

7:199 Show forgiveness, speak for justice, and avoid the ignorant. If Satan tempts you, seek refuge in God; He hears all and knows all.

If those that guard themselves against evil are tempted by Satan, they have but to remember; and they shall see the light. As for their brothers, they shall be kept long in error, nor shall they ever desist.

When you have no verse to recite to them, they say: 'Have you not yet invented one?' Say: 'I follow only what is revealed to me by my Lord. This Book is a veritable proof from your Lord, a guide and a blessing to true believers.'

When the Koran is recited, listen to it in silence so that you may be shown mercy. Remember your Lord deep in your soul with humility and reverence, and without ostentation: in the morning and in the evening; and do not be negligent.

7:206 Those who dwell with your Lord do not disdain His service. They give glory to Him and prostrate themselves before Him.

THE SPOILS¹

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

8:1 THEY ASK you about the spoils. Say: 'The spoils belong to God and the Apostle. Therefore have fear of God and end your disputes. Obey God and His apostle, if you are true believers.'

The true believers are those whose hearts are filled with awe at the mention of God, and whose faith grows stronger as they listen to His revelations. They are those who put their trust in their Lord, pray steadfastly, and give in alms from what We gave them. Such are the true believers. They will be exalted and forgiven by their Lord, and a generous provision shall be made for them.

8:5 Your Lord bade you leave your home to fight for justice,

1. Of the Battle of Badr, A.D. 624.

but some of the faithful were reluctant. They argued with you about the truth that had been revealed, as though they were being led to certain death while they looked on. 8:6

God promised you victory over one of the two bands, but it was your wish to take possession of the one that was unarmed.¹ God wished to vindicate the truth by His words and to rout the unbelievers, so that He might vindicate the truth and render falsehood vain, though the wrongdoers wished otherwise.

When you prayed to your Lord for help, He answered: 'I am sending to your aid a thousand angels in their ranks.' By this good news God sought to reassure your hearts, for victory comes only from God; God is mighty and wise.

You were overcome by sleep, a token of His protection. He sent down water from the sky to cleanse you and to purify you of Satan's filth, to strengthen your hearts and to steady your footsteps.

God revealed His will to the angels, saying: 'I shall be with you. Give courage to the believers. I shall cast terror into the hearts of the infidels. Strike off their heads, strike off the very tips of their fingers!' 8:12

That was because they defied God and His apostle. He that defies God and His apostle shall be sternly punished by God. We said to them: 'Taste this. The scourge of the Fire awaits the unbelievers.'

Believers, when you encounter the infidels on the march, do not turn your backs to them in flight. If anyone on that day turns his back to them, except for tactical reasons, or to join another band, he shall incur the wrath of God and Hell shall be his home: an evil fate.

It was not you, but God, who slew them. It was not you 8:17

1. Muhammad's plan was to attack an unarmed caravan belonging to the Quraysh of Mecca on its way from Syria to that city. An army of Meccans marched to its assistance. Some of the Muslims wished to attack the caravan, others the Meccan army. Muhammad's forces, only 319 strong, routed the Meccans, who were nearly 1,000 in number.

who smote them: God smote them so that He might richly reward the faithful: God hears all and knows all. Even so;
8:18 God will surely frustrate the designs of the unbelievers.

If you¹ were seeking a judgement, now has a judgement come to you. If you desist, it will be best for you. If you resume your war against the faithful, We will return to their assistance, and your forces, superior though they be in number, shall avail you nothing: for God is with the faithful.

Believers, obey God and His apostle, and do not forsake him, now that you have heard all. Do not be like those who say: 'We hear,' but pay no heed to what they hear.

The meanest beasts in God's sight are those that are deaf, dumb, and devoid of reason. Had God perceived any virtue in them, He would have surely endowed them with hearing. But even if He had made them hear, they would have turned away and refused to listen.

Believers, obey God and the Apostle when he calls you to that which gives you life. Know that God stands between man and his heart, and that in His presence you shall all be assembled.

8:25 Guard yourselves against temptation. The wrongdoers among you are not the only men who will be tempted. Know that God's punishment is stern.

Remember, when you were few in number and persecuted in the land, ever fearing the onslaught of your enemies, how He gave you shelter. He made you strong with His help and provided you with wholesome things, so that you might give thanks.

Believers, do not betray God and the Apostle, nor knowingly betray your trust. Know that your children and your worldly goods are but a temptation, and that God's recompense is great.

Believers, if you fear God He will grant you salvation and cleanse you of your sins and forgive you. The bounty of God is great.

8:30 Remember how the unbelievers plotted against you.²

1. The Meccans.

2. Muḥammad.

They sought to take you captive or to have you slain or banished. They schemed – but God also schemed. God is most profound in His machinations.

Whenever Our revelations are recited to them, they say: 8:31
'We have heard them. If we wished, we could say the like. They are but fables of the ancients.'

They also say: 'Lord, if this be Your revealed truth, rain down upon us stones from heaven or send some dreadful scourge to punish us.'

But God would not punish them while you were present in their midst. Nor would He punish them if they sought forgiveness.

Yet it is but just that He should punish them; for they have debarred others from the Sacred Mosque, although they have no right to be its guardians. Its only guardians are those that fear God, though most of them do not know it.

Their prayers at the Sacred House are nothing but whistling and clapping of hands. 'Taste then the scourge, because you disbelieved.'

The unbelievers expend their riches in debarring others 8:36
from the path of God. Thus they dissipate their wealth: but they shall rue it, and in the end be overthrown. The unbelievers shall into Hell be driven.

God will separate the wicked from the just. He will heap all the wicked one upon another and then cast them into Hell. These will surely be the losers.

Tell the unbelievers that if they mend their ways their past shall be forgiven; but if they persist in sin, let them reflect upon the fate of bygone nations.

Make war on them until idolatry shall cease and God's religion shall reign supreme. If they desist, God is cognizant of all their actions; but if they pay no heed, know then that God will protect you. He is the noblest Helper and the noblest Protector.

Know that one-fifth of your spoils shall belong to God, the 8:41
Apostle, the Apostle's kinsfolk, the orphans, the destitute, and the traveller in need: if you truly believe in God and

what We revealed to Our servant on the day of victory, the day when the two armies met. God has power over all things.

8:42 You were encamped on this side of the valley and the unbelievers on the farther side, with the caravan below. Had they offered battle, you would have surely declined; but God sought to accomplish what He had ordained, so that, by a clear sign, he that was destined to perish might die, and he that was destined to live might survive. God hears all and knows all.

God made them appear to you in a dream as a small band. Had He showed them to you as a great army, your courage would have failed you and discord would have triumphed in your ranks. But this God spared you. He knows your innermost thoughts.

And when you met them, He made each appear to the other few in number, that God might accomplish what He had ordained. To God shall all things return.

8:46 Believers, when you meet their army stand firm and pray fervently to God, so that you may triumph. Obey God and His apostle and do not dispute with one another, lest you lose courage and your resolve weaken. Have patience: God is with those that are patient.

Do not be like those who left their homes elated with insolence and vainglory. They debar others from the path of God: but God has knowledge of all their actions.

Satan made their foul deeds seem fair to them. He said: 'No man shall conquer you this day. I shall be at hand to help you.' But when the two armies came within sight of each other, he took to his heels, saying: 'I am done with you, for I can see what you cannot. I fear God. God's punishment is stern.'

The hypocrites, and those whose hearts were tainted, said: 'Their religion has deceived them.' But he that puts his trust in God shall find God mighty and wise.

8:50 If you could see the angels when they carry off the souls of the unbelievers! They shall strike them on their faces and their backs, saying: 'Taste the torment of the Conflagration!

This is the punishment for what your hands committed.' 8:51
God is not unjust to His servants.

Like Pharaoh's people and those before them, they disbelieved God's revelations. Therefore God will smite them for their sins. Mighty is God and stern His retribution.

God does not change the blessings He has bestowed upon a people until they change what is in their hearts. God hears all and knows all.

Like Pharaoh's people and those before them, they disbelieved their Lord's revelations. Therefore We will destroy them for their sins even as We drowned Pharaoh's people. They were wicked men all.

The basest creatures in the sight of God are the faithless who will not believe; those who time after time violate their treaties with you and have no fear of God. If you capture them in battle discriminate between them and those that follow them, so that their followers may take warning.

If you fear treachery from any of your allies, you may fairly retaliate by breaking off your treaty with them. God does not love the treacherous.

Let not the unbelievers think that they will ever get 8:59
away. They have not the power so to do. Muster against them all the men and cavalry at your command, so that you may strike terror into the enemy of God and your enemy, and others besides them who are unknown to you but known to God. All that you give in the cause of God shall be repaid to you. You shall not be wronged.

If they incline to peace, make peace with them, and put your trust in God. It is surely He who hears all and knows all. Should they seek to deceive you, God is all-sufficient for you. He has made you strong with His help and rallied the faithful round you, making their hearts one. If you had given away all the riches of the earth, you could not have so united them: but God has united them. He is mighty and wise.

Prophet, God is your strength, and the faithful who follow you.

Prophet, rouse the faithful to arms. If there are twenty 8:65

steadfast men among you, they shall vanquish two hundred; and if there are a hundred, they shall rout a thousand unbelievers, for they are devoid of understanding.

8:66 God has now lightened your burden, for He knows that you are weak. If there are a hundred steadfast men among you, they shall vanquish two hundred; and if there are a thousand, they shall, by God's will, defeat two thousand. God is with those that are steadfast.

A prophet may not take captives until he has fought and triumphed in the land. You¹ seek the chance gain of this world, but God desires for you the world to come. God is mighty and wise. Had there not been a previous writ from God, you would have been sternly punished for what you took. Enjoy therefore the good and lawful things which you have gained in war, and fear God. God is forgiving and merciful.

Prophet, say to those you have taken captive: 'If God finds goodness in your hearts, He will give you that which is better than what has been taken from you, and He will forgive you. God is forgiving and merciful.'

8:71 But if they seek to betray you, know they have already betrayed God. Therefore He has made you triumph over them. God is all-knowing and wise.

Those that have embraced the Faith and fled their homes, and fought for the cause of God with their wealth and with their persons; and those that have sheltered them and helped them, shall be as friends to each other.

Those that have embraced the Faith, but have not left their homes, shall in no way become your friends until they have done so. But if they seek your help in the cause of the true Faith, it is your duty to assist them, except against a people with whom you have a treaty. God is cognizant of all your actions.

8:73 The unbelievers give aid and comfort to each other. If you fail to do likewise, there will be disorder in the land and great corruption.

1. Muḥammad's followers.

Those that have embraced the Faith and fled their homes and fought for the cause of God, and those that have sheltered them and helped them – they are the true believers. Forgiveness and a gracious provision await them.

Those that have since embraced the Faith and fled their 8:75 homes and fought with you – they too are your brothers; although according to the Book of God those who are bound by ties of blood are nearest to one another. God has knowledge of all things.

REPENTANCE¹

A DECLARATION of immunity from God and His apostle 9:1 to the idolaters with whom you have made agreements:

For four months you shall go unmolested in the land. But know that you shall not escape God's judgement, and that God will humble the unbelievers.

A proclamation to the people from God and His apostle on the day of the greater pilgrimage:

God and His apostle are under no obligation to the idolaters. If you repent, it shall be well with you; but if you pay no heed, know that you shall not be immune from God's judgement.

Proclaim a woeful punishment to the unbelievers, except to those idolaters who have honoured their treaties with you in every detail and aided none against you. With these keep faith, until their treaties have run their term. God loves the righteous.

When the sacred months² are over slay the idolaters 9:5 wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them. If they repent and take to

1. This is the only chapter in the Koran which does not begin with the invocation 'In the Name of God, etc.' Traditional commentators regard it as a continuation of 'The Spoils'.

2. Shawwāl, Dhūl-Qu'adah, Dhūl-Ḥajjah, and Muḥarram.

prayer and render the alms levy, allow them to go their way. God is forgiving and merciful.

9:6 If an idolater seeks asylum with you, give him protection so that he may hear the Word of God, and then convey him to safety. For the idolaters are ignorant men.

God and His apostle repose no trust in idolaters, save those with whom you have made treaties at the Sacred Mosque. So long as they keep faith with you, keep faith with them. God loves the righteous.

How can you trust them? If they prevail against you, they will respect neither agreements nor ties of kindred. They flatter you with their tongues, but their hearts reject you. Most of them are evil-doers.

They sell God's revelations for trifling gain and debar others from His path. Evil is what they do. They break faith with the believers and set at nought all ties of kindred. Such are the transgressors.

If they repent and take to prayer and render the alms levy, they shall become your brothers in the Faith. Thus do We make plain Our revelations to men of knowledge.

9:12 But if, after coming to terms with you, they break their oaths, and revile your faith, make war on the leaders of unbelief – for no oaths are binding with them – so that they may desist.

Will you not fight against those who have broken their oaths and conspired to banish the Apostle? They were the first to attack you. Do you fear them? Surely God is more deserving of your fear, if you are true believers.

Make war on them: God will chastise them at your hands and humble them. He will grant you victory over them and heal the spirit of the faithful. He will take away all rancour from their hearts: God shows mercy to whom He pleases. God is all-knowing and wise.

Did you imagine you would be forsaken before God has had time to know those of you who have fought valiantly and served none but God, His Apostle and the faithful? God is cognizant of all your actions.

9:17 It ill becomes the idolaters to visit the mosques of God,

for they are unbelievers, self-confessed. Vain shall be their works, and in the Fire they shall abide for ever.

None should visit the mosques of God except those who 9:18 believe in God and the Last Day, attend to their prayers and render the alms levy and fear none but God. These shall be rightly guided.

Do you pretend that he who gives a drink to the pilgrims and pays a visit to the Sacred Mosque is as worthy as the man who believes in God and the Last Day, and fights for God's cause? These are not held equal by God. God does not guide the wrongdoers.

Those that have embraced the Faith, and left their homes, and fought for God's cause with their wealth and with their persons, are held in higher regard by God. It is they who shall triumph. Their Lord has promised them mercy from Himself, and His pleasure and gardens of eternal bliss where they shall dwell for ever. God's recompense is great indeed.

Believers, do not befriend your fathers or your brothers if they choose unbelief in preference to faith. Wrongdoers are those that befriend them.

Say: 'If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your 9:24 wives, your tribes, the property you have acquired, the merchandise you fear may not be sold, and the homes you love, are dearer to you than God, His apostle and the struggle for His cause, then wait until God shall fulfil His decree. God does not guide the evil-doers.'

God has aided you on many a battlefield. In the Battle of Hunain¹ you set great store by your numbers, but they availed you nothing: the earth, for all its vastness, seemed to close in upon you, and you turned your backs and fled. Then God caused His tranquillity² to descend upon His apostle 9:26 and the faithful: He sent to your aid invisible warriors and sternly punished the unbelievers. Thus were the infidels rewarded.

1. Fought in A.D. 630. The Muslim army was 12,000 strong, the Meccans 4,000.

2. See footnote, p. 36.

9:27 Yet God will show mercy to whom He will. God is forgiving and merciful.

Believers, know that the idolaters are unclean. Let them not approach the Sacred Mosque after this year is ended. If you fear poverty, God, if He pleases, will enrich you through His own bounty. God is all-knowing and wise.

Fight against such of those to whom the Scriptures were given as believe in neither God nor the Last Day, who do not forbid what God and His apostle have forbidden, and do not embrace the true Faith, until they pay tribute out of hand and are utterly subdued.

The Jews say Ezra is the son of God, while the Christians say the Messiah is the son of God. Such are their assertions, by which they imitate the infidels of old. God confound them! How perverse they are!

9:31 They make of their clerics and their monks, and of the Messiah, the son of Mary, Lords besides God; though they were ordered to serve one God only. There is no god but Him. Exalted be He above those they deify besides Him!

They would extinguish the light of God with their mouths: but God seeks only to perfect His light, though the infidels abhor it.

It is He who has sent forth His apostle with guidance and the True Faith that he may exalt it above all religions, though the idolaters abhor it.

Believers, many are the clerics and the monks who defraud men of their possessions and debar them from the path of God. To those that hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in God's cause, proclaim a woeful punishment. The day will surely come when their treasures shall be heated in the fire of Hell, and their foreheads, sides, and backs branded with them. They will be told: 'These are the riches which you hoarded. Taste then what you were hoarding.'

9:36 God ordained the months twelve in number when He created the heavens and the earth. Of these, four are sacred, according to the true Faith. Therefore do not sin against

yourselves by violating them. But you may fight against the idolaters in all these months, since they themselves fight against you in all of them. Know that God is with the righteous.

The postponement of sacred months is a grossly impious 9:37 practice, in which the unbelievers are misguided. They allow it one year and forbid it in the next, so that they may make up for the months which God has sanctified, thus making lawful what God has forbidden. Their foul acts seem fair to them: God does not guide the unbelievers.

Believers, why is it that when you are told: 'March in the cause of God,' you linger slothfully in the land? Are you content with this life in preference to the life to come? Few indeed are the blessings of this life, compared with those of the life to come.

If you do not go to war, He will punish you sternly, and will replace you by other men. You will in no way harm Him: for God has power over all things.

If you do not help him,¹ God will help him as He helped 9:40 him when he was driven out by the unbelievers with one other.² In the cave he said to his companion: 'Do not despair, God is with us.' God caused His tranquillity³ to descend upon him and sent to his aid invisible warriors, so that he routed the unbelievers and exalted the Word of God. God is mighty and wise.

Whether unarmed or well-equipped, march on and fight for the cause of God, with your wealth and with your persons. This will be best for you, if you but knew it.

Had the gain been immediate or the journey short, they 9:42 would have followed you:⁴ but the distance seemed too far to them. Yet they will swear by God: 'Had we been able, we would have marched with you.' They bring ruin upon themselves. God knows that they are surely lying.

1. Muḥammad.

2. Abū-Bakr, later the first of the Rightly-guided Caliphs.

3. See footnote, p. 36.

4. Muḥammad.

9:43 God forgive you! Why did you give them leave to stay behind before you knew those who spoke the truth from those who invented false excuses?

Those that believe in God and the Last Day will not beg you to exempt them from fighting with their wealth and with their persons. God best knows the righteous. Only those seek exemption who disbelieve in God and the Last Day, and whose hearts are filled with doubt. Because they doubt, they waver.

Had they intended to set forth, they would have prepared themselves for war. But God was loth to let them go, and held them back. They were bidden to stay with those who stayed behind.

Had they taken the field with you, they would have only added to your burden. They would have wormed their way through your ranks, seeking to sow discord among you: and among you there were some who would have been willing listeners. God knows the evil-doers.

9:48 They had sought before this to sow dissension, and hatched plots against you. But in the end the truth prevailed and the will of God triumphed, much as they disliked it.

Some of them say: 'Give us leave to stay behind, and do not expose us to temptation.' Surely they have already succumbed to temptation. Hell shall engulf the unbelievers.

If you meet with success, it grieves them; but if a disaster befalls you, they say: 'We have taken our precautions.' And they turn away, rejoicing.

Say: 'Nothing will befall us except what God has ordained. He is our Guardian. In God let the faithful put their trust.'

Say: 'Are you waiting for anything to befall us except victory or martyrdom? We are waiting for God's scourge to smite you, direct from Him or at our hands. Wait if you will; we too are waiting.'

9:53 Say: 'Whether you give willingly or with reluctance, your offerings shall not be accepted from you; for you are wicked men.'

Their offerings shall not be accepted from them because 9:54 they have denied God and His apostle. They pray half-heartedly and begrudge their contributions.

Let neither their riches nor their children rouse your envy. Through these God seeks to punish them in this life, so that their souls shall depart while still in unbelief.

They swear by God that they are believers like you. Yet they are not. They are afraid of you. If they could find a shelter or a cave, or any hiding-place, they would run in frantic haste to seek refuge in it.

There are some among them who speak ill of you¹ concerning the distribution of alms. If a share is given them, they are contented: but if they receive nothing, they grow resentful.

Would that they were satisfied with what God and His apostle have given them, and said: 'God is all-sufficient for us. God will provide for us from His own abundance, and so will His apostle. To God we will submit.'

Alms shall be only for the poor and the destitute, for those 9:60 that are engaged in the management of alms and those whose hearts are sympathetic to the Faith, for the freeing of slaves and debtors, for the advancement of God's cause, and for the traveller in need. That is a duty enjoined by God. God is all-knowing and wise.

And there are others among them who speak ill of the Prophet, saying: 'He believes everything he hears.' Say: 'He hears only what is good for you. He believes in God and puts his trust in the faithful. He is a blessing to the true believers among you. Those that wrong the Apostle of God shall be sternly punished.'

They swear in the name of God in order to please you. But it is more just that they should please God and the Apostle, if they are true believers.

Are they not aware that the man who defies God and His 9:63

apostle shall abide for ever in the fire of Hell? That surely is the supreme humiliation.

9:64 The hypocrites are afraid lest a Chapter be revealed to them, telling them what is in their hearts. Say: 'Scoff if you will; God will surely bring to light what you are dreading.'

If you question them, they will say: 'We were only jesting and making merry.' Say: 'Would you mock God, His revelations, and His apostle? Make no excuses. You have renounced the faith after embracing it. If We pardon some of you, We will punish others, for they are guilty men.'

Be they men or women, the hypocrites are all alike. They enjoin what is evil, forbid what is just, and tighten their fists. They forgot God, so God forgot them. Surely the hypocrites are evil-doers.

God has promised the hypocrites, both men and women, and the unbelievers, the fire of Hell. They shall abide in it for ever: a sufficient recompense. The curse of God is upon them; lasting torment awaits them.

9:69 Your ways are like the ways of those who have gone before you. They were mightier than you, and were blessed with greater riches and more children. Like them, you have enjoyed your earthly lot and, like them, you have engaged in idle talk. But vain were their works in this life, and vain they shall be in the life to come. These will surely be the losers.

Have they not heard the histories of those who have gone before them? The fate of Noah's people and of Thamūd and 'Ād; of Abraham's people and the people of Midian and the Ruined Cities? Their apostles showed them veritable signs. God did not wrong them, but they wronged themselves.

The true believers, both men and women, are friends to one another. They enjoin what is just and forbid what is evil; they attend to their prayers, and render the alms levy, and obey God and His apostle. On these God will have mercy. God is mighty and wise.

9:72 God has promised the men and women who believe in

Him gardens watered by running streams, in which they shall abide for ever: goodly mansions in the gardens of Eden: and, what is more, they shall have grace in God's sight. That is the supreme triumph.

Prophet, make war on the unbelievers and the hypocrites 9:73 and deal rigorously with them. Hell shall be their home: an evil fate.

They swear by God that they said nothing. Yet they uttered the word of unbelief and renounced Islām after embracing it. They sought to do what they could not attain. Yet they had no reason to be spiteful; except perhaps because God and His apostle had enriched them through His bounty. If they repent, it will indeed be better for them; but if they pay no heed, God will sternly punish them, both in this world and in the world to come. They shall have none on earth to protect or help them.

Some pledged themselves, saying: 'If God is bountiful to us, we will give alms and live like righteous men.' But when God had bestowed His favours on them they tightened their fists and, turning their backs, hurried away. He has 9:77 caused hypocrisy to reign in their hearts till the day they meet Him, because they have been untrue to the pledge they gave Him and because of the lies they told.

Are they not aware that God knows what they conceal and what they talk about in secret? That God knows what is hidden? As for those that taunt the believers who give freely, and deride those who give according to their means, God will deride them. Woeful punishment awaits them.

It is the same whether or not you beg forgiveness for them. If seventy times you beg forgiveness for them, God will not forgive them, for they have denied God and His apostle. God does not guide the evil-doers.

Those that stayed at home were glad that they were left 9:81 behind by God's apostle, for they had no wish to fight for the cause of God with their wealth and with their persons. They said to each other: 'Do not go to war, the heat is fierce.'

Say to them: 'More fierce is the heat of Hell-fire!' Would that they understood!

9:82 They shall laugh but little and shed many tears. Thus shall they be rewarded for their misdeeds.

If God brings you back in safety and some of them ask leave to march with you, say: 'You shall not march with me, nor shall you fight with me against an enemy. You chose to stay at home on the first occasion; therefore you shall now stay with those who will remain behind.'

You shall not pray for any of their dead, nor shall you attend their burial. For they denied God and His apostle and remained sinners to the last.

Let neither their riches nor their children rouse your envy. Through these God seeks to punish them in this life, so that their souls shall depart while still in unbelief

Whenever a Chapter was revealed, saying: 'Believe in God and fight alongside His apostle,' the rich among them excused themselves to you, saying: 'Leave us with those who are to stay behind.'

9:87 They were content to be with those who stayed behind: a seal was set upon their hearts, leaving them bereft of understanding. But the Apostle and the men who shared his faith fought with their goods and with their persons. These shall be rewarded with good things. These shall surely prosper. God has prepared for them gardens watered by running streams, in which they shall abide for ever. That is the supreme triumph.

Some Arabs of the desert turned up with excuses, begging leave to stay behind; while those who denied God and His apostle remained idle at home. A woeful scourge shall fall on those of them that disbelieved.

It shall be no offence for the disabled, the sick, and those lacking the means to stay behind: if they are true to God and His apostle. The righteous shall not be blamed: God is forgiving and merciful. Nor shall those be blamed who, when they came to you demanding conveyances to the battle-front and you could find none to carry them, went away in tears grieving that they had not the means to contribute.

9:93 The offenders are those that seek exemption although

they are men of wealth. They are content to be with those who stay behind. God has set a seal upon their hearts; they are devoid of knowledge.

When you return to them they will come up to you with excuses. Say: 'Make no excuses: we will not believe you. God has revealed to us the truth about you. God and His apostle will watch your actions. Then you shall return to Him who knows alike the unknown and the manifest, and He will declare to you what you have done.'

When you return they will appeal to you in God's name to let them be. So let them be: they are unclean. Hell shall be their home, the punishment for their misdeeds.

They will swear to you in order to gain your acceptance. But if you accept them, God will not accept the evil-doers.

The desert Arabs surpass others in unbelief and hypocrisy, and have more cause to be ignorant of the laws which God has revealed to His apostle. But God is all-knowing and wise.

Some desert Arabs regard what they give as a compulsory fine and wait for some misfortune to befall you. May ill-fortune befall them! God hears all and knows all.

Yet there are others among the desert Arabs who 9:99 believe in God and the Last Day, and regard what they give as a means of bringing them close to God and to the Apostle's prayers. Indeed, closer they shall be brought; God will admit them to His mercy. God is forgiving and merciful.

As for those who led the way, the first of the *muhājirīn*¹ and the *anṣār*,² and those who nobly followed them, God is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them gardens watered by running streams, where they shall dwell for ever. That is the supreme triumph.

Some of the desert Arabs around you are hypocrites, and 9:101 so are some of the citizens of Madīnah, who are indeed fanatical in their hypocrisy. You do not know them, but We

1. Muḥammad's early followers who fled with him to Medina.

2. Muḥammad's supporters in Medina.

know them well. Twice We will chastise them: then shall they return to a grievous torment.

9:102 Others there are who have confessed their sins; their good works had been intermixed with evil. Perchance God will turn to them in mercy. God is forgiving and merciful. Take alms from them, so that they may thereby be cleansed and purified, and pray for them: for your prayers will give them comfort. God hears all and knows all.

Do they not know that God accepts the repentance of His servants and takes their alms, and that God is the Forgiving One, the Merciful?

Say: 'Do as you will. God will behold your works, and so will His apostle and the faithful; then shall you return to Him who knows alike the unknown and the manifest, and He will declare to you all that you have done.'

There are yet others who must await God's decree. He will either punish or pardon them. God is all-knowing and wise.

9:107 And there are those who built a mosque from mischievous motives, to spread unbelief and disunite the faithful, in expectation of him¹ who had made war on God and His apostle. They swear that their intentions were good, but God bears witness that they are lying. You shall not set foot in it. It is more fitting that you should pray in a mosque founded on piety from the very first. There you shall find men who would keep themselves pure. God loves those that purify themselves.

Who is a better man, he who founds his house on the fear of God and His good pleasure, or he who builds on the brink of a crumbling precipice, so that his house will fall with him into the fire of Hell? God does not guide the wrong-doers.

9:110 The edifice which they have built shall ever inspire their hearts with doubt, until their hearts are cut in pieces. God is all-knowing and wise.

1. Abū 'Āmir.

God has purchased from the faithful their lives and worldly goods, and in return has promised them the Garden. They will fight for the cause of God, they will slay and be slain. Such is the true promise which He has made them in the Torah, the Gospel and the Koran. And who is more true to his pledge than God? Rejoice then in the bargain you have made. That is the supreme triumph.

Those that repent and those that serve and praise Him; those that fast and those that kneel and prostrate themselves; those that enjoin justice, forbid evil, and observe the commandments of God [shall be richly recompensed]. Proclaim the good tidings to the faithful.

It is not for the Prophet or the believers to beg forgiveness for idolaters, even though they be related to them, after it has become manifest that they have earned the punishment of Hell. Abraham prayed for his father only to fulfil a promise he had made him. But when he realized he was an enemy of God, he disowned him. Yet Abraham was a compassionate and tender-hearted man.

Nor will God confound men after He has given them guidance until He has made plain to them all that they should avoid. God has knowledge of all things.

God has sovereignty over the heavens and the earth; He ordains life and death. You have none besides God to protect or help you.

God turned in mercy to the Prophet, the *muhājirīn* and the *anṣār*, who stood by him in the hour of adversity, when some were on the point of losing heart. He turned to them in mercy. He took pity on them and was merciful. And to the three who had been left behind. So despondent were they that the earth, for all its vastness, and their own souls, seemed to close in upon them. They knew there was no refuge from God except in Him. Therefore He turned to them in mercy, so that they might repent. God is the Forgiving One, the Merciful.

Believers, have fear of God and stand with those who uphold the cause of truth. No cause have the people of Madīnah and the desert Arabs who dwell around them to

forsake God's apostle or to jeopardize his life so as to safeguard their own; for they do not expose themselves to thirst or hunger or to any ordeal for the sake of God, nor do they take any step which may provoke the unbelievers, nor do they inflict any loss on an enemy, but shall be noted down for them as a good deed: God will not deny the righteous their reward. Each sum they give, be it small or large, and each valley they traverse, shall be noted down, so that God may requite them for their noblest deeds.

9:121 It is not right that all the faithful should go to war at once. A band from each community should stay behind to instruct themselves in religion and to admonish their men when they return, so that they may take heed.

Believers, make war on the infidels who dwell around you. Deal firmly with them. Know that God is with the righteous.

9:124 Whenever a Chapter is revealed, some of them ask: 'Whose faith will this increase?' It will surely increase the believers' faith and give them joy. As for those whose hearts are tainted, it will add uncleanness to their uncleanness, so that they shall die while still in unbelief.

Do they not see how every year they were afflicted once or twice? Yet they neither repent nor take warning. Whenever a Chapter is revealed, they glance at each other, asking: 'Is anyone watching you?' Then they turn away. God has turned away their hearts, for they are senseless men.

There has now come to you an apostle of your own, one who grieves at your sinfulness and cares for you; one who is benevolent and merciful to true believers.

9:129 If they pay no heed, say: 'God is all-sufficient for me. There is no god but Him. In Him I have put my trust. He is the Lord of the Glorious Throne.'

JONAH

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

ALIF *lām rā'*. These are the verses of the Wise Book: Does it seem strange to mankind that We revealed Our will to a mortal from among themselves, saying: 'Give warning to mankind, and proclaim good tidings to the faithful: their endeavours shall be rewarded by their Lord?' 10:1

The unbelievers say: 'This man¹ is a skilled enchanter.' Yet your Lord is God, who in six days created the heavens and the earth and then ascended the throne, ordaining all things. None has power to intercede for you, except him who has received His sanction. Such is God, your Lord: therefore serve Him. Will you not take heed?

To Him shall you all return: God's promise shall be fulfilled. He brings the Creation into being and will then restore it, so that He may justly recompense those who have believed in Him and done good works. As for the unbelievers, scalding water shall they drink, and for their unbelief woeful punishment awaits them.

It was He that gave the sun his brightness and the moon her light, ordaining her phases that you may learn to compute the seasons and the years. God created them only to manifest the Truth. He makes plain His revelations to men of knowledge. 10:5

In the alternation of night and day, and in all that God has created in the heavens and the earth, there are signs for righteous men.

Those who entertain no hope of meeting Us, being pleased and contented with the life of this world, and those who pay no heed to Our revelations, shall have the Fire as their home in requital for their deeds.

As for those that believe and do good works, God will guide them through their faith. Rivers will run at their feet in the Gardens of Delight. Their prayer will be: 'Glory be to You, Lord!' and their greeting: 'Peace!' 'Praise be to God, 10:10

1. Muḥammad.

16:115 He has forbidden you carrion, blood and the flesh of swine; also any flesh consecrated other than in the name of God. But whoever is driven by necessity, intending neither to sin nor to transgress, will find that God is forgiving and merciful.

You shall not falsely declare: 'This is lawful, and that is forbidden,' in order to invent a falsehood about God. Those who invent falsehoods about God shall never prosper. Brief is their enjoyment of this life, and woeful punishment awaits them.

To the Jews We have pronounced unlawful what We recounted to you before. We never wronged them, but they wronged themselves.

To those who commit evil through ignorance, and then repent and mend their ways, your Lord is forgiving and merciful.

Abraham was a paragon of piety, an upright man obedient to God. He was no idolater. He rendered thanks for His favours, so that He chose him and guided him to a straight path. We bestowed on him a blessing in this world, and in the world to come he shall dwell among the righteous.

16:123 And now We have revealed to you Our will, saying: 'Follow the faith of saintly Abraham: he was no idolater.'

The Sabbath was ordained only for those who differed about it. On the Day of Resurrection your Lord will judge their disputes.

Call men to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kindly exhortation. Reason with them in the most courteous manner. Your Lord best knows those who stray from His path and those who are rightly guided.

If you punish, let your punishment be commensurate with the wrong that has been done you. But it shall be best for you to endure your wrongs with patience.

16:128 Be patient, then: God will grant you patience. Do not grieve for the unbelievers, nor distress yourself at their intrigues. God is with those who keep from evil and do good works.

THE NIGHT JOURNEY

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

GLORY BE to Him who made His servant go by night 17:1 from the Sacred Temple¹ to the farther Temple² whose surroundings We have blessed, that We might show him some of Our signs. He alone hears all and observes all.

We gave Moses the Book and made it a guide for the Israelites, saying: 'Take no other guardian than Myself. You are the descendants of those whom We carried in the ark with Noah. He was a truly thankful servant.'

In the Book We solemnly declared to the Israelites: 'Twice you shall do evil in the land. You shall become great transgressors.'

And when the prophecy of your first transgression came to be fulfilled, We sent against you a formidable army³ which ravaged your land and carried out the punishment you had been promised.

Then We granted you victory over them and multiplied 17:6 your riches and your descendants, so that once again you became more numerous than they. We said: 'If you do good, it shall be to your advantage; but if you do evil, you shall sin against your own souls.'

And when the prophecy of your next transgression came to be fulfilled, We sent another army⁴ to afflict you and to enter the Temple as the former entered it before, utterly destroying all that they laid their hands on.

We said: 'Your Lord may yet be merciful to you. If you again transgress, you shall again be scourged. We have made Hell a prison-house for the unbelievers.'

This Koran will give guidance to that which is most 17:9

1. Of Mecca.

2. Of Jerusalem (and thence to the Throne of God, accompanied by the Angel Gabriel). Some Muslim commentators give a literal interpretation to this passage, others regard it as a vision.

3. The Assyrians.

4. The Romans.

those that drink it, and rivers of clarified honey. There shall they eat of every fruit, and receive forgiveness from their Lord. Are they to be compared to those who shall abide in Hell for ever, and drink scalding water which will tear their bowels?

47:16 Some of them indeed listen to you, but no sooner do they leave your presence than they ask those endowed with knowledge: 'What did he say just now?' Such are the men whose hearts are sealed by God, and who follow their base desires.

As for those who follow the right path, He will increase their guidance and show them the way to righteousness.

Are they waiting for the Hour of Doom to overtake them unawares? Its portents have already come. How else will they be warned when it does overtake them?

Know that there is no deity but God. Implore Him to forgive your sins and to forgive the true believers, men and women. God knows your busy haunts and resting-places.

47:21 The faithful say: 'If only a Chapter were revealed!' But when a forthright Chapter is revealed and war is mentioned in it, you see the infirm of heart staring at you as though they are fainting away for fear of death. Yet obedience and courteous speech would become them more. Indeed, should war be decided upon, it would be better for them to be true to God.

If you¹ renounced the Faith, you would surely do evil in the land and violate the ties of blood. Such are those on whom God has laid His curse, leaving them deaf and sightless.

Will they not ponder on the Koran? Are there locks upon their hearts?

Those who return to unbelief after God's guidance has been revealed to them are seduced by Satan and inspired by him. That is because they say to those who abhor the Word of God: 'We shall obey you in *some* matters.' God knows their secret talk.

What will they do when the angels carry off their souls, striking their faces and their backs?

47:28 That is because they follow what has incurred the wrath

1. The hypocrites.

of God and abhor what pleases Him. He will surely bring their works to nothing.

Or do the feeble-hearted think that God will not reveal their malice? If We pleased, We could point them out to you and you would recognize them promptly by their looks. But you will surely know them from the tenor of their words. God has knowledge of all your actions. 47:29

We shall put you to the proof until We know the valiant and the resolute among you, and test all that is said about you.

The unbelievers who debar others from the path of God and disobey the Apostle after they have seen the light shall in no way harm God. He will bring their works to nothing.

Believers, obey God and obey the Apostle, and let not your labours come to nothing.

Those that disbelieve and debar others from God's path and in the end die unbelievers shall not be shown forgiveness by God. Therefore do not falter or sue for peace when you have gained the upper hand. God is on your side and will not grudge you the recompense of your labours. 47:34

The life of this world is but a sport and a diversion. He will reward you if you believe in Him and guard yourselves against evil. He does not ask for all your wealth. If He demanded all and strongly pressed you, you would grow tight-fisted, and this would show your malice.

You are called upon to give in the cause of God. Some among you are ungenerous; yet whoever is ungenerous to this cause is ungenerous to himself. Indeed, God does not need you, but you need Him. If you pay no heed, He will replace you by others who shall bear no resemblance to yourselves. 47:38

VICTORY

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

WE HAVE given you¹ a glorious victory,² so that God may

1. Muhammad.

2. The taking of Mecca, A.D. 630, or of Khaybar a year earlier.

48:2 forgive you your past and future sins, and perfect His goodness to you; that He may guide you to a straight path and bestow on you His mighty help.

It was He who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the faithful, so that their faith might grow stronger (God's are the legions of the heavens and the earth: God is all-knowing and wise); that He may bring the believers, both men and women, into gardens watered by running streams, there to abide for ever; that He may forgive them their sins (this, in God's sight, is a glorious triumph); and that He may punish the hypocrites and the idolaters, men and women, who think evil thoughts about God. A turn of evil shall befall them, for God is angry with them. He has laid on them His curse and prepared for them the fire of Hell: an evil fate.

God's are the legions of the heavens and the earth. God is mighty and wise.

48:8 We have sent you¹ forth as a witness and as a bearer of good news and warnings, so that you² may have faith in God and His apostle and that you may assist Him, honour Him, and praise Him morning and evening.

Those that swear fealty to you, swear fealty to God Himself. The Hand of God is above their hands. He that breaks his oath breaks it at his own peril, but he that keeps his pledge to God shall be richly recompensed by Him.

The desert Arabs who stayed behind³ will say to you: 'We were occupied with our goods and families. Implore God to pardon us.' They will say with their tongues what they do not mean in their hearts.

Say: 'Who can intervene on your behalf with God if it be His will to do you harm or good? Indeed, God is cognizant of all your actions.'

48:12 No. You⁴ thought the Apostle and the believers would

1. Muḥammad. 2. The Meccans.
3. Away from the war. 4. The desert Arabs.

never return to their people; and with this fancy your hearts were delighted. You harboured evil thoughts and thus incurred damnation.

As for those that disbelieve in God and His apostle, We 48:13 have prepared a blazing Fire for the unbelievers. God has sovereignty over the heavens and the earth. He pardons whom He will and punishes whom He pleases. God is forgiving and merciful.

When you set forth to take the spoils, those that stayed behind will say: 'Let us come with you.'

They seek to change the Word of God. Say: 'You shall not come with us. So God has said beforehand.'

They will reply: 'You are surely jealous of us.' But how little they understand!

Say to the desert Arabs who stayed behind: 'You shall be called upon to fight a mighty nation, unless they embrace Islām. If you prove obedient, God will reward you well. But if you run away, as you have done before this, He will inflict on you a stern chastisement.'

It shall be no offence for the blind, the lame, and the sick 48:17 to stay behind. He that obeys God and His apostle shall be admitted to gardens watered by running streams; but he that turns and flees shall be sternly punished by Him.

God was well pleased with the faithful when they swore allegiance to you under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts. Therefore He sent down tranquillity upon them, and rewarded them with a speedy victory and with the many spoils which they have taken. Mighty is God and wise.

God has promised you rich booty, and has given you this¹ with all promptness. He has stayed your enemies' hands, so that He may make your victory a sign to true believers and guide you along a straight path.

And God knows of other spoils which you have not yet taken. God has power over all things.

If the unbelievers join battle with you, they shall be put 48:22 to flight. They shall find none to protect or help them.

1. The spoils taken at Khaybar.

48:23 Such were the ways of God in days gone by: and you shall find no change in the ways of God.

It was He who ended hostilities between you in the Valley of Mecca¹ after He had given you victory over them. God was watching all your actions.

Those were the unbelievers who debarred you from the Sacred Mosque and prevented your offerings from reaching their destination. But for the fear that you might have trampled underfoot believing men and women unknown to you and thus incurred unwitting guilt on their account, [God would have commanded you to fight it out with them; but He ordained it thus] that He might bring whom He will into His mercy. Had the faithful stood apart from them, We would have sternly punished the unbelievers.

And while bigotry—the bigotry of ignorance—was holding its sway in the hearts of the unbelievers, God sent down His tranquillity on His apostle and on the faithful and made the word of piety binding on them, for they were most worthy and deserving of it. God has knowledge of all things.

48:27 God has in all truth fulfilled His apostle's vision, in which He had said: 'If God wills, you shall enter the Sacred Mosque secure and fearless, with hair cropped or shaven.' He knew what you knew not; and what is more, He granted you a speedy victory.

It is He that has sent forth His apostle with guidance and the true Faith, so that he may exalt it above all religions. Sufficient is God as a witness.

48:29 Muḥammad is God's apostle. Those who follow him are ruthless to the unbelievers but merciful to one another. You see them worshipping on their knees, seeking the grace of God and His good will. Their marks² are on their faces, the traces of their prostrations. Thus are they described in the Torah and in the Gospel:³ they are like the seed which puts forth its shoot and strengthens it, so that it rises stout and firm upon its stalk, delighting the sowers. Through them

1. The allusion is probably to the Peace of Ḥudaybiyya, A.D. 628.

2. Dust. 3. Cf. Mark iv, 26–9.

He seeks to enrage the unbelievers. Yet to those of them who will embrace the Faith and do good works God has promised forgiveness and a rich recompense.

THE CHAMBERS

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

BELIEVERS, DO not behave presumptuously in the presence of God and His apostle. Have fear of God: God hears all and knows all. 49:1

Believers, do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor shout aloud when speaking to him as you do to one another, lest your labours should come to nothing without your knowledge. Those who speak softly in the presence of God's apostle are the men whose hearts God has tested for piety. Forgiveness and a rich reward await them.

Those who call out to you¹ while you are in your chambers are for the most part foolish men. If they waited until you went out to them, it would be better for them. But God is forgiving and merciful.

Believers, if an evil-doer brings you a piece of news, 49:6 inquire first into its truth, lest you should wrong others unwittingly and then regret your action.

Know that God's apostle is among you. If he obeyed you in many matters, you would surely come to grief. But God has endeared the Faith to you and beautified it in your hearts, making unbelief, wrongdoing, and disobedience abhorrent to you. Such are those who are rightly guided through God's grace and bounty. God is all-knowing and wise.

If two parties of believers take up arms the one against the other, make peace between them. If either of them unjustly attacks the other, fight against the aggressors till they submit to God's judgement. When they submit, make

1. Muḥammad.