

# TAFSEER AS-SA'DI

JUZ' 4-6

تفسير السجدي

تيسير الكريم الرحمن في تفسير كلام المنان

'Abdur-Rahmân Nâsir as-Sa'di



الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي





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**ALLAH**

THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL



VOLUME 2

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JUZ' 4-6

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# TAFSEER AS-SA'DI

## JUZ' 4-6

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**تفسير السعدي**  
(تيسير الكريم الرحمن في تفسير القرآن)  
جزء ٤-٦

Abdur-Rahmân Nâsir as-Sa'di

Translated by  
Nasiruddin al-Khattab

Edited by  
Huda Khattab



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# Pronunciation and Transliteration Chart



Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated form
أ	short 'a', as in <i>cat</i>	a
آ — آي	longer 'a', as in <i>cab</i> (not as in <i>cake</i> )	â
ب	/b/ as in <i>bell</i> , <i>rubber</i> and <i>tab</i>	b
ت	/t/ as in <i>tap</i> , <i>mustard</i> and <i>sit</i>	t
ة	takes the sound of the preceding diacritical mark sometimes ending in h (when in pausal form): ah, ih or ooh; or atu(n), ati(n) or ata(n) when uninterrupted	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	/th/ as in <i>thing</i> , <i>maths</i> and <i>wealth</i>	th
ج	/j/ as in <i>jam</i> , <i>ajar</i> and <i>age</i>	j
ح	a 'harsher' sound than the English initial /h/, and may occur medially and in word-final position as well	ḥ
خ	as in <i>Bach</i> (in German); may occur initially and medially as well	kh
د	/d/ as in <i>do</i> , <i>muddy</i> and <i>red</i>	d
ذ	as in <i>this</i> , <i>father</i> and <i>smooth</i>	dh

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
ر	/r/ as in <i>raw</i> , <i>arid</i> and <i>war</i> ; may also be a rolled 'r', as pronounced in Spanish	r
ز	/z/ as in <i>zoo</i> , <i>easy</i> and <i>gaze</i>	z
س	/s/ as in <i>so</i> , <i>messy</i> and <i>grass</i>	s
ش	as in <i>ship</i> , <i>ashes</i> and <i>rush</i>	sh
ص	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /sw/ or /s/ farther back in the mouth	ṣ
ض	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /d/ farther back in the mouth	ḍ
ط	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /t/ farther back in the mouth	ṭ
ظ	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing 'the' farther back in the mouth	<u>dh</u>
ع	no close equivalent in English: a guttural sound in the back of the throat	ʿ
غ	no close equivalent in English, but may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like the French /r/ in 'rouge'	gh
ف	/f/ as in <i>fill</i> , <i>effort</i> and <i>muff</i>	f



Arabic script	Pronunciation	Transliterated form
ق	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /k/ farther back in the mouth	q
ك	/k/ as in <i>king</i> , <i>buckle</i> and <i>tack</i>	k
ل	/l/ as in <i>lap</i> , <i>halo</i> ; in the word <i>Allah</i> , it becomes velarized as in <i>ball</i>	l
م	/m/ as in <i>men</i> , <i>simple</i> and <i>ram</i>	m
ن	/n/ as in <i>net</i> , <i>ant</i> and <i>can</i>	n
هـ - ه - ح	/h/ as in <i>hat</i> ; unlike /h/ in English, in Arabic /h/ is pronounced in medial and word-final positions as well	h
و	as in <i>wet</i> and <i>away</i>	w
و	long 'u', as in <i>boot</i> and <i>too</i>	oo
ي	as in <i>yard</i> and <i>mayo</i>	y
ي	long 'e', as in <i>eat</i> , <i>beef</i> and <i>see</i>	ee
ء	glottal stop: may be closely approximated by pronouncing it like 't' in the Cockney English pronunciation of <i>butter</i> : <i>bu'er</i> , or the stop sound in <i>uh-oh!</i>	(omitted in initial position)

## Diphthongs

Arabic script	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
أَوْ، وَاوْ	long 'o', as in <i>owe, boat</i> and <i>go</i>	au, aw
أَيَّ، يَايَ	long 'a', as in <i>aid, rain</i> and <i>say</i>	ay, ai, ei

## Diacritical marks (tashkeel)

Name of mark	Pronunciation	Trans-literated form
فَٓٔٓ fathah	very short 'a' or schwa (unstressed vowel)	a
كَسْرَٓٔٓ kasrah	shorter version of ee or schwa (unstressed vowel)	i
دَمَمَٓٔٓ dammah	shorter version of oo	u
شَدَدَٓٔٓ shaddah	a doubled consonant is stressed in the word, and the length of the sound is also doubled	double letter
سُكُونَٓٔٓ sukoon	no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of a word	absence of vowel



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## Arabic honorific symbols

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- |     |                                       |  |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--|
| (ﷻ) | <i>Subhānahu wa Ta'âlâ</i>            | The Exalted  |
| (ﷺ) | <i>şalla Allâhu 'alayhi wa sallam</i> | Blessings and peace be upon him                      |
| (ﷺ) | <i>'alayhi as-salâm</i>               | May peace be upon him                                |
| (ﷺ) | <i>rađiya Allâhu 'anhu</i>            | May Allah be pleased with him                        |
| (ﷺ) | <i>rađiya Allâhu 'anhâ</i>            | May Allah be pleased with her                        |
| (ﷺ) | <i>rađiya Allâhu 'anhumâ</i>          | May Allah be pleased with both of them               |
| (ﷺ) | <i>rađiya Allâhu 'anhum</i>           | May Allah be pleased with all of them                |
| (ﷺ) | <i>rađiya Allâhu 'anhunna</i>         | May Allah be pleased with all of them (females only) |



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# Hadith grade terms

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Sound: *ṣaḥeeḥ*

Reliable: *ḥasan*

Weak: *ḍa'eef*

Odd: *ghareeb*

Authentic: includes sound, reliable, or any grade in between

Acceptable: *sakat 'anhu*; the grader of the hadith did not comment on it, meaning that he found nothing unacceptable in it





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03.  
Soorat Âl 'Imrân



(continued)

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﴿لَنْ نَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِن شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ﴾ ﴿٩٢﴾

(سورة آل عمران: ٩٢)

3:92. You will never attain righteousness until you spend [in charity] of that which you love; and whatever you give [in charity], verily Allah knows it well.<sup>1</sup>

---

Here Allah (*Subhânahu wa Ta'âlâ* – Glorified and Exalted is He) encourages His slaves to spend on good causes, and says: «You will never attain righteousness» that is, you will never reach the level of righteousness which leads to paradise, «until you spend [in charity] of that which you love» that is, your precious wealth that you love. If you give precedence to the love of Allah over the love of wealth, and you spend it in ways that please Him, this will prove your sincere faith, the righteousness of your hearts and the genuineness of your piety. That includes spending what is precious of your wealth, spending when the giver is in need of what he gives, and spending when one is healthy. The verse indicates that

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<sup>1</sup> The meanings of the verses of the Qur'an in this book (with some minor changes to the punctuation) have been translated by the translator. (Editor)

the individual will attain righteousness according to his spending of that which he loves, and that he will be lacking according to what is lacking in his spending. Because spending in any way brings reward, whether the amount is small or great, and whether it is something he loves or not, and the words: «You will never attain righteousness until you spend [in charity] of that which you love» may give the impression that spending anything other than what is mentioned will be of no benefit, Allah dispelled this notion by saying: «and whatever you give [in charity], verily Allah knows it well», so do not be hard on yourselves, for He will reward you according to your intentions and the extent to which (your charity) benefits others.



﴿ كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حَلَالًا لِّبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَائِيلُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تُنَزَّلَ التَّوْرَةُ ۗ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِالتَّوْرَةِ فَاتْلُوهَا إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾ فَمَنْ أَفْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذْبَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾ قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ٩٣-٩٥)

- 3:93. All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Israel [Ya'qoob] made unlawful for himself, before the Torah was revealed. Say: Bring the Torah and read it, if you are telling the truth.
- 3:94. Those who persist in fabricating lies and attributing them to Allah after this are indeed the wrongdoers.
- 3:95. Say: Allah has spoken the Truth. Follow the religion of Ibrâheem, the monotheist, and he was not one of those who ascribe partners to Allah.

This is a refutation of the Jews' false claim that abrogation was not permissible, as a result of which they disbelieved in 'Eesâ ('alayhi

*as-salām* – peace be upon him) and Muhammad (*ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* – blessings and peace be upon him) because they brought some rulings that differed from the rulings of the Torah concerning what is permissible and what is forbidden. By way of being completely fair in argument, and to make them quote from their own Book, the Torah, in order to prove that all types of food were permissible to the Children of Israel, Allah said: «All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Israel» meaning Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) «made unlawful for himself» that is, without any prohibition from Allah (ﷻ); rather he forbade it to himself because he suffered from sciatica, so he vowed that if Allah (ﷻ) healed him, he would forbid to himself the most beloved of food to him. According to their sources, he forbade to himself the meat and milk of camels, and they followed him in that; this happened before the Torah was revealed. Then it was revealed in the Torah things that were forbidden other than what Israel (Ya‘qoob) had forbidden, of foods that had previously been permissible to them, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

«Because of the wrongdoing of the Jews, We forbade to them certain good things that had [previously] been permitted to them...» (*an-Nisā’ 4: 160*)

Allah instructed His Messenger (ﷺ) that if they denied that, he was to tell them to bring the Torah, yet they persisted in wrongdoing and stubbornness after that. Hence Allah (ﷻ) said:

«Those who persist in fabricating lies and attributing them to Allah after this are indeed the wrongdoers». What wrongdoing can be greater than the wrongdoing of one who is called to let his scripture judge, but he refuses to do that out of stubbornness and arrogance? This is among the greatest evidence of the soundness of the prophethood of our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and that there are many clear signs of his truthfulness and the truthfulness of the One Who told him of various matters that he could not have known unless his Lord had told him of them. Hence Allah says:

«Say: Allah has spoken the Truth» that is, in what He has told you and in what He has ruled. This is a command from Allah to His Messenger (ﷺ) and those who follow him that they should say out loud: “Allah has spoken the truth”, believing that in their hearts on the basis of certain evidence, and so as to establish this testimony against those who deny it. Thus we know that the people who have the most faith and belief in Allah are those who have the most knowledge and understanding of the proof and evidence in detail, based on reports or reason. Then He instructed them to follow the religion of their father Ibrâheem (ﷺ), that was based on affirmation of the oneness of Allah and abandoning polytheism; this is the basis of happiness, and abandoning it will result in doom and misery. This indicates that the Jews and others, who are not following the religion of Ibrâheem (ﷺ), are polytheists, not monotheists.

When Allah commanded them to follow the religion of Ibrâheem in affirming the oneness of Allah and giving up polytheism, He commanded them to follow him in venerating His Sacred House by performing pilgrimage to it and otherwise, as He said:



﴿إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١١﴾ فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ٩٦-٩٧)

- 3:96. The first House [of worship] to be established for humanity was that at Bakkah [Makkah], full of blessings and guidance for the worlds.
- 3:97. In it are clear signs, [such as] the Station of Ibrâheem; whoever enters it will be safe. Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to Allah by all who can afford the journey; and whoever disbelieves, then Allah has no need of the worlds.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the high status of this sacred House and that it was the first House (of worship) that Allah established for people, where they could focus on worshipping their Lord, and thus their sins would be forgiven, they would draw close to Allah, and by virtue of (this House) they would do many acts of worship and good deeds to attain the pleasure of their Lord, earn His reward and be saved from His punishment. Hence Allah says:

﴿full of blessings﴾ that is, in it there is a great deal of blessing and spiritual and worldly benefits, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿So that they may avail themselves of benefits and mention the name of Allah [at the time of sacrifice], during the appointed days, over the livestock that He has provided for them...﴾ (*al-Hajj* 22: 28)

﴿and guidance for the worlds﴾. Guidance is of two types: guidance in knowledge and guidance in deeds. Guidance in deeds is visible; it includes what Allah has ordained in it (the Ḥaram) of various acts of worship that are unique to this place. Guidance in knowledge refers to what a person acquires, by means of this place, of knowledge of the truth, as there are clear signs therein that Allah (ﷻ) has mentioned in the following verse:

﴿In it are clear signs﴾ that is, clear evidence and definitive proof for various kinds of divinely revealed knowledge and sublime aims, such as evidence of His oneness, mercy, wisdom, greatness, majesty, the perfect nature of His knowledge, and the vastness of His bounty and what He has bestowed upon His close friends and Prophets. One of these signs is ﴿the Station of Ibrâheem﴾. It may be that what is meant here is the well-known *Maqâm*<sup>2</sup> (Station), which is the rock on which Ibrâheem (ﷺ) stood in order to build the Kaaba when the structure

<sup>2</sup> Wherever possible, Arabic terms have been translated into English. In cases where we have chosen to retain the Arabic, the transliterated word or phrase is shown in italics the first time it appears in the text. The term is also defined in the glossary found at the end of this book. (Editor)

had grown tall. It was formerly attached to the wall of the Kaaba, then when 'Umar (*raḍīya Allāhu 'anhu* – may Allah be pleased with him) was caliph, he put it in the place where it is now. It was also said that the sign in it is the traces of Ibrâheem's feet, which left a mark on the rock; that mark remained until the early period of this Ummah, and this is something extraordinary. It was also said that the sign in it is the high esteem for it that Allah has instilled in people's hearts, so they venerate, honour and respect it. It may be that what is meant by the Station of Ibrâheem is the various locations in which he stood for the rituals of Hajj. Thus it may mean that all the parts of Hajj are clear signs, such as *tawâf* (circumambulation of the Kaaba), *sa'iy* (going back and forth between Şafâ and Marwah), as well as its locations, standing in 'Arafah and Muzdalifah, and the stoning of the *jamarât*, and all the rituals of Hajj. The sign in this case is what Allah has instilled in people's hearts of veneration and respect for these places and rituals, and their readiness to make the effort and spend the best of their wealth in order to reach these places, and putting up with all kinds of difficulty for that purpose, as well as what there is in those rituals and places of great wisdom and sublime meanings, and what there may be in those actions of wisdom and benefits, some of which are beyond people's comprehension. Another of the great signs in this place is that whoever enters it will be safe, protected by Sharia, as is Allah's will. With regard to *shar'ī* protection, Allah and His Messenger Ibrâheem (ﷺ), then His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ), ordained that the place should be respected and that whoever enters it should be granted safety and not be disturbed. This protection even includes the game animals, trees and plants (in the Ḥaram). This verse is quoted as evidence by those scholars who said that any person who commits an offence outside the Ḥaram then seeks sanctuary in the Ḥaram is to be granted safety and no *ḥadd* punishment is to be carried out on him unless he goes out of the Ḥaram. As for being granted safety according to Allah's will, that is because Allah (ﷻ),

by His will and decree, has instilled in people's hearts – even in the hearts of the polytheists who associate others with Him and those who disbelieve in their Lord – veneration and respect for this place, to the extent that one of them, despite all their strong tribal feelings and lack of patience in putting up with any wrongdoing done to him, may find his father's killer in the Ḥaram and not disturb him. Part of it being made a sanctuary is that if anyone intends to do harm to it, Allah will inevitably punish him in this world, as happened to the army of the elephant and others.



﴿ قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾ قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مِن ءَامَنَ تَبِعُونَهَا ءَوْجًا وَانْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِيلٍ ۗ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَطِيعُوا قَرِيبًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ يَرُدُّوكُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ كَافِرِينَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَاتُ اللَّهِ وَفِيكُمْ رَسُولُهُ ۗ وَمَن يَعْتَصِم بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل

عمران: ٩٨-١٠١)

- 3:98. Say: O People of the Book, why do you reject the revelations of Allah, when Allah is witness to all that you do?
- 3:99. Say: O People of the Book, why do you bar from Allah's way those who believe, seeking to make it [seem] crooked when you yourselves are witnesses [to its truth]? But Allah is not unaware of all that you do.
- 3:100. O you who believe, if you obey some of those who were given the scripture, they will turn you into disbelievers after your having believed.

3:101. How can you disbelieve, when Allah's revelations are being recited to you and His Messenger is in your midst? Whoever holds fast to Allah is indeed guided to a straight path.

Here Allah rebukes the People of the Book, the Jews and Christians, for their rejection of the revelations of Allah that He sent down to His Messengers and made as a mercy to His slaves, by means of which they are guided to Him and by means of which they will be guided to all sublime aims and beneficial knowledge. These disbelievers combine disbelief in the revelations with barring those who believe in Allah from following them, and distorting and twisting the intended meaning, when they bear witness to its truth, knowing that what they have done is the greatest act of disbelief that would incur punishment. ﴿For those who disbelieve and bar others from the path of Allah, We will add punishment to their punishment because they used to spread mischief.﴾ (*an-Nahl* 16: 88)

Hence Allah warns them here: ﴿But Allah is not unaware of all that you do﴾; rather He is aware of your deeds, your intentions and your evil plot, and He will requite you for it with the worst of punishments. As He warned and rebuked them, He followed that with mention of His mercy, generosity and kindness, and warned His believing slaves lest a plot be hatched against them without them realising, as He said:

﴿O you who believe, if you obey some of those who were given the scripture, they will turn you into disbelievers after your having believed﴾ – that is because of their envy and resentment towards you, and their eagerness to turn you away from your religion, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Many among the People of the Book wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed, out of the envy they have in their hearts, after the truth has become clear to them...﴾ (*al-Baqarah* 2: 109)



Then Allah (ﷻ) mentions the main reason and most significant factor that should make the believers steadfast, so that their certainty will not be shaken, and He states that this is something that is very unlikely:

«How can you disbelieve, when Allah's revelations are being recited to you and His Messenger is in your midst?» That is, the Messenger (ﷺ) is among you, reciting to you the verses of your Lord all the time; these are clear revelations which make one certain of the meaning and what they refer to, and not have any doubt about that content in any way, especially when the one who is explaining them is the best of humankind, the most knowledgeable, the most eloquent, the most sincere and the most compassionate towards the believers, and he is eager for people to be guided by all possible means; blessings and peace of Allah be upon him. He conveyed the message sincerely and clearly, and he did not leave any room for anyone to need to ask further questions or to seek further. Then Allah tells us that the one who holds fast to Him, puts his trust in Him, seeks protection by virtue of His strength and mercy from all evils and seeks His help in attaining all that is good, «is indeed guided to a straight path» that will bring him to his ultimate goal, because he is combining following the Messenger (ﷺ) in word and deed with holding fast to Allah.



﴿يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهٖۚ وَلَا تَمُوْنُوْا اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ  
 (۱۰۲) ﴿۱۰۲﴾ وَاَعْتَصِمُوْا بِحَبْلِ اللّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوْا وَاذْكُرُوْا اَنْعَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذْ كُنْتُمْ  
 اَعْدَاءَ ۗ فَآلَفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِكُمْ فَاَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهٖۙ اِخْوَانًا وَّكُنْتُمْ عَلٰۤى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ  
 فَاَنْقَذَكُمْ مِّنْهَا ۗ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ ءَايٰتِهٖۙ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿۱۰۳﴾ (سورة آل عمران:

- 3:102. O you who believe, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims.
- 3:103. And hold fast, all together, to the rope of Allah, and do not be divided among yourselves. Remember the blessing that Allah bestowed upon you, for you were enemies then He brought your hearts together, so that by His grace, you became brethren, and you were on the brink of the pit of fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes His revelations clear to you, so that you may be guided.

This is a command from Allah to His believing slaves, that they should fear Him as He should be feared and persist in that, remaining steadfast and adhering to it until death. The one who persists in something will die adhering to it. If a person persists in fearing his Lord, obeying Him and turning to Him all the time when he is healthy, energetic and able, Allah will make him steadfast at the time of death and bless him with a good end. Fearing Allah as He should be feared – as Ibn Mas'ood said – means that He is to be obeyed and not disobeyed, remembered and not forgotten, shown gratitude and not ingratitude. This verse explains what Allah (ﷻ) deserves of fear of Him. As for what is required of people in that regard, it is as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿So fear Allah as best you can...﴾ (at-Taghābun 64: 16)

The details of fearing Allah in terms of what is in the heart and actions that one should take are very many; fearing Allah means doing what Allah has enjoined and refraining from everything that Allah has forbidden.

Then Allah (ﷻ) instructed them to do that which will help them to attain fear of Him, which is to be united and adhere to the religion of Allah. The fact that the believers' call is one should unite them in harmony, because if the Muslims are united in their religion and their hearts are in harmony with one another, that will help to make

their religious affairs sound and worldly affairs in good shape. By uniting, they will be able to tackle any matter and achieve innumerable interests that depend on unity, such as cooperating in righteousness and piety, and other matters; by the same token, division and enmity undermine their well-being, sever the bonds between them and lead to everyone striving for his own self-interests, even if that leads to harm on a community level.

Then Allah (ﷻ) reminds them of His blessings and instructs them to remember them:

﴿Remember the blessing that Allah bestowed upon you, for you were enemies﴾ killing one another and taking one another's wealth, to such an extent that the members of one tribe would fight and oppose one another, and there would be enmity and fighting among the people of one city. Their situation was one of grievous trouble; this was the situation of the Arabs before the Prophet (ﷺ) was sent. When Allah sent him and they believed in him, united in Islam and joined together in faith, they became like one person because of the harmony and bonds of friendship between them. Hence Allah (ﷻ) said: ﴿then He brought your hearts together, so that by His grace, you became brethren, and you were on the brink of the pit of fire﴾ that is, you deserved to enter the fire, and there was nothing standing between you and it except death, after which you would enter it

﴿and He saved you from it﴾ by means of what He blessed you with of belief in Muhammad (ﷺ).

﴿Thus Allah makes His revelations clear to you﴾ that is, He explains and clarifies them, and distinguishes for you truth from falsehood, guidance from misguidance

﴿so that you may be guided﴾ by knowing the truth and acting upon it. This verse indicates that Allah loves His slaves to remember His blessing in their hearts and verbally, so that they may increase in gratitude towards Him and love for Him, and so that He will give them more of His bounty and blessings. The greatest of what one

may remember of His blessings is the blessing of guidance to Islam, following the Messenger (ﷺ) and unity among the Muslims.



﴿وَلَتَكُنَّ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٠٤-١٠٥)

- 3:104. Let there arise from among you a group of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong. They are the ones who will be successful.
- 3:105. Do not be like those who became divided and fell into disputes after the clear proofs had come unto them; for them there will be a grievous punishment.

That is, let there be among you, O believers whom Allah has blessed with faith and holding fast to His rope, ﴿a group of people inviting to all that is good﴾. Good (*khayr*) is a comprehensive word that includes everything that brings one closer to Allah and further away from His wrath ﴿enjoining what is right﴾ that is, everything that is known to be good by means of rational or shar'i proof ﴿and forbidding what is wrong﴾ that is, everything that is known to be evil by means of rational or shar'i proof. This is an instruction from Allah to the believers, that among them there should be a group that takes on the task of calling people to His way and explaining His religion to people. That includes the scholars who teach religion; the preachers who call the people of other religions to enter Islam and call those who have gone astray to mend their ways; the *mujāhideen* who strive in jihad for the sake of Allah; those who have the task of checking on people and making them adhere to the rulings of Islam

such as the five daily prayers, *zakāh*, fasting, Hajj and so on; and those who check on weights and measures, and check on the traders in the marketplace, preventing them from cheating or engaging in invalid transactions. All of these matters come under the heading of communal obligations, as is indicated in this verse, in which it says, «Let there arise from among you a group of people». In other words, let there be among you a group of people who achieve the purpose behind the things mentioned. It is well established that when something is enjoined, it refers to that thing and whatever means are necessary to achieve it. Whatever these matters depend on is also enjoined, such as preparing for jihad by making ready all kinds of equipment by means of which the goal of defeating enemies and making the word of Islam supreme may be attained; acquiring knowledge with which to call people to what is good and developing means of achieving that; building schools to teach knowledge; helping the authorities in implementing the laws of Sharia among the people in word and deed, and with financial support; and other matters on which these aims depend. This group that is prepared to call people to what is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, is the elite of the believers. Hence Allah (ﷻ) says concerning them: «They are the ones who will be successful»; they will attain what they are seeking (paradise) and be saved from what they fear (hell).

Then Allah forbids being like the People of the Book in terms of division and disputes:

«Do not be like those who became divided and fell into disputes». What is astounding is that their disputes came «after the clear proofs had come unto them», that should have led to them not being divided. It was more expected of them than others that they would adhere to the religion, but what happened was the opposite, even though they were aware that they were going against the command of Allah. Thus they deserved the severe punishment; hence Allah (ﷻ) said: «for them there will be a grievous punishment».



﴿يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ أَكْفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ أَبْيَضَتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَبِهِ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٠٦-١٠٨)

- 3:106. On the day when some faces will become bright, and some faces will become dark, to those whose faces will become dark, [it will be said]: Did you disbelieve after having believed? Taste then the punishment for having disbelieved.
- 3:107. But those whose faces become bright, they will be in Allah's mercy [paradise], to abide therein forever.
- 3:108. These are the revelations of Allah; We recite them to you in Truth: And Allah does not intend any injustice to [any of] His creation.

Here Allah tells us about the Day of Resurrection and the outcome of recompense on the basis of justice and grace on that day. This includes both promises and warnings that instil hope and fear.

﴿On the day when some faces will become bright﴾ – these are the faces of the good people who are blessed, the people who were united in holding fast to the rope of Allah.

﴿and some faces will become dark﴾ – these are the faces of the evil people who are doomed, those who were divided and who differed among themselves. Their faces will become dark because of the disgrace, humiliation and shame in their hearts; the faces of the blessed will become bright because of the joy, happiness, blessing and contentment in their hearts, the effects of which will appear on their faces, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...and will bestow upon them radiance and joy.﴾ (al-Insân 76: 11)

The radiance will be on their faces and the joy will be in their hearts. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿As for those who earn evil, the recompense of an evil deed will be the like thereof, and shame will cover them. They will have no protector from [the wrath of] Allah. Their faces will be covered, as it were, with patches of darkest night. They will be inhabitants of the fire; they will abide therein forever.﴾ (Yoonus 10: 27)

﴿to those whose faces will become dark﴾ it will be said to them by way of rebuke and reprimanding: ﴿Did you disbelieve after having believed?﴾ that is, how could you prefer disbelief and misguidance over faith and guidance? How could you forsake the path of guidance and follow the path of misguidance?

﴿Taste then the punishment for having disbelieved﴾ for nothing is befitting for you except the fire and you deserve nothing but disgrace and shame.

﴿But those whose faces become bright﴾ will have the most perfect joy and they will be given the greatest glad tidings. They will be given the glad tidings of admittance to paradise and the pleasure and mercy of their Lord.

﴿they will be in Allah's mercy [paradise], to abide therein forever﴾. Because they will abide in His mercy forever, paradise is part of His mercy; they will abide therein forever, enjoying all that it contains of eternal delights and a life of ease in the vicinity of the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

When Allah explained to His Messenger (ﷺ) the rulings and requitals, He said: ﴿These are the revelations of Allah; We recite them to you﴾ that is, We tell them to you ﴿in Truth﴾ because His commands and prohibitions are based on wisdom and mercy, and the reward and punishment are likewise based on wisdom, mercy and justice that is free of any injustice. Hence He said ﴿And Allah does not intend any injustice to [any of] His creation﴾. He told us that He does not intend to be unjust towards them, let alone act on the basis

of injustice, so He will not detract from the reward for good deeds of anyone or increase the wrongdoing of the wrongdoers; rather He will requite them for their deeds only.



﴿وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ﴾ (سورة آل عمران:

(١٠٩)

3:109. To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth; it is to Allah that all things will return.

That is, He is the Sovereign of everything in the heavens and on earth; He created them and granted them provision, and He controls them in accordance with His will and decree and in what He prescribes and enjoins upon them. They will return to Him on the Day of Resurrection, and He will requite them for their deeds, both good and bad.



﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ آهَلُ الْكِتَابِ كَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۚ مِنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾ (١١٠) لَنْ يَضُرُّكُمْ إِلَّا أَذًى ۗ وَإِنْ يُفْتَلِكُمْ يُؤْلِكُمْ الْآذِبَارِثُمْ لَا يَبْصُرُونَ﴾ (١١١) ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذَّلِيلَةُ أَنْ مَا تُفْقَهُوا إِلَّا بِحَبْلِ مِنْ اللَّهِ وَحَبْلِ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَبَاءُ وَبِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ۗ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِكَايِبَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ۗ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ

﴿١١٢﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١١٠-١١٢)



- 3:110. You are the best community ever brought forth for [the benefit of] humankind; you enjoin what is good, and forbid what is evil, and you believe in Allah. If only the People of the Book had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are some who do believe, but most of them are evildoers.
- 3:111. They will do you no harm, except with abusive words. If they come out to fight you, they will turn and flee, then they will not be helped.
- 3:112. They are struck with humiliation wherever they may be, except when under a covenant [of protection] from Allah or a covenant [of protection] from the people. They have incurred Allah's wrath, and wretchedness is decreed for them. This is because they disbelieved in the revelations of Allah, and killed the Prophets unjustly. That was because of their disobedience and transgression.

Here Allah (ﷻ) praises this Ummah and states that it is the best of communities that Allah has ever brought forth for (the benefit of) humanity, because they perfected themselves by having faith, which requires them to do everything that He enjoined and to strive in perfecting others by enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil. That includes calling the people to Allah, striving for that purpose and doing their utmost to turn people away from their misguidance, transgression and sin. By doing that, they (the Muslims) become the best community ever brought forth for (the benefit of) humanity. In a previous verse (3: 104), Allah (ﷻ) said: «Let there arise from among you a group of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong». This is a command from Allah to this Ummah, and when there is a command, the one who is commanded may or may not do it. But in this verse (3: 110) Allah states that the Ummah has carried out what Allah instructed it to do and obeyed the command of its Lord; thus it deserves to be favoured above all other nations or communities.

﴿If only the People of the Book had believed, it would have been better for them﴾. This is a kind of calling them in a gentle manner that should cause them to respond to the call, but only a few of them believed; most of them are evildoers who disobeyed Allah and showed all kinds of enmity towards the close friends of Allah. But by the grace of Allah towards His believing slaves, He caused their plots to backfire, so they will not harm the believers in terms of their religious commitment or physical well-being. Rather the worst of their harm is no more than verbal annoyance which is inevitable on the part of every opponent. But if they fight the believers, they will turn and flee, then their defeat will be ongoing; they will continue to be humiliated and they will not be helped at any time. Hence Allah says that He has punished them with inward humiliation and outward wretchedness, and they will never feel settled or at peace.

﴿except when under a covenant [of protection] from Allah or a covenant [of protection] from the people﴾. The Jews will only either be under Muslim rule, paying *jizyah* according to the covenant, or they will be under Christian rule.

﴿They have incurred Allah's wrath﴾ in addition to that, and this is the worst punishment. Allah tells us why they have ended up in this situation, as He says:

﴿This is because they disbelieved in the revelations of Allah﴾ that Allah sent down to His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ), that should have led to certainty and faith, but they disbelieved in them out of resentment and stubbornness

﴿and killed the Prophets unjustly﴾ that is, they responded to the Prophets of Allah, who showed them the greatest kindness, in the most evil of ways, by killing them. After such an audacious crime, could there be anything worse than that? All of this came about because of their disobedience and enmity, which is what gave them the audacity to disbelieve in Allah and kill the Prophets of Allah.



﴿ لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ ءَاتَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ  
 يَسْجُدُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ  
 عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾ وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ  
 خَيْرٍ فَلَن يُكْفَرُوهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١١٣-١١٥)

- 3:113. Not all of them are alike. Among the People of the Book are some who are upright; they recite the revelations of Allah [in prayer] during the night, and they prostrate.
- 3:114. They believe in Allah and the Last Day; they enjoin what is good, and forbid what is evil; and they hasten to do good deeds. They are among the righteous.
- 3:115. Whatever good they do, it will not go unappreciated; for Allah knows well those who are conscious of Him.

After having told us about the evildoers among the People of the Book, and their deeds and punishments, Allah then tells us about the upright group, and their deeds and rewards. He tells us that they are not alike in His sight, rather there is an indescribable difference between them. The evildoers are as described above, whereas these people are believers. Allah tells us that some of them «are upright» that is, they adhere to the religion of Allah and do that which Allah has commanded, which includes establishing prayer «they recite the revelations of Allah [in prayer] during the night, and they prostrate». This is a description of their prayer during the night, their lengthy *tahajjud*, their recitation of the Book of their Lord, their showing humility towards Him and their bowing and prostrating to Him.

«They believe in Allah and the Last Day» that is, their faith is like that of the believers, which includes believing in every Prophet who was sent and every Book revealed by Allah. Belief in the Last Day

is singled out for mention because belief in the Last Day motivates the believer to do that which brings him closer to Allah and that will bring reward on that day, and to avoid anything for which he will be punished on that day.

﴿they enjoin what is good, and forbid what is evil﴾ thus they strive to perfect themselves by means of faith and all that it entails, and they strive to perfect others by enjoining them to do all that is good and forbidding them to do anything that is evil. That includes encouraging their co-religionists and others to believe in Muhammad (ﷺ). Then Allah describes their lofty aspirations:

﴿and they hasten to do good deeds﴾ that is, they rush to do them and seek every opportunity to do them at the earliest possible time. That is because of their great eagerness to do what is good, and their knowledge of the benefits and reward that goodness brings. These are the people to whom Allah ascribes these beautiful characteristics and good deeds.

﴿They are among the righteous﴾ whom Allah encompasses in His mercy and forgiveness, bestowing upon them His grace and bounty.

﴿Whatever good they do﴾, whether it is great or small  
 ﴿it will not go unappreciated﴾ that is, they will never be deprived of its reward; rather Allah will reward them for it completely, but the reward for deeds depends on what is in the individual's heart of faith and piety. Hence Allah says: ﴿for Allah knows well those who are conscious of Him﴾, as He says elsewhere:

﴿... Verily, Allah only accepts from those who fear Him.﴾ (al-Mā'idah 5: 27)



﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾ مَثَلُ مَا يُنْفِقُونَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ

رِيحٌ فِيهَا صِرٌّ أَصَابَتْ حَرْثَ قَوْمٍ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فَأَهْلَكْتَهُ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَٰكِن  
 أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١١٦-١١٧)

- 3:116. As for those who disbelieve, neither their wealth nor their children will avail them at all against Allah; it is they who will be inhabitants of the fire, abiding therein forever.
- 3:117. The likeness of what they spend in this worldly life is that of a freezing wind that strikes the crops of people who have wronged themselves, destroying them. It is not Allah Who has wronged them, but they wronged themselves.

Here Allah tells us that in the case of those who disbelieve, their wealth and children will never avail them at all before Allah; they will not ward off from them anything of the punishment of Allah or bring them anything of the reward of Allah, as He says:

﴿It is not your wealth or your children that bring you nearer to Us; but those who believe and do righteous deeds...﴾ (Saba' 34: 37)

Rather their wealth and their children are a means that will take them to hell and serve as proof against them that Allah bestowed blessings upon them for which they should have been grateful, and they will be punished for not giving thanks and for disbelieving. Hence Allah says: ﴿it is they who will be inhabitants of the fire, abiding therein forever﴾.

Then Allah gives a likeness of what the disbelievers spend of their wealth in order to bar people from the path of Allah, seeking thereby to extinguish the light of Allah; their wealth will not achieve anything and it will diminish, like one who sows crops, hoping that they will be productive and hoping to harvest the yield, but whilst he is like that a freezing wind comes, one that is biting cold, and destroys his crops, leaving him with nothing but exhaustion and sorrow. Similarly, these disbelievers, of whom Allah (ﷻ) says:

«The disbelievers spend their wealth to bar [people] from the path of Allah, and they will continue to spend it, then it will become a source of regret for them, then they will be defeated...» (al-Anfāl 8: 36)

«It is not Allah Who has wronged them» by cancelling out their deeds

«but they wronged themselves» when they disbelieved in the revelations of Allah, rejected His Messenger (ﷺ) and were eager to extinguish the light of Allah. These factors are what made their deeds come to nothing and took away their wealth.



﴿يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بَطَانَةَ مِن دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأُولُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا وَدُوا مَا عَنِتُّمْ قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِن أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾ هَآئِنَّمْ أَوْلَادُ تُحِبُّوهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمْ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ كُلِّهِ وَإِذَا لَقُوكُمْ قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُوا عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْفَيْظِ قُلْ مُوتُوا يَعِظُكُمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿١١٩﴾ إِن تَمَسَّكُمُ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَإِن تُصِيبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا وَإِن تَصِيرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿١٢٠﴾﴾

(سورة آل عمران: ١١٨-١٢٠)

3:118. O you who believe, do not take as your close friends those outside your ranks; they will spare no effort to cause you mischief; they wish to see you in distress. Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, and what their hearts conceal is far worse. We have made clear to you the revelations, if you understand.

3:119. O you who [take them as close friends], you love them but they do not love you, even though you believe in all the scriptures. When they meet you, they say: We believe, but when they are

alone, they bite their fingertips in their rage against you. Say: Perish in your rage; Allah knows well what is in [your] hearts.

- 3:120. If anything good happens to you, it grieves them; but if some misfortune overtakes you, they rejoice at it. But if you remain steadfast and fear Allah, not the least harm will their scheming do to you; for Allah has full knowledge of all that they do.

Here Allah (ﷻ) forbids His believing slaves to take close friends from among the hypocrites of the People of the Book and others, telling them of their secrets and what is in their hearts, or appointing them to do some work for the Muslim community. That is because they are enemies whose hearts are filled with hostility and hatred, thus it has appeared from their mouths.

﴿and what their hearts conceal is far worse﴾ than what you hear from them. Hence ﴿they will spare no effort to cause you mischief﴾ that is, they will do their utmost to cause you harm and distress, and they will do things to cause you trouble and help your enemies against you. Allah says to the believers:

﴿We have made clear to you the revelations﴾ that is, in which you will find that which is in your best interests in both religious and worldly terms

﴿if you understand﴾ and thus recognise these things and distinguish between friends and enemies. For not everyone should be taken as a close friend; rather the wise person is someone who, if he has no choice but to mix with the enemy, only mixes with him outwardly, and does not let him know anything about his inner thoughts, even if that person tries to be a friend and swears that he is his friend.

Allah says, urging the believers to be cautious of these hypocrites among the People of the Book, and explaining the extent of their enmity:

﴿O you who [take them as close friends], you love them but they do not love you, even though you believe in all the scriptures﴾ that is,

all the Books that Allah has revealed to His Prophets, whereas they do not believe in your Book; rather when they meet you they pretend to be believers:

«When they meet you, they say: We believe, but when they are alone, they bite their fingertips in their rage against you».

«Say: Perish in your rage; Allah knows well what is in [your] hearts» this is glad tidings for the believers: those who aim to harm you are only harming themselves and they cannot act upon their rage; they will continue to be troubled by it until they die and move from the punishment of this world to the punishment of the hereafter.

«If anything good happens to you», such as victory over the enemy, conquests and booty

«it grieves them» that is, it upsets them and causes them distress

«but if some misfortune overtakes you, they rejoice at it. But if you remain steadfast and fear Allah, not the least harm will their scheming do to you; for Allah has full knowledge of all that they do». If you take the measures by means of which Allah has promised victory – namely steadfastness and fear of Him – their scheming will not harm you; rather Allah will cause their schemes to backfire, because He has complete knowledge and power over them. Hence they cannot escape from that and nothing is hidden from Him.



﴿وَإِذْ عَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقْعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢١﴾  
هَمَّتْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ تَفْشَلَا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيَهُمَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾﴾

(سورة آل عمران: ١٢١-١٢٢)

- 3:121. And [remember] when you set out from your home to post the believers at their stations for battle; and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.



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3:122. And [remember] when two groups from among you were about to lose heart; but Allah was their protector, and in Allah let the believers put their trust.

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These verses were revealed concerning the battle of Uḥud, the story of which is well known from books of *seerah* (Prophet's biography) and history. Perhaps the reason why the story of Uḥud is mentioned in this context, as is the story of Badr later on, is that Allah (ﷻ) had promised the believers that if they were steadfast and feared Him, He would grant them victory and foil the schemes of their enemies against them. This is a general principle and true promise that is never broken if the conditions are met. Examples of that are mentioned in these two stories. Allah supported the believers at Badr, when they were patient and feared Him, and He caused the enemy to gain the upper hand (at Uḥud) when they acted in a manner that showed that their fear of Allah had been undermined. One of the reasons why these two stories are mentioned together is that Allah loves His slaves, if something they dislike happens to them, to remember other things that happened to them that they do like; this will reduce the impact of the calamity and they will give thanks to Allah for the great blessing that, when compared to the calamity that has befallen them but is ultimately good for them, will make the calamity seem insignificant in comparison with those blessings. And Allah also refers to this wisdom in the verse: ﴿How is it that, when a calamity befell you whilst you had inflicted twice as much [on your enemy], you said: Where has this come from? Say [to them]: It has come from your own selves. Verily, Allah has power over all things.﴾ (3: 165).

To sum up the story of Uḥud: when the remnants of the polytheists went back from Badr to Makkah, which happened in 2 AH, they prepared all that they could of wealth, men and equipment, until they had collected enough to give some certainty that they would achieve their goal and exact vengeance. Then they headed from Makkah to

Madinah with three thousand fighters, and they halted near Madinah. The Prophet (ﷺ) came out to meet them, after consulting with his Companions (*radiya Allāhu 'anhum* – may Allah be pleased with all of them). He came out with one thousand men. After they had gone a short distance, the hypocrite 'Abdullāh ibn Ubayy went back with one-third of the army whose thinking was akin to his. Two groups among the believers, Banu Salamah and Banu Hārithah, thought of turning back, but Allah made them steadfast. When they reached Uḥud, the Prophet (ﷺ) stationed the Muslims with their back to Uḥud, then he placed fifty men in a gap in Mount Uḥud, and instructed them to stay put and not to move from that spot; their job was to make sure that no one could attack the Muslims from the rear. When the Muslims and the polytheists met in battle, the polytheists were initially defeated and they fled, leaving behind their camps, and the Muslims pursued them, killing some and taking others captive. When the archers whom the Prophet (ﷺ) had stationed in the gap in the mountain saw them, they said to one another: The booty, the booty! Why should we stay here when the polytheists have been defeated? Their commander, 'Abdullāh ibn Jubayr, warned them not to disobey orders, but they did not pay any attention to him. When they deserted their posts and only a few were left, including their commander 'Abdullāh ibn Jubayr, the cavalry of the polytheists came through that gap and attacked the Muslim rearguard from behind. The Muslims were thrown into panic, which was a very hard test for them and in which they were made to taste the punishment for their disobedience, and some of them were killed. Then they climbed up to the top of Mount Uḥud and Allah restrained the hands of the polytheists, who returned to their land, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his Companions (رضي الله عنهم) returned to Madinah.

﴿And [remember] when you set out from your home﴾ the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions set out after *Jumu'ah* prayer

﴿to post the believers at their stations for battle﴾ that is, you organised them and placed them in suitable positions. This is great praise for the Prophet (ﷺ), because he is the one who organised them and posted them in their battle stations; that was because of his perfect knowledge and skill, and his high aspirations and perfect courage, because he took care of these matters himself; blessings and peace of Allah be upon him.

﴿and Allah is All-Hearing﴾; He hears all sounds, including what the believers and hypocrites say, each of them speaking in accordance with what is in his heart

﴿All-Knowing﴾; He knows people's intentions, and requites them in full. Moreover, Allah hears you, knows all about you, and takes care of you; He controls your affairs and supports you. He said to Moosâ and Hâroon:

﴿Allah said: Fear not; verily I am with you both. I hear and see [everything].﴾ (Tâ Hâ 20: 46)

By His grace and kindness to them, when ﴿two groups from among﴾ the believers thought of giving up – namely Banu Salamah and Banu Hârithah, as stated above – Allah (ﷻ) made them steadfast as a favour to them and to the rest of the believers. Hence He said: ﴿but Allah was their protector﴾. That was by His grace towards His close friends; He guided them to that which was in their best interests and protected them from that which could have caused them harm. One aspect of His protection of them was that when they thought of committing this great sin, namely giving up and deserting the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), He protected them from doing so because of the faith they had. This is like the verse:

﴿Allah is the Protector of those who have faith; from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light...﴾ (al-Baqarah 2: 257)

Then He said: ﴿and in Allah let the believers put their trust﴾. This is a command to put their trust in Allah, which means relying on Him to bring benefits and ward off harm, whilst trusting and having faith

in Allah. A person's trust in Allah will be commensurate with his faith, and the believers are more entitled to put their trust in Allah than anyone else, especially at times of hardship and fighting, because they have no choice but to put their trust in their Lord, to seek His help and support, to declare that they have no power or strength of their own and to depend on the power and strength of Allah. Thus He will support them and ward off calamities and trials from them.



﴿ وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾ إِذْ تَقُولُ  
لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْ يَكْفِيكُمْ أَنْ يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلَاثَةِ آفٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنَزَّلِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾  
بَلَىٰ إِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّن فَوْرِهِمْ هَذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آفٍ مِّن  
الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾ وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ وَلِنَطْمِئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُم بِهِ وَمَا النَّصْرُ  
إِلَّا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿١٢٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٢٣-١٢٦)

- 3:123. Allah had helped you at Badr, when you were weak and few in number. So fear Allah, that you may be grateful.
- 3:124. [Remember] when you said to the believers: Does it not suffice you that Allah will help you with three thousand angels sent down?
- 3:125. Indeed, if you remain steadfast and are mindful of Allah, even if the enemy should attack you suddenly, your Lord will [immediately] help you with five thousand angels clearly marked.
- 3:126. Allah ordained this only as glad tidings for you, and to reassure your hearts thereby; there is no victory except from Allah, the Almighty, the Most Wise.

This is a reminder to His believing slaves of how He helped them achieve victory on the day of Badr, when they were weak, few in

number and poorly equipped, in contrast to the great numbers and superior equipment of their enemy. The battle of Badr occurred in 2 AH. The Prophet (ﷺ) left Madinah with a little over three hundred of his Companions (رضي الله عنهم), and they had only seventy camels and two horses with them. They set out in pursuit of the caravan of Quraysh that had come from Syria. The polytheists heard of that, so they prepared the army to go from Makkah to protect their caravan; they set out with approximately one thousand well-equipped and fully armed fighters and plenty of horses. They and the Muslims met at a well called Badr, between Makkah and Madinah, where they fought. Allah granted a great victory to the Muslims, who killed seventy of the most prominent and courageous of the polytheists, as well as capturing seventy more and seizing control of their camp. We will discuss the story further in the commentary on Soorat al-Anfāl, in *shā' Allāh*, as that is the appropriate place to do so. However, Allah mentioned it here to remind the Muslims that they should fear their Lord and give thanks to Him. Hence He said: ﴿So fear Allah, that you may be grateful﴾, because the one who fears his Lord has given thanks to Him, and the one who does not fear his Lord has not given thanks to him.

﴿[Remember] when you said to the believers﴾ that is, remember, O Muhammad (ﷺ), when you said to the believers on the day of Badr, giving them the glad tidings of victory:

﴿Does it not suffice you that Allah will help you with three thousand angels sent down? Indeed, if you remain steadfast and are mindful of Allah, even if the enemy should attack you suddenly, your Lord will [immediately] help you with five thousand angels clearly marked﴾ that is, they bear marks of courage. Allah stipulated three conditions for their support: steadfastness, fear of Allah and a sudden attack from the enemy. This was a promise to send down the angels mentioned and to support them by means of those angels. As for the promise of victory and foiling the enemy's schemes, Allah stipulated the first

two conditions for that, as we have seen previously in the verse: ﴿But if you remain steadfast and fear Allah, not the least harm will their scheming do to you﴾ (3: 120).

﴿Allah ordained this﴾ that is, His support of you with the angels ﴿only as glad tidings for you﴾ so that you might rejoice and your spirits be raised

﴿and to reassure your hearts thereby; there is no victory except from Allah﴾, so do not rely on what you have of the means of victory; rather the means of victory may give you some reassurance, but the true victory that cannot be overturned comes by the will of Allah; He grants victory to whomever He will of His slaves. If He wills, He grants victory to those who have the means of attaining victory and are better prepared, as is usually the case; but if He wills, He will grant victory to the weaker side, in order to highlight to His slaves that all matters are in His Hands and all matters go back to Him. Hence He said:

﴿from Allah, the Almighty﴾, so no created being can frustrate Him; rather all people are weak and under His control

﴿the Most Wise﴾ Who says and does what is appropriate at the right time and in the right place. By His wisdom He sometimes causes the disbelievers to prevail over the Muslims, but this is not ongoing. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...If Allah had so willed, He could have exacted retribution upon them [without you fighting], but He [commands you to fight] in order to test some of you by means of others...﴾ (Muhammad 47: 4)



﴿لَيَقْطَعَنَّ طَرْفًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْ يَكْتُمُهُمْ فَتَنقَلِبُوا خَائِبِينَ﴾ (سورة آل عمران)

3:127. [Allah helped you] so that He might cut down a section of the disbelievers or disgrace them, so that they might retreat in utter disappointment.

Here Allah tells us that He gives His help to His believing slaves for either of two reasons, the first of which is to cut down a section or group of the disbelievers and their prominent figures, by causing them to be killed or captured, or a city to be taken over, or booty to be seized, thus strengthening the believers and humiliating the disbelievers. That is because the disbelievers' resistance to Islam and their fighting the Muslims are based on their individuals, weapons, wealth and land, by means of which they are able to resist and fight. Therefore cutting down any part of that reduces their strength. The second reason is that by means of their strength and numbers, the disbelievers have great hope of defeating the Muslims and are very keen to achieve that, so they do their utmost and spend their wealth to achieve it. Hence Allah helps the believers against them and sends them back disappointed, not having achieved their goal; rather they go back with loss, grief and sorrow. If you think about what happens in reality, you will see that Allah's help to His believing slaves is only ever one of these two things: either victory against the enemy or disgrace and retreat for them.



﴿ لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴾ ۱۲۸ ﴿ وَاللَّهُ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝ السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۝ وَاللَّهُ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝﴾

(سورة آل عمران: ۱۲۸-۱۲۹) ﴿ ۱۲۹ ﴾

3:128. It is not for you [O Prophet] to decide whether He turn in mercy to them, or punish them, for they are indeed wrongdoers.

3:129. To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. He forgives whomever He wills and punishes whomever He wills, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

When the events of the day of Uḥud unfolded, and the Prophet (ﷺ) went through hardship, by means of which Allah raised him in status, and his head was injured and his front tooth broken, he said: «How can any people prosper who injured the head of their Prophet?» (Muslim)<sup>3</sup>

He started to pray against the leaders of the polytheists, such as Abu Sufyān ibn Ḥarb, Ṣafwān ibn Umayyah, Suhayl ibn 'Amr and al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām, but Allah sent down revelation to him, forbidding him to pray against them, invoke curses upon them and seek their expulsion from the mercy of Allah:

«It is not for you [O Prophet] to decide»; all you have to do is convey the message, teach the people and strive to do what is in their best interests. The matter is in the Hand of Allah (ﷻ), Who controls all things; He guides whomever He wills and He causes to go astray whomever He wills. So do not pray against them; rather their case is for your Lord to decide. If His wisdom and mercy dictate that He should show mercy to them and bless them with Islam, He will do that, and if His wisdom dictates that they should remain disbelievers and not be guided, in which case they are the ones who wronged and harmed themselves and brought it upon themselves, He will do that.

<sup>3</sup> All hadiths in this text have been checked and verified by IIPH's researchers. It is rare, but it does happen that a hadith is not verifiable within the timeframe of researching and editing the book. In that case, a decision is made by the editorial board as to whether or not to include the hadith. It is IIPH's policy not to include weak hadiths or fabricated (fake) hadiths in our publications. If a weak hadith is included in any text, it is only because the author of the book discusses it as a weak hadith. (Editor)



Allah turned in mercy to these specific individuals and others, and guided them to Islam, may Allah be pleased with them. This verse indicates that the will of Allah supersedes the will of people; that an individual, no matter how high his status, may choose one thing but what is best and serves a purpose is something other than that; it was not for the Messenger (ﷺ) to decide, so it is more appropriate to say this in the case of others. This is the greatest refutation of those who pin their hopes on Prophets, righteous people and others, and it highlights the fact that doing so is associating others with Allah in worship and is indicative of a lack of rational thinking, because they turn away from the One Who is in control of all things and turn to those who have no control at all, which is clearly misguidance. Think about how, when Allah mentions His turning to them in mercy, He attributes this action to Himself and does not refer to any measure on their part that could make them qualified for that. This indicates that this blessing is pure grace from Him to His slave, without any prior measure on the part of that person. But when He mentions the punishment, He also mentions their wrongdoing and connects the punishment to the fact that they were wrongdoers: ﴿or punish them, for they are indeed wrongdoers﴾. This is indicative of the perfect justice and wisdom of Allah, as He dictates punishment when appropriate, and He does not wrong His slaves; rather it is the slave who wrongs himself. When He stated that His Messenger (ﷺ) had nothing to do with the decision, He affirmed that the decision was His to make:

﴿To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth﴾ including the angels, human beings, *jinn*, animals, heavenly bodies and all inanimate things. Everything in the heavens and on earth belongs to Allah, and is created by Him and under His control. He directs them like slaves, and they have no control at all. As that is the case, they are recipients of either His forgiveness or His punishment; He forgives whomever He wills, by guiding him to Islam, forgiving his association of others with Him and blessing him by enabling him to give up sin, so that He will forgive him his sin.

﴿and punishes whomever He wills﴾ by leaving him to his own devices and his ignorant self that is inclined towards evil; thus he will do evil deeds and be punished for that. Then the verse ends with two names of Allah that are indicative of the vastness of His mercy and the comprehensive nature of His forgiveness, as He says: ﴿and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾. This offers the great glad tidings that His mercy prevails over His wrath, and His forgiveness prevails over His punishment. This verse tells us about the categories of people and that Allah forgives some of them and punishes others, but it does not end with one name that refers to mercy and another that refers to vengeance; rather it ends with two names, both of which refer to His mercy. He is possessed of mercy and kindness by virtue of which He will show mercy to His slaves such as has never entered the mind of any human being and cannot be described. We ask Him to bestow His mercy upon us and admit us to His paradise among His righteous slaves.



﴿يَتَابِعُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا الرِّبَا اَضْعَافًا مُضَاعَفَةً ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ ۞ وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَنُظِيِّنَ الْفَظِيطَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾ وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَجَسَةً أَرَّظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا الذُّنُوبَ بِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرِ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّةٌ تَجْرَىٰ مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَيَنصَبُ لَهُمُ الْعِلْمَ ﴿١٣٦﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٣٠-١٣٦)

- 3:130. O you who believe! Do not devour usury, doubled and multiplied. Fear Allah, that you may prosper.
- 3:131. Guard yourselves against the fire, which is prepared for the disbelievers,
- 3:132. And obey Allah and the Messenger; that you may attain mercy.
- 3:133. Hasten towards forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as vast as the heavens and the earth, which is prepared for the pious,
- 3:134. Those who spend in times of both ease and hardship, who control their anger, and pardon people, for Allah loves those who do good;
- 3:135. And those who, if they do something shameful or wrong themselves, remember Allah and ask for forgiveness for their sins – for who can forgive sins except Allah? – and do not knowingly persist in what they have done.
- 3:136. For such their reward is forgiveness from their Lord, and gardens through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever; how excellent a reward for those who work [and strive]!

We have seen above, in the introduction to this *tafseer*, that each person should pay attention to enjoining what is good and forbidding what is bad to himself and to others, and that when Allah (ﷻ) issues a command, it becomes incumbent upon him – first of all – to understand when and how it is to be done, and what is enjoined upon him, so that he can fulfil the command. Once he understands that, he must strive and seek Allah's help to put it into practice himself and enjoin others to do so, as much as he is able. Similarly, if he is told not to do something, he must understand when and how this applies, and what it does and does not include, then he should strive hard, seeking the help of his Lord, to refrain from it. This is what he must do with regard to all the divine commands and prohibitions.

In these verses, Allah issues some commands and describes some good characteristics that He enjoins and urges us to attain, and tells us

of the reward of those who do these things. He also mentions some prohibitions and urges us to keep away from those things.

It may be – and Allah knows best – that the reason why these verses come in the context of the story of Uḥud is that Allah (ﷻ) had previously promised His believing slaves that, if they remained steadfast and feared Him, He would grant them victory over their enemies and He would weaken their enemies' resolve against them, as He said: ﴿But if you remain steadfast and fear Allah, not the least harm will their scheming do to you﴾ (3: 120) and ﴿Indeed, if you remain steadfast and are mindful of Allah, even if the enemy should attack you suddenly, your Lord will [immediately] help you...﴾ (3: 125).

It is as if the listener would be keen to know what these qualities are that bring fear of Allah, by means of which victory, success and happiness may be attained. Hence in these verses Allah mentions the most important characteristics of fear of Him which, if a person attains them, he will be more likely to attain others.

This is proven by the fact that Allah mentions the word *taqwā* (meaning piety or fear of Him) three times in this passage, once in absolute terms (without mentioning Who or what is to be feared or to Whom piety is to be directed): ﴿which is prepared for the pious﴾ (3: 133); and twice in conjunction with mention of Who is to be feared or what is to be guarded against: ﴿Fear Allah﴾ (3: 130) and ﴿Guard yourselves against the fire﴾ (3: 131).

﴿O you who believe﴾ every time this phrase appears in the Qur'an, saying ﴿O you who believe﴾, do such and such or do not do such and such, it indicates that faith is the reason that makes one abide by these commands and avoid what is prohibited, because faith means believing in everything that one is required to believe in, which has an impact on one's deeds. Here Allah forbids them to devour usury, doubled and multiplied. This is what the people of the *jāhiliyah*, and those who did not care about the commands of Sharia, were used to,

namely that when debt became due from one who was in financial difficulty, they would say to him: Either pay what you owe us, or we will extend the deadline and increase what you owe. The poor man would be forced to accept this condition in order to get the lender off his back, trying to find temporary relief from this trouble, but it increased what he owed, doubled and multiplied, without any benefit to him.

The words ﴿doubled and multiplied﴾ highlight the harshness and abhorrent nature of this condition, and point to the wisdom behind the prohibition thereof. Allah forbade usury because of the injustice it involves; Allah instructs the lender to give respite to the one who is in difficulty and leave the amount owed as it is, without increasing it. Forcing the borrower to pay more than he owes is multiple wrongdoing, which the pious believer must refrain from and not go near it, because forsaking it is one of the requirements of piety or fear of Allah.

Success depends on piety or fear of Allah, therefore He said: ﴿Fear Allah, that you may prosper. Guard yourselves against the fire, which is prepared for the disbelievers﴾ by giving up that which leads to entering it, namely disbelief and sins of varying degrees. All sins – especially major sins – lead to disbelief; in fact they are among the characteristics of disbelief. Allah has prepared the fire for those who do these things, therefore giving up sin will save one from the fire and protect one from the wrath of Allah. Doing good deeds and acts of obedience lead to attaining the pleasure of the Most Merciful, entering paradise and attaining mercy. Therefore Allah says:

﴿And obey Allah and the Messenger﴾ by doing what He commands and avoiding what He forbids ﴿that you may attain mercy﴾; obeying Allah and obeying His Messenger (ﷺ) are means of attaining mercy, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...My mercy encompasses all things; I shall ordain it for those who fear Me, and give zakâh...﴾ (al-A'raf 7: 156)

Then Allah commanded them to hasten towards His forgiveness and His paradise, as vast as the heavens and the earth, which Allah has prepared for the pious who fear Him, for they are its people and acts of piety are what bring one to it.

Then He describes the pious and their deeds:

﴿Those who spend in times of both ease and hardship﴾ that is, at times of difficulty or ease. When things are easy, they spend a great deal and when things are hard they do not think of any deed of kindness as being too little.

﴿who control their anger﴾ that is, if someone else harms them in a way that makes them angry – which refers to the heart being filled with rage and the desire to take revenge in word and deed – they do not act in accordance with human nature; rather they suppress the anger in their hearts and show patience in refraining from treating the offender in the same manner.

﴿and pardon people﴾ – pardoning people includes pardoning everyone who mistreats you in word or deed. Pardon is superior to suppressing anger because pardon means not holding it against the one who mistreated you and forgiving the offender. This can only come from one who has attained praiseworthy characteristics and has given up bad characteristics, and who is thinking of the reward of Allah, so he forgives the slaves of Allah out of compassion and kindness towards them, because he does not want to hurt them, and so that Allah will forgive him and his reward will be with his generous Lord, not with His helpless slave, as Allah says:

﴿...but whoever forgives and reconciles, his reward is with Allah...﴾ (ash-Shoorâ 42: 40)

Then Allah tells us about a quality that is more comprehensive, better and more sublime, which is doing good (*ihsân*):

﴿for Allah loves those who do good﴾. Doing good refers to two things: doing well in worshipping the Creator and doing good to other people. The Prophet (ﷺ) described doing well in worshipping the Creator as: «...worshipping Allah as if you can see Him, for if you do not see Him, He sees you.» (Muslim)

Doing good to other people means trying to help or benefit them in both spiritual and worldly terms, and warding off harm from them in both spiritual and worldly terms. That includes enjoining them to do good and forbidding them to do bad, teaching those who are ignorant, admonishing those who are heedless, offering sincere advice to the common folk and prominent figures, striving to bring them together, giving them charity, and spending on them in ways that are obligatory or encouraged, according to their situation and needs.

That includes being generous and helpful, refraining from annoying them, and putting up with their annoyance, as Allah described the pious in these verses. Whoever does these things has done his duty towards Allah and towards His slaves.

Then Allah tells us how they apologise to their Lord for their sins: ﴿And those who, if they do something shameful or wrong themselves﴾ that is, if they do bad deeds, whether they are major sins or of a lesser degree, they hasten to repent and seek forgiveness, and they remember their Lord and His warning to those who are disobedient and His promise to those who fear Him. So they ask for forgiveness for their sins and concealment for their faults; at the same time, they give up their sins and regret them. Hence Allah says: ﴿and [they] do not knowingly persist in what they have done﴾.

﴿For such﴾ that is, for those who are described in these terms ﴿their reward is forgiveness from their Lord﴾ that removes the burden of sin that forms an impediment to reaching paradise ﴿and gardens through which rivers flow﴾ in which there is eternal blessing, delight, happiness, well-being, goodness, happiness, palaces,

lofty and elegant dwellings, beautiful and fruitful trees, and rivers flowing through that splendid abode.

﴿to abide therein forever﴾ – they will never leave it; they will never want anything else and its delights will never change.

﴿how excellent a reward for those who work [and strive]﴾. They strove a little for the sake of Allah and were rewarded with much. Those who push themselves to travel by night will, in the morning, be glad that they made that effort, and at the time of reward, the one who strove hard will find his reward paid in full.

These verses are among the texts quoted by *ahl as-Sunnah wal-jamâ'ah* as evidence that deeds are part of faith, which is unlike the view of the Murjites.

To prove this, we quote the following verse from Soorat al-Ĥadeed, which is akin to this passage in Âl 'Imrân:

﴿Race towards forgiveness from your Lord and paradise which is as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers...﴾ (*al-Ĥadeed* 57: 21)

The verse in Soorat al-Ĥadeed only refers to believing in Allah and His Messengers, and the verse here in Soorat Âl 'Imrân (3: 133) says that paradise is prepared for the pious.

Then Allah describes the pious in terms of financial and physical actions, which indicates that these pious people who are described in these terms are the same – as those who are mentioned in Soorat al-Ĥadeed as believers (in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ).



﴿ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ ﴾

﴿ هَذَا بَيَانٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٣٧)



- 3:137. There were many nations before you; travel through the earth, and see what was the fate of those who disbelieved.
- 3:138. This is a clarification for all humankind, a guidance and admonition to those who fear Allah.

In these verses and those that follow them, discussing the story of Uḥud, Allah (ﷻ) offered consolation to His believing slaves and told them that there had been many nations before them who were tested, and Allah tried the believers among them by causing them to fight the disbelievers, and the struggle continued with no decisive outcome until Allah decreed that the ultimate victory should be for His pious, believing slaves, and in the end the disbelievers were defeated; Allah humiliated them by granting victory to His Messengers and their followers.

«travel through the earth» that is, travel physically and contemplate «and see what was the fate of those who disbelieved» for you will not find that there was any other outcome for them but all kinds of worldly punishments. Their habitations are empty, and the loss of their power and sovereignty, and the disappearance of their extravagance and pride, are clear to everyone. Is this not the greatest proof for the truth of what the Messengers brought?

The divine wisdom behind the trials that Allah sends to His slaves is to distinguish those who are sincere from those who are lying. Hence Allah (ﷻ) says:

«This is a clarification for all humankind» that is, a clear explanation that shows people truth from falsehood, those who are blessed from those who are doomed. This refers to those whom Allah punishes.

«a guidance and admonition to those who fear Allah» because they are the ones who benefit from the revelation, which guides them to the straight path, and admonishes them and deters them from following the path of misguidance. As for other people, it is a clarification for

them by means of which Allah establishes proof against them, that those who died might die after proof had been established against them.

It may be that what is referred to in the words ﴿This is a clarification for all humankind﴾ is the Holy Qur'an and that it is a clarification for people in general, and guidance and admonition for those who fear Allah in particular. Both meanings are correct.



﴿وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾﴾ إِنَّ يَمَسُّكُمْ فَرَحٌ  
فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ فَرَحٌ يُرْسَلُ ﴿١٤٠﴾ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ  
الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ  
الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٤٢﴾ أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ  
الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ  
تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ نٰظِرُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٣٩-١٤٣)

- 3:139. So do not lose heart nor grieve, for you will overcome if you are [truly] believers.
- 3:140. If you have suffered a blow, the [disbelieving] people have suffered a blow like it. Such days [of varying fortunes] We give to people by turns, so that Allah may know those who believe and so that He may choose martyrs from among you. And Allah does not love the wrongdoers.
- 3:141. And so that Allah may purify the believers and destroy the disbelievers.
- 3:142. Did you think that you would enter paradise when Allah has not yet seen who among you will strive hard [in jihad] and has not seen who will remain steadfast?

3:143. You did indeed wish for death before you met it; now you have seen it with your own eyes.

Allah (ﷻ) says, encouraging His believing slaves, strengthening their resolve and raising their spirits:

﴿So do not lose heart nor grieve﴾ that is, do not weaken physically, and do not let your hearts be filled with grief because of the calamity that has befallen you and the trial you have gone through. Grief in the heart and physical weakness will only make the calamity worse for you and give your enemy an advantage over you. Rather you should be of good courage and be steadfast, ward off grief and strengthen your resolve to fight your enemy.

Here Allah tells them that it is not appropriate or befitting for them to lose heart and feel grief when they will overcome by virtue of their faith and hope of the support and reward of Allah. The believer who is certain of what Allah has promised of reward in this world and the hereafter should not feel like that. Hence Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿for you will overcome if you are [truly] believers﴾.

Then He consoles them for what they suffered of defeat and explains the great wisdom that resulted in that:

﴿If you have suffered a blow, the [disbelieving] people have suffered a blow like it﴾ so you and they are equal in terms of blows suffered, but you have hope in Allah that they do not have, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...If you are suffering hardships, they are also suffering hardships; but you hope for something from Allah that they cannot hope for...﴾

(*an-Nisâ' 4: 104*)

One of the lessons that we learn from that is that Allah may give worldly comforts to both believers and disbelievers, those who are righteous and those who are evildoers, and Allah alternates the fortunes of people, one day for this group and one day for the other

group, because this world will come to an end, unlike the hereafter, which is only for those who believe.

﴿so that Allah may know those who believe﴾ this is another lesson: Allah tests His slaves with defeat and trials in order to distinguish the believer from the hypocrite, because if the believers were always victorious in all battles, people would enter Islam without really wanting it. But if various kinds of trials occur in some battles, those believers who truly want Islam in good times and bad, in ease and in hardship, will become distinct from those who are not like that.

﴿and so that He may choose martyrs from among you﴾. This is another lesson, because martyrdom is one of the highest statuses before Allah, and there is no way of attaining it without the means that lead to it. By His mercy towards His believing slaves, He has made available means of attaining it even though it is hard for them, so that they may attain what they want of high status and eternal blessing.

﴿And Allah does not love the wrongdoers﴾ who wrong themselves and refrain from fighting in His cause. It is as if this is an implicit criticism of the hypocrites, stating that they are hated by Allah, and that is why He held them back from joining the fight in His cause.

﴿If they had truly wanted to go forth, they would surely have made preparations to do so, but Allah disliked their going forth, so He made them lag behind, and it was said to them: Stay behind with those who are staying behind.﴾ (at-Tawbah 9: 46)

﴿And so that Allah may purify the believers﴾. This is another lesson, that Allah purifies the believers thereby from their sins. This indicates that martyrdom and fighting in Allah's cause expiate sins, and Allah also makes the believers distinct from the hypocrites, so that they may rid themselves of them and know the believer from the hypocrite.

Another lesson we learn is that Allah decrees that in order to destroy the disbelievers; in other words, it is a means of eradicating

them through (divine) punishment, because if they prevail they will go to extremes and increase in wrongdoing, which will make them deserving of an expedited punishment. This is out of mercy towards His believing slaves.

Then Allah says: ﴿Did you think that you would enter paradise when Allah has not yet seen who among you will strive hard [in jihad] and has not seen who will remain steadfast?﴾. This appears in the form of a question but serves as a statement that it is not as you think. In other words, do not think, and do not let it cross your mind, that you will enter paradise without facing hardship and putting up with difficulties in the cause of Allah and seeking His pleasure. For paradise is the highest of aspirations and the best thing for which people compete. The greater the goal, the greater the means of attaining it and the deeds by which one reaches it. The life of ease and comfort (in the hereafter) cannot be attained except by giving up a life of ease and comfort (in this world).

But if a person prepares himself and trains himself to face the hardships of this world that one may go through for the sake of Allah, bearing the end result in mind, these trials – for those who have insight – will turn into gifts at which he feels joy and does not worry. This is the grace of Allah that He bestows upon whomever He wills.

Then Allah (ﷻ) rebukes them for not being steadfast with regard to what they wished for and hoped would take place:

﴿You did indeed wish for death before you met it﴾. That was because many of the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) had missed the Battle of Badr, and they wished that Allah would cause them to witness a battle so that they could do their utmost. Allah said to them: ﴿now you have seen it with your own eyes﴾ so why did you not remain steadfast? This is not appropriate and it is not good, especially for one who wished for that and got what he wished for. What he should have done is strive his utmost.

This verse indicates that there is nothing wrong with wishing for martyrdom, because Allah (ﷻ) approved of their wishes and did not criticise them for that; rather He criticised them for not acting upon their wishes. And Allah knows best.



﴿وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَصُرَ اللَّهُ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٤﴾ وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِنْتُمْ مُوَجَّلًا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَسَيَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾﴾

(سورة آل عمران: ١٤٤-١٤٥)

- 3:144. Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and [other] Messengers passed away before him. If he dies or is slain, will you then turn on your heels? Those who turn on their heels do not harm Allah in the slightest, but Allah will reward those who are grateful.
- 3:145. No soul can die except by Allah's leave, and at an appointed time. Whoever desires the reward of this world, We will give him thereof, and whoever desires the reward of the hereafter, We will give him thereof. And We will reward those who are grateful.

﴿Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and [other] Messengers passed away before him﴾ that is, he is not the first of the Messengers; rather he is like the Messengers who came before him, whose job was to convey the messages of their Lord and carry out His commands. They are not immortal and their remaining alive is not a condition of obeying the commands of Allah; rather what people are required to do is worship their Lord at all times and in all circumstances. Hence

He said: «If he dies or is slain, will you then turn on your heels?» by abandoning what he brought of faith or jihad and the like.

«Those who turn on their heels do not harm Allah in the slightest»; rather they only harm themselves and Allah has no need of them. He will cause His religion to prevail and will grant victory to His believing slaves. When Allah (ﷻ) rebuked those who turned on their heels, He praised those who remained steadfast with His Messenger (ﷺ) and obeyed the command of their Lord: «but Allah will reward those who are grateful». Gratitude can only be by being a true slave of Allah in all circumstances.

In this verse Allah (ﷻ) gives instructions to His slaves that they should be in such a state that their faith cannot be shaken and they should not lose their resolve to adhere to some of its requirements because of the loss of a leader, even if he was great. That state can only be attained by making preparations in all matters of their religion, by having many qualified people who could step in so that if one is lost, another can take his place. The aim of ordinary people should be to establish the religion of Allah and strive in His cause as much as possible, and they should not be too attached to one leader rather than another. Thus their affairs will be in order and they will be in good shape.

This verse also offers the greatest proofs of the virtue of the greatest *siddeeq*, Abu Bakr, and his companions who fought the apostates after the death of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), because they were foremost among those who are grateful.

Then Allah (ﷻ) tells us that all souls have an appointed time of death, by Allah's leave and in accordance with His will and decree. If it is decreed for a person to die, he will die even if that is with no apparent cause, and if He wills that a person will live, even if he is exposed to all causes of death, nothing will harm him before he reaches his appointed time (of death). That is because Allah has willed and decreed that he should live until the appointed time:

﴿..when their appointed time comes, they will not be able to delay it for a single moment or bring it forward.﴾ (al-A'raf 7: 34)

Then Allah tells us that He will give reward to people in this world and in the hereafter, according to what they hope for:

﴿Whoever desires the reward of this world, We will give him thereof, and whoever desires the reward of the hereafter, We will give him thereof﴾.

And Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿On all – both the latter and the former – We bestow of the bounty of your Lord. Verily, the bounty of your Lord is not denied [to anyone]. See how We have bestowed more on some than on others [in this world], but verily the hereafter will have higher ranks and greater degrees of excellence for some over others﴾ (al-Isrâ' 17: 20-21)

﴿And We will reward those who are grateful﴾. Allah does not mention what their reward is, to indicate how great and abundant it will be, and so that it will be known that the reward will be commensurate with the level of gratitude.

❁ ❁

﴿وَكَايْنٍ مِّن نَّجِيٍّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رِثِيُونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِلَّا أَن قَالُوا رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾ فَكَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْآخِرَةِ وَحَسَنُ ثَوَابٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٤٨﴾﴾ (سورة

آل عمران: ١٤٦-١٤٨)

3:146. How many of the Prophets fought [in Allah's cause], and multitudes of devout men fought alongside them, but they never lost heart because of the suffering they endured in Allah's cause, nor did they weaken [in resolve] nor yield. And Allah loves those who are steadfast.



- 3:147. All they said was: Our Lord, forgive us our sins and our excesses in our conduct, make firm our foothold and grant us victory against the disbelievers.
- 3:148. So Allah gave them reward in this world and the excellent reward of the hereafter. For Allah loves those who do good.

This passage offers consolation to the believers and encourages others to follow their example and do as they did. This is something that has happened before, and it is the way of Allah that could happen again.

﴿How many of the Prophets fought [in Allah's cause], and multitudes of devout men fought alongside them﴾ that is, large numbers of their followers, in whose hearts the Prophets had instilled faith that led them to do righteous deeds, and they suffered death, injuries and so on.

﴿but they never lost heart because of the suffering they endured in Allah's cause, nor did they weaken [in resolve] nor yield﴾ that is, their courage never weakened and they did not tire physically or yield, that is, they did not give in to their enemies. Rather they remained patient and steadfast, pulling themselves together and carrying on. Hence Allah says: ﴿And Allah loves those who are steadfast﴾.

Then He mentions what they said, seeking victory from their Lord: ﴿All they said﴾ in those difficult circumstances ﴿was: Our Lord, forgive us our sins and our excesses in our conduct﴾. Excess means overstepping the mark and doing what is forbidden. They realised that sins and excesses are among the main causes of troubles, and that ridding themselves of these sins was one of the main means of attaining victory, so they asked their Lord to forgive them.

Moreover, they did not rely on their efforts to keep them steadfast; rather they relied on Allah and asked Him to make their foothold firm when meeting the disbelieving enemies in battle, and to grant them

victory. Thus they combined patience and steadfastness, and avoided the opposite thereof, in addition to repenting, seeking forgiveness and asking their Lord to grant them victory. So it is no wonder that Allah granted them victory and caused them ultimately to prevail, in this world and in the hereafter. Hence He said:

﴿So Allah gave them reward in this world﴾ in the form of victory and booty

﴿and the excellent reward of the hereafter﴾, which is attaining the pleasure of their Lord and eternal bliss that is free of anything that might spoil it. That is only because they strove their utmost for His sake, so He granted them the best reward. Hence Allah says:

﴿For Allah loves those who do good﴾ and do their best in worshipping their Creator and interacting with people. Part of doing good is to act like those who are described here when striving in jihad against the enemy.



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَطِيعُوا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَلَىٰ  
 أَعْقَابِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾ بَلِ اللَّهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ النَّاصِرِينَ  
 ﴿١٥٠﴾ سَنُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ بِمَا أَشْرَكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ  
 بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَمَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ وَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾﴾ (سورة آل

عمران: ١٤٩-١٥١)

- 3:149. O you who believe! If you obey those who disbelieve, they will make you turn on your heels, and thus you will turn back as losers.
- 3:150. Nay, Allah is your Protector, and He is the best of helpers.
- 3:151. Soon will We cast dread into the hearts of the disbelievers, because they ascribed partners to Allah, for which He had

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not sent down any authority; their abode will be the fire, and wretched is the abode of the wrongdoers!

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Here Allah forbids the believers to obey the disbelievers, whether they be hypocrites or polytheists, for if they do so, they intend only to do them harm; their goal is to bring them back to disbelief, which leads only to doom and loss.

Then Allah states that He is their protector and helper; this is glad tidings that He will take care of them by His kindness and protect them from all kinds of evil.

This provides encouragement for them to take Him alone as protector and helper, to the exclusion of all others. One aspect of His protection and help is that He promised them that He would cast dread into the hearts of their enemies among the disbelievers; this refers to great fear that would prevent them from achieving many of their goals. And He did indeed do that: when the polytheists departed after the battle of Uḥud, they discussed amongst themselves, saying: How could we have left after killing whom we killed and defeating them without eradicating them? They thought of going back, but Allah instilled dread in their hearts, so they left disappointed.

Undoubtedly this was the greatest help, because, as mentioned above, Allah helps His believing slaves in one of two ways: either He cuts down a section of the disbelievers or He disgraces them, so that they retreat in utter disappointment. In this case, the latter is applicable.

Then Allah mentions the reason why dread was cast into the hearts of the disbelievers:

﴿because they ascribed partners to Allah, for which He had not sent down any authority﴾ that is, it was because of the rivals and idols they took as gods instead of Him, which they did on the basis of their evil ulterior motives, with no proof or evidence, and they no longer sought protection from the One, the Most Merciful.

Hence the polytheists were in dread of the believers, and they had no strong support, and no one to turn to at times of hardship and distress. This was the situation in this world, and the hereafter is worse. Hence Allah said: ﴿and wretched is the abode of the wrongdoers﴾; because of their wrongdoing and transgression, the fire will become their final abode.



﴿وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُم بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَزَّعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِمَّا أُرِيكُمْ مَا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ مِنْكُمْ مَن يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَن يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ۚ ثُمَّ صَرَقَكُمُ عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ ۗ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥٢﴾﴾

(سورة آل عمران: ١٥٢)

3:152. Allah did indeed fulfil His promise to you when you, with His permission, were killing them, until you faltered and quarrelled among yourselves about the [Prophet's] orders, and disobeyed after He had shown you what you desired [of booty]. Among you are some that seek worldly gains and some that seek rewards in the hereafter. Then He made you flee from them in order to test you but He forgave you, for Allah is most gracious to the believers.

﴿Allah did indeed fulfil His promise to you﴾ of help; He helped you against them until they began to flee, and you started killing them, then you caused trouble for yourselves and helped your enemy against you, when you faltered  
 ﴿and quarrelled among yourselves about the [Prophet's] orders﴾ and thus ignored Allah's command to be united and not disagree. But you disagreed. Some said: We should remain in our positions where

the Prophet (ﷺ) stationed us; but others said: Why should we stay when the enemy has started to flee and there is no longer any danger? Thus you disobeyed the Messenger (ﷺ) and ignored his instructions after Allah had shown you that which you love, namely the putting to flight of your enemies. What is required of the one whom Allah blesses with that which he loves is greater than that which is required of others, and in this particular case what was required was something specific; however, in general terms what is required is obedience to the commands of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).

﴿Among you are some that seek worldly gains﴾; they are the ones who caused all these troubles

﴿and some that seek rewards in the hereafter﴾; they are the ones who adhered to the instructions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and remained where they had been ordered to stay.

﴿Then He made you flee from them﴾ that is, after you did these things, Allah caused you to flee from them. The course of events turned in the enemy's favour, as a test and trial from Allah to you, in order to distinguish between the believer and the disbeliever, the obedient and the disobedient, and so that by means of this calamity Allah might expiate for you that which you had brought about. Hence Allah said: ﴿but He forgave you, for Allah is most gracious to the believers﴾ that is, He is most gracious to them, as He blessed them with Islam, guided them to His religion, forgave them their bad deeds and made them steadfast at the time of calamity.

By His grace towards the believers, He does not decree for them any good or any calamity but it is ultimately good for them. If something good happens to them, they give thanks and He grants them the reward of those who are grateful; if something bad happens to them, they bear it with patience and He grants them the reward of those who are patient.



﴿ إِذْ تَصْعَدُونَ وَلَا تَكُونُ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي آخِرِنَاكُمْ فَأَتَيْنَاكُمُ غَمًّا يَمِيرُ لِكَيْلًا تَحْزَنُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا مَا أَصَابَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾ ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُم مِّن بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ أَمْنَةً نَّعَاسًا يَغْشَىٰ طَآئِفَةً مِّنْكُمْ وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَقُولُونَ هَل لَّنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِن شَيْءٍ قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُ لِلَّهِ يُخْفُونَ فِي أَنفُسِهِم مَّا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَّا قَاتَلْنَا هَهُنَا قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحَّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٥٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٥٣-١٥٤)

- 3:153. [Remember] when you were fleeing, paying no heed to anyone, and the Messenger at your rear was calling you back. So Allah gave you distress upon distress by way of requital, so that you should not grieve for what you missed or for what befell you. For Allah is well aware of what you do.
- 3:154. After that distress, He sent down calm on a group of you who were overcome with slumber, while another group cared only about themselves, harbouring thoughts about Allah that were untrue – thoughts of ignorance. They said: Do we have any say in the matter? Say: All matters belong to Allah. They conceal in their hearts what they do not disclose to you. They say: If we had had any say in the matter, we would not have been killed here. Say: Even if you had remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death; but [all this happened] so that Allah might test and purify what is in your hearts. For Allah knows well what is in [your] hearts.

Here Allah (ﷻ) reminds them of the state they were in at the time when they fled from the battle, and He rebukes them for that:

«[Remember] when you were fleeing, paying no heed to anyone» that is, no one among you cared about anyone else or looked at him; rather your only concern was to flee and save yourselves from the battle.

But in fact there was no great danger, because you were not the closest of the people to the enemy or in the battlefield. Rather «the Messenger at your rear was calling you back». He was the closest to the enemy, and he was saying:

«Come to me, O slaves of Allah!» (A very odd hadith recorded by Ibn Katheer and Ibn Hajar)

But you did not pay attention to him or respond to his call. Fleeing in and of itself is blameworthy, but failing to respond to the call of the Messenger (ﷺ), to whom you should give precedence over yourselves, is even worse.

«So Allah gave you distress upon distress» that is, the distress of missing out on victory and booty, the distress of fleeing, and that distress which made you forget all others, which was hearing that Muhammad (ﷺ) had been killed.

«by way of requital» that is, requital for your deeds.

But Allah, by His grace and kindness towards His slaves, caused all of these things to be good for His believing slaves, as He said: «so that you should not grieve for what you missed» of victory and booty «or for what befell you» of defeat, killing and wounding. When you realised that the Messenger (ﷺ) had not been killed, all of these calamities became insignificant in your eyes, and you rejoiced in his survival, which was a consolation for all calamities and trials. How great are the hidden benefits and wisdom in calamities and trials.

All of that is based on His knowledge and complete awareness of your actions, both visible and hidden. Hence He said: «For Allah is well aware of what you do».

It may be that what is meant by the words: ﴿so that you should not grieve for what you missed or for what befell you﴾ is: He decreed that this distress and calamity should befall you, so that you would get used to it and become accustomed to being patient and steadfast at the time of calamities, and it would become easier for you to bear hardship.

﴿After that distress﴾ that befell you  
 ﴿He sent down calm on a group of you who were overcome with slumber﴾.

Undoubtedly this was mercy and kindness towards them, that brought reassurance to their hearts and made them feel at peace, because one who is in a state of fear cannot be overtaken by slumber, because of the fear in his heart. But when the fear is removed from his heart, then it becomes possible for him to slumber.

This group whom Allah blessed with slumber were the believers who had no concern other than establishing the religion of Allah, attaining the pleasure of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), and acting in the interests of their Muslim brothers.

As for the other group, who ﴿cared only about themselves﴾, they had no other concern, because of their hypocrisy or the weakness of their faith. Hence slumber did not overtake them as it did others. ﴿They said: Do we have any say in the matter?﴾ This is a question that expresses disapproval; in other words they were expressing despair, thinking that victory would never be attained at all. They thought negatively of their Lord and His religion and Prophet (ﷺ); they thought that Allah could not cause His religion and His Messenger (ﷺ) to prevail, and that this defeat was the final blow to the religion of Allah.

Allah said in response to them:

﴿Say: All matters belong to Allah﴾; this includes what He decrees and what He prescribes; all things are subject to the will and decree



of Allah, and ultimate victory will be for His close friends and those who obey Him, no matter what setbacks they may face.

﴿They﴾ that is, the hypocrites ﴿conceal in their hearts what they do not disclose to you﴾. Then Allah describes what it is that they are concealing:

﴿They say: If we had had any say in the matter﴾ that is, if our opinion concerning this battle had been listened to, ﴿we would not have been killed here﴾.

This is criticism on their part, and disbelief in the will and decree of Allah; it also shows that they regarded the opinion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and that of his Companions, as foolish, and that they thought highly of themselves. But Allah responded to them by saying: ﴿Say: Even if you had remained in your homes﴾, which were far away from the places of killing, ﴿those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death﴾. Measures taken to protect oneself – no matter how great they may be – are only of benefit if they are not opposed by the divine will and decree. If they are opposed by the divine decree, they will be of no benefit at all; rather the decree of Allah concerning life and death, which is written in *al-Lawh al-Mahfūdh*, will inevitably come to pass.

﴿but [all this happened] so that Allah might test and purify what is in your hearts﴾ that is, so that He might test what is in them of hypocrisy, faith or weakness of faith, and purify them of the whispers of the Shayṭān and the bad characteristics that stem therefrom.

﴿For Allah knows well what is in [your] hearts﴾ and what you conceal. His knowledge and wisdom dictate that He should decree events by means of which what is hidden in people's hearts will become apparent.



﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٥٥)

3:155. As for those of you who fled on the day the two armies met, it was only because the Shayṭān made them slip, on account of some of their deeds. But Allah has pardoned them, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about those who fled on the day of Uḥud and what caused them to flee; it was because of the whisper of the Shayṭān, who gained control over them because of some of their sins. Hence they are the ones who let him have control and power over them, because of the sins they committed; sins are his vehicle and the passage by which he enters. If they had remained obedient to their Lord, he would not have had any power over them. Allah says elsewhere:

﴿Verily, you will have no power over My slaves...﴾ (al-Isrā' 17: 65)

Then Allah tells us that He has pardoned them, after they had committed actions for which they could be held accountable, otherwise if He had brought them to account, He could have eradicated them. ﴿for Allah is Oft-Forgiving﴾ to the sinners, by means of guiding them to repent and seek forgiveness, and by means of calamities that expiate sin.

﴿Most Forbearing﴾; He does not hasten their punishment for one who disobeys Him; rather He gives him respite and calls him to repent and turn to Him. Then if he repents and turns to Him, He accepts it from him and makes him like one who did not commit any sin. To Him be praise for His kindness.



﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَقَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ إِذَا ضَرَبُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ  
أَوْ كَانُوا غُرَىٰ لَوْ كَانُوا عِنْدَنَا مَا مَاتُوا وَمَا قُتِلُوا لِيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ  
وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَارُ ۗ وَيُؤْتِي مَا يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١٦١﴾ وَلَٰكِنْ قُتِلْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ مُتُّم

لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ وَلَئِن مُّتُّم أَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿١٥٨﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٥٦-١٥٨)

- 3:156. O you who believe, do not be like the disbelievers, who say of their brethren, when they are travelling through the earth or go forth on a military campaign: If they had stayed with us, they would not have died, or been slain, for Allah will make such thoughts a source of anguish in their hearts. It is Allah Who gives life and death, and Allah sees well all that you do.
- 3:157. And if you are slain in the cause of Allah, or die, forgiveness and mercy from Allah are far better than all they could accumulate.
- 3:158. And if you die, or are slain, it is unto Allah that you will be gathered.

Here Allah forbids His believing slaves to be like the disbelievers who do not believe in their Lord or in His will and decree, whether they are the hypocrites or others.

He forbids them to be like them in any respect, especially in this particular matter, which is that they say to their brothers in faith or in blood, «when they are travelling through the earth» that is, travelling for the purpose of trade «or go forth on a military campaign», and it so happens that some of them are killed or die, they say something contrary to the concept of the divine decree: «If they had stayed with us, they would not have died, or been slain». This is a lie on their part, because Allah (ﷻ) says: «Say: Even if you had remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death» (3: 154).

But this lie is not going to benefit them; rather Allah will cause this statement and this belief to be a source of anguish in their hearts, which will lead to the calamities having a greater impact on them. As for those who believe in Allah, they realise that this is the will of

Allah, so they believe and submit to His will, and Allah guides their hearts and makes them steadfast, which reduces the impact of the calamity for them.

Allah says, refuting them: ﴿It is Allah Who gives life and death﴾ that is, He is the only One Who does that, and no precaution can ward off the divine decree.

﴿and Allah sees well all that you do﴾, and He will requite you for your deeds and your disbelief (in the divine decree).

Then Allah (ﷻ) tells us that there is nothing wrong with, and there should be no reservations about, being killed or dying in His cause; rather it is something for which people should compete, because it is a means that leads to forgiveness and mercy from Allah, which is better than what people accumulate of worldly gains. If people die or are killed, no matter how it happens, their return is to Allah and He will requite each person for his deeds.

So where can people flee except to Allah, and what do people have to hold on to except the rope of Allah?



﴿فِيمَا رَحِمَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٥٩)

- 3:159. It is by the mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them. If you had been harsh or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So pardon them, and ask for [Allah's] forgiveness for them; and consult them in matters of importance. Then, when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, for Allah loves those who put their trust [in Him].

That is, by Allah's mercy to you and your Companions, He has blessed you in that you have been gentle with them and humble and kind towards them, and you showed a good attitude towards them, so they rallied around you and loved you, and they followed your commands.

«If you had been harsh» that is, if you had shown a bad attitude «or hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you» because this would have put them off and would have made them dislike the one who had a bad attitude.

A good attitude in a religious leader attracts people to the religion of Allah, in addition to what this leader himself will attain of praise and reward from Allah. In contrast, a bad attitude in a religious leader will put people off their religion and make them hate it, in addition to what the leader will incur of blame and punishment from Allah. If Allah says this about this infallible Messenger (ﷺ), then how about anyone else?

Is it not of the utmost necessity and importance to follow the example of his noble attitude and to treat people as he treated them, with gentleness, a good attitude and a soft approach, following the commands of Allah and attracting the slaves of Allah to the religion of Allah?

Then Allah (ﷻ) instructs him to pardon them for what they did and their shortcomings with regard to him, and to ask for forgiveness for them for their shortcomings with regard to the rights of Allah, thus combining pardon with kind treatment.

«and consult them in matters of importance» that is, in matters that require consultation and thinking. The benefits of consultation in both religious and worldly matters are unlimited and include the following:

- Consultation is an act of worship that brings one closer to Allah.

- It is an act of gentleness that makes people feel part of the decision-making process and removes any (negative) thought that could cross their minds when serious decisions need to be made. If one who has a position of authority gathers together people of prominence and wisdom, and consults them concerning some event or incident, that will make them feel at ease and make them love him, and they will realise that he is not some sort of tyrant; rather his main focus is on the general interests of all. Thus they will spare no effort and will do their utmost in obeying him, because they will realise that he is striving to serve the interests of all. This is in contrast to those who are not like that, because it is unlikely that they will be sincere in loving or obey him willingly; if they do obey him, it will be insincere and incomplete.
- Consultation sheds light on new ideas, because it brings many minds together to make the right decision.
- Consultation usually leads to the right decision; the leader who consults others in decision-making will hardly ever reach the wrong conclusion. Even if a wrong decision is made or the goal is not met, he will not be to blame (because it will have been a collective decision). If Allah says to His Messenger (ﷺ) – who is the most perfect of people in reasoning, has the most abundant knowledge and is the smartest – ﴿and consult them in matters of importance﴾, then how about others?

Then Allah says: ﴿Then, when you have taken a decision﴾ that is, when you have decided upon something after consulting others, if consultation is needed,

﴿put your trust in Allah﴾ that is, rely on the power and strength of Allah, not on your own strength and power

﴿for Allah loves those who put their trust [in Him]﴾ and turn to Him.



﴿إِن يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِن يَخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَن ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرْكُم مِّن بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٦٠)

3:160. If Allah helps you, none can overcome you; if He forsakes you, who is there, after that, who can help you? In Allah, then, let the believers put their trust.

That is, if Allah sends to you His support and help, ﴿none can overcome you﴾, even if they gather against you all the people of earth, with all their numbers and weapons, because no one can overcome Allah; He has subjugated all people and has taken hold of their forelocks, so no living being moves or stands still except by His leave.

﴿if He forsakes you﴾ and leaves you to your own devices ﴿who is there, after that, who can help you?﴾ You will inevitably be defeated, even if all people help you. In this there is an implicit command to seek the help of Allah and rely on Him, and to admit that you have no strength and power of your own. Hence Allah says: ﴿In Allah, then, let the believers put their trust﴾. The fact that Allah is mentioned at the beginning of this phrase indicates that they should put their trust in Him alone and in no one else, because it is known that He is the only supporter, so relying on Him is indicative of belief in His oneness which will help you reach your goal, whereas putting your trust in anything else is a kind of associating others with Him which is of no benefit at all, rather it is harmful.

In this verse is a command to put one's trust in Allah alone, and the level of trust will be commensurate with the level of the individual's faith.



﴿ وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغْتَلَّ وَ مِنْ يَغْتَلِّ يَأْتِ بِمَا عَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٦١)

- 3:161. It is inconceivable that a Prophet would ever misappropriate anything from the war booty. Anyone who does so will carry it with him on the Day of Resurrection. Then every soul will be paid in full what it has earned and no one will be wronged.

The word translated here as misappropriation, or taking things by stealth, from the war booty may also refer to dishonesty in any position of authority. It is haram according to scholarly consensus; in fact it is a major sin, as indicated by this verse and other texts. Allah (ﷻ) tells us that it is not appropriate or befitting for a Prophet to misappropriate anything, because misappropriation – as is well known – is one of the gravest of sins and the most shameful behaviour. Allah (ﷻ) protected His Prophets from committing any action that might cause shame or undermine their status, and He made them the best of people in manners and attitude, the purest in soul and the best; He made them free of any shameful deeds and made them fit to receive His message and learn His wisdom.

﴿...Allah knows best where to place His message...﴾ (al-An'âm 6: 124)

As soon as a person learns of any of them, he will be certain that they are free of anything that could be a source of shame or criticism, and he will not need to examine what was said about them by their enemies, because knowing that they are Prophets requires one to reject anything bad that is attributed to them. Hence the wording of the verse indicates that it is impossible that they could do such a thing:



«It is inconceivable that a Prophet would ever misappropriate anything from the war booty» that is, it is not possible; that is impossible for one whom Allah has chosen to be His Prophet (ﷺ).

This is followed by the warning to anyone who misappropriates anything from the war booty:

«Anyone who does so will carry it with him on the Day of Resurrection» that is, he will come carrying it on his back, whether it was an animal or goods or anything else, so that it will be a cause of punishment to him on the Day of Resurrection.

«Then every soul will be paid in full what it has earned», whether it was misappropriation of the war booty or anything else; each person will be given his reward or punishment in full, according to his earnings

«and no one will be wronged» that is, nothing will be added to their bad deeds and nothing will be detracted from their good deeds.

Look at the careful wording in this verse. When Allah speaks of the punishment for misappropriation of war booty, and says that the person will come on the Day of Resurrection carrying what he stole, mentioning requital in full for the misappropriation of war booty on its own may give the wrong impression that those who commit other sins may not be requited in full; therefore, He mentioned requital in full in general terms, as being applicable both to the one who misappropriates war booty and others (who commit other sins).



﴿ أَفَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانُ اللَّهِ كَمَن بَاءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَيَتْسَلَّى الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٦٢﴾ هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٦٢-١٦٣)

- 3:162. Is the one who seeks the good pleasure of Allah like the one who incurs the wrath of Allah, and whose abode is hell, a hapless journey's end?
- 3:163. They vary greatly in rank in the sight of Allah, and Allah sees well all that they do.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that the one whose aim is to please his Lord and who strives hard to do so and the one who does not do that and who persists in sin and incurs the wrath of his Lord are not equal. They are not equal according to His judgement and wisdom, and according to people's common sense.

﴿Is one who is a believer like one who is an evildoer? They are not equal.﴾ (as-Sajdah 32: 18)

Hence Allah says here: ﴿They vary greatly in rank in the sight of Allah﴾ that is, all of them vary in rank and status, according to the differences in their deeds.

Those who seek the pleasure of Allah and strive to attain high status and lofty positions, Allah will grant them reward by His grace and generosity, commensurate with their deeds. But those who seek that which displeases Allah and strive to go down to the lowest level will be requited according to their deeds. Allah (ﷻ) sees all that they do and nothing is hidden from Him; rather He knows it and it is recorded in al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfoodh. He has appointed His noble, trustworthy angels to record it and preserve it accurately.



﴿لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ  
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ

مُبِينٍ ﴿١٦٤﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٦٤)

3:164. Allah conferred grace upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His revelations, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although before that they had been in manifest error.

This grace that Allah has bestowed upon His slaves is the greatest blessing; indeed it is the basis of all blessings. This refers to His blessing them with this noble Messenger (ﷺ) through whom Allah saved them from misguidance and protected them from doom, as He says:

«Allah conferred grace upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves», whose lineage, character and language they knew; he was one of their own people and tribe, sincere and compassionate towards them, reciting to them the revelations of Allah, teaching them the words and meanings

«purifying them» of polytheism, sin, bad characteristics and all bad manners.

«and teaching them the Book» – either the Qur'an itself is what is meant by «the Book», or what is meant by «the Book» here is literacy, thus He has blessed them by teaching them how to read and write, by means of which one may acquire knowledge.

«and wisdom» that is, the Sunnah, which is the twin of the Qur'an; or it may refer to saying and doing the right thing at the right time, and understanding the subtleties of Sharia. Thus Allah combined for them the learning of the rulings and the means of implementing them with the means of attaining the benefits and fruits of the rulings. Thus they superseded everyone else by virtue of these great blessings, and they were devout and knowledgeable people.

«although before that» that is, before the sending of this Messenger (ﷺ) «they had been in manifest error», not knowing the path that would lead them to their Lord or how to cleanse and purify their souls; rather whatever appeared attractive to them in their ignorance, they did it, even if that contradicted the rational thinking of the world.



﴿أَوْلَمَّا أَصَبْتَكُمْ مُصِيبَةً قَدْ أَصَبْتُمْ مِثْلَهَا قُلْتُمْ أَنْ هَذَا قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٦٥﴾ وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ التَّحِي الْجَمْعَانِ فَيَاذِنْ اللَّهُ وَبِعَلَّمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٦٦﴾ وَبِعَلَّمَ الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا قَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ ادْفَعُوا قَالُوا لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَاتَّبَعْنَاكُمْ هُمْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ يَوْمِئِذٍ اقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿١٦٧﴾ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِأَخْوَاهِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قَاتَلُوا قُلْ فَادْرَأُوا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٦٥-١٦٨)

- 3:165. How is it that, when a calamity befalls you whilst you had inflicted twice as much [on your enemy], you say: Where has this come from? Say [to them]: It has come from your own selves. Verily Allah has power over all things.
- 3:166. What befell you on the day the two armies met happened by Allah's leave, in order that He might test the believers,
- 3:167. and in order to know those who are hypocrites. They were told: Come, fight in the cause of Allah, or at least defend yourselves. They said: If we knew there was going to be fighting, we would certainly follow you. They were that day nearer to disbelief than to faith, saying with their lips that which was not in their hearts, but Allah has full knowledge of all they conceal.
- 3:168. [They are] the ones that said of their [slain] brethren, while they themselves stayed behind: If only they had listened to us they would not have been slain. Say: Avert death from your own selves, if what you say is true.

This is consolation from Allah to His believing slaves, when calamity befell them on the day of Uḥud and approximately seventy of them were killed. Allah said: ﴿you had inflicted twice as much [on

your enemy]» that is, on the day of Badr, when you killed seventy of their prominent figures and captured seventy more. That should make it easier for you and reduce the impact of the calamity, even though you and they are not equal, for your slain are in paradise and their slain are in hell.

«you say: Where has this come from?» That is, where did this calamity and defeat come from?

«Say [to them]: It has come from your own selves» when you disputed and disobeyed after He showed you what you desired (of booty), so you only have yourselves to blame; beware of doing that which may lead to your doom.

«Verily Allah has power over all things», so avoid thinking negatively of Allah, for He is able to grant them victory, but He has perfect wisdom in testing you.

«...Thus [are you commanded]. If Allah had so willed, He could have exacted retribution upon them [without you fighting], but He [commands you to fight] in order to test some of you by means of others...» (*Muhammad 47: 4*)

Then Allah states that what befell them of killing and defeat on the day the two armies, the Muslim army and the polytheist army, met at Uḥud, happened by His leave and in accordance with His will and decree that cannot be avoided and must inevitably come to pass.

When the divine decree comes to pass, there is no option but to submit to it and accept it, for there is great wisdom behind His decree and it brings great benefit, and it is ordained so that the believers might be made distinct from the hypocrites who were commanded to fight and were told: «Come, fight in the cause of Allah» that is, to defend and protect the religion of Allah, seeking His pleasure «or at least defend yourselves» and your families and city, even if you do not have any good intentions.

But they refused to do that, and gave excuses, saying: «If we knew there was going to be fighting, we would certainly follow you» that

is, if we knew that there would be fighting between you and them, we would follow you. But this was a lie; they knew and were certain, as was everyone else, that these polytheists were filled with hatred and rage towards the believers because of what the believers had inflicted on them (at Badr), and that they had spent a great deal of wealth and gathered all they could of men and weapons, and had come with a huge army, intending to attack the believers in their city, and they were very eager to fight them.

When such is the case, how could it be imagined that there would not be any fighting between them and the believers, especially when the Muslims had come out of Madinah to face them? This is impossible, but the hypocrites thought that this excuse would fool the believers.

﴿They were that day﴾ that is, at that time when they failed to come out with the believers

﴿nearer to disbelief than to faith, saying with their lips that which was not in their hearts﴾. This applies in particular to the hypocrites, who say and do what they think is the opposite of what is in their hearts. For example, they said: ﴿If we knew there was going to be fighting, we would certainly follow you﴾. But they did indeed know that there would be fighting.

This verse is quoted as evidence for the principle of “doing the lesser of two evils so as to ward off the greater, and doing that which serves a lesser interest when it is not possible to do that which serves a greater interest.” The hypocrites were commanded to fight for the sake of the religion, but if they could not do that, then they should at least defend their families and city.

﴿but Allah has full knowledge of all they conceal﴾ and He will cause it to be shown to His believing slaves and He will punish them for it.

﴿[They are] the ones that said of their [slain] brethren, while they themselves stayed behind: If only they had listened to us they would

not have been slain» that is, they combine staying behind from jihad with objecting to and disbelieving in the will and decree of Allah. Allah said in response to them: «Say: Avert» that is, ward off «death from your own selves, if what you say is true», that if they had listened to you, they would not have been killed. But you are not able to do that and you cannot do it.

This passage indicates that a person may have some characteristics of disbelief and some of faith, and he may be closer to one than the other.



﴿ وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾  
 فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَهُمْ يَحْتَفُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا  
 خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾ ﴿١٧١﴾ ﴿١٧٢﴾ ﴿١٧٣﴾ ﴿١٧٤﴾ ﴿١٧٥﴾ ﴿١٧٦﴾ ﴿١٧٧﴾ ﴿١٧٨﴾ ﴿١٧٩﴾ ﴿١٨٠﴾  
 اللَّهُ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٦٩-١٧١)

- 3:169. Do not think of those who are slain in Allah's cause as dead. Nay, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision,
- 3:170. rejoicing in what Allah has bestowed upon them out of His bounty, sharing glad tidings that for those who have yet to join them, of those whom they left behind, they will have no fear, nor will they grieve;
- 3:171. Rejoicing in the favours and bounties of Allah, and at the awareness that Allah will not cause the reward of the believers to be lost.

These verses speak of the virtue and honour of the martyrs, and what Allah has blessed them with of His grace and kindness. They also offer consolation to the living for the loss of those who were slain

and motivation to fight for the cause of Allah and offer themselves for martyrdom.

﴿Do not think of those who are slain in Allah's cause﴾ that is, in jihad against the enemies of Islam, seeking thereby to make the word of Allah supreme

﴿as dead﴾ that is, it should not enter your mind that they are dead and lost, and that they are no longer enjoying the pleasures of the life of this world that those who are too cowardly to fight and have no desire for martyrdom may be worried about losing.

﴿Nay﴾ they have attained something greater than that for which people in this world compete, for ﴿they are alive with their Lord﴾ in the realm of honour. The phrase ﴿with their Lord﴾ is indicative of their high status and their closeness to their Lord

﴿receiving provision﴾ of various kinds of delights that cannot be known or described, except by the One Who blessed them with it.

Moreover, they are ﴿rejoicing in what Allah has bestowed upon them out of His bounty﴾ that is, they are very happy with it, delighted with it and rejoicing in it. That is because it is so beautiful, abundant and great, and there is immense joy when attaining it and there is nothing to spoil that joy.

For them, Allah combined the physical joy of the provision and the spiritual joy, with the joy of that which He bestows upon them out of His bounty. Thus their joy and happiness is complete, and they are ﴿sharing glad tidings that for those who have yet to join them, of those whom they left behind﴾ – that is, they give one another the glad tidings that their brothers who have not yet joined them will come and will attain the same as they did.

﴿they will have no fear, nor will they grieve﴾ that is, they rejoice that they will have nothing to worry about for themselves or their brothers, which is a sign of perfect joy



«Rejoicing in the favours and bounties of Allah» that is, congratulating one another for the greatest thing for which congratulations may be given, namely the blessings, grace and kindness of their Lord «and at the awareness that Allah will not cause the reward of the believers to be lost»; rather He causes it to grow and appreciates it, and He increases it by His grace to an extent that their efforts did not reach.

These verses affirm the blessings in *al-barzakh* and confirm that the martyrs enjoy the highest status with their Lord; in *al-barzakh* the souls of good people meet one another and visit one another, giving glad tidings to one another.



﴿الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لََّ وَالرَّسُولِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا مِنْهُمْ  
وَأْتَفَوْا أَجْرَ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٧٢﴾ الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ  
فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ﴿١٧٣﴾ فَأَنْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
وَفَضْلٍ لَمْ يَنْتَسِبْ لَهُمْ سُوءٌ وَأَتَّبَعُوا رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٧٤﴾ إِنَّمَا ذَلِكُمُ  
الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَآءَهُ. فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُوا اللَّهَ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران:

(١٧٥-١٧٢)

- 3:172. Those who answered the call of Allah and the Messenger, even after sustaining injuries, those who do good and fear Allah will have an immense reward;
- 3:173. those to whom people said: The people have gathered against you, so fear them. But it [only] increased them in faith. They said: Allah is Sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.

- 3:174. And they returned with grace and bounty from Allah, and no harm touched them, for they pursued the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is the Possessor of abundant grace.
- 3:175. It is only the Shayṭân who instils fear in [the hearts of] his followers. Do not fear them, but fear Me, if you are [true] believers.

When the Prophet (ﷺ) came back from Uḥud to Madinah, and heard that Abu Sufyân and the polytheists with him were thinking of coming back to Madinah, he called on his Companions to go out, so they went out, despite the injuries they had sustained, in response to the call of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), and in obedience to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). When they reached Ḥamra' al-Asad, some people came to them and told them: «The people have gathered against you» and are thinking of eradicating you. They said this in order to scare them and cause alarm, but that only increased them in faith and trust in Allah.

«They said: Allah is Sufficient for us» that is, He is the One Who will protect us from all that is causing us concern  
 «and He is the best disposer of affairs» that is, He is the One Who is in control of His slaves' affairs and looks after their interests.

«And they returned with grace and bounty from Allah, and no harm touched them». News reached the polytheists that the Messenger (ﷺ) and his Companions had come out to pursue them, and some of those who had stayed behind (from Uḥud) regretted it (and had now joined the Prophet [ﷺ]). Thus Allah instilled dread in the polytheists' hearts, and they continued on their way back to Makkah, while the believers returned with grace and bounty from Allah, as He blessed them by inspiring them to go out despite the state they were in (having sustained injuries in the battle) and to put their trust in their Lord. Moreover, He had decreed for them the reward of a complete campaign, because of their doing their best in obedience to their Lord

and refraining from sin. Thus they attained great reward, and that was by Allah's grace towards them.

«It is only the Shayṭān who instils fear in [the hearts of] his followers» that is, the one who tried to scare (the believers) by instilling fear of the polytheists, and telling them that the polytheists had gathered against them, was no more than one of the callers of the Shayṭān, who ended up scaring his own followers among those who lacked faith or were weak in faith.

«Do not fear them, but fear Me, if you are [true] believers» that is, do not be afraid of the polytheists who are followers of the Shayṭān, for their forelocks are in the Hand of Allah and they cannot do anything but by His decree. Rather you should fear Allah Who supports His friends who fear Him and respond to His call.

This verse speaks of the obligation to fear Allah alone, and tells us that this is one of the requirements of faith. A person's fear of Allah will be commensurate with the level of his faith; this is the praiseworthy kind of fear that deters a person from doing that which Allah has forbidden.



﴿وَلَا يَحْزَنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَلَّا يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حِزْبًا فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٦﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٧﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٧٦-١٧٧)

- 3:176. Do not be saddened by those who rush into disbelief; not the least harm will they do to Allah. It is Allah's will that they will have no share in the hereafter; theirs will be a grievous punishment.
- 3:177. Those who purchase disbelief at the cost of faith; not the least harm will they do to Allah, but theirs will be a painful punishment.

The Prophet (ﷺ) cared deeply about people and strove hard to guide them, and he would be saddened if they did not follow guidance. Hence Allah (ﷻ) said:

﴿Do not be saddened by those who rush into disbelief﴾ because of their great love for it and their eagerness to attain it.

﴿not the least harm will they do to Allah﴾ for Allah will support His religion and His Messenger (ﷺ), and His will and decree will come to pass despite them. So do not worry about them or be concerned about them; rather they are only harming and striving to harm themselves, by missing out on faith in this world and incurring the painful punishment in the hereafter. They have become insignificant in Allah's sight and it is His will that they should have no share of His reward in the hereafter. He has forsaken them, so He did not guide them to that to which He guided His close friends and those for whom He willed good, by His justice and wisdom, because of His knowledge that they were not fit to be guided and were not receptive to guidance, because of their bad attitude and intentions.

Then Allah tells us concerning those who chose disbelief over faith, and desired it like one who desires something he likes and gives his wealth to buy the thing he desires:

﴿not the least harm will they do to Allah﴾; rather their action backfires and harms them. Hence He said:

﴿but theirs will be a painful punishment﴾. How could they harm Allah in the slightest, when they have no interest at all in faith but they have the strongest desire to disbelieve in the Most Merciful? Allah has no need of them.

Allah has prepared for His religion people other than them among His righteous slaves, and He has prepared for His religion – among those with whom He is pleased with to support His religion – people of deep insight and reason, strong-willed men. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Say: Believe in it, or do not believe. Verily, those who were given knowledge before it,<sup>4</sup> when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in prostration.﴾ (al-Isrā' 17: 107)



﴿وَلَا يَحْسِبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُمَلِّ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لِّأَنفُسِهِمْ إِنَّمَا نُمَلِّ لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُوا إِفْسًا  
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٧٨)

3:178. Those who disbelieve should not think that the respite We give them is good for them. We only grant them respite so that they may increase in sinfulness; theirs will be a humiliating punishment.

Those who disbelieved in their Lord, rejected His religion and fought His Messenger (ﷺ) should not think that Our leaving them alone in this world, not destroying them, and giving them respite is good for them or is because of Our love for them. No, that is not the case at all. It is not as they claim; rather that is for something bad that Allah wills for them, and it serves to increase their punishment in addition to the original punishment. Hence Allah says: ﴿We only grant them respite so that they may increase in sinfulness; theirs will be a humiliating punishment﴾. Allah (ﷻ) gives the wrongdoer respite so that he may increase in his transgression and go further in his ingratitude, so that when Allah seizes him, it will be the seizing of One Who is Almighty, All-Powerful (cf. 54: 42). So the wrongdoers should beware of this respite, and not think that they can escape the Great, the Most High.

<sup>4</sup> Namely the People of the Book (Jews and Christians).



﴿ مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْتَبِيٰ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۚ وَإِن تَوَمَّنُوا ۖ وَسَقَرُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٩﴾ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٧٩)

- 3:179. On no account will Allah leave the believers in the condition in which they are now, until He distinguishes the evil from the good, nor will He disclose to you the secrets of the unseen. But Allah chooses of His Messengers whom He will [to receive knowledge thereof]. So believe in Allah and His Messengers: And if you believe and guard against evil, you will have an immense reward.

By His wisdom, Allah does not leave the believers as they are, mixed with the hypocrites, with no distinction between the two groups; rather He distinguishes the evil from the good, the believer from the hypocrite, the sincere from the insincere.

Nor is it in accordance with His wisdom to disclose to His slaves matters of the unseen concerning what He knows about them. His great wisdom dictated that He should test His slaves with various trials which will distinguish the evil from the good. So Allah sent His Messengers and enjoined people to obey them, follow them and believe in them, and He promised them a great reward in return for believing and guarding against evil. Thus people are divided, according to whether they follow the Messengers, into two groups: obedient and disobedient, believers and hypocrites, Muslims and disbelievers, so that on this basis they will be rewarded or punished, and so as to make manifest His justice, grace and wisdom to His creation.



﴿وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ بَلْ هُوَ سَرٌّ لَّهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخُلُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاتُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

خَيْرٌ ﴿١٨٠﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٨٠)

3:180. Those who covetously withhold what Allah has granted them by His grace should not think that it is good for them; rather it is bad for them, for the things which they covetously withheld will be hung around their necks on the Day of Resurrection. To Allah belongs the inheritance of the heavens and the earth; and Allah is well aware of what you do.

This refers to those who covetously withhold that which Allah has given to them by His grace of wealth, status, knowledge and other blessings, and commanded them to give some of it to His slaves in a manner that does not harm them, but they withheld it and kept it for themselves, and were too miserly to give to the slaves of Allah; they thought that it was better for them, when in fact it was bad for them in both spiritual and worldly terms, in this world and in the hereafter.

﴿for the things which they covetously withheld will be hung around their necks on the Day of Resurrection﴾ that is, what they withheld will be made like a collar on their necks, with which they will be punished, as it says in the *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith:

«The miser's wealth will appear to him on the Day of Resurrection in the form of a bald-headed venomous snake with two fangs in its mouth which will hold him with its jaws, then it will say: I am your wealth, I am your treasure.» (Muslim)

Then the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) recited this verse in confirmation of that. These people who thought that their miserliness would benefit them and help them will find that it will turn out to be the opposite,

and it will become one of the greatest causes of harm and punishment for them.

﴿To Allah belongs the inheritance of the heavens and the earth﴾ that is, Allah (ﷻ) is the Lord of all dominion, and all dominions will be returned to their real Lord. All people will leave this world without having any dirham or dinar, or any other possessions. Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿Verily, it is We Who will inherit the earth and all who are upon it, and to Us they will be brought back.﴾ (*Maryam 19: 40*)

Think about how Allah mentions the initial reason (not to be miserly) and the ultimate reason, both of which should make one refrain from withholding that which Allah has given him.

First of all, He said that what a person has in his possession or in his hands is from Allah and His blessing. It does not belong to the individual; rather, were it not for the grace and kindness of Allah towards him, he could not have gained any of it. Thus his withholding of it is tantamount to withholding the bounty and kindness of Allah; Allah's kindness to him dictates that he should be kind to other people, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...Be good to others, as Allah has been good to you...﴾ (*al-Qasas 28: 77*)

Whoever realises that whatever he possesses is by the grace of Allah will not withhold that which is surplus to his needs and that it will not harm him to give; rather he will benefit (from giving) both spiritually and financially, his faith will increase and he will be protected from troubles and problems.

Secondly, He says that what is in people's hands will all return to Allah; He will inherit it all, and He is the best of inheritors. Therefore there is no reason to withhold anything when it is going to be removed from your possession and go to someone else.

Thirdly, Allah mentions the reason that has to do with the requital, as He says: ﴿and Allah is well aware of what you do﴾. So if He is



aware of all your deeds – which implies that He will reward for good deeds and punish for bad deeds – no one in whose heart is an atom's weight of faith will refuse to give, because giving will be requited with reward, and he would not be happy to withhold it, because that leads to punishment.



﴿لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا وَقَتْلَهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَنَقُولُ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿١٨١﴾ ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْت أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٨٢﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٨١-١٨٢)

3:181. Allah has heard the words of those who say: Truly, Allah is poor and we are rich! We shall certainly record their words and their killing the Prophets unjustly, and We shall say: Taste the punishment of the scorching fire!

3:182. This is because of what your hands sent on ahead. For Allah is never unjust to [His] slaves.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the words of those evildoers, who said the most abhorrent and stupid things. He states that He has heard what they said, He will record it along with their evil deeds, namely the killing of the sincere Prophets, and He will punish them in the most severe manner, and it will be said to them, in response to their saying that Allah is poor and we are rich: ﴿Taste the punishment of the scorching fire﴾, which will burn and penetrate from the outside of the body to the inside. This punishment is not injustice from Allah towards them, for He ﴿is never unjust to [His] slaves﴾; rather He declares Himself to be above that.

Rather this is the return for what their hands sent on ahead of shameful and evil deeds that lead to them deserving punishment and being deprived of reward.

The commentators stated that this verse was revealed concerning some of the Jews who said these words, and mentioned that one of them was Finhâş ibn 'Âzoorâ', one of the leading Jewish scholars of Madinah. When he heard the words of Allah:

﴿Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan?...﴾ (al-Baqarah 2: 245)

– and:

﴿...and lend to Allah a goodly loan...﴾ (al-Hadeed 57: 18)

– he said these words, by way of arrogance and audacity, may Allah curse him. Hence He mentioned what they had said, and stated that this was not something new on their part; rather they had done similar evil deeds before, namely ﴿their killing the Prophets unjustly﴾ (3: 181). What is meant by describing that deed as unjust is that they had the audacity to kill the Prophets even though they were well aware of the abhorrent nature of the deed. They did not do it out of ignorance and misguidance; rather it was out of rebelliousness and stubbornness.



﴿الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عٰهَدَ اِلَيْنَا اَلَّا نُوْمِنَ لِرَسُوْلِ حَتّٰى يٰٓاْتِنَا بِقُرْاٰنٍ  
تَاْكُلُهُ النَّارُ فَلَ قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِىْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ وَاِلٰذِىْ قُلْتُمْ فَلِمَ  
قَتَلْتُمُوهُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿١٨٣﴾ اِنْ كَذَّبُوْكُمْ فَكُذِّبْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ  
جَآءُوْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتٰبِ الْمُنِيْرِ ﴿١٨٤﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٨٣-١٨٤)

- 3:183. They [also] said: Allah has commanded us not to believe in any Messenger until he makes an offering that the fire [from heaven] will consume. Say: There came to you Messengers before me, with clear signs and with the sign you have mentioned. Why then did you kill them, if you are telling the truth?

3:184. Then if they reject you, Messengers before you were also rejected, even though they came with clear signs, the scriptures, and the Book of Enlightenment.

Here Allah tells us about these liars who said: «Allah has commanded us» that is, He has given us instructions «not to believe in any Messenger until he makes an offering that the fire [from heaven] will consume». Thus they combined telling lies about Allah and limiting the sign of the Messengers to that which they suggested of this obvious fabrication, whilst stating that if they did not believe in a Messenger who did not make an offering that would be consumed by fire (from heaven), then by doing so they would be obeying their Lord and adhering to His command. It is known that Allah supported every Messenger He sent with signs and proofs on the basis of which people would believe in him, and He did not limit it to what they suggested, yet despite that they said something false that they did not adhere to or act upon.

Hence Allah commanded His Messenger (ﷺ) to say to them: «Say: There came to you Messengers before me, with clear signs» that proved their truthfulness «and with the sign you have mentioned», of making an offering that the fire (from heaven) consumed. «Why then did you kill them, if you are telling the truth?» that is, in their claim that they would believe in a Messenger who made an offering that the fire (from heaven) consumed. Thus it becomes clear that they were lying, being stubborn and contradicting themselves.

Then Allah consoles His Messenger (ﷺ), and says: «Then if they reject you, Messengers before you were also rejected» that is, this is normal on the part of the wrongdoers; it is their custom to disbelieve in Allah and reject the Messengers of Allah. Their rejection of the Messengers of Allah is not because of any defect or shortcoming in what they brought, or because the proof was not clear. Rather the

Messengers ﴿came with clear signs﴾ that is, rational evidence and scriptural proof

﴿the scriptures﴾ that is, the Books that were sent down from heaven, that could not be brought by anyone but the Messengers

﴿and the Book of Enlightenment﴾, that sheds light on the rulings ordained by Allah and explains what they contain of rational and beautiful teaching. It also sheds light on true events. But this was their way, to not believe in the Messengers who were like this, so do not be saddened by them and do not worry about them.



﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّقُونَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ رُخِّعَ  
عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْفُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾﴾

(سورة آل عمران: ١٨٥)

- 3:185. Every soul will taste death, and only on the Day of Resurrection will you be requited in full [for your deeds]. Whoever is saved from the fire and admitted to paradise will have triumphed, for the life of this world is nothing but a fleeting vanity.

This verse highlights the reality of this world in order to put people off being overly concerned with it because of its transient nature, for it is a fleeting vanity that dazzles with its adornment and deceives with its ostentatious displays, but it will come to an end and people will pass on to the realm of eternity, when they will be requited for what they did in this world, good or bad.

﴿Whoever is saved﴾ that is, brought out ﴿from the fire and admitted to paradise will have triumphed﴾ that is, he will have attained the greatest victory of escaping from the eternal punishment and reaching the gardens of delight in which there is that which no eye has seen,

no ear has heard, nor has it ever entered the mind of man. What this verse means is that whoever is not saved from the fire and admitted to paradise has not triumphed; rather he is doomed to eternal misery and suffering.

This verse contains a subtle reference to joy and punishment in al-barzakh, and that people will be partially requited therein for what they did, and they will taste the reward or punishment of what they did in this world. This may be understood from the words ﴿and only on the Day of Resurrection will you be requited in full [for your deeds]﴾. In other words, requital in full for one's deeds will only come on the Day of Resurrection; before that, (there will be some degree of requital) in al-barzakh, and even in this world, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere: ﴿We will surely cause them to taste a lesser punishment before the greater punishment...﴾ (as-Sajdah 32: 21)



﴿ تَتَّبَلُّونَ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَكَلْتَمَعْنَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آتَوْا  
الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا وَإِنْ تَصَابِرُوا  
وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٨٦)

3:186. You will certainly be tried and tested in your possessions and in your persons; and you will certainly hear much that is hurtful, from those who were given the Book before you and from those who ascribe partners to Allah. But if you are patient and fear Allah, that is something that must be adhered to [as it is enjoined by Allah].

Here Allah addresses the believers, and tells them that they will be tested with regard to their possessions or wealth, in terms of obligatory and encouraged spending, and that their wealth will be exposed to

being used up in Allah's cause; they will also be tested with regard to their persons, by being required to carry burdens that are too heavy for many people, such as jihad in Allah's cause, in which they may be exposed to exhaustion or being killed or captured; or by being faced with sickness that may affect a person himself or those whom he loves.

﴿and you will certainly hear much that is hurtful, from those who were given the Book before you and from those who ascribe partners to Allah﴾, such as impugning you and your religion, your Book and your Messenger.

There are a number of benefits in Allah's telling His believing slaves of that, such as the following:

- His wisdom dictates that these things should happen, in order to distinguish the sincere believer from others.
- Allah (ﷻ) decrees these things for them because of what He wills of good for them, in order to raise them in status, expiate their bad deeds, and increase them in faith and certainty. When He told them of that and it came to pass as He said:
 

﴿...they said: This is what Allah and his Messenger had promised us, and the promise of Allah and His Messenger is true. And it only increased them in faith and submission.﴾

*(al-Aḥzâb 33: 22)*
- Allah told them about that in order to make them get used to such things happening and to bear it with patience if they did happen, because then they would be prepared for it happening, which would make it easier to bear. This would make them better able to cope with it and would prompt them to resort to patience and fear of Allah. Hence He said: ﴿But if you are patient and fear Allah﴾ that is, if you bear with patience whatever trials and tests befall you with regard to your possessions and your persons, and whatever hurtful words the wrongdoers address to you, and you be mindful of Allah whilst being patient, by intending it for His sake and hoping to draw close to Him, without going to

extremes or overstepping the mark in showing patience, such as showing patience in situations where it is not appropriate to do so and in which your role is to wreak vengeance upon the enemies of Allah, then ﴿that is something that must be adhered to [as it is enjoined by Allah]﴾ that is, it is one of the things that one must adhere to and compete in, and no one is helped to attain it except people of strong resolve and high ambition, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿But none can attain that except those who are patient, and none can attain it except one who is blessed with a great share of good and righteousness.﴾ (Fussilat 41: 35)



﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ، فَنَبَذُوهُ  
وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَأَشْرَوْا بِهِ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا فِئْسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾ لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ  
الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أُوتُوا وَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ مِنَ  
الْعَذَابِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨٨﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٨٧-١٨٨)

- 3:187. And [remember] when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the scripture, that they should make it known and clear to humankind, and not conceal it; but they cast it behind their backs, and sold it for a small price; what a wretched trade they made!
- 3:188. Do not think that those who rejoice in what they have done, and love to be praised for what they have not done – do not think that they can escape the punishment. Theirs will be a painful punishment.

The covenant is a confirmed, binding promise. Allah (ﷻ) took this covenant from everyone to whom He gave the scriptures and taught

knowledge, that they should teach the people whatever they need of what Allah taught them, and they should not conceal that from them or withhold it, especially if the people ask for it or if something happens that necessitates teaching them, because everyone who has knowledge must, in that case, disclose it and explain that which distinguishes truth from falsehood.

Those who were guided fulfilled that duty properly and taught the people some of that which Allah had taught them, seeking the pleasure of their Lord and out of compassion towards other people, and for fear of committing the sin of concealing it.

As for those who were given the scripture, the Jews, Christians and others like them, they cast these covenants behind their backs and did not care about them. Thus they concealed the truth and made falsehood manifest, out of audacity and carelessness in transgressing the limits set by Allah, and out of negligence concerning the rights of Allah and the rights of other people. But all they got in return for that concealment was a small price, which is what they obtained of positions of leadership and a miserable amount of wealth from the foolish ones who follow their whims and desires and give precedence to their desires over the truth.

«what a wretched trade they made» because it is the most miserable and cheap trade; what they gave away in this exchange – which was explaining the truth which leads to eternal happiness and serves people's interests, both spiritual and worldly – is the most important and greatest of aims. They only chose that which is vile and base, and gave up that which is sublime and precious, because of their misfortune and insignificance, and because they were not fit for anything other than that for which they were created.

Then Allah says: «Do not think that those who rejoice in what they have done» of evil actions and falsehood in word and deed



﴿and love to be praised for what they have not done﴾ that is, for the good things that they have not done and the truth that they have not spoken. Thus they combined doing and saying evil things, and rejoicing therein, with love of being praised for good things that they have not done.

﴿do not think that they can escape the punishment﴾ that is, they are not in any position to be saved from it; rather they deserve it and it will inevitably befall them. Hence Allah says: ﴿Theirs will be a painful punishment﴾.

This verse includes the People of the Book who rejoiced in the knowledge that they had, but they did not follow the Messenger (ﷺ), and they claimed that they were in the right in everything they did and said. The same applies to everyone who follows innovation in word or deed, rejoicing in it, calling others to it and claiming that they are in the right whilst others are in the wrong, as the innovators do.

This verse indicates that if the one who likes to be praised for what he does of good deeds and following the truth does not have the aim of showing off and enhancing his reputation, then he is not to be blamed. Rather this is something that one may seek, and He may reward in this manner those who do and say good things for His sake. Allah grants this reward to people of special standing who ask Him for that, as Ibrâheem (ﷺ) said:

﴿And grant me an honourable renown among the later nations.﴾ (*ash-Shu'arâ* 26: 84)

And Allah says:

﴿Peace be upon Nooh among all nations. Thus do We reward those who do good.﴾ (*as-Sâffât* 37: 79-80)

And the worshippers of the Most Merciful say:

﴿...and make us good examples for those who fear You.﴾ (*al-Furqân* 25: 74)

This is one of the blessings that Allah bestows upon His slaves, and one of His favours for which thanks must be given.



﴿وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ (سورة آل عمران:

(189)

3:189. To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; and Allah has power over all things.

That is, He is the Sovereign of the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them of all types of creatures; He controls them with perfect might and power, so no one can resist Him or frustrate Him.



﴿إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ﴾  
 ﴿الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ﴾ رَبَّنَا  
 إِنَّكَ مَنْ تَدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْرَجْتَهُ، وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ﴿١٩٢﴾ رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَجَعْنَا  
 مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ ءَامِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا  
 سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَقَّنَا مِنَ الْآبْرَارِ ﴿١٩٣﴾ رَبَّنَا وَءَايَاتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ  
 الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ ﴿١٩٤﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران: 190-194)

3:190. Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for people of understanding,

3:191. People who remember Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and reflect upon the creation of the heavens and

- the earth, [with the thought]: Our Lord, You have not created all this in vain. Glory be to You! Save us from the punishment of the fire.
- 3:192. Our Lord, whomever You cause to enter the fire, You have surely brought to disgrace, and the wrongdoers will have no helpers.
- 3:193. Our Lord! We have heard a caller calling [us] to faith, [saying]: Believe in the Lord, and we have believed. Our Lord, forgive us our sins, expiate our bad deeds, and cause us to die in the company of the righteous.
- 3:194. Our Lord, grant us what You have promised to us through Your Messengers, and do not disgrace us on the Day of Resurrection, for You never break Your promise.

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Here Allah tells us that ﴿Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for people of understanding﴾. This encourages people to think deeply, examine these signs and contemplate the creation. He left the word ﴿signs﴾ ambiguous, and did not state explicitly what it points to, as an indication of the great number and ubiquitous nature of those signs. That is because in creation there are amazing signs that dazzle those who look upon them, convince those who ponder them, attract the hearts of those who are sincere and strengthen the faith of people of understanding.

But the details of what these signs contain are impossible for any person to list or even comprehend some of them. In conclusion, what we see in them of greatness, the vastness and order in the movement of heavenly bodies, point to the greatness of their Creator and His power, which encompasses all things. Their perfection, precision and beauty point to the wisdom of Allah, His control over all things and the vastness of His knowledge. The benefits they bring to people are indicative of the vastness of Allah's mercy, the all-encompassing

nature of His grace and kindness, and the necessity of being grateful to Him.

All of that indicates that the heart should only be attached to its Creator and originator, and should do its utmost to seek His pleasure, and not associate with Him any of those who have not even an atom's weight of power over themselves or others on earth or in heaven.

Allah has intended these signs only for people of understanding, namely the people of reason, because they are the ones who benefit from that and who contemplate the signs with reason, and do not merely look at them with their eyes.

Then Allah describes the people of understanding as being: ﴿People who remember Allah﴾ in all circumstances, ﴿standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides﴾. This includes all types of remembrance of Allah, both verbal and in the heart. That includes praying standing; if that is not possible, then sitting; and if that is not possible then lying on one's side.

﴿and reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth﴾ that is, so that they may reach the conclusion intended (that there is a great Creator). This indicates that reflection is an act of worship, and is one of the characteristics of the close friends of Allah. When they reflect upon these things, they realise that Allah did not create them in vain, and they say:

﴿Our Lord, You have not created all this in vain. Glory be to You﴾ and exalted be You above all that is not befitting to Your Majesty; rather You created it in truth, for truth, and including truth.

﴿Save us from the punishment of the fire﴾ by protecting us from doing bad deeds, and helping us to do righteous deeds, so that we might attain thereby salvation from the fire. This is an implicit prayer for paradise, because – if Allah protects them from the punishment of the fire – they will attain paradise. But as this fear is entrenched in their hearts, they call upon Allah referring to that which most concerns them.

«Our Lord, whomever You cause to enter the fire, You have surely brought to disgrace» that is, because he has incurred the wrath of Allah and of His angels and close friends, and has become subject to inescapable shame.

Hence Allah says: «and the wrongdoers will have no helpers» to save them from His punishment. This indicates that they will enter it because of their wrongdoing.

«Our Lord! We have heard a caller calling [us] to faith», namely Muhammad (ﷺ). What is meant is: he is calling the people to faith, and encouraging them to believe in the major and minor matters of faith

«and we have believed» that is, we hastened to respond to him. This is an acknowledgement on their part of the blessings that Allah has bestowed upon them, and an expression of joy in that blessing, asking Him by virtue thereof to forgive their sins and expiate their bad deeds, because good deeds erase bad deeds. The One Who blessed them with faith will bless them with complete security (on the Day of Resurrection).

«and cause us to die in the company of the righteous». This supplication implies guidance to do good and refrain from evil, by virtue of which one will become one of the righteous and will continue in that path and remain steadfast until death.

When they mentioned Allah's guiding them to faith and beseeched Him to complete His favour, they asked Him to reward them for that, and to fulfil what He had promised to them on the lips of His Messengers, of victory in this world and the attainment of Allah's pleasure and paradise in the hereafter, for Allah (ﷻ) does not break His promise. Allah answered their prayer and accepted their request, hence He says:



﴿فَأَسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَمَلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ  
 مِن بَعْضٍ ۗ فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِن دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُودُوا فِي سَبِيلِي وَقُتِلُوا وَقَاتَلُوا  
 لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ بَّحَّرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِّن  
 عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ﴿١٩٥﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٩٥)

3:195. Their Lord has answered them: Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female; you are both the same in that respect. Those who have left their homes, and been driven out therefrom, and suffered harm for My sake, and fought and been slain, verily, I will expiate their bad deeds, and admit them to gardens through which rivers flow, a reward from Allah; with Allah is the best reward.

That is, Allah answered their supplication (*du'ā'*) and said: I will not allow the work of any of you, male or female, to be lost; each of you will receive the reward of his or her deeds in full.

﴿you are both the same in that respect﴾ that is, all of you are equal in terms of reward and punishment.

﴿Those who have left their homes, and been driven out therefrom, and suffered harm for My sake, and fought and been slain﴾: they combined faith and migration, leaving behind what one loves of homeland and property, seeking the pleasure of their Lord and striving in the cause of Allah.

﴿verily, I will expiate their bad deeds, and admit them into gardens through which rivers flow, a reward from Allah﴾, Who grants abundant reward to His slave for little effort.

﴿with Allah is the best reward﴾ such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever entered the mind of man. Whoever wants that, let him ask Allah for it by virtue of his obedience, and strive to draw close to Him by whatever means he can.



﴿لَا يَغُرُّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿١٩٦﴾ مَتَّعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَا لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ  
وَبَيْتَ الْمَعَادِ ﴿١٩٧﴾ لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ  
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ ﴿١٩٨﴾﴾ (سورة آل عمران:

(196-198)

- 3:196. Do not be deceived by the [uninhibited] movement of the disbelievers throughout the land:
- 3:197. It is only a brief enjoyment; their ultimate abode is hell, what a wretched resting-place!
- 3:198. But for those who fear their Lord are gardens, through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever, a welcoming gift from Allah; and that which is with Allah is best for the righteous.

These verses offer consolation (to the believers) for what the disbelievers have of pleasure and enjoyment in this world, and freedom of movement for the purposes of trade, earning a living and leisure, and different kinds of power and prevalence at various times. All of that is ﴿only a brief enjoyment﴾ that will not last; rather they will enjoy it for a while, then they will be punished for it for a long time. This is the best state that the disbeliever may be in, and you see how it will end.

As for those who fear their Lord and believe in Him – in addition to attaining honour and joy in this world, they will have: ﴿gardens, through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever﴾.

If it so happens that in this world they encounter misery, hardship, suffering and difficulties, that will be insignificant in comparison to eternal delight, good living, happiness and joy (in the hereafter); it will be a gift in the form of a trial. Hence Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿that which is with Allah is best for the righteous﴾. The righteous are those whose

hearts, words and deeds are righteous. The Most Magnificent, Most Merciful will grant them an immense reward and eternal victory, by His grace.



﴿ وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ خَشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَايَتِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿١٩٩﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَصْبِرُوا وَاصْبِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٠٠﴾ (سورة آل عمران: ١٩٩-٢٠٠)

- 3:199. Verily, among the People of the Book, there are those who believe in Allah, and in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down to them, humbling themselves before Allah. They do not sell the revelations of Allah for a small price. These will have their reward with their Lord; verily Allah is swift in reckoning.
- 3:200. O you who believe, be steadfast and stand firm, be on the alert, and fear Allah; that you may prosper.

That is, some of the People of the Book are guided to goodness; they believe in Allah and they believe in what has been sent down to you and what has been sent down to them. This is the faith that is beneficial; it is not like the faith of one who believes in some of the Messengers and Books, and rejects others.

Hence – because their belief was comprehensive and real – it became beneficial for them, which led them to humble themselves before Allah and submit to His Majesty, which made them follow His commands, heed His prohibitions and adhere to His limits.



These are People of the Book and knowledge in the true sense, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...Among His slaves, only those who have knowledge truly fear Allah...﴾ (*Fâtir 35: 28*)

A sign of their complete humility before Allah is that they do not sell the revelations of Allah for a small price. So they do not give precedence to worldly interests over religious interests, as is done by the deviant people who conceal that which Allah revealed and sell it for a small price.

These people have come to know the truth of the matter and realised that it is the greatest loss to be content with that which is cheap and inferior, and to give it precedence over religious commitment, or to focus on some base desires of the *nafs* and overlook the truth, which is the greatest gain and triumph in this world and the hereafter; thus they give precedence to the truth, explain it, call others to it and warn against falsehood. Therefore Allah rewards them for that; He promised them a great reward and told them that it is near and that He is swift in reckoning, so that they will not think that what Allah promised them is slow in coming, because whatever is coming and there is no doubt about it is in fact near.

Then Allah urges the believers to do that which will bring them to prosperity, which is victory, happiness and success. The way to attain that is to adhere to patience, which means disciplining oneself to do that which one finds hard, such as refraining from sin, being steadfast at the time of calamity and adhering to commands that one finds burdensome. So Allah commands them to be patient in all these cases. Standing firm means being patient and steadfast, and resisting the enemy in all circumstances.

Being on the alert means staying in the place where there is a fear the enemy could reach, keeping a lookout for the enemy and preventing them from reaching their goals, so that they (the believers)

may prosper, attain what they want in both religious and worldly terms and in the hereafter, and be safe from that which they fear.

Thus we learn that there is no way to attain prosperity without being steadfast, standing firm, and being on the alert as mentioned. Those who prosper only do so by means of these things, and people only miss out on prosperity because they overlook these things or some of them.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat *Āl 'Imrān*.  
All praise and thanks are for Allah, and may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, and his Companions abundantly until the Day of Judgement.



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04.

## Soorat an-Nisâ'

(Madani)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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



﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا  
كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾﴾ (سورة

النساء: ١)

- 4:1. O humankind, fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul, and from it created its mate, and from the pair of them spread countless men and women far and wide. Fear Allah, in Whose name you demand your mutual [rights], and be mindful of your ties of kinship, for Allah is always watching you.

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This *soorah* begins with the command to fear Allah and worship Him, and to uphold ties of kinship. We are urged to do these things, and in this *soorah* Allah explains the reason for all of that, and why we should fear Him.

«your Lord, Who created you», provided for you and bestowed great blessings upon you, which includes His creation of you «from a single soul, and from it created its mate» so that there would be compatibility between them and that he may find comfort in her, thus the blessing will be completed and joy will be attained.

There is also another reason to fear Him, which is that you demand your mutual rights in His name, and venerate Him by doing so, in that when you want your needs to be met and your goals fulfilled, you try to get it by asking for it in the name of Allah. So the one who wants that says to another person: I ask you by Allah to do such and such. That is because he knows what the other person has in his heart of veneration towards Allah, which will make him not reject anyone who asks him by Allah. So just as you venerate Him by doing that, you should also venerate Him by worshipping Him and fearing Him.

Similarly, Allah tells us that He is always watching; in other words, He can see his slaves in all that they do, in secret and in public, for He is always watching them. This should prompt us to remember that He is always watching, and thus feel shy before Him, by constantly fearing Him.

By telling us that He created them from a single soul and that He spread them throughout the earth, even though they have one origin, this should make them compassionate and kind towards one another. Alongside the command to fear Him comes the command to be mindful of ties of kinship and the prohibition on severing these ties. This serves to affirm the importance of upholding ties of kinship: just as it is obligatory to fulfil duties towards Allah, it is also essential to fulfil duties towards other people, especially relatives. In fact doing one's duty towards them is part of doing one's duty to Allah, that Allah has enjoined.

Think about how this soorah begins with the command to fear Allah and be mindful of ties of kinship and spouses in general. Then after that, these factors are explained fully, in detail, from the

beginning of the soorah to the end. It is as if the entire soorah focuses on these issues, as it goes on to explain in detail and clarify what is mentioned in brief here.

The words «and from it created its mate» emphasise paying attention to the rights of husbands and wives, and fulfilling them, because wives are created from husbands, so the closest connections, ties and relationships exist between them.



﴿وَمَا آتَاؤُا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَبَدَّلُوا الْخَيْرَ بِالْضَلِيلِ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا﴾ (سورة النساء: ٢)

- 4:2. Give orphans their property, and do not exchange the bad for the good, nor consume their wealth by mixing it with your own, for this is indeed a great sin.

This is the first issue with regard to the rights of people in this soorah. This refers to orphans who have lost their fathers, who had been taking care of them, when they are still small and vulnerable, unable to take care of themselves. So the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful enjoined His slaves to treat orphans well and not to come near their wealth except in the best manner, and to give their wealth back to them when they reach adulthood and become mature.

Also, He instructed them not to «exchange the bad», which refers to consuming the orphan's wealth unlawfully «for the good», which refers to that which is permissible and with which there is nothing wrong

«nor consume their wealth by mixing it with your own».

This verse highlights the abhorrent nature of consuming their wealth in this case, when the provision that Allah has granted him

should mean that there is no need to take their wealth. Whoever transgresses the limits in this case has committed «a great sin» that is, a grievous sin. Another type of exchanging bad for good is when the guardian takes what is precious from the orphan's wealth and replaces it with what is inferior of his own wealth. This verse proves the validity of guardianship over orphans, because the implication of giving orphans their wealth is that the one who gives them their property is their guardian. It also instructs guardians to take proper care of orphans' property, because giving him his wealth properly requires taking care of it and doing that which will keep it safe and make it grow, and not exposing it to danger.

❁ ❁

﴿ وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبْعًا ۚ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۚ ذَلِكَ أَذَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ﴿٣﴾ ۗ وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً ۚ فَإِنْ طِبَّنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيئًا ﴿٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ٤-٣)

- 4:3. If you fear that you will not be able to deal fairly with orphan girls, you may marry other women who seem good to you, two or three or four; but if you fear that you will not be equitable, then marry only one, or any slave-girls you may own. That is more likely to keep you from committing an injustice.
- 4:4. And give the women [on marriage] their dowry graciously; but if they, of their own accord, choose to give up to you a part of it, you may enjoy it with a clear conscience.

That is, if you fear that you will not be fair or just to female orphans who are under your guardianship and care, and you fear that you will not fulfil their rights because you do not feel attracted

to them, then choose from among other women, and marry «other women who seem good to you» that is, those whom you choose of women who are religiously committed, wealthy, beautiful, of good lineage or good social standing, and other qualities that make them desirable for marriage, so choose as you see fit.

Out of all these qualities, the best you can choose is the quality of religious commitment, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Women may be married for four things: their wealth, their lineage, their beauty and their religious commitment. Choose the one who is religiously-committed, may your hands be rubbed with dust (that is, may you prosper).» (Bukhari and Muslim)

This verse indicates that the man should find out about the woman he wants to marry; indeed it is permissible for him to look at the one he wants to marry, so that he will choose one he thinks is suitable for him and he will be certain that he likes her.

Then Allah states the number of women whom it is permissible to marry: «two or three or four» that is, whoever wants to take two wives may do so, and if he wants to take three or four, he may do so, but no more than that, according to scholarly consensus.

That is because a man's desire may not be satisfied with just one wife, so it is permitted for him to take one after another, until he reaches four, because four is enough for anyone, except in rare cases. However, that is only permitted on condition that he is certain that he will be able to avoid injustice and mistreatment and he is confident that he will be able to give them their rights.

But if he fears that he will not be able to be fair and just in any way, then he must limit it to one, or to slave women, because he is not obliged to give equal shares to slave women.

«That» namely limiting it to one wife or to slave women «is more likely to keep you from committing an injustice» that is, being unfair to any of them.

This indicates that for a person to put himself in a situation in which he fears that he may be unjust or unfair, or not carry out his duties – even if it is permissible in principle – is not appropriate; rather he must err on the side of caution and protect his religious commitment, because keeping his religious commitment intact is for the best.

Because many men mistreat women and deny them their rights – especially the *mahr* or dowry, which is usually a large amount that is paid in one go, therefore the husband may find it difficult to give it to the wife – here Allah commands and urges men to give wives «their dowry» or mahr «graciously» that is, with goodwill and with peace of mind, and not to delay it or deduct anything from it. This indicates that the mahr is to be given to the woman if she has reached the age of accountability, and that it becomes her property as soon as a marriage contract is done, because it is described as belonging to the woman («their [that is, women's] dowry»), which implies that it is their property.

«but if they, of their own accord, choose to give up to you a part of it» that is, of the dowry. What is meant is: if they give it up to you willingly and by their own choice, by waiving part of it, or accepting delays or substitutions «you may enjoy it with a clear conscience» that is, there is no blame on you for that, and there are no consequences.

This indicates that the woman has the right to dispose of her wealth, even by giving it freely, if she is mature. If she is not mature, then her giving it is not valid. We also learn that her guardian is not entitled to any part of her dowry, unless she gives it willingly.

The words «you may marry other women, who seem good to you» indicate that marriage to bad women is not enjoined; in fact it is forbidden, such as polytheist women or immoral women, as Allah says elsewhere:



«Do not marry the polytheist women until they believe...» (al-Baqarah 2: 221)

«...and a woman who fornicates may only marry a man who fornicates or who is a polytheist...» (an-Noor 24: 3)



﴿وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ فِيهَا أَرْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا

مَعْرُوفًا﴾ (سورة النساء: ٥)

- 4:5. Do not entrust your property to the feeble-minded, which Allah has made a means of support for you, but feed and clothe them from it, and speak to them with kind words.

The word translated here as «feeble-minded» refers to one who does not dispose of wealth in the proper manner either because he is lacking in mental capacity, such as one who is insane or has an intellectual disability, or because he is not mature, such as minors and those who are reckless. Allah forbids the guardians to give them their wealth, lest they spoil it or waste it, because Allah has made wealth a means of support for His slaves, to serve their religious and worldly interests, but these people cannot look after it properly or protect it.

So He instructs guardians not to give it to them; rather they should feed and clothe them from it and spend from it on their necessities and things they need for their spiritual and physical well-being, and they should speak kind words to them by promising them – if they ask for it – that they will give it to them after they reach the age of maturity and the like. And they should speak kindly to them so that they will feel reassured.

The fact that Allah (ﷻ) attributes the wealth to the guardians («your property») indicates that they must handle the property of these

feeble-minded or immature ones as they handle their own property, by protecting it, disposing of it properly and not exposing it to danger.

This verse indicates that expenses for the maintenance of the insane, minors and the feeble-minded should come from their own wealth, if they have any wealth, because Allah says: ﴿but feed and clothe them from it﴾. This indicates that the word of the guardian is acceptable in whatever claims he makes of having spent on their maintenance and clothing, if it sounds plausible, because Allah has entrusted him with their wealth, and the word of the trustee must be accepted.



﴿وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ آنَسْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَن يَكْبُرُوا وَمَن كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فَأَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا﴾ (سورة

النساء: ٦)

- 4:6. Test the orphans until they reach a marriageable age. Then, if you find that they have sound judgement, hand over their property to them. Do not consume it unlawfully or hastily before they come of age [and demand it]. If the guardian is well-off, let him abstain entirely [from the orphan's property], but if he is poor, let him consume thereof according to what is reasonable. When you hand over their property to them, call in witnesses. And Allah is sufficient in taking account.

Testing is done by giving the orphan who is approaching maturity and is expected to be of sound judgement a small amount of his wealth, to see if he handles it properly as befits his situation; thus it will become clear whether he is of sound judgement or foolish. If he

continues to mishandle it, then his wealth is not to be handed over to him even if he grows very old, because he is persisting in foolishness.

If it becomes clear that he is of sound judgement and fit to handle his own wealth, and he has reached a marriageable age, ﴿hand over their property to them﴾ in full.

﴿Do not consume it unlawfully﴾ that is, by overstepping the mark of what is permissible, namely what Allah has permitted to you of your own wealth, and transgressing upon that which Allah has forbidden to you of their wealth.

﴿or hastily before they come of age [and demand it]﴾ that is, do not consume it when they are small and unable to take it from you or prevent you from consuming it, rushing to do that before they grow up and become able to take it from you or keep you away from it. This is something that actually happens a great deal on the part of guardians who do not fear Allah and do not have any compassion or love for the orphans under their care; they regard this situation as an opportunity, so they take advantage of it and hasten to do that which Allah has forbidden to them. Hence Allah (ﷻ) forbids such actions in this particular case.



﴿لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا﴾ (سورة النساء: ٧)

- 4:7. Men have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind, and women have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind, whether it be little or much; this is ordained [by Allah].

During the jāhiliyah, because of their cruelty and hardheartedness, the Arabs did not permit the weak, such as women and children, to inherit and they made inheritance for strong men only, because

such men – according to their way of thinking – were people of war and fighting who could plunder and seize booty. But the Most Wise, Most Merciful Lord wanted to ordain laws for His slaves in which men and women, strong and weak, would be equal. As a precursor to that, He revealed general principles so that they could get used to the idea, then the details came after the general principle had become established, people were prepared to receive it and they would feel no resentment such as might have stemmed from these abhorrent customs. Hence Allah said:

«Men have a share» that is, a portion  
 «in what parents» that is, mothers and fathers «and relatives» in general «leave behind, and women have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind».

It is as if there was a question: is this share to be based on custom and tradition, and may they give them whatever they want to give, or is it something of a specified amount? Hence Allah (ﷻ) said: «this is ordained [by Allah]» that is, the All-Knowing, Most Wise has ordained it, and we will discuss the size of the portions below, in shâ' Allâh.

Moreover, there may be another misconception, which is that women and children have no share except in cases where the wealth is abundant, so Allah dispelled that notion by saying: «whether it be little or much». Blessed be Allah, the best prescriber of laws.



﴿وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينُ فَأَرْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهُ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا﴾ (سورة النساء: ٨)

- 4:8. But if at the time of division [other] relatives, or orphans or those in need, are present, give them something from it, and speak to them with kind words.

This is a beautiful and sublime teaching, and a kind gesture. Allah says: «But if at the time of division» that is, division of the estate «[other] relatives» who are not designated heirs «or orphans or those in need» that is, deserving cases among the poor «are present, give them something from it» that is, give them something that you can afford from this wealth that has come to you without any effort or trouble on your part, for they are eager to have something of it, so give them something, as a kind gesture, in such a way that will not affect you yet will benefit them.

From this we learn that if anyone shows interest or hopes for some of that which you have in front of you, you should give him something of it, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«If the servant of one of you brings him his food, let him make him sit with him, and if he does not make him sit with him, then let him give him a morsel or two.» (Bukhari)

When the first fruits of their trees appeared, the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) would bring it to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) for him to pray for blessing for it; he would look for the youngest child present, and give it to him, knowing that he was most eager to have it. All of this applies if it is possible to give something; if that is not possible, because there are others who are more deserving of it, then let them say to them «kind words» and turn them away gently, by saying something kind, not insulting or offensive.



﴿وَلِيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكُوا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَافًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا ﴿١٠﴾﴾ (سورة النساء: ٩-١٠)

- 4:9. And let those be careful who, if they were to leave behind vulnerable children, would be concerned for them; let them fear Allah and say what is appropriate.
- 4:10. Verily, those who devour the property of orphans unjustly take nothing into their bellies but fire. Soon they will burn in a raging fire.

It was said that this is addressed to those who are present when a person is dying; if he shows some unfairness in his bequests, they should tell him to be just and fair in his bequests, based on the words: ﴿let [them]...say what is appropriate﴾ that is, what is in accordance with fairness and what is right. So they should advise the one who wants to make a bequest to minimise it out of compassion for his own children (so that there will be more wealth left for them); their advice should be based on what they would want for their own children after they are gone.

According to other commentators, this is addressed to the guardians of those who are feeble-minded, such as the insane, minors and those who are poor in judgement; they should treat them with regard to their religious and worldly affairs in the way they would like those who come after them to treat their own vulnerable children, ﴿let them fear Allah﴾ in their guardianship of others; in other words, let them treat them in a manner that reflects fear of Allah, without humiliating them, and let them take care of them and raise them to fear Allah.

When He enjoined that upon them, He warned them not to devour the wealth of orphans, and promised a severe punishment for doing so: ﴿Verily, those who devour the property of orphans unjustly﴾ that is, unlawfully; this excludes what is mentioned above, about it being permissible for one who is poor to consume it in accordance with what is reasonable, and its being permissible to mix their food with the orphans' food.

But those who devour it unjustly ﴿take nothing into their bellies but fire﴾ that is, what they are devouring is fire that is raging inside them, and they are the ones who put it in their own bellies.

﴿Soon they will burn in a raging fire﴾ that is, a fire that is stoked and burning fiercely. This is the most severe warning that is mentioned concerning sins, which is indicative of how abhorrent and terrible devouring orphans' wealth is, and that it deserves admittance to hell. This indicates that it is one of the worst of major sins. We ask Allah to keep us safe and sound.



﴿يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلَّذِ كَرِ مِثْلَ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۚ فَإِن كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ ۚ وَإِن كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ ۚ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ السُّدُسُ ۚ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دِينٍ ؕ أَبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا فَرِيضَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَ اللَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١﴾ ۚ وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهُنَّ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لهنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دِينٍ ۚ وَلهنَّ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلهنَّ الثُّمْنُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ تُوصُونَ بِهَا أَوْ دِينٍ ۚ وَإِن كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورِثُ كِلَيْهٖ أَوْ امْرَأَةٌ وَلهٗ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتُ فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ ۚ فَإِن كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِن ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي الثُّلُثِ ۚ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دِينٍ غَيْرِ مُضَاعَفٍ ۚ وَصِيَّةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ

عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ ﴿سورة النساء: ١١-١٢﴾

- 4:11. Allah instructs you concerning [the inheritance of] your children: to the male, a portion equal to that of two females; if there are only daughters, more than two, their share is two-thirds of the estate; if there is only one [daughter], her share is a half. For parents, a sixth share of the estate goes to each, if the deceased left children; if [he left] no children, and the parents are the [only] heirs, the mother has a third, but if the deceased left siblings, the mother has a sixth. [The distribution in all cases is] after the payment of bequests and debts. With regard to your parents and your children, you do not know which of them is going to benefit you more. [These fixed shares] are ordained by Allah; and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise.
- 4:12. Your share of your wives' estate is a half, if they leave no child; but if they leave a child, you have a fourth, after payment of bequests and debts. Their share of your estate is a fourth, if you leave no child; but if you leave a child, they have an eighth of the estate, after payment of bequests and debts. If a man or woman leaves neither ascendants nor descendants, but has left a brother or a sister, each one of the two has a sixth; but if they are more than two, they share in a third, after payment of bequests and debts, without prejudice to the rights of the heirs. This is an instruction from Allah; and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Forbearing.

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These verses, and the verse at the end of the soorah, are the verses that discuss the division of the estate. They – along with the hadith of 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abbâs that is proven in *Ṣaḥeḥ al-Bukhâri*:

«Give the fixed shares (of inheritance) to those who are entitled to them, and whatever is left over goes to the closest male relative (on the father's side).» (Bukhari and Muslim)

– include most of the rulings on the fixed shares of inheritance, if not all of them, as we shall see below, apart from the shares of grandmothers, which are not mentioned in these texts.



But it is proven in *as-Sunan* from al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah and Muhammad ibn Maslamah that the Prophet (ﷺ) gave the grandmother one-sixth and, moreover, there is scholarly consensus on this point.

﴿Allah instructs you concerning [the inheritance of] your children﴾ that is, your children – O parents – are entrusted to you and Allah has instructed you to look after them, take care of their affairs both spiritual and worldly, teach them, discipline them, restrain them from committing evil, and enjoin them to obey Allah and to fear Him at all times, as He says elsewhere:

﴿O you who believe, guard yourselves and your families against a fire whose fuel is men and stones...﴾ (*at-Tahreem 66: 6*)

So children are entrusted to the care of their parents, who either fulfil the obligations of this trust, in which case they will have a great reward, or they neglect it, in which case they deserve warning and punishment. This indicates that Allah (ﷻ) is more merciful to His slaves than parents, as He instructed parents – even though they are compassionate towards their children – to take care of them.

Then Allah describes the manner in which they inherit, as He says: ﴿to the male, a portion equal to that of two females﴾. This refers to the deceased's own children, and the children of his son; the son has a portion or share equal to that of two females, if there is no other heir who is entitled to a fixed share; whatever is left after giving to others who are entitled to a fixed share is also given to the children and divided in the same manner.

The scholars are unanimously agreed on that, and that if the deceased has children, the inheritance goes to them, and the children of a son do not get anything when there are children of the deceased, male or female; this applies when there are both males and females. There are also two other scenarios: when there are only males, which we will discuss below, and when there are only females, which is mentioned here:

﴿if there are only daughters, more than two﴾ that is, daughters of the deceased or daughters of his son, three or more ﴿their share is two-thirds of the estate; if there is only one [daughter]﴾ that is, a daughter or the daughter of a son ﴿her share is a half﴾. There is scholarly consensus on this point.

But it remains to be asked: Where do we get the ruling that if there are two daughters, they may take two-thirds, as there is consensus on this point?

The answer is that we learn it from the words ﴿if there is only one [daughter], her share is a half﴾. This implies that if there is more than one daughter, the fixed share will change from one half, and there is nothing more than one half except two-thirds.

Moreover, the words ﴿to the male, a portion equal to that of two females﴾ mean that if he leaves behind a son and a daughter, then the son gets the two-thirds. Allah has told us that he gets the share of two females, which indicates that two daughters get two-thirds. Moreover, if the daughter takes one-third alongside her brother, when he affects her share more than her sister, then her taking it (one-third), when her sister is with her, is more appropriate or more expected. Furthermore, the words of Allah concerning two sisters: ﴿If there are two sisters [or more], they will have two-thirds of the estate [between them]﴾ (4: 176) is a statement about two sisters. If two sisters – even though they are not as closely related as daughters – take two-thirds, then it is more appropriate that two daughters – who are more closely related – should take two-thirds. The Prophet (ﷺ) gave two-thirds to the two daughters of Sa'd, as it says in *aş-Saheeh*.

It remains to be asked: What is the point of the phrase ﴿more than two﴾?

The answer is that the point – and Allah knows best – is so that it may be known that the fixed share, which is two-thirds, does not increase if the number of daughters is greater than two; rather it is fixed for two or more daughters.

The verse indicates that if there is one daughter and a daughter of a son or daughters of a son, then the daughter gets half; what is then left of the two-thirds ordained by Allah for daughters or son's daughters is one-sixth, which is to be given to the son's daughter or daughters. Hence this one-sixth is called the completion of the two-thirds. A similar scenario is applicable to one daughter of a son with granddaughters of a son, who are more distantly related to the deceased.

This verse also indicates that once a daughter or son's daughter has taken the two-thirds of the estate, those who are further down the line of descent of the son's daughters (or granddaughters) do not get anything, because Allah only allocated two-thirds to them and it has been taken already. If they were not excluded from inheritance, that would mean that this group would take more than two-thirds, which is contrary to the text. There is consensus among the scholars on all of these rulings, praise be to Allah.

The words «of the estate» (*lit.* of what he leaves behind) indicate that the heirs inherit everything that the deceased left behind of property, furniture, gold, silver, and so on, including even the *diyah* that only becomes due after his death and even debts that are owed to him.

Then Allah mentions the parents' share of inheritance: «For parents» that is, his father and mother «a sixth share of the estate goes to each, if the deceased left children» – this refers to his own children or his son's children, whether they are male or female, one or several. The mother gets no more than one-sixth if there are any children. In the case of the father, if there are male children, he cannot take more than one-sixth; if the children are female, one or more, and there is nothing left after dividing the estate according to fixed shares – such as those of parents and two daughters – there will be nothing left to be given to the closest male relative. But if there is anything left after the fixed shares of the

daughter or daughters have been given, then the father will receive his fixed share of one-sixth, and what is left over also goes to the father, because he is the closest male relative; we have given the fixed shares to all those who are entitled to them, so what is left goes to the closest male relative, and the father is closer than a brother or paternal uncle and the like.

﴿if [he left] no children, and the parents are the [only] heirs, the mother has a third﴾ that is, and the remainder goes to the father, because the only heirs are the parents, and the mother's share is stated (as one-third), which implies that the remainder goes to the father.

Hence it is known that if there are no children, the father has no fixed share; rather, on the basis of being the closest male relative, he inherits all the wealth, or whatever is left after the fixed shares have been allocated. But if there is a spouse as well as parents, then the husband or wife takes his or her fixed share, the mother takes one-third of what is left, and the rest goes to the father.

This is indicated by the words of Allah: ﴿...and the parents are the [only] heirs, the mother has a third﴾ that is, one-third of what the parents inherit. This occurs in the following two scenarios: either one-sixth if there is a husband, mother and father; or one-fourth if there is a wife, mother and father. The verse does not indicate that the mother inherits one-third of the entire estate when there are no children, so there is no need to say that these two scenarios are an exception.

This may be explained by noting that the share taken by the husband or wife is similar to that which is taken by creditors, thus it should come from the entire estate (before it is divided), and what is left is to be shared between the parents.

Moreover, if we give the mother one-third of the wealth (before giving the fixed share to the spouse) that will lead to her taking more than the father if it is the husband (of the deceased) who is still alive, or the father would take more than half of the one-sixth of the

mother, if it is the wife (of the deceased) who is still alive. But there is no reference to this type of scenario, because the regular scenario is either that the mother takes a share equal to that of the father, or the father takes double what the mother takes.

﴿if the deceased left siblings, the mother has a sixth﴾. This refers to full siblings or siblings through the father or through the mother, whether they are male or female, heirs (with a fixed share) or blocked (from inheriting) by the presence of the father or grandfather. But it may be said that it does not appear from the phrase ﴿if the deceased left siblings﴾ that this includes those who have no rights to a fixed share of inheritance. Therefore the presence of the siblings should not reduce the mother's share (from one-third to one-sixth) unless the siblings have the right to a fixed share. This is supported by the argument that they would reduce her share from one-third (to one-sixth), so that there will be some wealth available for them. And Allah knows best.

However, this applies provided that they are two or more. But some may find that problematic, on the basis that the word *ikhwah* (siblings) is used, which is the plural form. The response to that is that what is meant is having more than one.

Based on that, if he leaves behind a mother, a father and siblings, the mother receives one-sixth and the rest goes to the father. Thus the siblings reduce the mother's share from one-third (to one-sixth), despite the fact that the father blocks them from having any share (except in the other possible interpretation, in which the mother receives one-third and the rest goes to the father).

Then Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿[The distribution in all cases is] after the payment of bequests and debts﴾. That is, these fixed shares of inheritance become due and are to be distributed after paying off any debts that the deceased owed to Allah (such as zakâh) or to other people, and after fulfilling any bequests that the deceased had made before he died. After that, whatever is left is the estate to which the heirs are entitled.

The bequest comes first, even though it is not as important as debt, in order to highlight its importance, because fulfilling bequests may be difficult for the heirs; otherwise, debts take precedence over bequests and must be paid from the estate (before the fixed shares are allocated).

The bequest is only valid with regard to one-third or less of the estate, if it is given to a non-relative who is not an heir. Otherwise, if it is more than that, the bequest cannot be executed except with approval from all the heirs.

«With regard to your parents and your children, you do not know which of them is going to benefit you more». If dividing the estate were left to be worked out according to your reasoning and choice, it would result in harm, of which only Allah knows the extent, because people are lacking in reason and do not know what is best and more appropriate at any time or in any place. No person knows which, out of their children and their parents, will be more beneficial to them and more helpful in attaining their aims, both religious and worldly.

«[These fixed shares] are ordained by Allah; and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise» that is, they have been enjoined by Allah, Whose knowledge encompasses all things, Whose prescription of laws and regulations is precise and perfect, and whatever He decrees, He decrees it in the best way, and human minds cannot produce anything close to His sound rulings and regulations that are suitable for all times, places and situations.

«Your share», O husbands, «of your wives' estate is a half, if they leave no child; but if they leave a child, you have a fourth, after payment of bequests and debts. Their share of your estate is a fourth, if you leave no child; but if you leave a child, they have an eighth of the estate, after payment of bequests and debts»

included under the same heading as a son or child, whose presence or absence affects the ruling, are her (the deceased wife's) own children or the children, whether male or female, one or more, of her son from

this husband or from a previous husband. The children of daughters are excluded from this, according to scholarly consensus.

«If a man or woman leaves neither ascendants nor descendants, but has left a brother or a sister» that is, through the mother, as it appears in some modes of recitation. The scholars are unanimously agreed that what is meant by siblings here is siblings through the mother. If the deceased left neither ascendants nor descendants, that is he left no parent or child, no father or grandfather, no son, no son's son, no daughter, no son's daughter, no matter how far the line of descent reaches, this is called *kalâlah* (the case in which the deceased leaves neither ascendants nor descendants). This is how it was explained by Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (رضي الله عنه), and there is scholarly agreement on this point, praise be to Allah.

«each one of the two» that is, of the brother and sister «has a sixth».

«but if they are more than two, they share in a third» that is, they do not get any more than one-third, even if they are more than two. The words «they share in a third» indicate that both male and females get equal shares in this case, because the word translated here as «share» indicates equal shares.

The word *kalâlah*, paraphrased here as «[leaving] neither ascendants nor descendants» refers to descendants, no matter how far the line of descent extends, and male ascendants, no matter how far the line of ascent extends. They cancel the share of siblings through the mother, because Allah did not give the latter a share of inheritance except in the case of *kalâlah*; were it not for *kalâlah*, they would not inherit anything at all, according to scholarly consensus.

The words «they share in a third» indicate that full siblings have no allocated share in the case where there is a husband, mother, siblings through the mother and full siblings. The husband receives half, the mother receives one-sixth, and the siblings through the mother receive (the remaining) third; in this case the full siblings do not receive

anything, because Allah allocated one-third to the siblings through the mother. If the full siblings had a share, that would include something that Allah did not include in His ruling. Moreover, the siblings through the mother have a fixed share, whereas full siblings would inherit (what is left after distribution of the fixed shares) on the basis of being male relatives through the father.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Give the fixed shares to those to whom they are due, and whatever is left should go to the closest male relative.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Those to whom fixed shares are due are those whose shares were allocated by Allah, and in this case (mentioned above – kalālah), there is nothing left after the fixed shares have been distributed. Therefore the full siblings do not receive anything. This is the correct view concerning this matter.

With regard to the inheritance of siblings, full sisters or sisters through the father, that is mentioned in the verse in which Allah says: ﴿They ask you for a ruling. Say: Allah gives you a ruling concerning those who die leaving neither ascendants nor descendants﴾ (4: 176).

If there is (only) one sister, whether she is a full sister or a sister through the father, she receives half of the estate; if there are (only) two sisters, they receive two-thirds. If there is one full sister with a sister or sisters through the father, she (the full sister) receives half and the rest of the two-thirds goes to the sister or sisters through the father. This is the one-sixth that completes the two-thirds. If the full sisters took all of the two-thirds, then the sisters through the father do not receive anything, as was stated above in the case of daughters and son's daughters. If the siblings are both men and women, then the males each receive a portion or share equal to that of two females.

If it is asked: Can we work out from the Qur'an the ruling on the inheritance of a killer, a slave, a relative who follows a different religion, a partially manumitted slave, a hermaphrodite, a grandfather



in the presence of siblings from a different mother, *al-'awl* (where the sum of fixed shares exceeds one hundred per cent and there is a shortfall), *ar-radd* (where the sum of fixed shares is less than one hundred per cent and there is something left over), *dhuwil arhām* (distant relatives), other relatives, sisters from a different mother in the presence of daughters or son's daughter, or not?

The answer is: Yes, all of the cases mentioned are referred to in an implicit and subtle manner, which may be difficult to understand except for the one who examines the matter thoroughly. In the case of the killer and a relative who follows a different religion, it is known that they do not inherit, because Allah has already explained that the distribution of wealth to the heirs is based on the closeness of blood ties and how beneficial they are in religious and worldly terms.

Allah (ﷻ) refers to this wisdom in the words: ﴿you do not know which of them is going to benefit you more﴾ (4: 11). It is known that the killer has caused the greatest harm to the one from whom he would have inherited, so the reason for him to inherit cannot be compared to the harm caused by killing, which is opposite to the benefit which is the reason for inheritance. Thus it is known that killing is the greatest impediment to inheritance and it is a severing of the ties of kinship of which Allah says:

﴿...And kindred by blood are nearer to one another [regarding inheritance], according to the decree ordained by Allah...﴾ (*al-Aḥzāb* 33: 6)

Although this is an established principle of Sharia, the one who tries to expedite something before its time is punished by being deprived of it.

Similarly, we may conclude that the one who is of a different religion to the deceased does not inherit from him, because there is an impediment to the reason for inheritance. Ties of blood dictate inheritance, but the impediment of the difference in religion dictates that all ties that would strengthen this impediment be severed. Thus

the reason for inheritance, namely blood ties, is rendered invalid because of this impediment. This is explained by the fact that Allah (ﷻ) has ordained that the rights of Muslims take priority over the worldly rights of relatives who are disbelievers. If a Muslim dies, his wealth is transferred to those who are closest to him and most entitled to it. The words of Allah, ﴿And kindred by blood are nearer to one another [regarding inheritance], according to the decree ordained by Allah﴾, are applicable if they have the same religion, but if they are of different religions, then the brotherhood of faith takes precedence over the brotherhood of blood.

Ibn al-Qayyim said in *Jalā' al-Afhām*:

Think about this meaning of the verse of inheritance, in which Allah made mutual inheritance conditional upon the word wife [*zawjah*], not woman [*imra'ah*, which may also mean wife], as He said: ﴿Your share of your wives' estate is a half﴾ (4: 12), to indicate that this mutual inheritance is only because of being spouses, which is indicative of similarities and of one being part of the other. But there is no similarity between the believer and the disbeliever, and the one cannot be part of the other. Therefore there is no inheritance between them. The subtle meanings of the words and phrases of the Qur'an are above the comprehension of humankind.

In the case of the slave, he does not inherit and he cannot be inherited from. With regard to his not being inherited from, this is clear, because he does not own anything that could be inherited from him; rather everything he owns belongs to his master. With regard to his not inheriting, that is because he cannot own anything; all that he owns belongs to his master, and he is not related to the deceased. Thus we conclude that the words of Allah, ﴿to the male, a portion equal to that of two females﴾, ﴿Your share of your wives' estate is a half﴾, ﴿each one of the two has a sixth﴾ and so on, apply only to those who may own property. The slave, however, cannot own anything, thus it is known that he cannot inherit anything.

As for the slave who is partially manumitted, the rulings concerning him are applied partially; to the extent that he is free, he is entitled to what Allah has allocated to him of inheritance, because he may own property commensurate with the degree to which he has been manumitted, whilst the proportion that is still enslaved does not come under that ruling. So the partially manumitted slave may inherit or be inherited from, and his presence may block others from inheriting, commensurate with the extent to which he is free.

With regard to the hermaphrodite, he must be either clearly masculine or feminine, or ambiguous. If he is clearly of one gender or the other, then the matter is clear.

If male, then he comes under the same ruling as males and the text that speaks of males applies to him. If female, then she comes under the same rulings as females, and the text that speaks of females applies to her.

If ambiguous, then in cases where there is no difference in inheritance between males and females – as in the case of siblings through the mother – then the matter is clear.

In cases where the share of inheritance differs according to gender, and we have no way of knowing that, we cannot give him the higher share, because of the possibility that that may lead to injustice to the other heirs, but we cannot give him the lower share either, because of the possibility that that may lead to injustice to him. So we must follow a middle path between the two, and do what is most just, because Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...Be just; that is nearer to true piety...﴾ (*al-Mā'idah* 5: 8)

– and there is no way we can be just in this case except by following what is suggested above, which is to adopt a middle path.

﴿Allah does not place on any soul a burden greater than it can bear...﴾ (*al-Baqarah* 2: 286)

﴿So fear Allah as best you can...﴾ (*at-Taghābun* 64: 16)

With regard to the inheritance of the grandfather when there are also full siblings or siblings through the father, do they inherit as well as him or not? The Book of Allah supports the opinion of Abu Bakr aş-Şiddeeq (رضي الله عنه), that the grandfather blocks the full siblings or siblings through the father or mother, just as the father does.

The reason for that is that the grandfather is referred to as a father in many places in the Qur'an, such as the following:

﴿Or were you present when death came to Ya'qoob? He said to his sons: What will you worship after I am gone? They said: We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, of Ibrâheem, Ismâ'eel and Is-hâq...﴾ (al-Baqarah 2: 133)

Yoosuf (عليه السلام) said:

﴿I follow the religion of my fathers, of Ibrâheem, Is-hâq and Ya'qoob...﴾ (Yoosuf 12: 38)

Thus we see that Allah described the grandfather and the father's grandfather as a father, which indicates that the grandfather is of the same status as the father; he inherits what the father inherits and he blocks those whom the father blocks.

As the scholars are unanimously agreed that the grandfather comes under the same rulings as the father when the father is not alive, and takes his share of inheritance alongside the children and others, such as the children of siblings (nephews and nieces), paternal uncles and their children, and other rulings of inheritance, he should also come under the same rulings with regard to blocking siblings from a different mother.

As the son's son is of the same status as the deceased's own son, why should the grandfather not be of the same status as the father? If there is a grandfather of the father as well as the son of a brother, then the scholars are unanimously agreed that the grandfather blocks the nephew, so why should the grandfather of the deceased not block his brother? Those scholars who allocate a share of inheritance to

siblings when the grandfather is present have no text to support their view, and no indication, hint or sound analogy.

With regard to the issue of al-‘awl (where the sum of fixed shares exceeds one hundred per cent and there is a shortfall), the ruling is referred to in the Qur’an. Allah (ﷻ) has allocated fixed shares to those who are entitled to inherit, which leads to one of two scenarios: either some of them block others, or they do not.

If some of them block others, those who are blocked are dismissed and are not entitled to anything. If they do not block one another, then either the fixed shares will not use up all of the estate (and there will be something left over), or they will use it all up without anything being left over or any shortfall, or the sum of the fixed shares will be greater than the estate. In the first two cases, each heir will be able to take his fixed share in full, but in the last case – in which the sum of the fixed shares is greater than the estate – there will be two possible solutions:

In the first possible solution, some of the fixed shares that have been ordained by Allah will be reduced, whilst others receive their shares in full, which is an action for which there is no evidence, and it is not appropriate to give some less than their fixed share but not others. Therefore there is only the second option, which is to give each one as close to his allocated share as possible, and we must work out a way of making the loss of each heir commensurate with his or her share of the inheritance, as is done with debts owed to lenders, if the total debt is greater than the debtor’s wealth. There is no way to do that except through al-‘awl; thus it is known that Allah has explained al-‘awl in the fixed shares of inheritance in His Book.

The exact opposite of this scenario is called ar-radd (where the sum of fixed shares is less than one hundred per cent and there is something left over). If the fixed shares do not use up the entire estate, and there is something left over to which no relatives on the father’s side, whether closely or distantly related, are entitled, there

is no evidence to support giving it to one of the heirs, and giving it to someone else who is not related to the deceased is unjust and unfair, and is contrary to the words of Allah:

﴿...But kindred by blood are nearer to one another [regarding inheritance] according to the decree ordained by Allah...﴾ (*al-Anfāl* 8: 75)

Therefore the only option is to share out the surplus among the heirs who are entitled to fixed shares, commensurate with the share of each one.

Therefore, because the relationship between the spouses is not one of blood ties, they are not entitled to the extra portion commensurate with their fixed share. This is according to those scholars who say that spouses do not inherit from anything that is left over after the fixed shares of inheritance have been distributed; they are the majority of those who say that what is left over is to be divided among the heirs (*ar-radd*). Based on that, the guideline for dividing the surplus is that the one who is entitled to a fixed share is a relative. According to the other view, spouses are like others who are entitled to fixed shares, thus they have the right to a portion of what is left over of the estate. As their share is decreased when there is a shortfall (*al-'awl*), it should be increased when there is a surplus, like that of others. The reason, according to this view, is that (the spouse) is an heir who is entitled to a fixed share, (therefore he is also entitled to a share of the surplus). This is the correct view as indicated by the Qur'an and Sunnah, and by sound analogy. And Allah knows best.

Similarly, we also learn about the inheritance of *dhawil-arhām* (distant relatives). If the deceased did not leave behind anyone who is entitled to a fixed share, or any relatives on his father's side, then either his wealth will go to the *bayt al-mâl* (treasury of the Islamic state), to the benefit of non-relatives, or his wealth will go to those relatives who are connected to those who would have been entitled

to fixed shares if they were still alive. This is indicated by the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

«...But kindred by blood are nearer to one another [regarding inheritance] according to the decree ordained by Allah...» (*al-Anfāl* 8: 75)

Giving it to people other than them in this case is depriving those who are more entitled than others; thus we learn that dhawil-arḥām may inherit.

Even though it is known that they may inherit, we know that they have no fixed share that is allocated to them in the Book of Allah, and that there are intermediaries between them and the deceased, because of whom they become relatives; hence they take the place of those through whom they are connected to the deceased. And Allah knows best.

With regard to giving what is left to relatives on the father's side, such as sons, brothers and their sons, and paternal uncles and their sons, and so on, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«Give the fixed shares to those who are entitled to them, and whatever is left over goes to the closest male relatives.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

Allah (ﷻ) says: «We have appointed heirs for everything that parents and close relatives leave behind» (4: 33).

So if we have given the fixed shares to those who are entitled to them, and there is nothing left, the relatives on the father's side are not entitled to anything; if there is anything left, then it goes to the closest relatives on the father's side, depending on the type and level of relationship.

There are five types of connection on the father's side: sons, then fathers (including grandfathers), then brothers and their sons, then paternal uncles and their sons, then freed slaves (of the deceased). Priority should be given to the most closely related. If they are all of

the same degree, then it goes to the one with the strongest connection, which is the full brother. If they are all equal in that regard, then they share it. And Allah knows best.

As far as sisters from a different mother are concerned, alongside daughters (of the deceased) or daughters of the son (of the deceased), with regard to the fact that they may be treated like male relatives on the father's side and may take what is left after the fixed shares are distributed, that is because there is nothing in the Qur'an to indicate that sisters should be blocked by the presence of daughters.

As that is the case, if there is anything left after the daughters have taken their fixed shares, then what is left is to be given to the sisters, and should not be given to any relatives on the father's side who are more distantly related than them, such as a brother's son or paternal uncle, or anyone who is even more distantly related than that. And Allah knows best.



﴿ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٣-١٤)

- 4:13. These are the limits [set by] Allah. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, [Allah] will admit him to gardens through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever, and that will be the supreme triumph.
- 4:14. But whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses His limits, [Allah] will admit him to a fire, to abide therein forever. And his will be a humiliating punishment.



The details that have been mentioned concerning inheritance are the limits of Allah that must be adhered to; we must not transgress them or fall short of them. This indicates that bequests to heirs are abrogated, as Allah (ﷻ) has decreed the fixed shares of the heirs.

«These are the limits [set by] Allah». Therefore bequeathing to an heir more than he is entitled to comes under the heading of this transgression. Moreover, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:  
«There is no bequest to an heir.» (Recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dâwood, at-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Mâjah; according to Aḥmad and at-Tirmidhi, the hadith is reliable)

Then mention is made of obedience versus disobedience to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) in general terms, which includes adhering to and falling short of the limits set by Allah with regard to the fixed shares of inheritance.

«Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger» by obeying their commands, the most important of which has to do with affirming the oneness of Allah (*tawḥeed*), then other commands of various types, and heeding their prohibitions, the most important of which has to do with associating others with Allah (*shirk*), then other sins of various types  
«[Allah] will admit him to gardens through which rivers flow, to abide therein forever».

So whoever carries out the commands and heeds the prohibitions will inevitably be admitted to paradise and saved from hell.  
«and that will be the supreme triumph» by which he will attain salvation from His wrath and punishment, and will attain His reward and pleasure, and eternal bliss that cannot be described.

«But whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses His limits, [Allah] will admit him to a fire, to abide therein forever. And his will be a humiliating punishment». Disobedience includes disbelief and other, lesser sins. Therefore understanding this leaves no

room for the specious argument of the Kharijites, who say that sinners become disbelievers (by virtue of their sin). Allah (ﷻ) has made admittance to paradise conditional upon obedience to Him and to His Messenger (ﷺ), and He has made admittance to hell conditional upon disobedience to Him and His Messenger (ﷺ). Whoever obeys Him completely will enter paradise without being punished, and whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) completely, which includes association of others with Him and other, lesser sins, will enter hell and abide therein forever. The one who combines disobedience and obedience will be subject to reward and punishment commensurate with the extent of his obedience and disobedience. The *mutawâtir* texts indicate that those who are obedient with regard to belief in the oneness of Allah will not abide forever in hell, because what they have of belief in His oneness will prevent them abiding therein forever.



﴿وَالَّذِي يَأْتِيكَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نِسَائِكَ فَأَسْتَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّى يَتَوَفَّيَهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٥﴾ وَالَّذَانِ يَأْتِيَنِهَا مِنْكُمْ فَتَاذُوهُمَا فَإِن تَابَا وَأَصْلَحَا فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٦﴾﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٥-١٦)

- 4:15. If any of your women are guilty of immoral conduct, take the evidence of four [reliable] witnesses from amongst you against them, and if they testify, confine them in their homes until death takes them, or Allah ordains for them some [other] way.
- 4:16. If two among you are guilty of [immoral conduct], punish them both. Then if they repent and mend their ways, leave them alone, for Allah is ever Accepting of repentance, Most Merciful.

This refers to women who «are guilty of immoral conduct», namely fornication, which is described as immoral conduct because of its abhorrent nature.

«take the evidence of four [reliable] witnesses from amongst you against them» that is, believing men of good character «and if they testify, confine them in their homes» and prevent them from that type of going out which leads to suspicion; this confinement is also a kind of punishment «until death takes them» which would be the end of their confinement or detention «or Allah ordains for them some [other] way» that is, a way other than confinement in their houses. This verse has not been abrogated; rather this was a temporary solution. This is how it was at the beginning of Islam, until Allah ordained another way for them, which is stoning for one who was previously married and flogging for one who was not previously married.

Similarly, «If two among you» men or women, «are guilty of [immoral conduct], punish them both», with harsh words, rebuke, shaming and beating, as a deterrent from such immoral conduct. Based on that, if men are guilty of immoral conduct, they are to be punished, and women who do that are to be confined and punished.

Confinement will end with death, and punishment will end with repentance and mending one's ways. Hence Allah says: «Then if they repent» that is, give up the sins they have committed, regret it and resolve not to do it again «and mend their ways» by doing things that are indicative of sincere repentance «leave them alone» and do not punish them «for Allah is ever Accepting of repentance, Most Merciful» that is, He always accepts the repentance of sinners, and He is extremely merciful and kind; by His kindness He helps them to repent, accepts it from them, and pardons them for what they have done.

From these two verses we understand that proof of fornication must be given by four believing men, and it is more appropriate that they should be of good character, because Allah has ordained strict conditions for proving this immoral action, so as to protect the dignity of His slaves. Hence the testimony of women on their own, or of both men and women, or of less than four men, is not acceptable.

It is also essential that the testimony be delivered clearly, as indicated by the *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadiths and as referred to in this verse, where Allah says: ﴿take the evidence of four [reliable] witnesses from amongst you against them﴾. But He did not stop there; rather He said ﴿and if they testify﴾ that is, there must be clear testimony on the part of eyewitnesses, and it should be spoken bluntly, without hints or metaphors.

From these two verses we understand that punishment in the form of harsh words and actions, and confinement, is prescribed by Allah as a disciplinary punishment because of the nature of the sin, so that this punishment may serve as a deterrent.



﴿ إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْإِسْلَامَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَرَاءُ أُولَئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

(سورة النساء: ١٧-١٨) ﴿١٨﴾

- 4:17. Allah only accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and repent soon afterwards; to them will Allah turn in mercy, for Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise.

4:18. But of no avail is the repentance of those who continue to do evil until, when death approaches any one of them, he says: Now I repent, nor [the repentance] of those who die as disbelievers; for them have We prepared a painful punishment.

Allah's mercy to His slaves includes guidance to repent and acceptance thereof after the individual repents. Here He tells us that the repentance that Allah has promised to accept, which is a promise that He took upon Himself out of kindness and generosity on His part, is the repentance of the one who does evil, that is he commits sin ﴿in ignorance﴾, because he is ignorant of the consequences and does not know that it will incur the wrath and punishment of Allah; he is also unaware that Allah is constantly watching him, and he does not know what it leads to of diminishing or erasing faith. Everyone who disobeys Allah is ignorant in this sense, even if he is aware of the prohibition of that sin; in fact awareness of the prohibition is a condition of an action being a sin and punishable.

﴿and repent soon afterwards﴾. This may be understood as meaning: then they repent before death comes to them, for Allah will definitely accept the repentance of His slave if he repents before he sees death and the punishment. However, after death comes, no repentance will be accepted from the sinners and no acknowledgement of the truth will be accepted from the disbelievers, as Allah says:

﴿...until, when he [Pharaoh] was about to drown, he said: I believe that there is no god but He in Whom the Children of Israel believe...﴾  
(*Yoonus 10: 90*)

﴿But when they saw Our punishment, they said: We believe in Allah alone, and we reject that which we used to associate with Him. But their believing after they had seen Our punishment could not benefit them at all. Such has always been the way of Allah in dealing with His slaves...﴾ (*Ghāfir 40: 84-85*)

Here, Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿But of no avail is the repentance of those who continue to do evil﴾ that is, sins that are of a lesser degree than disbelief.

﴿until, when death approaches any one of them, he says: Now I repent; nor [the repentance] of those who die as disbelievers; for them have We prepared a painful punishment﴾. That is because, in this case, repentance is due to compulsion, and will not benefit the one who repents. Repentance only benefits the one who repents by choice.

Or it may be that what is meant by the words ﴿and repent soon afterwards﴾ is: soon after committing the sin for which repentance is required. In this case what is meant is: the one who hastens to give up sin as soon as he has committed it, and turns to Allah in repentance, regretting what he has done, Allah will accept his repentance, unlike the one who persists in his sins until sinfulness becomes entrenched in him, then it becomes difficult for him to fulfil the conditions required for complete repentance. Such a person is not usually guided or inspired to repent, and the means that lead to repentance are not usually made available to him, such as the one who does evil despite full and certain knowledge that it is wrong, but he is heedless and does not care that Allah is watching him; in that case he has barred the way of mercy for himself.

Yes, Allah may guide one who persists in committing the sin deliberately, with full awareness of what he is doing, in such a manner that his repentance is acceptable, by means of which Allah will erase his previous sins and offences, but mercy and guidance to repent are more likely in the former case. Hence the first verse ends with the phrase ﴿for Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise﴾; part of His knowledge is knowing who is sincere and who is not, and He will requite each of them in the manner he deserves, according to His wisdom. His wisdom also dictates that He should guide those who His wisdom and mercy dictate should be guided to repent, and that He should forsake those

who His mercy and justice dictate should not be guided (to repent).  
And Allah knows best.



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرْهًا وَلَا تَقْضُوا لَهُنَّ  
لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَآءَاتِيْتُهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَحِشَةٍ مُّبِينَةٍ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ  
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا  
كَثِيرًا ﴿١٩﴾ وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَءَاتَيْتُمْ إِيَّاهُنَّ  
قَنْطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا ۚ أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ بُهْتَانًا وَإِنَّمَا مُبِينًا ﴿٢٠﴾ وَكَيْفَ  
تَأْخُذُونَهُ ۚ وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْتُمْ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا

﴿١٩﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٩-٢١)

- 4:19. O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will, nor to hinder them from marrying others, in order to take away some of what you have given them, unless they are guilty of brazenly immoral conduct; but live with them in kindness. If you take a dislike to them it may be that you dislike a thing, and Allah brings about through it a great deal of good.
- 4:20. But if you decide to replace one wife with another, even if you had given one of them a heap of gold, do not take the least bit of it back. Would you take it wrongfully and sinfully?
- 4:21. And how could you take it when you have been intimate with one another, and they have taken from you a solemn covenant?

During the jāhiliyah, if a man died and left his wife behind, his relative, such as his brother or cousin and so on, thought that he had more right to claim her than anyone else, and he would keep her away from everyone else whether she liked that or not. If he liked her, he

would marry her for a dowry of whatever amount he wanted, without consulting her, and if he did not like her, he would hinder her from marrying anyone else, and she would not be able to marry anyone except someone whom he chose; he might even refuse to let her get married until she gave him some of his (deceased) relative's estate or some of her (original) dowry. A man would also hinder his wife, if he disliked her, so that he could take back some of that which he had given her. Hence Allah forbade the believers to do any of these things, except in two cases: if she agreed and chose to marry her first husband's relative, as we understand from the phrase «against her will»; or if she was guilty of brazenly immoral conduct, such as fornication, obscene speech or harming her husband. In this case it is permissible for him to hinder her, as a punishment to her for her action, so that she may ransom herself from him if his hindering was justifiable.

«but live with them in kindness». This includes interactions in word and deed. The husband is obliged to live with his wife in kindness, which includes keeping her company in a good manner, not annoying or harming her, and showing kindness and treating her with respect. That also includes maintenance, clothing and so on. The husband is obliged to treat his wife in the manner that is expected of a man of his calibre towards a woman of her calibre, in that particular time and place; this differs from one situation to another.

«If you take a dislike to them it may be that you dislike a thing, and Allah brings about through it a great deal of good» that is, you – O husbands – should keep your wives even if you dislike them, for there is a great deal of good in that, such as obedience to the command of Allah and accepting His advice, which leads to happiness in this world and the hereafter.

So the husband should force himself – even if he does not love her – to strive to develop a good attitude so that he can treat her kindly; perhaps his dislike of her will disappear, to be replaced by love, as



usually happens; or perhaps Allah will bless him with a righteous child from her, who will benefit his (or her) parents in this world and the hereafter. All of that applies if it is possible to keep her without transgressing the limits. Then if there is no option but to separate, and there is no way he can keep her, in that case keeping her is not a must, rather ﴿if you decide to replace one wife with another﴾, that is by divorcing one wife and marrying another, there is no sin and no blame on you for doing that. But even if ﴿you had given one of them﴾ that is, the one you are leaving or the one you are marrying ﴿a heap of gold﴾ that is, a great deal of wealth, ﴿do not take the least bit of it back﴾; rather give it in full and do not delay payment.

This verse indicates that it is not prohibited to give a large mahr (dowry), even though it is better and more appropriate to follow the example of the Prophet (ﷺ) in giving a moderate dowry. This may be understood as meaning that Allah is referring to something that people do, without denouncing it, which indicates that it is not prohibited.

But giving a large amount may be disallowed, if it leads to mischief and undermining some religious principles, without serving any significant interest.

﴿And how could you take it when you have been intimate with one another, and they have taken from you a solemn covenant?﴾ What this means is: before the marriage contract, the wife was forbidden to the husband, and she would not accept becoming permissible for him except by means of this dowry that he pays to her. Then once he has consummated the marriage with her, been intimate with her and touched her in a manner that was previously forbidden and which she would not have accepted without that compensation, he has taken his part of the deal, and the mahr (dowry) is now due from him. So how can he take his part of the deal, then after that take her part of it (namely the dowry). This is the worst kind of injustice. Moreover, Allah took a solemn covenant from husbands by means of the marriage contract, that they should fulfil their duties towards their wives.



﴿وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَجِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا﴾ (سورة النساء: ٢٢)

- 4:22. Do not marry women whom your fathers married, except what is already past: It was shameful and odious, an abominable custom indeed.

That is, do not marry women whom your fathers or forefathers married

﴿It was shameful﴾ that is, it was extremely abhorrent

﴿and odious﴾ that is, hateful to Allah and to people; indeed because of that, a son may hate a father and a father may hate a son, at the time when the son is enjoined to be kind to his father.

﴿an abominable custom indeed﴾ that is because this is one of the customs of the jāhiliyah (time of ignorance) which Islam came to disavow.



﴿حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمْ أَلَّتِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ مِمَّنْ أَرْضَعْتُمْ وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبِّبَاتُكُمْ أَلَّتِي فِي حُجُورِكُمْ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمُ الَّتِي دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ إِنْ لَمْ تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَحَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ وَأَنْ تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأُحِلَّ لَكُمْ مَا وَرَاءَهُ ذَلِكَ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ

مُسْفِحِينَ<sup>٤</sup> فَمَا اسْتَتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَاتُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ بَرَكَاتٍ وَرِضَىٰ ۗ وَلَا جُنَاحَ  
عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا تَرَضَيْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٢٤﴾ (سورة)

(النساء: ٢٣-٢٤)

- 4:23. Prohibited to you [for marriage] are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters; your paternal aunts, your maternal aunts; your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters; your foster mothers, your foster sisters; your wives' mothers; your stepdaughters under your guardianship, born of your wives with whom you have consummated the marriage – and there will be no blame on you [if you marry the daughters] of [ex-wives] with whom you did not consummate the marriage; [those who have been] wives of your sons who are from your own loins; and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what is past, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful;
- 4:24. Also [prohibited are] women already married, except any slave-girls you may own. This is Allah's ordinance, binding upon you. All women other than these are lawful for you, so that you may seek them with your wealth in honest wedlock, not fornication. When you consummate your marriage with them, give the dowries due to them. There is no sin on you in what you mutually agree upon [of changes] after the [initial] agreement. And Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise.<sup>5</sup>

These verses include those who are *mahram* (prohibited for marriage) through blood ties, through breastfeeding (from a foster-mother) and through marriage, as well as combinations of relatives to whom marriage at the same time is prohibited. They also describe which women are permissible for marriage.

<sup>5</sup> v. 24 is actually the first verse of Juz' 5, but as the author treated vv. 23-24 as a single passage, we included it in Juz' 4. (Translator)

Those who are prohibited for marriage through blood ties are seven whom Allah mentions here: the mother, which includes anyone who is connected to you through having given birth, no matter how far the line extends; the daughter, which includes anyone who has been born from you; sisters, which includes full sisters and half-sisters through either the father or mother; paternal aunts, which includes any sister of your father or grandfather, no matter how far the line of ascent extends; maternal aunts, which includes any sister of your mother or grandmother, no matter how far the line of ascent extends, whether she is an heir or not; daughters of brothers and daughters of sisters, no matter how far the line of descent extends.

These are the maḥrams or women to whom marriage is prohibited because of blood ties, according to scholarly consensus, as stated in this verse. All others, apart from these, are included in the words: «All women other than these are lawful for you» (4: 24), such as daughters of paternal aunts and uncles, and daughters of maternal aunts and uncles.

Those who are prohibited through breastfeeding by a foster mother, whom Allah mentions here, are the (foster) mother and (foster) sister. This indicates that the foster mother is prohibited for marriage even though the milk does not belong to her; rather it belongs to her husband (the father of the child whose birth is the cause of the milk supply being available). Pointing this out indicates that the owner of the milk (that is, the husband of the foster mother) is a father to the infant who is nursed by the foster mother. Once it is established that the foster mother is a mother to the infant and her husband is a father to him, anyone connected to them is also proven to be a maḥram or prohibited for marriage to the person who is breastfed by that foster mother, such as their siblings and their ascendants and descendants.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:  
 «What becomes maḥram (forbidden for marriage) through breastfeeding is that which becomes maḥram through blood ties.»  
 (Recorded by Abu Dâwood; al-Albâni graded it as sound)

Thus the prohibition will spread from the foster mother and from the owner of the milk to their relatives; however it only affects the offspring of the individual who was breastfed. That is on condition that five full breastfeedings occur during the first two years of life, as explained in the Sunnah.

Those who are prohibited through ties of marriage are four: the wives of one's father or grandfather, no matter how far the line of ascent extends; the wives of one's sons or grandsons, no matter how far the line of descent extends, whether they are heirs or blocked from inheriting; the mother or grandmothers of one's wife, no matter how far the line of ascent extends – these three become mahrams as soon as a marriage contract is done.

The fourth is the stepdaughter, that is the daughter or granddaughter of one's wife, no matter how far the line of descent extends. She does not become a mahram until he consummates the marriage with his wife, as Allah says here: ﴿your stepdaughters under your guardianship, born of your wives with whom you have consummated the marriage﴾.

The majority of scholars say that the words ﴿under your guardianship﴾ refer to what is usually the case, and is not to be regarded as a condition of the stepdaughter becoming a mahram. The stepdaughter becomes a mahram even if she is not under his guardianship, but there are two benefits of mentioning this description:

- 1- It highlights the wisdom behind prohibiting the stepdaughter for marriage, which is that she is like a daughter, so it is abhorrent to permit marriage to her;
- 2- It indicates that it is permissible to be alone with a stepdaughter, and she is like others who are under his care, such as his own daughter and so on. And Allah knows best.

With regard to combinations of relatives to whom marriage at the same time is prohibited, Allah mentioned being married to two sisters at the same time, and forbade it. The Prophet (ﷺ) forbade being married to a woman and her paternal aunt, or maternal aunt, at the

same time. Any two women between whom are ties of kinship, and if one of them was male and the other female, she would be prohibited for marriage to him, it is prohibited to be married to both of them at the same time. That is because this may be a cause of severing ties of kinship.

Also prohibited for marriage are «women already married», that is those who have husbands. It is prohibited to marry them so long as they are still married, unless they are divorced and have completed the *'iddah*.

«except any slave-girls you may own» that is, those who have been captured in war. If a disbelieving woman who is married is captured in war, she becomes permissible for the Muslims after one menstrual cycle has passed (which serves to establish that she is not pregnant). But if a married slave woman is sold or given, her marriage is not invalidated because the second owner is in the same position as the previous owner, and because of the story of Bareerah,<sup>6</sup> when the Prophet (ﷺ) gave her the choice.

«This is Allah's ordinance, binding upon you» that is, you must adhere to following its guidance, because in it is healing and light, and the explanation of what is permitted and what is prohibited.

«All women other than these are lawful for you» – this refers to all of those who are not mentioned in this verse; they are permissible and good. Thus what is prohibited is limited, but there is no limit to or

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<sup>6</sup> The story of Bareerah, when she was set free and she chose to annul her marriage to her husband, who was still a slave. Her husband loved her, and he was walking behind her on the streets of Madinah with tears flowing down his cheeks, pleading with her to come back to him, and she refused. «The Prophet (ﷺ) interceded for him and said to her: O Bareerah, fear Allah, for he is your husband and the father of your child. She said: O Messenger of Allah, are you commanding me to do that? He said: No, I am just interceding. She said: I have no need of him.» (Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, no. 2231; also recorded by an-Nasā'i and authenticated by al-Albāni)

restriction on that which is permitted. This is the kindness and mercy of Allah, and is intended to make things easy for people.

﴿so that you may seek them with your wealth﴾ that is, so that you may seek those whom you have seen and chosen from among those whom Allah has permitted to you, provided that your aim is ﴿honest wedlock﴾ that is, provided that you are seeking chastity, avoiding fornication and seeking to help your women remain chaste too.

﴿not fornication﴾. The one who commits fornication is not keeping his wife chaste, because he is fulfilling his desires in a prohibited manner, so his desire for permissible sex is weakened, and thus he is failing to keep his wife chaste. This indicates that no one should marry a person who is not chaste, because Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿A man who fornicates may only marry a woman who fornicates or who is a polytheist, and a woman who fornicates may only marry a man who fornicates or who is a polytheist. Such marriages are forbidden to the believers.﴾ (*an-Noor* 24: 3)

﴿When you consummate your marriage with them, give the dowries due to them﴾ that is, in return for intimacy. Hence when the husband consummates the marriage with his wife, the dowry becomes due.

﴿due to them﴾ that is, giving the dowry to them is a duty enjoined by Allah upon you; it is not something optional that if the man wishes he may give it and if he wishes he may withhold it. Or it may be that what is meant by the words ﴿due to them﴾ is: the sum that you agreed to, therefore it becomes binding upon you, so do not detract anything from it.

﴿There is no sin on you in what you mutually agree upon [of changes] after the [initial] agreement﴾ that is, anything extra that is given by the husband, or anything that the wife waives willingly. This is the view of many of the commentators. Many of them said: this verse was revealed concerning temporary marriage (*mut'ah*) with women, which was permissible at the beginning of Islam, then the

Prophet (ﷺ) forbade it; the verse states that one should set a time limit (for the temporary marriage) and agree on payment, then once the time has ended, if they mutually agree to increase or decrease the amount of payment, there is no blame on them. And Allah knows best.

﴿And Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise﴾ that is, He has perfect and vast knowledge, and perfect wisdom. By His knowledge and wisdom He has decreed these laws for you and set these limits that separate what is permissible from what is forbidden.



﴿وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكَحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِنْ مِمَّا  
 مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنْ فَنِيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ  
 بَعْضٍ ۗ فَأَنْكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَءَاتُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ  
 مُسْفُوحَاتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ ۗ فَإِذَا أُحْصِنَ فَإِنَّ أَنْتَ بِفَحْشَتِهِنَّ فَعَلَيْنَ  
 يَصِفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ۗ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْ  
 تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾﴾ (سورة النساء: ٢٥)

- 4:25. If any of you does not have the means to marry free believing women, he may marry believing women from among the slave women whom you own and Allah knows best about your faith; you belong to one another. Marry them with the permission of their masters, and give them their dowries, according to what is reasonable. They should be chaste, not given to committing fornication or having illicit relationships. When they are married, if they commit adultery, their punishment shall be half that of free women. This is for those of you who fear that you will sin; but if you practise self-restraint, that is better for you. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Juz' 5 actually begins with v. 24, but as the author treated vv. 23-24 as a single passage, we included it in Juz' 4. (Translator)