

This document is created for the TwoPennyPosts with the purpose of inventorying scriptures on a specific topic. It does not reflect the entire content of the Quran nor does it visually relate to the proportions of these messages within the Quran. The words in this document are my summary of the scriptures and are based on an amateur knowledge of Arabic and Islamic history. This document is not intended for use by other sources, nor does it claim authority or ability to represent the views of Islam.

Subject Peoples of the Quran

The Quran does not regularly specify who it is talking about nor when it switches its subjects, frequently attributing descriptions and actions to a vague "them." Using context, both immediate and broad, you can usually make an educated guess. When the Quran is being specific, its subject populations are usually such:

- **Believers:** Sometimes Muslims are called *al-muslimuun*, but most often the Quran simply calls them *al-mu'minuun* "The ones who trust." These come from the roots [م-ي-ن](#) which connote [trust/belief](#). This is a good description of believers, because their essential act is putting trust in God, God's mercy, and Muhammad's honesty. They are not an ethnic group and are not defined by either class, tribe, or ethnicity. The central identity of Islam is one of opting into the ideas about God, morality, and government that are presented by Muhammad and the Quran he taught from.
- **Disbelievers:** the perfect opposite of *yu'minuu* "they believe" is *laa yuminuu* "they don't believe." The Quran prefers instead to use terms along the lines of *alladhiina kafaruu*, "those who disbelieve," or simply *al-kaafiruun*, "the disbelievers." The roots [ك-ف-ر](#) (Hebrew cognate [k-p-r](#)) at their basest meaning connote covering, but are expanded to also build concepts of atonement and turning over/tilling. Thus, *kufr* is not merely a lack of belief, but also carries an idea of concealing or negating what is being rejected. It isn't a passive act but takes effort, and is that is why it is translated as "disbelief" rather than "unbelief."
- **Pagans/polytheists:** *al-mushrikuun*, "the ones who associate." I wonder if the Quran invented this word. The roots [ش-ر-ك](#) neutrally connote "association" and can build works like *shirka*, "company/corporation." In the Quran, *shirk* is the act of associating something with God, usually other deities. Historical context and content of the suwar limit the polytheists being criticized to those on the Arabian peninsula, particularly the Meccans. While other populations are accused of *shirk*, they are still held separate from the Quran's category of polytheists.
- **Hypocrites:** *al-munaafiquun*, literally "the ones who [tunnel](#)." The etymology of "hypocrites" in Arabic suggests living underground and appearing at one or the other end of the tunnel unless it is convenient for them or when disaster falls at the other end. Thus the Arabic concept for a hypocrite is not only someone who is duplicitous and contrary, but someone whose real life is secretive, whose motivation is cowardice, and who keeps all their options open rather than fully commit.
- **People of the Book/People who have received Scripture.** Though historical Islam has had to question what other populations have a corrupted vestige of some divine Scripture (a popular inclusion in some communities is Zoroastrianism), the Quran only refers to other Jewish and Christian scriptures. It also includes that some Sabeans were guided too. Jews are called either *alladhiina huuduu* "those who became Jews," *al-yahuud*, "the are-Jewish," or more frequently *bani isra'iiil* "Children of Israel." Christians are usually called *an-naSaaraa*, which probably derives from "Nazarenes" but rather kindly puns with the roots [ن-س-ر](#) which connote "help/save." "People of the Book" is a concept describing a heritage rather than specific religious beliefs. Some People of the Book are still identified as such while being commended for taking Muhammad as a prophet, and other People of the Book are described directly as disbelievers.
- There are also "the criminals," "the corrupters," "the trespassers" and other related terms that show up, but these are usually combined with one of the other non-Muslim categories and are less distinct of a population.

Yellow Highlight means positive portrayal either directly or implicitly of non-Muslims.
Blue Highlight means critical portrayal of believers.

Surat al-Fatihah

In this prayer most of the verses are used praising the nature of God. This does include describing God as the ruler of Judgment Day and as such it appeals to Him for guidance. That's the essential message of this surah, and the disbelievers are not really a concern. In ayat 6-7, the supplicant is praying to belong to a group of people who have received favor rather than being of the groups that anger God and who He has left unguided.

Surat al-Baqarah

- 1 "This is the Book about which there is no doubt" - The Quran sees itself as so obvious that one's default response should be to trust in it. As such, it implies that deliberate rebellion is what it takes to reject it.
- 6-7 Those who disbelieve (*kafar*) are hopeless, on a course that cannot be altered. God has intervened to seal their fates for punishment
- 8-20 This section is mostly concerned with "they" the hypocrites, secret disbelievers.
 - 10 says that their hearts are already diseased, and God is just amplifying a disease inherent in them.
 - 11-12 The hypocrites are hapless, thinking that they are reforming things but unaware that they are only spreading corruption. **This potentially upholds that the hypocrites at least might mean well.**
 - 13 They consider orthodox Muslims simpletons/fools.
 - 14 They are also presented as deliberately duplicitous, holding allegiance to a secret group of evil people (literally "their satans") while presenting a false face to Muslims.
 - 15-18 Hypocrites once were guided, but then gave up guidance. This would suggest agency, except that it goes on to use imagery in which God interferes and takes away their guidance so that they cannot return to their former faith.
 - 19-20 Here, *kafiruun* are those who avoid the warnings because they fear the truth. Guidance only comes in brief snatches. **When they do have light they do move forward, so they are receptive to guidance in some capacity,** though it is not clear how the ayah intends to portray them with this metaphor. In the preceding metaphor of the campfire in which light represented guidance while darkness represented ignorance. That *kafiruun* do not take action when in a state of ignorance should be commendable, one would think, but that conflicts with the condemnation in this metaphor of the lightning. The verse also mocks their dependency on their eyes and ears by saying it is in essence only a mercy from God that they have those at all. Maybe this is supposed to insinuate that their dependency on their vision, hearing, and the presence of "light" demonstrates their lack of faith, and that if they had faith they could move through the darkness and still be guided(?).
- 23-24 Challenges the disbelievers to create their own surah that could compete with the Quran's, but this challenge is pre-empted by the declaration that they cannot. I'm going to take note of this particular challenge only this time, though it'll recur again. It's worth noting the once because the Quran does not define what in its quality is inimitable, nor do we know what the disbelievers produced. The Quran preemptively disqualifies anything they could produce from consideration, and thus listening to their attempts is irrelevant, and the Quran gets to portray that the unbelievers are pretentious and dismissive.

- 26 God condescends to give a tiny parable/example to the people, depositing only the mention of something tiny like a mosquito. This serves to sort people into believers and disbelievers, as those who believe will find meaning in the smallest details. Disbelievers, on the other hand, scoff and are portrayed as unreasonable. The ayah disregards the validity of the disbelievers' question: "what is this supposed to do/say?" This could fuel an Emperor's New Clothes scenario, in which believers *must* find meaning in everything in order to be secure in the club, shutting down anyone who contests an idea. Believers must do the work to read meaning and the evidences the Quran submits as proof. Not to be too hard on this ayah, I will say that in modern eyes this verse has added meaning, since we now are more aware of the extreme complexity and marvels in even the smallest components of the world.
- 26b-27 Those who are defiant and have recanted after conversion are then being misled by God.
- 34 Iblees is one of the *kafiruun*, which is notable because Iblees is not a character without knowledge, rather his defining trait is disobedience. This is a good example of how *kafir* refers to rebellion, not merely incorrect belief.
- 38-39 This passage has stronger suggestion of free will. People choose to follow or deny guidance, and God is not interfering except to provide guidance.
- 40-48 This passage is a caution to the Children of Israel, but it allows that there are members who meet all the requirements of obedience to God. There is no mention of Muhammad, or of looming wrath, or of their rebellious character. Indeed, the topic at hand is one of much more general religious concern, that they are preaching rather than practicing, and it is done gently. The section ends with a denial of the Jewish/Christian view of intercessionary sacrifice, and while the denial does not deal with the theology of that idea it also does not demean or read evil intent into it.
- 49-103 A broad section denouncing the People of the Book. Christians make an appearance a few times, but through frequent reference to the killing of prophets we get the idea that it is the Jews who are being reproached specifically.
 - 49-86 A long section that emphasizes through anecdotes the drudging nature of the Jews to respond to God. God is the proactive one in this section, having avenged them and forgiven them and guided them and provided for them. The Jews –excepting Moses– fail at every level to respond to God's goodness towards them. The scope of these failures is general, and their character is portrayed as highly arrogant, ignorant, fickle, and childish. This paints the Jews as unshakable degenerates.
 - 62 Says that there were Jews, Christians, and Sabeans who met the standard of faith and will be rewarded. The verbs are in past tense, suggesting that the time of those faiths is now closed, but this ayah credits that there were such people in the past who achieved eternal reward, and that societal degeneracy was not complete and that those religions/communities were not entirely futile.
 - 74 Miraculous proofs only make the Jews even more irredeemable in character.
 - 76 presents Jews in the same duplicitous light as hypocrites.
 - 83 concedes that a few Jews kept their covenant.
 - 85 Jews are inconsistent in following their scripture. While this is a net negative, it does at least acknowledge that they do good sometimes.
 - 87-103 Though a continuation of the previous subsection, this one really digs in to the outright evil character of the Jews, without pausing to concede that there were any otherwise except for prophets. The emphasis is by far on their murderous and jealous tendencies, that they kill prophets and are angered that God would send guidance to any other communities.
 - 88-89 Jews start being defined by their *kufr*, and start being called *kafiruun*.

- 94-96 In their hearts they know that they will be punished in the afterlife, and so they are more desperate to stay alive than even those who *shirk*.
- 99 Another statement that the Quran is so self-evident that belief in it is the default and that it takes deliberate defiance to reject.
- 100 It is declared that most of them do not believe, which **in a positive implication concedes that some of them do**.
- 102 A party of them follow ancient satanic teachings. There are also two angels who introduced false teaching in Babylon. Notice that the angels are transparent that their teachings are a trial which you fail by listening to them. This detail serves to make the angels innocent of the damage their temptations wreak, and makes it more damning to those who take the temptation for having been warned of the falseness of the angelic guidance. The final sentences communicate that The Children of Israel have sold their souls for magic.
- 105, 109, 111, 113 Those who disbelieve, whether People of the Book or *mushrikuun*, do not want the Muslims to receive any good from God. People of the Book particularly are jealous of Muslims, which leads them to reject Muslim belief even though they know it is true. Their goals are to disrupt and destroy places of prayer, and to revert Muslims away from guidance.
- 137 **Jews and Christians are capable of converting. Being Jew or Christian doesn't make one inherently sealed for Hell. They still have the potential for conversion.**
- 144-146 No signs will ever convince People of the Book to go in the direction of Muslims. People of the Book know the truth when they see it, as much as they recognize their own children, but a group of them knowingly work against the truth.
- 171 Those who *kafaruu* are compared to someone who can only hear that which is shouted at him (parsing the Arabic shows me that this verse does not actually call them sheep and cattle, that is Sahih's own interpretation) and are said to be deaf, dumb, blind, and thus beyond the ability to understand.
- 204-206 There is a person whose speech is eloquent and who swears by God that he is good, but whose evil is so manifest that he actually strives to corrupt the physical environment around him. This passage is weird in that it speaks of a singular anonymous individual. It could be a veiled description of some contemporary figure or a kind of Muslim anti-Christ, but it could also be a archetype of people in society to look out for. This latter idea is strengthened by the way that the sinfully proud man of these ayat is contrasted by the selfless person of ayah 207. Note that the latter is introduced with the same wording, so that these two examples stand in contrast to each other as members of society.
- 212 Disbelievers are petty and make fun of Muslims.
- 213 Everyone once was of one religion. It is jealousy that keeps people from uniting into one religion under divine scripture, and the jealousy is so strong that it makes people unable to accept clear proof.
- 217 A group of people will never cease to kill the believers who refuse to recant. This case seems very specific to Mecca, not to disbelievers as a whole, for the setting is The Sacred Mosque.
- 221 *Mushrikuun* are lower in social ranking than believing slaves. Note that this passage is about marriage specifically and does not necessarily set up a legally bound caste system. Inter-marriage is forbidden because pagan spouses are temptations towards Hell.
- 246-251 More stories in which the Jews are fickle and petulant. They fail temptation despite knowing the exact terms of the temptation.
 - 249 **There are a few who obey, and then a few within those few who have actual faith.**
- 253 The dividing of people into those who believe and who *kafaruu* is part of God's will.

- 256-257 The antithesis of God is called *aT-Taghuut*, a word that etymologically means “the transgressors.” There is an odd exchange here where God takes people out of darkness into light, while “the transgressors” take people from the light into darkness. Each side is in conflict with the other, and you are either allied with God or allied with antiGod-forces, always trying to convert the other side.
- 258-259 Some examples of arrogant disbelievers yielding to evidence.
- 286 The final prayer is for help/protection against the *kaafiruun*. *Kaafiruun* are thus cast as a force out to disrupt Muslim faith.

Surat Ali 'Imran

- 7 The Quran admits that while some of its verses are precise, others are more allegorical. This becomes a stumbling block for those who are already perverse in nature, as they try to use the allegorical sections to create arguments and overextend the intention of those allegories. While this ayah is not targeting disbelievers specifically, it does lay groundwork to accuse anyone who questions traditional orthodox interpretation of ayat as being inherently perverted. This ayah provides a way to write off or discredit when someone questions or objects to the Quran's lack of clarity. It also disregards the need to make sense of everything being said, requiring believers to only say that they accept the Quran unconditionally, whether it is clear or less so.
- 19 People of the Book are driven apart by jealousy and hatred of each other.
- 21 Those who *yakfuruun*, “are disbelieving,” are portrayed as murderous. This ayah is not necessarily stating that they *all* are like that, there are at least three items in this list and they could narrow the scope down to just a specific set of disbelievers, but I do find it problematic that disbelievers are regularly portrayed as malevolent in this way. If they are only ever represented by murderous extremists, then the whole population comes across as guilty or capable of those same crimes.
- 23-25 People of the Book were invited to be guided by God, but a group of them turn away because they are flippant about the punishments they expect. Is it perhaps some concept of purgatory that is being referenced here? The bigger point for this analysis is that the People of the Book are offered something good and they reject this goodness. **At the least, they reject it because they are deluded, not because they prefer evil.**
- 47-57 This is a summary of Jesus' ministry to the Jews. In it, Jesus is portrayed as doing many obvious miracles, teaching the most elementary points of Jewish monotheism, and loosening up the restrictive laws. The gospels portray Jesus as being subversive to Jewish institutions, religious interpretation, and Messianic expectations, making it more understandable that some highly invested Jews would be upset and threatened by his ministry. The simplification of his ministry here communicates that the Jews resented Jesus for performing miracles of kindness, teaching the barest essential fact of Jewish belief, and for making their lives less restricted. This makes the Jews look as though they saw something good and rejected it by jumping straight to plotting murder. Jesus's ministry is portrayed as having only an affect on his twelve disciples, implying the rest of the Jewish population was stuck in *al-kufr*.
- 64-89 This section has a wandering eye and bounces between addressing People of the Book and believers. It has nothing flattering to say about the former group.
 - 64-68 They are petty and without knowledge.
 - 69, 72-73 A faction of them wants to lead Muslims astray. They even strategize together and plan false conversions in order to discourage and dissuade Muslims of the strength of their beliefs. Note that this idea provides an explanation for why a convert would recant from Islam –because they are tricky and it's all a plot. Their motivation is resentment and racism, as they are jealous the Muhammad would receive a revelation like theirs.

- 75 They are inconsistent in their dealings. Some People of the Book are very honorable, but others are very dishonorable and cite religious prerogative.
- 78-79 Some People of the Book misquote scripture and present it as material from God. This is a deliberate act, done knowingly and not out of ignorance. Perhaps this is in order to put themselves in authority, since ayah 79 follows to rebuke those who would turn their followers into their servants, putting themselves in God's authority.
- 81-82 God calls the prophets into a covenant that they will support all prophets following their own ministry. This seems to intend that all followers of those prophets are also complicit to the covenant, or that their prophets always pointed forward to the next prophet, and that it constitutes defiance for their followers to deny a new prophet.
- 98-100 People of the Book are treated with incredulity, and are warned against as twisters of the Islamic faith.
- 110-115 Muslims are praised as a superior community than those of the People of the Book. However, People of the Book are not portrayed as totally lost.
 - 110 Some people of the book are bona fide believers, but *most* are defiantly disobedient.
 - 111-112 They pose no serious threat to Muslims, being so weak and pathetic that it is only due to God's covenant to them and the charity of Muslims that they survive at all. They are guilty of killing prophets and disobedience.
 - 113-115 But not all People of the Book are the same; some fitting within the bounds of Islamic law. These exceptions will be counted as righteous and God will remember their goodness. There is no mention of whether they accept or reject Muhammad, so this might allow that they do not need to in order to be blessed (though Paradise is still not mentioned for them).
- 118-120 Believers are not to take non-believers as close friends/allies/intimates, for such are treacherous and full hatred. They do not return the love of believers, and present a false face in public that does not match their intense outrage against Islam in private. They plot against believers, rejoicing when believers are harmed and growing distressed when believers are successful.
- 149 A repeat of ayah 111, wherein believers obeying disbelievers leads to the loss of Muslim faith.
- 173, 175 Hypocrites are perceived as dragging the Muslims down, and it's intimated that they are tools of Satan.
- 178 Disbelievers are only allowed extended time on earth so that they may increase the amounts of sin for which they will be punished.
- 181-184 Some people are mocking that "God is poor, while we are rich." Because the ayat charge these people with killing prophets, we assume these are Jews. They are denounced as haughty and arrogant, and also as having taken a vow which the Quran says they have already broken by killing other prophets. It says the Jews have vowed not to believe in a prophet unless he brings down fire from heaven, and the Quran says that they killed prophets who performed miraculous signs, including one who brought fire down from heaven. I will note that that particular sign is unique to Elijah, and he was not killed by the Jews. Similar signs of divine fire consuming offerings happened to David and Solomon, who were also not killed by the Jews.
- 186 People of the Book and those who *shirk* will abuse and mock Muslims.
- 187 People of the Book were told to share their scripture with the world and yet they broke their covenant by throwing their scriptures away.
- 199 There are among the People of the Book those who have converted to Islam, and thus will have their reward. They are still identified as People of the Book, as that title is more about

their heritage than their precise religious belief. This section is positive because it allows that the People of the Book are capable of conversion.

Surat an-Nisa

- 37-39 This starts as a condemnation of those who are extravagant, **potentially including people from among the believers**, but then broadens up to focus on disbelievers, who are called allies of Satan. More interesting than this description is that ayah 39 marvels that they do not convert to Islam, despite that it would cost them nothing and only guide them to good actions and heavenly reward. Subtext says that if they don't want such a simple, positive, minor change to their lives then they must just be evil.
- 42 **Portrays those who *kafaruu* and disobey Muhammad as at least showing mortification and honesty at the Day of Judgement.**
- 44, 48 People of the Book, and particularly Jews, are said to be flippant with scripture and malevolent to believers.
- 51-55 People of the Book are superstitious and idolatrous, they prefer disbelievers to believers, and they are cursed by God beyond help. They are motivated by jealousy and greed. **Some of them did believe in their scripture.**
- 60-66 A short denunciation of the hypocrites
 - 61-62 Hypocrites prefer the legislation and opinions of *aT-Taghut* (the rebels or transgressors) over Muhammad's rulings.
 - 64 They could be forgiven by simply repenting to Muhammad, but since this ayah is spoken as a hypothetical we gather that they aren't and that they are thus stiff-necked and defiant.
 - 65-66 They are disobedient, and any hesitation or discomfort with Muhammad's teaching means that one is not a believer but a hypocrite.
- 72-94 Denouncing those who do not go to war as hypocrites. This long section weaves in and out in examining the contrasts of hypocrites and believers. Note that the final ayah of this section is about being careful and impartial in prosecuting hypocrisy, so that some amount of authoritative action is being taken against these people, although the call to caution shows that the Quran is concerned about the abuses of inquisition.
 - 72-73 Hypocrites refuse to go out to war (ayah 74 clarifies that the righteous are engaged in *yuqatil*, "fighting/killing") but still endear themselves to the soldiers.
 - 75 Criticizes the hypocrites for not engaging in war that delivers the oppressed into protection, portraying the war as purely humanitarian and the abstainers as cowards or un-humanitarian.
 - 76 Not fighting in God's cause is made equal to fighting for the transgressors.
 - 77 They abhor fighting only out of fear for their lives, portraying them as cowards.
 - 78 Hypocrites blame believers for their misfortunes.
 - 81, 83 Hypocrites ignore guidance, spread sedition, and distrust/undermine authority.
 - 88-89 Some believers are chastised for being lenient/compassionate to hypocrites. Compassion to hypocrites is considered wasted effort against God's will. Hypocrites only want to drag believers into disbelief.
 - 90 **A good motivation of some hypocrites is acknowledged: that they are hesitant to fight their old families and kinsmen. Since this attachment to the past undermines absolute obedience it still constitutes hypocrisy, but the leniency of this passage acknowledges that there is something sympathetic and honorable in this.**
 - 91 Some hypocrites only feign Islam in order to gain security, but have no actual commitment.
- 97 Hypocrites caught in death make excuses, and their excuses are dismissed as petty.

- 105-115 This section refers more to a “them” than a specific group, but through context and phrases within it is reasonable to say the hypocrites are still the “they.”
 - 108 They hide their real selves from the people
 - 113 A group of them would mislead the people if it weren't for God's protection
 - 114 Their conversation is bad, **but it is conceded that some of them are moral, charitable, and peacemaking.**
- 137-146 Forbid relationships with disbelievers, which is a sin that hypocrites are guilty of, and thus hypocrites are further described
 - 137 Hypocrites converted to Islam, but then lost their conversion. God has abandoned them and they cannot be guided.
 - 140 They deny the Quran and make fun of it. There is no mention of why or what in the Quran they find ridiculous or unbelievable. Believers are to boycott all such conversations of hypocrites, since engaging in such conversation makes a believer into a hypocrite. God sees no distinction between hypocrites and disbelievers.
 - 141 They ingratiate themselves to both believers and hypocrites in any way that serves themselves.
 - 142-143 They are lazy and drudging in their religious duties.
 - 144 *kaafiruun* are forbidden as helpers/friends/sponsors/relatives to believers, and doing so condemns believers in God's view of justice.
 - 145 *munafiquun* are inherently worse in character than disbelievers, evidenced by their placement in the lowest depths of Hell.
 - 146 **Hypocrites can become repentant and be forgiven**
- 150-155 People of the Book come into focus, but through content we can see that it is the Jews specifically who are being denounced.
 - 150 They pick and choose their prophets
 - 153 They are outrageous in their demands. They took on error right after being given a sign from God.
 - 155 God has sealed most of them in unbelief, so that only **a few are capable of converting to Islam.**
 - 156-157 They slander Mary and boast about killing Jesus.
 - 160-161 Most of the Jews have rebellious and predatory character.
 - 162 **Some have converted (showing the whole race is not sealed by God).**
- 171 Passage that corrects Christianity. It is not hostile, it does not judge the Christians' character or motivations, but I record it here because by its description Christians look like polytheists, which is an important blurriness given how severely polytheists are denounced elsewhere.

Surat al-Ma'ida

- 12-19 Description of the People of the Book
 - 12-13 God takes a covenant with the Children of Israel, which they break. As punishment, God curses them and hardens their hearts. Most of them are deceitful, **but a few are not.**
 - 14 God takes a covenant with the Christians, but they forgot some of their teachings. Christians are thus portrayed as careless, **but not malicious or willfully contrary.**
 - 18 Jews and Christians take their position of favor with God for granted. They assume their privilege and lose their humility.
- 20-26 First approach to the Promised Land retold to denounce Jewish character.
 - 22 They are cowards.
 - 23 **Two men advocate for obeying God.**
 - 24 Jew persist in their obstinance.

- 25-26 Moses laments that *only Aaron and himself* (which has implications for ayah 23) are obedient to God. All other Jews in story are labeled defiantly disobedient.
- 27-32 Retelling of Cain and Abel doesn't mention the Jews directly, but the story is told to them and the conclusion connects Cain's act of murder with Jewish disobedience. The words "many of them" imply that not all of them were so.
- 41-43 Within the Jewish community are those who confess belief in Muhammad falsely. They prefer other authorities to Muhammad, distort words, are sinful, and do not accept guidance if it does not match their past teachings. God has made these people beyond the reach of guidance. These Jews cannot even interpret their own Torah, or cannot bring themselves to obey.
- 48-49 People of the Book (Jews and Christians are in view here) are allowed to keep existing in order to test Muslims. Muslims are to beware of them and the temptations they pose.
- 51-86 Denounces People of the Book's attitudes towards Islam. Making alliances with People of the Book is portrayed as the antithesis to trusting God. Lots of time is spent denouncing Jewish and Christian character.
 - 51-52 Jews and Christians are forbidden to believers as helpers/friends/sponsors/relatives, and whoever does so becomes one of them, abandoned by God. Those "in whose hearts is disease" join Christians and Jews because they are cowards.
 - 57 People of the Book who laugh at Islam are banned, the same as *al-kufaar*, from being taken as helpers/friends/sponsors/relatives of Muslims.
 - 58 They find the calls to prayer ludicrous, and it is blamed on their general thick-headedness.
 - 59-60 They are denounced as pettily jealous and most of them (again, implying not all) defiantly disobedient, and Muhammad is told to insult them as apes, pigs, and slaves of transgression.
 - 61 They confess like hypocrites.
 - 62-63 Many (therefor not all) prefer sinfulness and aggression, and their religious leaders are equally corrupt.
 - 64 The Jews accuse God of being stingy. Current revelation only increases their damnedness, and God has damned them on Earth to be hateful and dissenting, though impotent. They exert themselves to corrupt the land.
 - 66 Jews and Christians do not uphold their own revelation. There are some who are moderate, but a lot of them do evil.
 - 68 People of the Book are exhorted to uphold all revelation –Torah, Gospel, and presumably the Quran in the "all revelation" header –but it is expected that a lot of them will only become more damnable in reaction to Muhammad's revelation. They are forbidden from being grieved over, classified as *al-kaafiruun*.
 - 69 Those who believed in God and the Day of Judgement and who did good from amongst the Jews, Christians, and Sabeans are guaranteed reward. Such people are said to exist or to have existed.
 - 70-71 Jews denied or killed their prophets out of contrariness and disregard for Judgement.
 - 72-73 Christians who hold that Jesus was God or believe in trinitarian theory are said to have disbelieved/covered, and are equated with those who *shirk*. Those who do not desist saying so are classified as those who *kafaruu*.
 - 78-79 David and Jesus curse those among the Children of Israel who *kafaruu* and who did not enforce justice.
 - 80-81 Many of them take as allies/friends/governors/relatives those who *kafaruu*, rebelling against Muhammad out of defiance.

- 82-84 Jews are the most intensely hateful of Muslims; Christians, particularly priests and monks, are more humble and are thus more open to accepting truth and converting to Islam.
- 104 Concerning the pagans, they are said to hold to their old faith because they are satisfied with their heritage. This is not quite complimentary as far as the Quran goes, but it is not derived from malice or jealousy.
- 110 Jesus was provided with clear signs, but the Jews called it “clear magic” and tried to kill him for it.

Surat al-An'am

Unless otherwise noted “they” will refer to those who *kafaruu*. This surah is mostly concerned with rebuking *al-kafiruun* and *al-mushrikuun*, but largely refers to such in the third-person plural without specifying.

- 1-5 Axiom of God is posited through examinations of creation and mortality. Note that intellectual objection to this axiom is not ascribed to those who *kafaruu*. Instead, they are portrayed as ignorant (in dispute), stubborn (ayah 4), and flippant (ayah 5).
- 6-10 More of the above observations of their character, but this time as regards how they respond to revelation.
- 20-21 The Quran is portrayed as obvious, as obvious in its identity to its intended audience as their own children. Thus to disbelieve it requires fabricating lies about God and unjust denial of his signs/verses.
- 23-24 Even in judgment, their character is such that they will falsify testimony before God.
- 25 Some of them listen to Muhammad, but cannot convert because God has deliberately made conversion impossible, completely impossible, to the point where no argument or miracle will register with them.
- 26 They try to undermine Muhammad's teaching by anathematizing it and discouraging all engagement.
- 27-28 They are inherent liars, to the point that they'd even lie to God for a second chance on earth, though their behavior is so ingrained they'd be unchanged even by a glimpse of damnation.
- 33 They do not reject Muhammad, but the signs of God. This idea reinterprets any objection that disbelievers might have to Muhammad and how Muhammad is presenting as a pretext for rebelling against God. By this interpretation, Muhammad's character, behavior, or motivations do not need to be defended, since that is supposedly not the real point of the disbelievers' objections.
- 36 In contrast to those who respond, disbelievers are figuratively called dead.
- 39 Those who deny God's signs/verses are willed by God to be astray and abandoned.
- 40-41 This passage is a little unclear. On the one hand, it seems to be aiming to convict the disbelievers that, if they were honest, they would admit that God is the only source of hope. This would serve to condemn the disbelievers further as it implies they are in deliberate rebellion and lying to themselves and others. On the other hand, this passage in isolation could stretch to interpret that among the disbelievers are those who are honest in character, who will call to God at the judgment, and who God may indeed forgive once they call upon Him.
- 46 The Quran perceives itself as providing manifold compelling arguments, and thus sets up that negative conclusions can be drawn about men who still turn from it.
- 49 Those who deny God's signs/verses are being defiantly disobedient.
- 50 Muhammad is defined as humble and straightforward, only motivated by obedience. The rebuke for those who attest otherwise (presumably, if we assume that the verse is united in composition) is to call them blind and challenge them to re-evaluate their thoughts.

- 53 Disbelievers scoff at Islam because they view it as weak since it does not guarantee profit.
- 57 Muhammad claims having given clear proof, implying the denial of the disbelievers is either ridiculous or out of evil.
- 63-64 They know in their hearts that only God is effective, but still their *shirk* continues.
- 65-66 Again, the Quran states its self-perceived manifold persuasiveness and implies dark assumptions about the character/motivations of its deniers.
- 68-91 This chunk of ayat is united in theme regarding debating the Quran with disbelievers. A good Arabic root set to know when reading this is *خ-و-ض* (kh-w/uu-D), which carries the neutral concept of engagement or interaction. The wording of these ayah unite what could be interpreted as several groups of people into a broader category of unbeliever.
 - 68 Muhammad is commanded to refuse conversation with disbelievers when they talk about God's signs/verses. We assume their conversation is critical of the Quran, but there is no actual wording in the text that says such, with most translations interpolating that they are being rude/flippant/offensive. At base meaning, Muhammad is not allowed to debate (*yukhuud*) the Quran with disbelievers. If he happens to do so, it is because Satan has made him forget the command, and he should cut off the conversation as soon as possible.
 - 70 The pronoun "those who" is likely a continued reference to the "those who" in ayah 68, but could be referring to another class of individuals present in any community. This ayah accuses them of making religion "a game and amusement." This is the same description of earthly life in ayah 32, connecting these people as stuck in material delusion.
 - 91 The ayah starts seeming to rebuke a set of secularist/atheistic disbelievers, but pivots in material to start accusing Jews of poorly preserving the scriptures revealed to Moses and passing on man-made material. God commands that these Jews be left in their engagements (*khawd*) and denigrates their religious practice/theology as mere play, connecting them with the people of ayah 70. The connection of debate with trivialized religion here helps connect the "those who..." groups of ayah 68 and 70.
- 95, 100 The axiom of God is asserted and those with other explanations are treated with incredulity.
- 109-111 They swear oaths that they would believe in a sign should they receive one, but this is dismissed as falsehood. God is the reason they cannot believe.
- 112-113 God makes enemies for the prophets in order to attract those who do not believe and trap those disbelievers in their delusion.
- 116 Most of the people on Earth are making things up and are dangerous to Muslim faith.
- 121 Devils work through human allies to dispute with believers and corrupt them into *mushrikuun*.
- 123-124 God is responsible for the greatest criminal in each city, who operate by conspiracy and refuse to believe unless they can be prophets.
- 125 God wills people to be disbelievers.
- 137-144 A denunciation religious practices observed by *al-mushrikuun*. Keep in mind that we have no archaeological evidence of these practices or lack of them, and so how much the Quran is telling through experience, hearsay, or fabricated propaganda is beyond confirmation.
 - 137 They are happy to sacrifice their children in their religious confusion and debasement.
 - 138-139 They declare things to be sacred for their own advantage, abusing religion to establish their own privilege.
- 146 Jews were put under strict dietary restrictions because they were being punished for their rebellion/envy/grudgingness.

Surat al-A'raaf

Unless otherwise noted, I'm going to assume from the surah's content that it is speaking to disbelievers in general and use the generalized "they" from the text.

- 28 They are ignorant, attributing their immorality to commands of God passed down through the generations. This ayah responds to the disbelievers in a way that assumes immorality is objectively knowable, which implies their ignorance is a product of neglect or willful disobedience.
- 30 Some men deserve to be in error. Their deservedness comes from being duped by devils. Again, this implies that all error, even that which is the product of paranormal trickery or accident, is objectively discernible and that all error is thus a deliberate rebellion.
- 38-39 Even in entering Hell, the disbelievers will demonstrate their malicious character. They will blame their predecessor rather than take responsibility for their own sin, and will demand that God double His punishment upon those predecessors.
- 51 Disbelievers are accused of taking religion casually, as fun and games.
- 59-102 This is a cycle of the prophets. More time is spent on the prophets than their opponents, but the opponents have a say in each cycle that reflects upon their portrayed character. These opponents are always (excepting Lot's opponents) the people in power and thus **one could imply that these portrayals are not applied to all disbelievers**, though the punishment encompasses more than just the higher-ups.
 - 60 Noah's opponents simply dismiss Noah as being in error.
 - 66, 70 Hud's opponents both declare Hud to be in error and malign his character. They also insist on tradition and mock Hud's message with a challenge.
 - 75-77 Salih's opponents investigate Salih's ministry but have already made up their minds to reject it. They are malicious and torture the miraculous she-camel that God sent to them. They are insolent and mock Salih's message with a challenge.
 - 82 Lot's opponents reject Lot and his people for simply being virtuous and commanding virtue.
 - 88, 90 Shu'ayb's opponents are malicious and threatening to both the prophet and his followers. They reverse Shu'ayb's message and enforce their way with persecution.
 - 94-99 All the cities that God sends prophets to deny their prophets and fail to humble themselves in the face of hardship. They are arrogant and deluded because they have no fear of God.
 - 100-101 God seals closed the hearts of *al-munaafiquun*. Rejecting signs in the past results in God sealing one's heart, closing future opportunities to believe.
 - 102 Most of them were unresponsive to God, and most of them were defiantly disobedient.
- 103-137 Moses's story is a continuation of the prophetic cycles, but told with more distinct groups of characters and more specific events. There are still questions as to how widely this representation is meant to be applied, but
 - 103 Pharaoh and his court are called *al-mufsidun*, "the corrupters," which portrays them as inherently toxic.
 - 109-110 The ruling class assumes the worst about Moses, dismissing him as a pretentious sorcerer and enemy of the state.
 - 111-114 Pharaoh and his court resist Moses and Aaron with political maneuvering. Power and prestige are their promises.
 - 120-122, 125-126 **The opposing magicians convert to Moses and Aaron's Islam, showing that not all the Egyptians are resistant to miracles.**
 - 123-124, 127 The Egyptian court again responds negatively to miracles, reinterpreting them so that they can condemn them. Their response to the believers is to torture and persecute them.

- 131-133 The ruling Egyptians have their own narrative to dismiss good times or bad times, always putting Moses and his following to blame for the bad times. They refuse belief.
- 134-135 The ruling Egyptians are duplicitous, making false promises to Moses for their own advantage.
- 138-169 Muslims told versions of Jewish history from which to derive lessons and understandings of Jewish character.
 - 138 Israelites trend towards idolatry.
 - 148 The Israelites build an idol despite having been instructed by Moses not to do so and the falseness of such imagery.
 - 149 The Israelites immediately regret their idolatry, showing that they have conscience and are capable of repentance.
 - 150 The Israelites were murderously intent on their idolatry when they set to it.
 - 159 It is acknowledged that some Jews are righteous and just.
 - 162-165 More examples of Jews corrupting or disrespecting God's teachings. These stories are about limited populations of Jews, not the general population at large, and God still sends messengers to them to give them a chance to repent. There are good people amongst the populations who are saved from God's wrath.
 - 168 The Jewish diaspora is described as a mixture of righteous and unrighteous people.
 - 169 The successors of the Jews took their scriptures and God's mercy for granted and distracted themselves with earthly things.
- 172-173 God took a covenant with *all people* at some unspecified time in the past, and this was done as a precautionary measure so that no one can claim true ignorance. This claim that there was a universal covenant made with every individual who will ever exist serves to interpret any passive ignorance as a deliberate act of rebellion.
- 175-176 These two ayat describe the person who has rejected God's signs. This example emphasizes more the free will of the individual, but describes his character as inherently selfish. The rejector is dehumanized and compared to a dog whose inherent tendency to pant cannot be altered, in this way implying that free will is already predestined by the character of the individual.
- 177 People who deny God's signs are called examples of evil.
- 179 Many jinn and humans were created with the purpose of filling Hell. They are disposable, existing beyond the reach of mercy because their inherent character is unable to receive guidance. Their character is so low in quality that they are dehumanized as being like livestock, and degraded as even worse than livestock.
- 184 This verse commends the character of Muhammad and his teachings, and holds with incredulity those who disagree.
- 189-193 Pagans again are portrayed as people who know in times of stress that only God is effectual, but who abandon that knowledge in good times and return to their *shirk*.
- 193 disbelievers will not accept guidance from disbelievers, so it doesn't matter whether they receive instruction or not.
- 202 Those who do not fear God are hapless to the suggestions of the devils and do not hold back from error.

Surat al-Anfal

The topic of this surah is warfare. It addresses some flaws in the believers, which is constructive in that it communicates the universality of the human condition. The disbelievers also come under hostile focus at times here. One could argue that since the content is easier to connect to a historical time than other ayat, the disbelievers being defamed are only the Meccan disbelievers contemporary

to Muhammad. It is up to Muslims to interpret how to act upon scriptures that were more directly relevant to past events and circumstances.

- 2 Being a believer requires the appropriate response to the name of God *and* the Quran, with equal emphasis. The Quran functions as a litmus test for believers. Only those whose faith increases upon hearing God's verses being recited are believers.
- 5-19 This section concerns the Battle of Badr and holy warfare. Much of the section is about reading God's will and action into the events leading up to the battle and the battle itself. The believers are not very kindly portrayed, although this only directly appears in a few places.
 - 5-6 A group of the believers were reluctant to leave their homes and be obedient to God, fearing for their lives and causing strife as a result (using words reminiscent of hypocrites and disbelievers in prior suwar.)
 - 7 Believers, when given the promise of victory by God, still preferred their chances with the weaker prey. This portrays them as lacking in faith and acting more like bullies.
 - 11 Before the battle, the believers are affected by Satan's evil and God has to intervene.
 - 18-19 The disbelievers are described as having a plan/scheme/plot, as if the disbelievers are organized and acting according to coordinated intent. The setting of Badr suggests that it is the Meccans specifically who are being threatened, but the ayat are not so specific in words.
- 21-23 Believers are commanded how to behave through contrast, being told who not to be like. The behavior described and the wording used is definitely linked to descriptions of the hypocrites/disbelievers/Jews found in the other suwar. Those who are being contrasted to the believers are called the worst of living creatures. These condemned are completely evil, to the point that God does not even see good in them or try to salvage them. The wording is so strong that it seems to suggest even God can not save these people.
- 30 Translations of this ayah are odd to me in that they use past tense on these verbs. disbelievers are described as plotting to restrain, kill, or evict Muhammad. The verbs are all present tense, excepting the phrase "those who disbelieved." This is relevant because some Muslims argue that present tense means ongoing and uncompleted, which here would mean the disbelievers are still being attributed this mal-intent. The target of these verbs is the singular "you," meaning Muhammad. Given that Muhammad's life is in the past, translators have put this whole ayah in the past, but it is worth noting that the mal-intent of the disbelievers and God's countering plans are all ongoing as far as the ayah's text is concerned.
- 31-32 disbelievers are flippant towards the Quran and the Day of Judgement.
- 36 Those who disbelieve spend their money to confound God's people and His work.
- 42-44 Another string of ayat intent on declaring the handiwork of God, but to the detriment of the believers strength of character.
- 47-48 The disbelievers are said to have gone to battle in order to show off and fight against God's guidance. They were said to be deluded by Satan, who abandoned them on the battlefield. This description of the disbelievers ignores that the Meccans hustled a posse together to protect their caravan from yet another Muslim raid.
- 49 Hypocrites and spiritually sick Muslims think and deride believers as delusional.
- 53 People must change themselves before God changes their fates. This concession to free will makes people accountable for the way God treats them, i.e. they deserve to be damned because they refused to be receptive, and combines poorly with passages in which God seals disbelievers into their frame of mind so that they cannot change themselves.
- 55 As with ayat 21-23, this passage describes disbelievers as the worst of living creatures.
- 56 The disbelievers are predicted to be treacherous, breaking every treaty they make.
- 66-68 God knows that the disbelievers have weakness of spirit. He has to amend his justice for their sakes.

- 73 Those who disbelieve are described as allies of one another, portraying disbelievers as one united threat.

Surat at-Tawba

This surah is a turning point when Muslims were told to disconnect themselves from polytheists completely, thus this surah is motivating Muslims to distance themselves from non-Muslims. Given the high demands of warfare, this surah also seeks to rebuke those who are not compliant with Muhammad's message.

- 6 Polytheists should be granted protection from Muslims so that they might have a chance to convert. **This means that not all polytheists are perceived as sealed in their disbelief and thus there might be some who are redeemable.**
- 8-12 Most of them are inherently dishonest, treacherous, and flippant. Though since repentance is offered to them as an out for punishment, we know that **they are capable of converting and are not entirely sealed for damnation.**
- 30 Jews and Christians are considered imitators of those who *kaafiruu* and are regarded with scorn and incredulity.
- 31-32 Jews and Christians believe and act like the polytheists, committing *shirk*, suppressing God's guidance/light, and being categorized as *kaafiruun*.
- 34 Believers are taught to perceive in many, **but not all**, of the monks and scholars corruption, self-interest, and a desire to misdirect people.
- 36 The polytheists are portrayed as fighting as a unit, as an organized collective.
- 37 Polytheists are accused of manipulating their religious practices arbitrarily.
- 38- This section, in its historical context, concerns the obedience and commitment of believers going out to war with Muhammad. As such, it is targeted to believers and the section opens with a more general accusation, then begins sorting a "them" from within the believers' community. "They" are named *al-munaafiquun* eventually, but are also called "those not believing in God and the Last Day," and thus being defined as outside Islam.
 - 38-40 **Believers are accused of clinging to earthly life and not having strong enough faith in the hereafter. The believers are reminded that they are expendable should they disobey**
 - 42-45 "They" are reluctant, dishonest, and not self-sacrificing. Their flaws derive from their incomplete belief.
 - 46-48 They are toxic to believers, creating strife and confusion.
 - 50, 54 They wish the worst for Muhammad and rejoice when disaster comes to him. They are lazy and stingy.
 - 56-57, 63 They swear false oaths of allegiance, motivated by cowardice.
 - 58-60 They are greedy, ungrateful to God and Muhammad, stingy and uncharitable.
 - 61, 65 They disrespect Muhammad, and the Quran, but are too cowardly to admit it.
 - 64 They dread divine revelation out of cowardice.
 - 67 Male and female hypocrites are the same, perverting guidance and being stingy. They are defiantly disobedient.
 - 73 Hypocrites and disbelievers are equally enemies of Muhammad.
 - 74 They lie, and they resent Muslims out of jealousy. **They are capable of repentance.**
 - 75-77 They make false oaths, and are sealed by God in their *nifaaqan* to their doom.
 - 79 They ridicule earnest and charitable believers.
 - 80 God is indifferent to them, and they are beyond Muhammad's effort for saving.
 - 81 They do not like inconvenience or self-sacrifice and rejoice at their laziness.
 - 83-84 They are sealed for Hell and allowed no path of redemption.
 - 86-87, 93 They did not strive with Muhammad despite being able to because they were complacent and their hearts were sealed.

- 94-96 They are ready with excuses and reject facing their accountability. They are evil.
- 97-98 Bedouins are the worst, though attributed most of the same sins as other hypocrites and disbelievers, but are predicted to probably be more ignorant.
- 102 Having mixed deeds excludes one from being a believer, but **those who recognize this and seek forgiveness, paying a fine, can be forgiven and admitted back into God's favor.**
- 107, 110 Some people have built another mosque for those who were previously hostile to Muhammad. They profess good intentions, but God calls them liars and the ayah declares that their intention is to harm, dissuade, and divide believers. They even intuit their own error and live in doubt.
- 115 God does not let people stray unless they know what they *should* be doing and avoiding, an idea which denies that disbelievers are acting out of ignorance.
- 124-125, 127 Believers rejoice and increase in faith upon each revelation, which is contrasted to those "in whose hearts is disease" who find no edification in the revelation and in fact only increase their inherent evil. These die as *kaafiruun*. They walk away from assemblies when revelation is happening.

Surat Yunus

The opposition in this surah usually means polytheists, given the context and the sins attributed to them.

- *Al-kaafiruun* defame Muhammad, calling him a sorcerer while contrarily incredulous that he's a mere man like them.
- 12 Men turn to God in times of trouble but take nothing from the experience when the troubles pass, blithely continuing on without faith.
- 15 The disbelievers (called here "those not expecting to meet Us") reject the Quran because they dislike its content. They want to exercise control over it and dictate religion.
- 16 The question "then will you not reason?" portrays the disbelievers as unreasonable and thick.
- 17-18 They invent lies about God. This charge has appeared before, and I'm recording it specifically now because the words "invent" and "lie" imply that those being condemned know the truth and are deliberately going against it. The faith of the pagans is treated as arrogance, that they are saying they know something God does not.
- 21-23 The people are not responsive to kindness from God. Whenever their circumstances go well, they conspire against God's *ayat*/verses/signs, drop their religion, and act without justice.
- 31-36 One-sided rhetoric to the disbelievers is laid out. It concludes with the incredulous phrase "Then what is with you? How do you judge?" This tone of incredulity and one-sided debate does not allow that the other side has points to make or rational standing.
 - 33 God has willed those who defiantly disobeyed into disbelief, an idea which discourages debate.
 - 36 The beliefs and statements of the disbelievers are dismissed as assumption.
- 37-39 The Quran describes itself as obviously God-given, implying that to think otherwise is to be obstinate and rebellious. Their denial of it is to be disregarded because they are ignorant and their judgments unqualified.
- 42-43 Some of the people are inherently unreasonable, beyond Muhammad's ability to teach.
- 66 The deniers only follow assumption and make things up.
- 68 A similar thing as above, except that this ayah could be targeting Christians
- 69 Inventing falsehood is again the crime, still implying that the other religions are arbitrary and their adherents know that they are deluding themselves and others.
- 71-91 Restatement of the prophetic cycles, in which God's messengers are supplied with clear motives and clear proofs, but are denied and persecuted unjustly.

- 71-73 Noah's selfless motives are stated and he is rejected.
- 74 The people deny clear proofs.
- 75-76, 78 Pharaoh and his court are arrogant, criminal, and they defame Moses.
- 83 Most of the Egyptians are too cowardly to convert.
- 90-91 Pharaoh tries to convert at the last moment, presumably in an attempt to save himself rather than a meaningful change of heart.

Surat Hud

This surah is mostly occupied with retelling the prophetic cycles. Its disbelievers are mostly specific communities in the past, but their precedence is being transposed onto the disbelievers in Muhammad's time as well.

- 5 They (disbelievers) try to keep secrets from God.
- 7 Those who *kafaruu* defame Muhammad as practicing or promising magic.
- 8 They ridicule the prediction of the Day of Judgement.
- 19 In their disbelief they try to prevent people from God's guidance and look for flaws in it, portraying these disbelievers as proactively obstructive to believers.
- 20-24 The disbelievers are described as deaf and blind, as being fundamentally unable to receive guidance.
- Prophetic cycles are recounted. Note that all the prophets have simple messages and superficially easy demands, which does stand to further condemn the resistance of their communities.
 - 27 The opposition to Noah scorns his followers for being low-class and less intellectual. They defame Noah's character. These actions display arrogance in the character of the disbelievers, namely that they consider themselves intellectual, important, and authoritative.
 - 53-54 Hud's opposition reject Hud because they have no reason to recognize his words as truth, and they rationalize that he has been possessed or tricked by their deities in accordance with their current belief system. While the Quran is not commending this opposition, it does present a less hostile and more rational character to the disbelievers.
 - 55 Hud's counter to his opposition communicates that they are plotting against him, which does read deliberate malice into their character.
 - 59 Hud's opposition, the people of 'Aad, are described as spurning all help offered to them by God and preferring submission to obstinate tyrants.
 - 62 Salih's opponents, the Thamudi, are shocked at Salih's turn of character and are uneasy with his message. They describe themselves as suspicious, but there is a positive light to shed on this as they do not jump to hostility or defame Salih (yet).
 - 65 The Thamudi hamstring a camel that Salih presents to them as a miracle from God. This is a very petty and defiant act of malice.
 - 72 Abraham's wife is incredulous and perhaps doubtful that God can give her a child.
 - 77-80 Lot's opponents are so dangerous that he is immediately concerned for the welfare of God's messengers when they arrive. His opponents, who were already doing evil deeds, rush to Lot concerning his guests. Lot presents his daughters to these evil people. The people insist on their original demands. Lot despairs rather than have faith.
 - 87 Shu'ayb's opponents, the Midianites, respond to his message with sarcasm.
 - 91 The Midianites dismiss and threaten Shu'ayb very explicitly, and they pay more attention to family status than religious message.
 - 97-98 Pharaoh and his establishment weren't discerning, preferred the commands of Pharaoh to the commands of God, and were misguided by Pharaoh. Note that this matches Hud's opponents in 59, who preferred subjection to willful tyrants to subjection to God.

- 116-117 Almost all of the generations preceding Muhammad were morally corrupt, lacking any effort at reform or positive change.

Surat al-Yusuf

This surah is entirely occupied with the story of Joseph and contains fairly specific characters. Note that our main protagonist, Joseph, has a special connection with God and receives knowledge to handle every situation. How people react to his knowledge sets up a precedent by which to read others. There is Jacob, who fully accepts the knowledge and waits patiently for its fulfillment despite all circumstances. There's Benjamin, who receives knowledge from Joseph and is compliant to Joseph's will. All other examples will be dealt with below.

- 5 Jacob already reads into the character of his majority sons that they are prone to satanic suggestion and that they will react to Joseph's revelation with hostility.
- 8-9 Joseph's brothers are motivated by jealousy and pride in their strength and unity. They deem themselves suitable judges of right and wrong, and think that killing Joseph is permissible in the service of making righteousness easier for them.
- 10 One brother has qualms about killing Joseph, but only improves the scenario by suggesting abandonment.
- 11-15 Joseph's brothers lie in order to carry out their plot.
- 16-18 The brothers lie about their crime, and are passive aggressive in handling their father's mistrust.
- 19-20 The travelers take and sell Joseph as low-value merchandise.
- 21 Al-'Azeez takes Joseph with benevolent intentions.
- 23-25 Mrs. al-'Azeez betrays her role as guardian of Joseph and tries to seduce him. She responds to his virtue—which is derived from his special knowledge from God—by spitefully framing him and defaming his character.
- 28-29 Al-'Azeez, whose faith is unknown, is at least a fair man who investigates crimes and handles the case with mercy. He is misogynistic, though.
- 30 The city women are gossipy and classist.
- 31-33 Mrs. al-'Azeez plots against Joseph and the city women in order to have her way and to portray her way as justified. The other women go along and endorse her plot to break Joseph's moral fortitude. These are all unbelieving women being represented, which we know because Joseph prays to be saved from inclination towards ignorance.
- 35 The Egyptians imprison Joseph in response to the signs they see, and It's not clear what was meant by that. These signs could be his effect bringing out the worst in the women's desires, or it could be that this is the people rejecting Joseph's faith and putting him out of sight. Lastly, it could be that Joseph has been defamed with trumped up evidence that make the people throw him in prison. Al-'Azeez is compliant with this injustice.
- 42 The cup-bearer, whose faith at this point is unknown, is prone to the influence of Satan and forgets to advocate for Joseph.
- 45-46 The cup bearer acts honorably by way of acting courier for Joseph.
- 51 The women admit guilt when pressed, an act of honesty that may or may not show a thread of moral character.
- 54 The king of Egypt acts honorably by Joseph. How he feels about Joseph's religion is never stated, as Joseph never talks religion with him. At the least, we imply that the king tolerates Joseph's Islam, though Joseph does not conduct a religious ministry and is not said to have preached except for the sermonette in prison.
- 65 The brothers are bedazzled and motivated by greed.

- 75 The brothers set a high punishment for theft. Also, their proposed punishment (enslavement) is different from the Quran's (hand amputation), so we could infer they've chosen without divine guidance.
- 77 The brothers defame the Joseph/Benjamin side of the family in order to distance themselves from the supposed crime.
- 78 The brothers are willing to sacrifice themselves in order to honor their word to Jacob and bring Benjamin home.
- 83 Jacob mistrusts his sons and cannot discern when they are being honest.
- 85 This verse is ambiguous. They could either be concerned over their father's welfare, or be complaining about his love for Joseph.
- 88 The brothers display humility.
- 91 The brothers acknowledge their humbler place in God's plan and confess their sin.
- 95 A "they" of unknown identity scoff at Jacob's faith in Joseph's life and return.
- 97 The brothers confess and ask Jacob for forgiveness.
- 103-111 This is a concluding section in which a generalization of the prophetic cycles is given, to the condemnation of the pagans.
 - 103 Most people, despite the effort put in by Muhammad, are not responsive and believing.
 - 105 They are oblivious or close-minded to all the signs that God has provided in nature.
 - 106 They don't believe in God except as part of their pantheon.
 - 104, 108 The ministry of the prophet is portrayed as giving light teachings with no self-gain. This portrayal serves to condemn the opposition, implying that their rejection is groundless and that they have preferred a more complicated unstable religion for their own purposes.

Surat ar-Ra'd

The content of much of this surah is about detailing the signs on heaven and earth that it assumes should affirm its brand of monotheism. The variety of signs it claims to interpret serves to condemn those who reject Muhammad's teaching, and twice in the surah rejectors are called "blind" because of their inability/refusal to recognize these signs as the Quran sees them.

- 1-4 God has given signs, which should be obvious if only the people would stop and think about it.
- 5-6 The Quran teaches that anyone could question the resurrection should be regarded with astonishment, as if the doubts of those who *kafaruu* are unintuitive or unprecedented.
- 11 This ayah has a message about human free will that justifies God's condemnation of them. God does not change the condition of people until they change what is in themselves. Free will is a neutral concept that can give hope, but in this case the ayah emphasizes that people could change their fates by making the right decision, but haven't and thus they deserve ill treatment from God.

Surat Ibrahim

Contains a variety of images and purposes. Much is concerned with prophetic cycles and patriarchal stories, much is concerned with interpreting the natural world as supportive of the Quran's axiom of The God, much is concerned with Judgement. "They" covers a general set of disbelievers.

- 3 Those who disbeliever are worldly, misdirect people away from God's guidance, and seek to portray that guidance as deviant.
- 9 Those who disbelieved in their messengers denied clear signs from God and hold it in suspicion.
- 10 Those who rejected earlier messengers did not take the messengers at their words, preferred their traditions, and demanded clear signs.

- 12-13 The messengers talk of enduring the harm/troubles/ailments their opponents inflict, implying their opponents are hostile and dangerous. Those who *kafaruu* indeed are portrayed as threatening violent persecution.
- 21-22 This passage portrays the ruling pagans as victims of Satan, who meant well by their people but alas were in error. They are not declared vindicated, despite this portrayal.
- 28, 30 Disbelievers are portrayed as having exchanged away God's favor for their disbelief, as if they turned off a default path. They bring people into ruin with them, and indeed they create pagan pantheons to mislead their people.
- 45 God condemns the disbelievers because they were surrounded by obvious signs and did not believe.

Surat al-Hijr

This rebukes the disbelievers, but specific details in the surah shows these disbelievers are assumed to be pagan.

- 6-7 Disbelievers defame Muhammad and question his lack of miraculous evidence.
- 11 All messengers endure ridicule from their rejectors.
- 13-14 Disbelievers ignore the precedence of other peoples, and would defame and deny even the most obvious miraculous experience if God gave it to them.
- 39-42 God has chosen servants, and all other men are under the authority and misguidance of Satan. The deviators are a threat to God's servants, as any servants who follow them come under Satan's authority.
- 67-72 Lot's opponents work against Lot, rejoicing at the arrival of strangers to violate and forbidding him from protecting others. They are described, either figuratively or literally or both, as so intoxicated that they were blind.
- 81-82 People of Thamud were given signs but rejected them. They were arrogant in the feats of their strength and skill.

Surat an-Nahl

There are some beautiful ayat in this surah describing the good provisions God has given mankind. These images are cited in order to denounce the disbelievers as heedless and ungrateful, and this message is stated regularly throughout the ayat. The disbelievers in this surah are usually those who disbelieve in a resurrection. The target audience for most of the surah is pagan, and at base historical value just those pagans who came into contact with Muhammad. About the last third or less of the surah switches back and forth between addressing believers/allies and disbelievers.

- 22 Those who disbelieve in the hereafter are hard-hearted and arrogant
- 24 They are dismissive of Muhammad's stories.
- 28 Those who die in a state of sin pander and lie about their sinfulness.
- 33-34 The disbelievers blithely live their lives despite warnings. They ridicule the warnings of the Day of Judgment and do evil.
- 35 The polytheists blame God for their sinfulness and error, though the ayah implicitly denies this.
- 36-37 All people have been warned, God has given every nation a messenger, and so there is no excuse for a group of people not to be Muslim. They can all be perceived in rebellion, and there is no worth in desiring to reform those people because God has left them astray and thus no one can help them.
- 38-39 They swear by God that there will be no resurrection, but are ignorant and telling lies.
- 43-44 God has sent down clear evidences to people in the past and has supplied Muhammad with clear histories of those events in order to resonate with the people ("make clear to the people"). The emphasis on clarity serves to indemnify those who reject.

- 53-64
 - 53-54 Pagans know deep in their hearts that God is the only effectual God, but they return to polytheism once their prayers are fulfilled.
 - 56 They act in ignorance and speculation, wasting their blessings.
 - 57-59, 62 They hold contradictory practices, evil practices.
 - 60-61 They are to be likened to the devil. Their evil is so great that immediate punishment would destroy the whole earth.
 - 63 Satan is their ally, then and “today.”
 - 64 The Quran serves to provide clarity with which to indemnify the disbelievers.
- 75-76 These two sets of analogies in part describe the pagans and in part describe the things the pagans worship.
- 83 Most of the people are *kaafiruun*. They recognize God’s favor, but then still deny it, which condemns them as having the faculties to perceive what comes from God but to be in a state of rebellion that goes unaffected.
- 89-90 Muhammad’s message is summed up in its most positive terms, so that rejecting his message is presented as rejecting good things.
- 101-103 They defame Muhammad and are critical of his presentation of the Quran.
- 104-105 Those who are critical and disbelieving of God’s signs are liars.
- 107-108 God does not guide disbelievers and recanters to the point that He seals them in their disbelief.
- 118 The Jews were the source for their own restrictions and injustices.

Surat al-Israa’

- 4-7 The Jews are told that, despite specific due warning, they still fell into corruption twice and are suffering for it.
- 11 This verse could be commenting on the shortcomings of human perspective, but it also is probably commenting on the criticisms of the pagans, who challenged Muhammad to bring the judgment if it was real even though such a thing would be bad for them.
- 40 Criticisms of the seeming contradictions in the pagans’ beliefs.
- 41, 45-46 The Quran describes itself as having explained itself, but that it only increases “them” in aversion. God has made them impervious to the Quran.
- 47-48 They scoff and live private lives. They defame Muhammad.
- 59 God has given up providing signs because the people of the past never took heed of them. Miracles are useless against disbelievers.
- 60 The people are being tried and threatened, and they only respond by growing worse off.
- 67 Men are ungrateful to God for his provision, reverting to polytheism when times are good.
- 73 They were trying to tempt and trap Muhammad into their service, and their influence is so powerful that God has to intervene to thwart them.
- 76 They persecute Muhammad.
- 82 Disbelievers are only worsened by exposure to the Quran.
- 83 Mankind (interpreted as “disbeliever” in Sahih) distances itself from God in good times, despairs in bad times, but never turns to God.
- 88-89 Despite the inimitable character of the Quran, in which God explains through many examples, most people refuse to believe and prefer *kufuruun*.
- 90-93 They want Muhammad to perform a sign from God and make outrageous demands, refusing to take the testimony of another mere human.
- 98-99 The wrongdoers will only disbelieve, they will not reason and God has left them astray beyond help.
- 100 They are stingy, and would not dish out even God’s mercy if they were able.

- 103 Moses came with clear signs and was still denied, defamed, and persecuted by Pharaoh and the Egyptian court.

Surat al-Kahf

The material of this is far more concerned with telling stories about believers than with the failings of disbelievers, hypocrites, or people of the book. That said, it also strongly denounces and gives up hope for those who have rejected the Quran. Motivations do not play into things, they are just obstinate. All non-Muslims in these stories are hostile, though their presence or threat in each story varies quite a bit.

- 4-5 Those who say “God has taken a son” are ignorant and lie.
- Story of the Sleepers, in which the general people are hostile pagans. There are not characters or interactions with these pagans in the story, so they do not provide much example.
 - 15 The majority population worships without evidence and invents lies.
 - 20 They would kill the monotheistic youths.
 - 21 The later people who discover the youths differ over what to do about it. It is not clear whether the winning side is in the right.
 - 22 Most people don’t know the story and aren’t to be believed about the details.
- Parable of the Gardens, in which the opponent is a man so arrogant that he commits *shirk*. This character seems to serve as an archetype.
 - 34-36 The man who has wealth grows arrogant and boastful to the point of thinking himself immortal or God-approved.
- 54 The Quran gives diverse examples to support faith, but mankind’s greatest propensity is arguing.
- 55-7 Nothing prevents people from believing and repenting except that they are destined for destruction as were the people before them. Those who *kafaruu* dispute by using dirty tactics like mockery and lies. God has sealed them in their disbelief and they cannot ever be converted.
- 60-82 Discipleship of Moses: This one is intriguing because although I’m accustomed to thinking of Moses as a Jewish character, the Quran appropriates him as a Muslim. Thus the failings of Moses in this story presents us with the failings of a Muslim.
- 83-102 Dhul-Qarnayn, in which Dhul-Qarnayn conquers a lot of people. Not much commentary is made about these people, with some being reformed and others being killed for not reforming. There is an opposing group of peoples called “Gog and Magog” who corrupt the land, and who will cause chaos before the end days.