

Saying, 'Inshaa'allaah' (If Allaah Wills) when determining to do something in the future

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Source : Tafseer Ibn Kathir of Soorah al-Kahf

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[And never say of anything, "I shall do such and such thing tomorrow." Except (with the saying), "If Allaah wills!" And remember your Lord when you forget and say: "It may be that my Lord guides me to a nearer way of truth than this."]¹

When Allaah's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم)² declared Allaah's Oneness and proclaimed to be the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and revelation of Divine Message, the disbelievers of Makkah sent some men to Jewish rabbis in al-Madinah and said: "Ask them (the rabbis) about Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and describe him to them, and tell them what he is saying. They are the people of the first Book, and they have more knowledge of the Prophets than we do.' So they set out for al-Madinah, they asked the Jewish rabbis about the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم). They described him to them and told them some of his teachings.

The rabbis said: 'Ask him about three things which we will tell you to ask, if he answers them then he is a Prophet who has been sent (by Allaah); if he does not, then he is saying things that are not true, in which case how you will deal with him will be up to you. Ask him about some young men in ancient times, what was their story? For there is a strange and wondrous tale. Ask him about a man who travelled a great deal and reached the east and the west of the earth. What was his story? And ask him about the Rooh (soul or spirit) what is it?

If he tells you about these things, then he is a Prophet, so follow him, but if he does not tell you, then he is a man who is making things up, so deal with him as you see fit.' So, the men came back to Makkah and said: 'O people! We have come to you with a decisive solution which will put an end to the problem between you and Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم). The Jewish rabbis told us to ask him about some matters,' and they told them what they were. Then they came to the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and said: 'O Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) tell us,' and they asked him about the things they had been told to ask.

The Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: "I will tell you tomorrow about what you have asked me." But he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not say, 'If Allaah Wills.'

¹ سورة الكهف - Soorah al-Kahf [18:23-24]

² (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

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Allaah Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) never spoke anything except with revelation. So, he waited for the revelation from Allaah but fifteen days passed away without any revelation concerning those matter which the disbelievers asked, neither did Jibreel (عليه السلام)³ come to him. The people of Makkah started to doubt him and said: 'Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) promised to tell us the next day and now fifteen days have gone by and he has not told us anything in response to the questions we asked.'

The Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) felt sad because of the delay in revelation and was grieved by what the people of Makkah were saying about him.

Then Jibreel (عليه السلام) came with the revelation of Soorah al-Kahf, which contained answers to the questions and also the above mentioned verse explaining the correct etiquette when determining to do something in the future.

³ (عليه السلام) (alaih-salaam) Peace be upon him