me to do, and We will make that boy a sign for the people, would have become meaningless. Had this birth been an ordinary birth like the birth of every other child, there would have been no occasion to boast: It is an easy thing, and that it will be made a sign (miracle). This will be so because the child will speak in the cradle.

22. So she conceived him, then she withdrew with him to a far place. ^{*16}

فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا

***16** When she conceived the child, she left the sanctuary and went to a distant place (Bethlehem) in order to escape the bitter criticism of the people. They would have said: Look at the virgin daughter of the pious house of Aaron! She has conceived a child and that, too, in the sanctuary where she had retired for devotion! Thus she temporarily succeeded in concealing the shame of the conception, but

this event itself is a proof that prophet Jesus was born without a father. Had Mary been married and had a husband, she would not have left his or her parents house by herself and chosen a distant place for the purpose of delivery.

23. Then drove her the pains of childbirth to the trunk of the palm tree. She said: “Oh, would that I had died before this and had become forgotten, out of sight.” *17

فَاجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ
قَالَتْ يَلَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ
نَسِيًّا مَّوَسِيًّا

*17 The words “Would that” show the extreme state of anxiety in which Mary found herself at the time. She did not utter these words on account of the labor pains but due to the pangs of sorrow as to how she would conceal the child from her people. The angel’s words, grieve not at all explain why she had spoken these desperate words. When a married girl is delivering her first baby, she might be dying with pains, but she is never so sorrowful and grieved.

24. Then he called her from below her, “That do not grieve. Indeed, has caused to flow your Lord beneath you a brook.”

فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَّا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ
رَبُّكَ تَحْتِكَ سَرِيًّا

25. “And shake toward you the trunk of the palm tree, will drop on you fresh dates.”

وَ هُزِّي إِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسْقِطُ
عَلَيْكِ مَرَطًا جَنِيًّا

26. So eat and drink and keep cool eyes. Then if you

فَكُلِي وَ اشْرَبِي وَ قَرِّي عَيْنًا فَمَا تَرِينَ

see among men, any, say:
“Indeed, I have vowed to the
Beneficent a fast, so I shall
never speak today to any
man.” *18

مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا ۖ فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ
لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا



*18 That is, you need not say anything with regard to the child. It is now Our responsibility to answer the critics. This also indicates why Mary was so sad and grieved. Had she been married and given birth to her first baby like any other mother, there was no occasion to tell her to observe a fast of silence, though it was a common custom among the Jews.

27. Then she brought him to
her people, carrying him.
They said: “O Mary, indeed
you have brought a thing
monstrous.”

فَأْتَتْ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُ ۖ قَالُوا يَمْرَأَتُهُ
لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا

28. “O sister of Aaron, *19
your father was not a man of
evil, nor was your mother
unchaste.”

يَأْخُذُ هُرُونَ مَا كَانَ مِنْكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ
وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمَّكَ بَغِيًّا

*19 “Sister of Aaron” may either mean that Mary had a brother of the name of Aaron, or it may mean that she belonged to the family of Prophet Aaron. The first meaning is supported by a tradition of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the second is plausible because that is supported by the Arabic idiom. But we are inclined to the second meaning, for the wording of the said tradition does not

necessarily mean that she actually had a brother named Aaron. The tradition as related in Muslim, Nasai, Tirmizi, etc. says that when the Christians of Najran criticized the Quranic version of stating Mary as the sister of Aaron before Mughirah bin Shubah, he was not able to satisfy them, because Prophet Aaron had passed away centuries earlier. When he presented the problem before the Prophet (peace be upon him), he replied: Why didn't you say that the Israelites named their children after their Prophets and other pious men? That is: You could have answered their objection like this as well." (See also E.N. 32 of Aal-Imran). How can the people who reject the miraculous birth of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), explain why Mary's whole community had come out to curse and condemn her when she had appeared before them with the child?

29. So she pointed to him. They said: "How can we talk to him who is in the cradle, a child." *20

فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ ط قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ
كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا

*20 People who misinterpret the Quran translate this verse as: How shall we talk with him, who is but a child of yesterday? They attribute these words to the elderly people of the Jews, who said years later, when Jesus was a grown up boy, that they could not have any useful dialogue with a mere kid. But the person who keeps the whole context in view, will realize that this interpretation is absurd and has been given merely to avoid the miracle. As a matter of fact, the dialogue took place when the people were condemning Mary who being unmarried, had brought forth a child, and

not when the child had grown up into manhood. Ayat 46 of Surah Aal-Imran and Ayat 110 of Surah Al-Maidah also support the view that Prophet Jesus had uttered these words as a baby in the cradle and not when grown up. In the first verse, the angel while giving the good news of a son to Mary, says: He will speak to the people alike when in the cradle and when grown up. In the other verse, Allah Himself says to Prophet Jesus: You talked to the people even in the cradle as you talked when you were grown up.

30. He said: “Indeed, I am a slave of Allah. He has given me the Book and has made me a prophet.”

قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ^{تف} آتَنِي الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا ^ط

31. “And He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and He has enjoined upon me prayers and charity as long as I am alive.”

وَ جَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ ^ص وَ أَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَ الزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ^ط

32. And kind dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me arrogant, unblest.

وَ بَرًّا بِوَالِدَاتِي ^ط وَ لَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا ^ط

33. “And peace be upon me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive.” *21

وَ السَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ ^ط وَ يَوْمَ أَمُوتُ ^ط وَ يَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ^ط

*21 This speech in the cradle by Jesus was the sign to which the angel referred in Ayat 21. As Allah intended to punish the children of Israel for their continuous wicked ways and

evil deeds, He made a pious virgin girl of the family of Prophet Aaron, who had devoted herself to worship in the Temple under the patronage of Zachariah, bear a child and bring it before her people in order to concentrate the whole attention of the thousands of people assembled there on this extraordinary event. Then He made this new born child speak out even in the cradle that he had been appointed a Prophet. Though they had seen this wonderful sign of Allah, they rejected the Prophethood of Jesus and brought him to the court for crucifixion, and thus incurred the wrath of Allah. (For further details, please see Surah Aal-Imran E.Ns 44 and 53, and Surah An-Nisa E.Ns 212, 213).

34. Such is Jesus, son of Mary, a statement of truth, that in which they doubt.

ذٰلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

35. It is not for Allah that He should take anyone as a son. Glory be to Him. When He decrees a matter, then only He says to it, “Be” And it is. *22

مَا كَانَ لِلّٰهِ اَنْ يَّتَّخِذَ مِنْ وَّلَدٍ سُبْحٰنَهُ اِذَا قَضٰى اَمْرًا فَاِنَّمَا يَقُوْلُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُوْنُ ﴿٢٤﴾

*22 In Ayats 1-35, it has been shown that the “Doctrine of the son of God” in regard to Prophet Jesus is absolutely wrong. For just as the miraculous birth of Prophet John did not make him the son of God, so the miraculous birth of Prophet Jesus could not make him the son of God. For the births of both were the result of the same sort of miracle as they have been mentioned together in the same context in

the Gospel of Luke. Therefore, it is mere distortion that the Christians should regard one as the servant of God and the other as the son of God.

36. “And indeed, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. *23 That is the straight path.”

وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ

*23 This declaration by Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) has been cited to tell the Christians that Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) also taught the same doctrine of Tauhid as was taught by all other Prophets. And it was they who had invented the doctrine of shirk by making him the son of God. (Please also refer to Aal-Imran E.N. 68, and Al-Maidah E.Ns 100, 101 and 130).

37. Then differed the factions among themselves. *24 So a dreadful woe for those who disbelieved, from the meeting of a great day.

فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ مَّشْهَدِ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ

*24 That is, the sects of the Christians.

38. How well will hear they and see on the day they come to Us. But the wrong doers today are in error manifest.

أَسْمِعْ بِهِمْ وَأَبْصِرْ يَوْمَ يَأْتُونَنَا لَكِنِ الظَّالِمُونَ الْيَوْمَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

39. And warn them of the day of anguish when will be decided the matter. And they are in heedlessness, and they do not believe.

وَ أَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَ هُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ وَ هُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

40. Indeed, it is We who will inherit the earth and whatever is upon it. And to Us they shall be returned. *25

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَرِثُ الْأَرْضَ وَمَنْ عَلَيْهَا وَإِلَيْنَا يُرْجَعُونَ

*25 Here the address which was meant to be delivered before King Negus and his courtiers comes to an end. In the introduction to this Surah, we have already stated the historical background of this address. In order to form an idea of its great significance, it should be kept in mind that:

(a) This address was sent down at the time when the persecuted Muslims of Makkah were going to migrate to a Christian kingdom so that they may present before the Christians the true Islamic creed about Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him). This shows that the Muslims under no circumstances should conceal the truth,

(b) It shows a most wonderful moral courage of the Muslim migrants to Habash that they recited this address in the royal court at the critical moment, when the courtiers who had been bribed were bent on handing them over to their enemies. They indeed were faced with the real threat that this frank Islamic criticism of the basic articles of the Christian faith might turn the king against them and he might hand them over to the Quraish. But in spite of this, they presented the whole truth before the king without the least hesitation.

41. And mention in the Book, Abraham. *26 Indeed, he was man of truth, a prophet.

وَإِذْ كُنَّا فِي الْكِتَابِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا

*26 From here the address is directed towards the people of Makkah, who had forced their own near and dear relatives to emigrate from their homes, just as Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) had been exiled by his own father and brethren. The story of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) has been selected for this purpose because the Quraish professed to accept him as their religious leader and were proud of being his descendants.

42. When he said to his father: “O my father, why do you worship that which does not hear and does not see, and cannot avail you in anything.”

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبْصِرُ وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنْكَ شَيْئًا ﴿٤٢﴾

43. “O my father, indeed there has come to me of the knowledge that which has not come to you. So follow me, I will guide you to a straight path.”

يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي قَدْ جَاءَنِي مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِكَ فَاتَّبِعْنِي أَهْدِكَ صِرَاطًا سَوِيًّا ﴿٤٣﴾

44. “O my father, do not worship Satan. *27 Indeed, Satan is disobedient to the Beneficent.”

يَا أَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ عَصِيًّا ﴿٤٤﴾

*27 It should be noted that the literal translation of the Arabic text is: “Do not worship Satan”, though Abraham’s father and the other people did not worship Satan in the same sense as they worshiped idols. But as they followed and obeyed Satan, he accused them of worshipping Satan.

Thus it is clear that if somebody follows and obeys Satan, he virtually worships him. For Satan has never been a deity in the sense that people have made him an object of worship; nay, they have always been cursing him and following him at the same time. (For further details see Surah Al-Kahf E.Ns 49-50).

45. “O my father, indeed I fear that there would touch you a punishment from the Beneficent, so that you would become a companion of Satan.”

يَا بَتِ اِئْتِيْ اَخَافُ اَنْ يَّمْسَكَ عَذَابٌ
مِّنَ الرَّحْمٰنِ فَتَكُوْنَ لِلشَّيْطٰنِ وَلِيًّا ﴿٤٥﴾

46. He said: “Have you turned away from my gods, O Abraham. If you do not desist, I will surely stone you. And leave me a long while.”

قَالَ اَرَاغِبْ اَنْتَ عَنِ اِهْتِيْ يَا اِبْرٰهِيْمُ لِيْنِ
لَمْ تَنْتَهَ لِاَرْجَمَنَّكَ وَ اَهْجُرْنِيْ مَلِيًّا ﴿٤٦﴾

47. He said: “Peace be upon you. I shall ask forgiveness for you of my Lord. Indeed, He is to me most gracious.”

قَالَ سَلٰمٌ عَلَيْكَ سَاَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكَ رَبِّيْ
اِنَّهٗ كَانَ بِيْ حَفِيًّا ﴿٤٧﴾

48. “And I shall turn away from you and what you call upon other than Allah. And I shall call upon my Lord. It may be that I shall not be, by calling my Lord, unblessed.”

وَ اَعْتَزِلْكُمْ وَ مَا تَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ
اللّٰهِ وَ اَدْعُوا رَبِّيْ عَسٰى اَلَّا اَكُوْنَ
بِدَعَاۗءِ رَبِّيْ شَقِيًّا ﴿٤٨﴾

49. So when he had withdrawn from them and

فَلَمَّا اَعْتَزَلَهُمْ وَ مَا يَعْْبُدُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ

that which they worshipped other than Allah, We gave him Isaac and Jacob. And each We made a prophet.

اللَّهُ ۙ وَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۗ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا نَبِيًّا ﴿٤١﴾

50. And We bestowed on them of Our mercy, and We assigned to them a renown, true, high. *28

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُمْ مِّن رَّحْمَتِنَا وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا ﴿٤٢﴾

*28 This is to give comfort to the migrants who had been forced to migrate from their homes. They were told that they would be honored and blessed with true renown just as Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) had been blessed with true renown after his migration.

51. And mention in the Book, Moses. Indeed, he was chosen, *29 and he was a messenger, a prophet. *30

وَإِذْ كُنَّا فِي الْكِتَابِ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مُخْلَصًا ۚ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٤٣﴾

*29 The word used is *mukhlasan*, which means purified. In other words, Allah had specially chosen Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) for the mission of Prophethood.

*30 *Rasul* literally means the one who is sent; therefore it is used for an ambassador, envoy, messenger and representative. The Quran has used this title for angels, who are sent by Allah on a special mission, or for the human beings who brought His Message to mankind.

As regards the word *Nabi*, it literally means the one who brings news, or the one who is high in rank, or the one who shows the way. This title is used for the Prophets in all the

three senses. Thus Moses was a Messenger Prophet because he was a Messenger of high rank who gave news from Allah and showed the right way to the people.

The Quran does not necessarily differentiate between the use of the two titles, for sometimes it uses the title *Rasul* for one person at one place and the title *Nabi* for the same person at another place, and sometimes uses both the titles together for one and the same person. However, at some places each title has been used in a way as to show that there is some technical distinction between the two, though that has not been precisely marked out, except that every *Rasul* (Messenger) is a *Nabi* (Prophet) as well, but every *Nabi* may not be a *Rasul*, and that a *Rasul* has a special and more important mission to perform. This is supported by a tradition of the Prophet (peace be upon him), which has been reported by Imam Ahmad from Abu Umamah and by Hakim from Abu Zarr. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked how many Messengers and Prophets had been sent to the world, he said that the number of the Messengers was 313 or 315 and of the Prophets 124,000.

52. And We called him from the right side of the mount, ^{*31} and We brought him near to confide in. ^{*32}

وَنَادَيْنَاهُ مِنْ جَانِبِ الطُّورِ الْأَيْمَنِ وَ
قَرَّبْنَاهُ نَجِيًّا

^{*31} “The right side of the Mount” means the eastern side of the mountain. As Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), on his way from Midian to Egypt, was passing from the southern side of Mount Toor, the eastern side would lie on his right and the western on his left if he faced the

mountain, otherwise a mountain by itself cannot have a right or a left side.

*32 See E.N. 206 of Surah An-Nisa.

53. And We bestowed on him out of Our mercy his brother Aaron, a prophet.

وَ وَهَبْنَا لَهُ مِنْ رَحْمَتِنَا أَخَاهُ هَارُونَ
نَبِيًّا

54. And mention in the Book Ishmael. Indeed, he was true to his promise, and he was a messenger, a prophet.

وَ اذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ
صَادِقَ الْوَعْدِ وَ كَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا

55. And he used to enjoin on his family prayers and charity, and he was to his Lord, pleasing.

وَ كَانَ يَأْمُرُ أَهْلَهُ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَ الزَّكَاةِ
وَ كَانَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ مَرْضِيًّا

56. And mention in the Book, Idris. *33 Indeed, he was truthful, a prophet.

وَ اذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِدْرِيسَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ
صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا

*33 There is a difference of opinion as to who Prophet Idris (peace be upon him) was. Some commentators opine that he was a Prophet from among the Israelites, but the majority of them are inclined to the view that he was a Prophet before Noah (peace be upon him). There is no authentic tradition which may help determine his identity. The next verse (58), however, supports the view that he appeared before Prophet Noah (peace be upon him). For of all the Prophets mentioned, he alone was the one who may be said to be from the descendants of Adam.

The commentators are of the opinion that Idris was Enoch

of the Old Testament, about whom it is said:

And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years and he was not; for God took him. (Gen. 5: 21-24).

In Talmud, there are greater details about Enoch, which are briefly as follows: Before Noah when the descendants of Adam began to degenerate, the angel of God called to Enoch, who led a pious life away from the people, and said: O Enoch, arise, come out from seclusion, and go about among the people of the earth, guiding them to the path which they should follow and the ways which they should adopt.

Receiving this Divine Command, Enoch left his seclusion and gathered the people together and preached to them what he had been commanded, with the result that they listened to him and adopted the worship of God. Enoch ruled over mankind for 353 years: his rule was based on justice and truth, and consequently God favored mankind with all kinds of blessings." (H. Polano: The Talmud Selections, pp. 18-21)

57. And We raised him to high station. *34

وَأَرْفَعْنَاهُ مَكَانًا عَلِيًّا

*34 The plain meaning is that God had favored Idris with a high rank, but according to the Israelite traditions, God took up Idris (Enoch) to heavens. The Bible says: And he was not; for God took him, but the Talmud has a long story to tell, which ends with the words: Enoch ascended to heaven in a whirlwind, with chariot and horses of fire.

58. These were those bestowed favor Allah upon whom from among the prophets, of the offspring of Adam, and of those whom We carried with Noah, and of the offspring of Abraham and Israel, and from among those whom We guided and We chose. When were recited unto them the revelations of the Beneficent, they fell down prostrating and weeping. (AsSajda)

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنَ
النَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّةِ آدَمَ وَ مِنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ
نُوحٍ وَ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْرَائِيلَ
وَ مِنْ هَدَيْنَا وَاجْتَبَيْنَا إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتُ الرَّحْمَنِ خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَبُكِيًّا
(سجده)

59. Then there followed after them a posterity, who have ruined the prayers^{*35} and have followed desires.^{*36} So soon they shall meet with the doom.

فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَ اتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ فَسُوفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غِيًّا
(سجده)

***35** It appears that the degenerate people totally discarded Salat, or they had become neglectful and careless in its observance. This is the first evil that is committed by a degenerate people. For, after this there remains no connection whatever between them and God. Here it has been stated as a universal principle that the degeneration of the people of all the former Prophets started with the abandonment of Salat by them.

***36** This was the inevitable result of the loss of the connection with Allah. As they became more and more neglectful of their Salat, their lusts took complete hold of

them and they fell to the lowest depths of moral depravity and began to follow their whims instead of the divine commands.

60. Except him who repented and believed and did righteousness. So such shall enter Paradise, and they shall not be wronged in the least.

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَ آمَنَ وَ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا
فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ
شَيْئًا

61. Gardens of Eden, which has promised the Beneficent to His slaves in the unseen. *37 Indeed, His promise is to be fulfilled.

جَنَّتِ عَدْنِ ۖ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَنُ عِبَادَهُ
بِالْغَيْبِ ۗ إِنَّهُ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ مَأْتِيًا

***37 That is, the promised gardens which are yet unseen by His servants.**

62. They shall not hear therein idle talk, except peace. *38 And for them is their sustenance therein, morning and evening.

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا ۖ إِلَّا سَلَامًا ۗ وَ لَهُمْ
رِزْقُهُمْ فِيهَا بُكْرَةً ۖ وَ عَشِيًّا

***38 The word used is *salam*, which means free from defect and fault. It implies to mean that the greatest blessing that man will enjoy in Paradise will be that there he will hear no idle, vile or indecent talk. All the dwellers of Paradise will be neat and clean and pure people and every individual will be gentle and right minded by nature. Everybody will be secure against backbiting, slander and indecent songs and other ugly sounds. Whatever men will hear will be good, sensible and right.**

This is indeed a great blessing which only that person can fully appreciate, who possesses a neat and fine taste, because only such a one can feel the misery of living among a dirty society, where his ears are never immune against lies, backbiting, slander, and mischievous and sensual talk.

63. That is the Paradise which We will cause to inherit, among Our slaves, him who is righteous.

تِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي نُورِثُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا مَنْ
كَانَ تَقِيًّا ﴿٦٣﴾

64. And ^{*39} we (angels) do not descend except by the command of your Lord. To Him belongs what is before us and what is behind us and what is between that, and your Lord is not forgetful.

وَ مَا نَنْزِلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ لَهُ مَا
بَيْنَ أَيْدِينَا وَ مَا خَلْفَنَا وَ مَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ
وَ مَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا ﴿٦٤﴾

*39 This paragraph is a parenthesis, which has been inserted at the end of one theme and before the commencement of the other. It is obvious from this that this Surah was sent down after a long delay. At that time the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions were passing through very hard times and were always expecting a revelation to guide and comfort them. When Angel Gabriel came with other angels with this revelation, he at first delivered that part of the message which was immediately needed. Then before proceeding further, he said these words by the leave of Allah as an explanation for the delay and to give them comfort from Allah and counsel of fortitude. This interpretation is not only borne out by the

wording of the passage but also by some traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), which have been cited by Ibn Jarir, Ibn Kathir, and the author of Ruh-ul-Maani in their commentary on this passage.

65. Lord of the heavens and of the earth and whatever is between them. So worship Him, and be steadfast in His worship. *40 Do you know any of same name as He. *41

رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا
فَاعْبُدْهُ وَاصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَادَتِهِ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ

سَمِيًّا

*40 That is, you should not only follow strictly the way of service and face all the obstacles and afflictions with patience, but also should not get uneasy, if there is a delay in revelation and help. You should rest content with His service as an obedient servant and perform persistently the duties and responsibilities entrusted to you as a servant and Messenger.

*41 The word *Samiya* literally means a name sake. Here it implies: Allah is the only Deity. Do you know of any other deity besides Him? If there is none, and you know that there is none, then you do not have any alternative but to serve Him and obey His commands.

66. And man says: "Is it when I am dead, shall I be brought forth alive."

وَيَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ إِذَا مَا مِئْتٍ لَسَوْفَ
أُخْرَجُ حَيًّا

67. And does not remember man that indeed We created him before, and he was not a thing.

أَوَلَا يَذْكُرُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ
قَبْلُ وَلَمْ يَكُ شَيْئًا

68. So by your Lord, surely We shall gather them and the devils, *42 then We shall bring them around Hell upon their knees.

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْضُرَهُمْ وَ الشَّيْطِينَ ثُمَّ
لَنَحْضِرَهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا

*42 The Satans are the leaders who persuade the wicked people to enjoy themselves in this worldly life, for there is no life in the Hereafter, where they shall have to present themselves before Allah and give an account of their deeds.

69. Then indeed, We shall drag out from every sect all those who were worst against the Beneficent in rebellion. *43

ثُمَّ لَنَنْزِعَنَّ مِنْ كُلِّ شِيعَةٍ أَيُّهُمْ أَشَدُّ
عَلَى الرَّحْمَنِ عِتِيًّا

*43 The leader of every rebel band.

70. Then certainly We know best of those who are most worthy of being put therein.

ثُمَّ لَنَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِالَّذِينَ هُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِهَا
صِلِيًّا

71. And there is none among you except he will pass over it. *44 That is upon your Lord, a decree which must be accomplished.

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَىٰ
رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا

*44 According to some traditions, “pass over it (Hell)” means to enter Hell, but none of these traditions is authentic. Then this interpretation goes against the Quran and a great many authentic traditions, which clearly state that the true believers will never be cast into Hell. Lexically also, *variduha* (being presented unto) is not synonymous

with *dukhul* (causing to enter). Therefore, the correct meaning would be that every human being will be presented before Hell, but then, as the next verse clarifies, the pious people will be rescued and the transgressors left therein on their knees.

72. Then We shall save those who are righteous. And We shall leave the wrongdoers therein on their knees.

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَ نَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جثيًا ﴿٧٢﴾

73. And when are recited to them Our clear revelations, say those who disbelieve to those who believe: “Which of the two groups is better in status and grander in assembly.” *45

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَيُّ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ خَيْرٌ مَّقَامًا وَ أَحْسَنُ نَدِيًّا ﴿٧٣﴾

*45 In response to the recital of clear revelations, instead of accepting their message, the unbelievers put such questions as these to the believers to show that they were in the right: Who has grander houses to live in? Who has a higher standard of life? Who enjoys splendid meetings? If we are enjoying all these things while you are deprived of them, you may decide for yourselves whether we, who are enjoying happy worldly lives, are in the wrong, or you who are living miserable lives of indigence are in the right? (Also see Surah Al-Kahf E.Ns 37-38).

74. And how many We have destroyed before them of the generations who were better in wealth and appearance.

وَ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّن قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَحْسَنُ أَثَانًا وَ رِئِيًّا ﴿٧٤﴾

75. Say: “He who is in error, will extend for him the Beneficent, further extension, until when they behold that which they are promised, either a punishment or the Hour. Then they will know who is that is worst in position and weaker in force.”

قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ
الرَّحْمَنُ مَدًّا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا
يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا الْعَذَابَ وَإِمَّا السَّاعَةَ
فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَ
أَضْعَفُ جُنْدًا ﴿٧٥﴾

76. And increases Allah, to those who are guided, more in guidance. ^{*46} And the enduring righteous deeds are better with your Lord for reward, and better for recourse.

وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى ط وَ
الْبَقِيَّةِ الصَّالِحَاتِ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ
ثَوَابًا وَ خَيْرٌ مَرَدًّا ﴿٧٦﴾

***46** That is, On every critical occasion, Allah guides them to make right decisions and helps them to adopt the right way, and protects them from evil and wrong things; thus they go on making more and more progress on the right way.

77. Then, have you seen him who disbelieved in Our verses and he said: “Assuredly I shall be given wealth and children.” ^{*47}

أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتِيَنَّ
مَالًا وَ وَلَدًا ﴿٧٧﴾

***47** The boastful person was not a particular man but a typical chief of the disbelievers of Makkah. Everyone of them claimed: Howsoever you may call me an erroneous and un-righteous person and threaten me with the divine

scourge, the fact is that I am more prosperous than you today and shall continue being blessed with favors in future as well. Just have a look at my riches, at my grandeur and at my estate, and at my well-known sons, and then say where you see any signs of the wrath of God.

78. Has he obtained knowledge of the unseen, or has he taken with the Beneficent a covenant.

أَطَّلَعَ الْغَيْبِ أَمْ آتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا



79. Nay, We shall record what he says *48 and We shall increase for him the punishment, a long span.

كَلَّا سَنَكْتُبُ مَا يَقُولُ وَنَمُدُّ لَهُ مِنَ

الْعَذَابِ مَدًّا

*48 That is, the boastful words of his shall also be included in the record of his crimes and he shall have to bear the consequences of his arrogant claim.

80. And We shall inherit of what he says, and he shall come to Us alone.

وَنَرْتُهُ مَا يَقُولُ وَيَأْتِينَا فَرْدًا

81. And they have taken other than Allah gods that they may be for them a strength. *49

وَآتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ آلِهَةً لِيَكُونُوا

لَهُمْ عِزًّا

*49 The Arabic word *Izzan* (from *Izat*) implies a powerful and strong person whom nobody may dare do any harm; here it means a person's having such a strong supporter that no enemy or opponent of his may even cherish an evil intention against him.

82. Nay, they will deny their worship of them *50 and will become against them opponents.

كَلَّا سَيَكْفُرُونَ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ وَيَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضِدًّا

*50 That is, they will say: We never asked them to worship us nor were we aware that these foolish people were worshipping us.

83. Do you not see that We have sent the devils upon the disbelievers who incite them, more incitement.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ عَلَى الْكٰفِرِينَ تَوْزِيَهُمْ أَرَا

84. So make no haste over them. In fact, We count out for them, a number of days. *51

فَلَا تَعْجَلْ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّمَا نَعُدُّ لَهُمْ عَدًّا

*51 That is: Endure their persecutions patiently a little more, for the time of their punishment is coming near, for We have given them respite for a fixed term, and let that term expire.

85. The day We shall gather the righteous to the Beneficent, like guests.

يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ الْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى الرَّحْمٰنِ وَفَدًّا

86. And We shall drive the criminals to Hell, like thirsty cattle.

وَ نَسُوْقُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وِرْدًا

87. They will have no power of intercession, except him who has made with the Beneficent a covenant. *52

لَا يَمْلِكُونَ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمٰنِ عَهْدًا

***52 This implies two things:**

(1) Intercession will be allowed only for the one who might have received permission for it from the Merciful, that is, the one who believed in Allah in the world and made himself deserving of His pardon.

(2) Only that one will be able to plead intercession who might have received permission for this from the Merciful, and not those ones whom people themselves had made their intercessors without any reason.

88. And they say: "Has taken the Beneficent a son."

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا ^ط


89. Indeed, you have brought forth a thing atrocious.

لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئًا إِدًّا ^ط


90. Almost the heavens are torn therefrom, and split asunder the earth, and fall the mountains in ruins.

تَكَادُ السَّمَاوَاتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْهُ وَ تَنْشَقُّ
الْأَرْضُ وَ تَخْرُجُ الْجِبَالُ هَدًّا ^ط


91. That they ascribe to the Beneficent a son.

أَنْ دَعَوْا لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدًا ^ط


92. And it is not appropriate for the Beneficent that He should take a son.

وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّحْمَنِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا ^ط


93. There is not anyone who is in the heavens and the earth but shall come to the Beneficent as a slave.

إِنْ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضِ
إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا ^ط


94. Certainly, He has encompassed them and has counted them, a full counting.

لَقَدْ أَحْصَاهُمْ وَ عَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا ^ط


95. And all of them will come to Him on the Day of Resurrection, alone.

وَكُلُّهُمْ آتِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَرْدًا ﴿١٥﴾

96. Indeed, those who believed and did righteous deeds, *53 soon will bestow for them, the Beneficent, love.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
سَيَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ وُدًّا ﴿١٦﴾

*53 This is to comfort the righteous people who were being persecuted and insulted in the streets of Makkah. They are being assured that the time is coming near when the people will honor and love them because of their righteous deeds and good conduct. Hearts will be attracted towards them and the world will hold them in high esteem. And this will happen according to a universal principle. Those who are wicked, proud and haughty and try to rule over the people with falsehood and hypocrisy can never captivate the hearts of the people. On the other hand, those who invite the people to the right way with truth, honesty, sincerity and good conduct succeed in winning their hearts in the end, even though at first they might have to face the indifference and opposition of the dishonest people.

97. In fact, We have made this easy in your tongue that you may give good tidings by it to the righteous, and warn with it a people who are contentious.

فَأَنَّمَا يُسَّرُّنَا بِلسَانِكَ لِتُبَشِّرَ بِهِ
الْمُتَّقِينَ وَتُنذِرَ بِهِ قَوْمًا لُدًّا ﴿١٧﴾

98. And how many have We destroyed before them of

وَكَم أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِّن قَرْنٍ هَلْ يُحِسُّ

generations. Do you perceive
of them any one, or you hear
a whisper of them.

مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْ تَسْمَعُ لَهُمْ رِكْزًا

