

The Holy Qur'an -The Final Testament – Juz 2

The Holy Qur'an -The Final Testament – Juz 2



**English Translation: S.V. Mir Ahmad
Ali; Commentary: Mirza Mahdi Pooya**

Al-Islam.org

[1] [1]

SHARES

Author(s):

[Mirza Mahdi Pooya](#) [2]

[S.V. Mir Ahmad Ali](#) [3]

Publisher(s):

[Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an](#) [4]

This text is the second volume of the translation and commentary of the Holy Qur'an by Mir Ahmad Ali and Ayatullah Agha Hajj Mirza Mahdi Pooya Yazdi. It covers the second Juz of the Holy Qur'an from Surah Al-Baqarah Verse 142 to Surah Al-Baqarah Verse 252.

[Get PDF](#) [5] [Get EPUB](#) [6] [Get MOBI](#) [7]

Topic Tags:

[Qur'anic Exegesis \(Tafsir\)](#) [8]

[Surat al-Baqara](#) [9]

Important notice:

The Ahlul Bayt DILP team wishes to inform the reader of some important points regarding this digitised text.

While the original publishers aimed to make this work accessible to an English-speaking audience, the editing and digitisation process carried out by the DILP team has revealed several issues.

In light of this, the DILP team has carried out a number of corrections to improve readability and reduce ambiguity; spelling mistakes, typographical errors, and non-standard transliterations of Arabic names and terms have also been addressed. In addition, the layout has been adjusted to enhance clarity and make the text easier to consult online.

For these reasons, the online text is not an exact reproduction of the original published work.

Readers wishing to see the translation as it was published should refer to printed copies available in bookshops.

Miscellaneous information:

The Holy Qur'an –The Final Testament – Juz 2 Arabic Text, With English Translation And Commentary

With Special Notes From Ayatullah Agha Haji Mirza Mahdi Pooya Yazdi Translated By S.V. Mir Ahmed Ali Published by Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, Inc. Publishers and Distributors of Holy Qur'an 80'08 51st Avenue Elmhurst, NY 11373'4141 Tel: 718'446'6472 Fax: 718'446'4370 email: read@koranusa.org http://www.koranusa.org Eighth U.S Edition, 2019 Library of Congress Catalogue Number: British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data ISBN: (paperbound) 978'0'940368'85'9 ISBN: (casebound) 978'0'940368'84'2 ISBN: (Vinyl) 978'0'940368'524 ISBN: (eBook) 978'0'940368'54'5 The World Federation of KSIMC – Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Communities – helped us pay for part of the project

Al-Baqarah Section 17 – The Ka'ba Fixed As Qiblah The Of The Muslims

The Ka'ba fixed as the Qiblah or the central turning point for the Muslims, The differences among the people of the scripture about their respective Qiblahs.

Al-Baqarah Verses 142 – 147

سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَّاهُمْ عَن قِبَلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا قُلْ لِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ يَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

“The fools among men will say, “What hath turned them from their Qiblah towards which they were at (here before), “Say (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad!), God’s is the East and the West, He guideth whomsoever He pleaseth to the Right path”” (2: 142).

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَن يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِن كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَّءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

“And thus, have We made you a group of middling stand that ye may be witnesses over mankind and the Prophet be witness over you; And we did not fix the ‘Qiblah’ towards which thou wert at, but that We might distinguish him who followeth the Prophet, from him that turneth back upon his heels; and this was surely a hard thing for any except for those whom God hath guided. And God would not make futile your faith (in Him); verily God unto mankind is Affectionate (and) Merciful” (2: 143).

قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا
وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ

“Verily We see the turning of thy face in heaven so We shall turn thee (in prayer) towards a ‘Qiblah’ thou shalt be pleased with. Turn then thy face towards the Sacred Mosque; and whenever ye be (in prayers) turn ye your faces towards it; verily those who have been given the Book know it is the Truth from their Lord; and God is not heedless of what they do” (2: 144).

وَلَئِنْ أَتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ وَلَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتَ
أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذًا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

“And even if thou wert to bring unto those who have been given the Scripture, every sign yet they would follow not thy ‘Qiblah’, neither thou art the follower of their ‘Qiblah’; nor will some of them follow the ‘Qiblah of others; And if thou wert to follow their inclinations after the knowledge that hath come unto thee, then thou surely wouldst be of the unjust ones” (2: 145).

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

“Those unto whom We have given the Scripture recognise him (even) as they recognise their own children; but verily some of them do conceal the truth though they know it” (2: 146).

الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ

“It is the Truth from thy Lord so be thou not of those who doubt” (2: 147).

Commentary

Verse 142

‘Qiblah’ literally means the direction towards which one turns his face. As a religious term it means the direction towards which one turns while praying. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad was among the heathens at Mecca, while he prayed, he turned towards Jerusalem, but he used to keep ‘Ka’ba’ between himself and Jerusalem. At Madina where he migrated to, the Jews formed a very strong and powerful majority of the inhabitants. Even after settling down at Madina for about seventeen months the Holy Prophet used to turn towards the same direction i.e. Jerusalem. The Jews used to very frequently taunt the Muslims at not having a ‘Qiblah’ of their own and but for the Jews’ faith the Holy Prophet would not even know the direction towards which he should turn in prayers. Owing to the sneers of the Jews the

Holy Prophet desired a change and it was granted by God.

The fact is that from the veneration and the regard attached to Ka'ba – and from the zealous rescue divinely sent to save it from destruction by the Christians through Abraha¹ – it is quite evident that 'Ka'ba' alone was meant to be the 'Qiblah' for the adherents of the finally revealed faith for the human race as whole, for all times. But it was a temporary phase of guidance that the early converts to Islam were commanded to turn towards Jerusalem. Besides, in fulfilment of the divine promise to bless Abraham through his seed Ishmael, it was necessary that the House built and dedicated by Abraham and his son Ishmael exclusively for the worship of the only True God, alone should be the 'Qiblah'.

This change in 'Qiblah' was also a clear prophecy that Mecca would be conquered by the Muslims, to be cleared of the false gods, for a centre of idolatry, as Mecca then was, could never have been the 'Qiblah' of the perfectly monotheistic faith.

The change of the 'Qiblah' from Jerusalem to Ka'ba is also a prophecy that Jerusalem will not remain permanently or wholly in the independent hands of the Muslims. The Jews and the Christians will have their own share of worship in the place, and Mecca will for all times remain in the hands of Muslims. There is a famous prophecy of the Holy Prophet that the Christians will sway all lands save Mecca and Madina.

A reply to the criticism based upon the political wisdom of Mr. Osborne, is given hereunder in the words of Badshah Husayn:

“There have been few incidents more disastrous in their consequence to the human race than this decree of Mohammad changing the Qiblah from Jerusalem to Mecca. Had he remained true to his earlier and better faith the Arabs would have entered the religious community of the nations as peacemakers, not as enemies and destroyers. To all alike, Jews, Christians, and Mohammadans there would have been a single centre of holiness and devotion. Exactly the reverse.

How many crusades, memorable in history, and the much subtler campaigns of later days have been fought and continue to be fought to this day for the mere fact that Jerusalem happens to be under the domination of a Muslim ruler. Deliverance of Jerusalem from Muslim hands is the sacred ideal of all the Jews and all Christian nations in the world. And what success they have had to this day is due to the fact that Muslims as a people have no great interest in the matter. What would have been the result if the place had been their Qiblah? Would not the struggle have been more fatal and disastrous to all?”

[Verse 143](#)

To understand this verse correctly one has to know the several meanings of the important words used in it. In this verse we will have to study in detail the meaning and implication of the important words used in it.

1. ‘*Ummat*’ literally meaning a people or a community, need not always mean the same for the word ‘*Ummat*’ has been used in the Holy Qur’an for a single individual:

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ

‘*Inna Ibrahima Kana Ummatan qanitan lil-Lahi*’.

“*Verily Abraham was an Imam²[for the] people, devoutly obedient to God*” (16: 120).

2. ‘*Wasat*’ literally means middle, hence it is used for just and equitable, which means remaining exactly on the middle point without inclining to either direction. As the straight line between two points can always be only one, only one and not more can occupy the exact middle point. The word is undoubtedly used as a great praise. It is also logically established that the one so greatly praised should essentially be void of, or free from every kind of pollution or imperfection. The opposite of equity is injustice. And the greatest injustice according to the Holy Qur’an is ‘*Shirk*’,

إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

‘*Inna ash-Shirka lazulmun Azeem*’

“*Most surely polytheism is a grievous iniquity*” (31: 13).

Verily, associating (anything) with God is the greatest iniquity. There it is evidently inferred that those praised by God for their special excellence of equity should never have been polluted with ‘*shirk*’ at any time. Save the Holy Ahl Al-Bayt, every one of the early Muslims were converts who were once sunk in idolatry or ‘*shirk*’ of some kind or other. Even none among the subsequent generations could ever claim to be totally free from ‘*shirk*’ for ‘*shirk*’ is of three kinds:

1. ‘*Shirke Jalee*’ i.e. the ‘*Shirk*’ open or manifest.
2. ‘*Shirke Khafee*’ i.e. the ‘*Shirk*’ hidden or concealed.

3. 'Shirke Akhfa' i.e. 'Shirk' the most concealed.

The Holy Prophet has said that '*shirk*' in the hearts of men is so much concealed, as is unseen the movement of a black ant on a black stone in a dark night. Everyone is involved in the heart of his heart, with 'Shirk' of some kind or other. Strictly speaking asserting the wish of one's own self against any ordinance of God, is no less than a '*Shirk*' of equalising the self or the ego with the authority of the Divine will. In this regard Ali Ibn Abi Talib who besides the Holy Prophet had never in his life bowed before anybody else other than the One and the Only True God. In the correct meaning and the proper sense of the word '*Wasat*' none can be meant but Ali and besides him the other Imams who were the divinely chosen ones and who were the heavenly commissioned guides. Besides, it is essential that the '*Ummat al-Wasat*' whom God Himself declares to keep them as such must be as free from the pollution of every kind of evil as the Holy Prophet himself was. They must be '*Ma'soom*' i.e. sinless or infallible. They were no other than the Holy 'Ahl Al-Bayt' who were the only purified ones by God Himself³.

'*Shahid*' means witness used in the sense of '*Raqeeb*' or '*Mohaimin*' a close watcher or a careful observer. Witness in the true sense or in the completeness of the meaning of the word means one who can give evidence upon every aspect of the event, both the manifest and the hidden factors. The word 'Shaheed' is used for God the witness over everything:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

'*Inna Allaha ala Kulle Shaiyin-shaheed*'

"Verily God is a witness over everything" (22: 17).

These witnesses upon the people must essentially be perfect. Gan the Muslims in general play this role. It will be said 'No'. Only a very few who by nature must be pure and themselves perfect in all aspects of their lives. Such ones can be no other in Islam than the Holy 'Ahl Al-Bayt' about whose personal purity God has declared in Verse 33:33:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

'*Innama yuridullaha leyuzhiba ankumur rijsa Ahlal-Bait wa yutahhironum Tathira*'

"O' Ahl Al-Bayt - Verily God hath willed to keep away from you every pollution and to purify you a thorough purifying" (33:33).

A similar announcement has been made by God in the Holy Quran⁴ in which it is said a witness from each Ummat (i.e. from the people or the followers of each prophet) will be called to bear witness upon

the truth and the conduct of the people, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad will be called to bear witness upon all the witnesses. For further explanation to these verses see the notes to the respective verses.

The Holy Imam Zayn Al-'Abidin is reported to have said: '*Nahnu Shuhada' Allah*'. We are the witnesses of God. The same is reported of Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali Ibn Abi Talib.

Thus, the '*Ummat al-Wasat*' are only the Holy Imams – and their position among the Muslims is that of the 'Ka'ba' to the Muslim world towards which Muslims must necessarily turn. In the absence of the Holy Prophet the Imams of his Ahl Al-Bayt are the spiritual centres to which every true believer in God has to resort to for correct guidance and the necessary inspiration of goodness and virtue. The closer anyone is attached to these spiritual magnets, the more he will be conditioned with their divine attributes and get qualified for the praise from God and to receive the honour of being associated with the real '*Ummat al-Wasat*' like Salman, who for his faithfulness and the closest attachment to the Holy Prophet, was bestowed with the unique honour of being called '*Minna Ahl Al-Bayt*' i.e. one among the Ahl Al-Bayt, the honour and privilege which was given to none else outside the family of the Holy Prophet.

'*Le-na'lama*' literally meaning that We might know – but here the literal meaning is never to taken, for God who is the All-knowing, does not need any trial or test to know the result. Wherever such a term is used on behalf of God it means to prove expressly i.e. to make manifest. Here it means that the change in the direction or the '*Qiblah*' was affected to prove as to who really believes in God and His Prophet and who turns away from the faith simply because the change does not suit his personal bias.

'*Illa 'ala alladheena hada Allah*' – meaning that the change in the '*Qiblah*' from Jerusalem to Mecca was certainly hard save to those whom God had guided aright. This part of the verse discloses that among those who prayed behind the Holy Prophet while the divine instruction about the change of the '*Qiblah*' was enacted, there was Ali son of Abu Talib who turned along with the Holy Prophet from Jerusalem to Mecca.

Sha'bi reports that once when some famous '*Qaries*' i.e. the reciters of the Holy Quran, from Madina and Syria were assembled in the court of Hajjaj at Basra, Hasan al-Basri entered the assembly and Hajjaj offered him a respectable seat in front of him and a discussion upon various topics began and when a tradition from Hazrat Ali, was quoted by one of the scholars assembled there, Hajjaj began abusing and giving vent to his hatred against Hazrat Ali. Everyone in the assembly dreaded against the displeasure of the notorious tyrant Hajjaj and joined him in expressing hatred against Ali, Hasan Basri kept quiet. Hajjaj turned towards Hasan Basri and asked as to what his opinion was about Ali. Hasan replied in reciting this verse and said, "Ali is the one meant by '*Illa 'ala alladheena hada Allah*' and the best and the nearest of the friends and the son-in-law of the Holy Prophet. Ali has been given such a glorious and exalted position with God that none can deny it, and this is the grace of God which is bestowed upon whomsoever God wills."

"God is not to make your faith go in vain" According to Ibn -Abbas this part of verse was to allay the

fears of some who thought that their prayers offered towards Jerusalem might go in vain. It may also mean that the genuine and truly faithful ones in the family of the Holy Prophet knew by their faith in the Almighty God what their 'Qiblah' would ultimately be and their faith in God would not go in vain.

Verse 144

The Holy Prophet's turning his face to heaven was in waiting for God's command about the matter of the real or the ultimate 'Qiblah' of Islam. Madina being located between Mecca and Jerusalem the Holy Prophet while turning towards Jerusalem had to turn his back to Mecca. The Holy Prophet did not like turning his back to the 'Ka'ba' which was ultimately to be the 'Qiblah' of Islam.

'*Inna alladheena Ootul-Kitabi*', i.e. those who are given the Book means the Jews who through the prophecies in their scriptures already knew that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is a true prophet⁵.

"The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken" Deut. 18/15.

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" Deut: 18/18, 19.

Or that the Jews knew through their scriptures that the 'Ka'ba' with the Holy Black Stone set in one of its comers had already been destined by God to be the 'Qiblah' of the true believers in God⁶ and this same prophecy has been referred to by Jesus. (Math. 21/45).

"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner" Ps. 118/22.

"The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner" Math. 21/45.

In this connection it will be appropriate to refer the reciters of the Holy Quran towards the utterance ascribed to the Holy Prophet Jesus. Jesus makes use of Psalm 118/22 and threatens the Jews through the parable of wicked husbandmen indicating what the fate of those who reject him will be *"He will miserably destroy these wicked men and would let out His vineyard unto other husbandmen which shall render him the fruits in their seasons"* It happened exactly as the Jews were warned for after trying the Israelites and the Israelites' failure to fulfil the covenant, the covenant of God went to the Ishmaelite⁷.

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

Therefore, say I unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spoke of them"

Math. 21/ 42–45.

A similar announcement was made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad about the disgrace the Jews would suffer from the Kingdom of God.

As regards the transfer of the Kingdom of God to another nation in the place of Israelites, it can never mean those of the Jews who believed in Jesus for, yet they were the Israelites. And if it is construed to mean the spread of the doctrines or the faith of the church later on established in the name of Jesus, even then it can never mean the object of the transfer for it refers not to any single nation but to many nations of the world. Though Islam is spread over the whole globe among the many various nations of the world, the spiritual leadership remains for ever in the chosen ones of God in the family of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, called the Holy Imams, all of whom were Ishmaelites. The Kingdom of God remaining with the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his seed the Holy Imams is prophesied in Deut. 18/5.

“For the Lord thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the Lord, him and his sons for ever.”

Jesus refers to the Holy Prophet as the ‘Comforter’ who would succeed him, as the one who would abide with his people for ever: *“I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter that he may abide with you for ever”* John 14/11. This is proved in the Holy Prophet and the divinely chosen and commissioned ones from among his family who have been vested with the spiritual leadership of the faithful for ever.

Verse 145

It means that even if all the signs or miracles to prove the apostleship of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, had been advanced to the Jews and the Christians, they would not have followed the ‘*Qiblah*’ of the Holy Prophet meaning that it was the Jews and the Christians did not accept the ‘Ka’ba’ as their ‘*Qiblah*’, not because they did not know that it was the truth but merely because of their arrogance and envy against the Holy Prophet who was an Ishmaelite.

Here the acceptance of the ‘*Qiblah*’ by the Jews and the Christians stands for the acceptance of Islam as their faith. (AP).

Though the Jews and the Christians both regarded Jerusalem as the religious centre yet they were not agreed upon it as their common ‘*Qiblah*’ for the Christians turned towards the east whereas the Jews turned towards Jerusalem, although both as per their own claim followed the law of Moses.

The last word of this verse is a warning not for the Holy Prophet but to those who follow him if they still doubt the Holy ‘Ka’ba’ now being the ‘*Qiblah*’. The address is to the Holy Prophet to intensify the power or the strength of the warning against any disbelief in the true ‘*Qiblah*’ for fear or for any other reason against the dread or the arguments of the Jews.

Verse 146

The Jews and the Christians, in fact knew that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was truly the Apostle promised by God, because of their knowledge that the blessings of God was promised in the seed of Abraham through Isaac as well as through Ishmael, i.e. both the sons of Abraham. They could recognize the Holy Prophet as the true apostle of God as they could naturally make out or recognize the apostles who appeared among the children of Israel for, they knew the clear prophecy of Moses that a prophet like unto him would be raised among his brethren i.e. the Ishmaelites, and no prophet of the description had ever appeared among the Israelites after Moses.

It is difficult to give in all their details all the manifold proofs and evidence making doubtlessly clear that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the Prophet of God promised to mankind as a whole, foretold by Moses, Jesus, and the other religious leaders of old⁸.

Selfishness of the Jews and the Christians and their arrogance had its full play upon some of them to act against their own knowledge and conceal the truth.

Verse 147

The announcing to the Holy Prophet that he in fact is the Apostle from God, sounds to some as a consolation to the Holy Prophet himself, but as such it sounds as an unnecessary and a superfluous assertion like a meaningless assurance being given to a man saying that he is a man, for the individual is fully conscious of his position as such. If the Holy Prophet was not sure of his position as an Apostle of God, with what conviction did he start his apostolic mission?

In fact, it is the exposition or reiteration of the truth about the holy position or the heavenly status of the Holy Prophet for the information or the satisfaction of the believers who might be weak in faith and also a re-assertive and an imperative guidance to the disbelievers who refused to believe in him as a genuine apostle from God. Any warning or threat addressed to the Holy Prophet, is always and invariably meant never for the Holy Prophet, but for his followers.

¹. Vide: Sura 105.

². leader in religion.

³. Vide: 33:33.

⁴. Vide: 4:41 and 16:89.

⁵. Vide: Deut. 18/15 and 18.

⁶. Vide: Psalms 118/22

⁷. Vide: Math. 21/42-45.

⁸. Vide: Deut. 18/18 and Deut. 28/1 and 2.

Al-Baqarah Section 18 – House Built By Abraham Sanctified As The Qiblah Of The Muslims

To strive together for good, The House built by Abraham sanctified to be the ‘Qiblah’ for the Apostle, raised in the fulfilment of the covenant with Abraham, and for all the Muslims, The Apostle as well as the Muslims commanded to turn towards it while in prayer, wherever they may be.

Al-Baqarah Verses 148 – 152

وَلِكُلِّ وِجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيَهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمْ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“And for everyone is a direction to which He turneth. Hasten then to precede each other in everything good; Wherever ye (may) be, God will bring ye together (unto Him), for verily God hath power over all things” (2: 148).

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ لَلْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

“And from whencesoever thou goest forth, turn thou thy face (while in prayer) towards the Sacred Mosque. And verily that is the truth from thy Lord; And God is not heedless of what ye do” (2: 149).

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي وَلِأْتِمَّ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

“So from whencesoever thou (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad) goest forth, turn thou thy face towards the Sacred Mosque; and wherever ye (O’ Muslims) are, turn ye (too) your faces thither than men may have no plea against you save those of them that are unjust; So fear not them but fear Me! And that I may perfect My bounties on you, and that ye may be guided aright” (2: 150).

كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِنْكُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Even as We have sent among you a Prophet from amongst yourselves who reciteth unto you Our signs and purifieth you and teacheth you the Book and the Wisdom; and teacheth Qur’an you that which ye did not know” (2: 151).

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ

“Therefore, remember Me, I will remember you, and be thankful to Ale and (he) not ungrateful” (2: 152).

Commentary

Verse 148

The Unity of the ‘Qiblah’ indicates or signifies the unity of the faith of the people and its leadership.

Comprehensively speaking the unity of the Islamic ‘Qiblah’, symbolises the unity of the purpose of the religion and the religionists to unify or bind the believers as a whole into one brotherhood or disciplinary order.

Unity of faith leads to spiritual unity which culminates into physical harmony. The clause ‘*Whenever ye may be, God will bring you together*’ used in this verse gives out a very important prophecy or glad tidings for the truly faithful ones that wherever they may be in the world they will be brought together under the banner of the Twelfth Holy Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi in ‘*Raj’at*’ (TS).

The Sunni commentators say that this collection of the faithful refers to the Day of Judgment, but it is meaningless, for the prophecy is addressed to the believers whereas on that day not only the believers but every one of the human races, believer, or a disbeliever, will be summoned and gathered together to account for one’s life on earth.

The Ahmadi commentator has only to say that it refers to Muslims all over the world being bound by the bond of brotherhood which has not been done till now in the true meaning or the realization of a perfect brotherhood, for the Muslims in the various parts of the world do identify themselves differently with the various labels of their own respective nationalities.

According to the Holy Imams, particularly Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq, the collection of the faithful together refers to the collection of the true devotees of the truth i.e. the faithful ones among the believers. Wherever they may be in the world, they will, before the final resurrection, be gathered together under the last of the divinely commissioned guides or the Imams of the holy Ahl Al-Bayt i.e. the Holy Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi.

In the note to verse 115 above, it was pointed out that the specific direction for ‘Qiblah’ does not mean

the manifestation of God being only in that single direction, He is manifest alike in all directions. The order to turn to any particular direction while in prayer, was nothing but a Test of obedience on the part of the followers of the faith, besides effecting the centralisation of the mind of the believers in prayers¹.

Here, pointing out that there is none without some direction or the other, the ultimate object of which is He (God), minimises the importance of the physical directions prescribed in the different religions for prayer, and emphasises on the importance of the constructive strife and effort towards whatever is good and excellent, some account of which is given in the verse 177 of this Sura, wherein is pointed out the importance of the attainment of the theoretical and the practical virtues, of which, faith in God is the base or the root, and expressively dismisses the consideration of the turning towards the east or the west, as a virtue².

The words 'Mowalliha' and 'Mowallaha' are the two different 'Qir'ats' or the recitals; the former is the present participle and the latter the past participle. The meaning given above is in accordance with the past participle i.e., He is the Ultimate Object of the direction of every one's mind. As a present participle it means that He is directing everyone towards a particular direction which is confirming Verse 5:48 wherein is pointed out the purpose of the different methods of worship and the ritual precepts prescribed in the different religions as the testing factors and also signifying the importance of the competitive strife and efforts towards earning virtues and excellence.

Another point which is referred to here and in Chapter 5 is that in spite of all these different directions of man's strife and endeavour, all will reach the same goal and object and then it will be made known to everyone the value of the directions about which they differed. These passages have been taken as the support to the subjective value of the various religions, meaning that the aim of all the religions being one and the same, all being true. This is not correct, for the passage explains only the all-pervasive nature of the Absolute to the extent that the Holy Prophet says: *"Abuse not the nature which the atheist takes as the First Cause responsible for the whole phenomenon, because the nature itself is God"*

Taking this in view the person who has reached the highest stage of monotheistic realisation, is not the same as the man who has realised Him in the form of the natural forces. Both have reached Him, because He is here as well as there, but it is not true that the state of the realisation is also the same. Therefore, it is the difference in the value to which the Holy Qur'an refers.

Most of the translators have taken the meaning of 'Hoa' (i.e. he) as referred to 'Kol' (everyone), but the Shi'a grammarians assert it to refer to God saying it is more appropriate and in concord with 5:48. (A.P.)

Verse 149

Thou goeth forth i.e. for 'Jihad' or for any other purpose (see note on the next verse). The latter part of the verse is meant to impress upon the Muslims the importance or the sanctity of the Holy House the 'Ka'ba'. It is to keep the Muslims mindful of God's knowing how the Holy House would be profaned at

the hands of the Muslims. Khalif Yazid destroyed the Holy House. Khalif Walid held a party of debauchery on its roof. By Khalif Abdul Malik and Khalif Mansur³, other 'Ka'ba' were set up at Damascus and Baghdad respectively for pilgrimage⁴.

Verse 150

The significance or the implication of the ordinance to turn towards the Holy 'Ka'ba' is to establish, and to be always kept in view the sanctification and the sanctity of the Holy House and its perfect immunity from domination by infidels or infidelity.

'*Alaikum Hujjatun*' – So that it may be a proof against the arguments of the Meccans, the Quraish as well as the Jews against their attacks.

The Jews saying that though Muhammad is opposed to our faith he still bows towards our central temple in Jerusalem. And the Quraish criticising, "*Why does not Muhammad respect the Ka'ba the Holy House built by Abraham and Ishmael exclusively for the prayer to God and yields towards the religious centre of the Jews?*"

'*Wale-Otimma Na'mati alaikum*' refers to the perfecting of the religion Islam by instituting Imamah to succeed 'Risalah' (i.e. apostleship). For this refer to Verse:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

"This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My bounties on you, and am pleased with Islam being your religion" (5:3).

which was revealed immediately as the Holy Prophet Muhammad declared Ali as his successor or the guide or the supreme head of the believers in his place, on the 18th of Dhu 'l-Hijja 11 A.H. while he was at Ghadir Khumm on his return from his last pilgrimage to the Holy 'Ka'ba'. Besides, it refers to the fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham and his seed through his son Ishmael⁵.

'*Ta' allakum Yahtadun*' i.e. "so that you may be guided aright" – seals the reference to the perfecting of the favour of God referring it to the '*Imamah*' immediately succeeding the 'Risalah' or the apostolic services divinely instituted for the guidance of the faithful for all times. This also refers to the fulfilment of the promise made by God to the seed of Ishmael. If the 'Qiblah' had not been the 'Ka'ba', the promise to Abraham and Ishmael would have remained unfulfilled in the past, but with the promise made to Abraham and to the seed of Ishmael being fulfilled in its entirety, none but the unjust could have doubted the claim of the Holy Prophet to Apostleship.

Verse 151

This verse refers to Abraham's prayer Verse 129. To fulfil the prayer of Abraham, God directed that the Sacred House dedicated by Abraham and Ishmael, exclusively to His worship, be purified so that it might be the Sanctuary and the Centre to which all the devotees should turn to Verse 125 and 129. It was in fulfilment of this prayer of Abraham, that God raised the Holy Prophet Muhammad whose advent was prophesied by most of the prominent prophets of the old viz. Moses, Deut. 18/18 Jesus, John 16/13. (L).

The Holy 'Ka'ba' was set up as '*Qiblah*' as another blessing in continuation of the fulfilment of Abraham's prayer, symbolizing the spiritual unity of the true believers in God, with faith in One God with one code of discipline (Qur'an) for their life, temporal as well as spiritual welded together.

Verse 152

God's remembrance refers to his special favours or bounties exclusively bestowed, otherwise no forgetfulness can ever be imagined to be attributed to His All-Perfect Being. The wicked ones being left to their own earned fate will be interpreted as His forgetting them.

[1.](#) Vide: 2:143.

[2.](#) Vide: 2:142.

[3.](#) All these atrocious tyrants are held as the Khalifs or the spiritual leaders by some non-Shi'a Schools.

[4.](#) Vide: Tabari – Tamaddunne Islam, etc.

[5.](#) Vide: Gen. 17/18, 20.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Al Baqarah Section 19 – Hard Trials And The Necessity Of Patience And Steadfastness

God's help to be sought through patience and prayer, during trials, Reward for steadfastness in faith and reliance upon God, Regard for the signs of God – Infidelity cursed by God, by the angels and by mankind, The disbelievers shall abide under the curse and the torment for ever without any remission of the torment, nor shall they have any respite.

Al-Baqarah Verses 153 – 163

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

“O’ ye who believe! seek help with patience and prayer; Verily God is with the patient ones” (2: 153).

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أحيَاءٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

“And say not of those who are slain in the path of God that they are dead; Nay, (they are) living, but ye perceive not” (2: 154).

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

“We will surely test you with something of fear, and hunger and loss of wealth and lives and fruits; and give glad tidings to the patient ones” (2: 155).

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

“Who when, misfortune befallerh them, say, “Verity we are God’s and verity unto Him shall we return” (2: 156).

أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

“Those are they on whom are the blessings from their Lord and (His) Mercy; and they are the ones that are (rightly) guided” (2: 157).

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ

“Verily, “Safa’ and ‘Marwa’ are among the signs of God; whoever therefore, maketh a pilgrimage to the House or performeth ‘Umra’. Therefore, it shall be no blame on him to go round them both; and whoever of his own accord doeth anything good in deed, verily God is Grateful, All-Knowing” (2: 158).

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ
الْمَلَائِكَةُ

“Verily, those that conceal what We have sent of (Our) manifest evidences and guidance, after what We have (so) clearly shown for mankind in the Book, (they are) those that God doth curse them and (also) curse them (all) those who curse (such ones)” (2: 159).

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَبَيَّنُّوا فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنَا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

“Except those who turn (repentant) and amend (themselves) and make manifest (The Truth), these it is unto whom I turn (mercifully), and I am the Oft-returning (to mercy), the All-Merciful” (2: 160).

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارًا أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمُ لعنةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ

“Verily, those who disbelieve and die while they are disbelievers, on them shall be the curse of God, and (of) the angels and (of) mankind all together” (2: 161).

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ

“Abiding in it the torment shall not be lightened for them nor shall they have respite” (2: 162).

وَاللَّهُمَّ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

“And your God is one God! There is no god but He! He is the Beneficent, the Merciful!” (2: 163).

Commentary

Verse 153

One most naturally and reasonably qualify for the special blessings from God. If this verse is to be taken referring to the conquest of Mecca, even then it holds good, if it means to say that the people must prove their worth or value to the Truth in Islam, by bearing hardest trials with constant prayers to the Lord, for prayer suggests the praying individual’s acknowledgment of God’s Omnipotence and the individual’s confidence in God being the All-Merciful one, as the only One who can grant the prayers of the sincere supplicants.

Faith real can never be mere empty words. It must express or manifest itself through patience or endurance in all that befalls to the individual for his being faithful to God, and the help from God be sought through prayers or supplication to the Lord.

Verse 154

This phenomenon is more clearly given in 3: 169 which gives further information about the truth that those who surrender or sacrifice their lives in the way i.e. the cause of the Lord (i.e. the martyrs), are alive receiving their sustenance from their Lord.

The passage should not be taken as a reference to the leaving of the soul at its departure from the body, for this state is not confined to the soul of only the Muslims. It is true of the soul of every conscious being,¹ but it should be taken as referring to a particular state of blissful life which the other souls are deprived of.

The term life and death has been used in the Holy Qur'an to also signify the knowledge and the ignorance²; faith and infidelity³. The life after the departure of the soul, if it is more torturous and miserable than the present state, can be termed as death because of its being deprived of the bliss which it was enjoying here. And if the life there be more blissful than here, the life here will be death in comparison to that, and that state in comparison to this will be life. A similar statement is narrated from the Holy Prophet:

'Ad-Dunya sijnun lil Momin wa Jannatun lil Kafir'.

i.e., This world is a prison for the believer and a paradise for the infidel.

It is said that a poor Jew argued with the Second Holy Imam Hasan Ibn Ali, who was in plenty:

'Horn can the state thou art in, be a prison for thee and the state I am in, be a paradise for me?'

The Holy Imam replied:

'O' Yes! If thou only knowest the miseries awaiting the infidels, in the hereafter and the bliss awaiting the faithful there, thou wilt then realise that even thy present miserable state is a paradise in comparison to those miseries, and the state- of plenty I am now in, in comparison to the bliss awaiting for me there, is nothing short of a prison for me.'

In short, the term, life and death should be taken in the relative sense, i.e., in the sense of gain and loss in the various stages, man passes through. It is in this sense that the Holy Qur'an says:

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أحيَاءٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

“Consider not those who have given their lives for the sake of God as dead, they are indeed alive. By losing the temporary material life of miseries, they have gained eternal life of bliss.” (2: 154).

In 3: 169 is said that the martyrs are with their Lord receiving their sustenance: meaning that they are in direct communion with their Cherisher Lord and the same will be the state in which the faithful who are obedient to the Holy Prophet. The term ‘*Shaheed*’ used in many places in the Holy Qur’an refers to this state of realisation. (A.P.)

This verse clears the doubt of the materialist who believes that with death, man’s life gets extinct, i.e., there is no life after death, and so believed the infidels among the people of Arabia, particularly of Mecca and Madina. It is reported that this verse was revealed about the Muslims who were martyred in the battle of Badr about whom the disbelievers said that those slain had lost their lives. Some new converts to Islam seem to have shared this view, for this fact is quite evident from the address of the verse being to the Muslims.

The Verse 17: 106 indicates that the course of the teaching of higher ideals was slow and gradual. And now not only the Muslims but even non-Muslims subscribe to this phenomenon. One of the most eminent scientists and philosophers Sir Oliver Lodge has gone to the extent of preaching this view through his famous work ‘The Survival of Man.’ ‘In the way of God’ means for the cause of Truth as opposed to ‘the way of the devil’ which means the cause of falsehood⁴

Sale interprets ‘*fi Sabil Allah*’ as wars undertaken against non-Muslims to propagate Islam, whereas this is a gross misinterpretation of the fact, and it is diametrically opposed to Qur’an which prohibits compulsion in religion.⁵ All the wars the Muslims had to fight during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet were forced upon them in which the Muslims had been attacked for nothing but their merely professing Islam.

Thus, all the wars were totally defensive against the unprovoked aggression from the Jews, the Christians, and the idolaters. It is a blasphemy coined and levelled against the Holy Prophet and Islam, to say that Islam was spread by the sword, whereas the fact is that Islam spread facing the swords of the idolaters, the Jews, and the Christians. Such unreasonable and unjust charges against the Holy Prophet and Islam are motivated more by the Christians to forestall by an argument, be that a false and unreasonable one, against their own inhuman and brutal atrocities enacted by the Edict of Milan by which innumerable innocent souls of men, women and even children and babes of the Jews were made to suffer the most miserable and horrible kinds of death under the freezing cold in the snowy mountains, in the flaming fires and in torturous prisons for nothing but professing their own faith of Judaism.

Verse 155

The emphasis laid upon the trying of everyone is noteworthy. It is also worth noting that the trial will be with a partial fear or dread, a partial hunger (and thirst) and a partial loss of fruits (Issues) and with the

whole of any kind of feeling, suffering or loss. The more an individual rises in his faith in God, his personal virtues, and the quality of patience, more he is beset with trials through calamities to prove his personal excellence, and as he passes through the trials successfully, he is raised into higher and higher elevations of the excellence of divinity and promoted to be nearer to God. Those who do not suffer any calamities at all in this life are not much to be congratulated for it might be that these souls are not considered fit to be tried. The respite may be to allow the infidelity to increase to qualify for an intensive punishment⁶

It is an undeniable and incontestable fact that the Holy Prophet and all the twelve of the Holy Imams succeeding him, were in the highest ranks of faith in God and their lives are full of the most miserable kinds of torturous sufferings, and they suffered the most heart-rending calamities all in the way of God, i.e., for the cause of truth. The reference in particular, of this verse is towards these Holy Ones and the others can also come under this to the extent that their own sufferings qualify them for it.

It was only once in the history of the creation of the earth that all the kinds of trials mentioned in the verse were enacted all together to the maximum degree conceivable, with the Holy Imam Husayn and the small band of his faithful comrades in the plain of Karbala. This verse had its fullest realization only in the sufferings and the martyrdom of Husayn and his faithful comrades and the suffering of the other Imams at different times under the Omayyids and Abbaside Khalifs.

Verse 156

This clause used by a Muslim when he hears any loss, should be the motto of the life of every Muslim. It is the brief expression of all that Islam means. We are His, being His, our duty should be nothing short of absolute submission to His Will. We are returning to Him, which implies that we have proceeded from Him and that we are in our march towards Him and He is the destination.

It is obvious that whoever has moulded himself according to this motto is naturally subject to His blessing and His grace and he is the guided one. But it should not be a mere verbal expression. A more detailed expression of this motto is given in 6:163 as the motto of the life of the Holy Prophet who stands first and foremost in the order of Islam (i.e., submission to God). It is obvious that there can be no loss for a person of such realisation. His march is gain after gain, i.e., an ever-progressive gain. (A.P.)

Verse 157

'*Salawat*' from God may be interpreted as God's blessings. The words suggest recognition of some merits of extra-excellence and of a very high order⁷.

The souls referred to in this verse must necessarily be personalities of extraordinary position in view of the Lord worth being associated with the Holy Prophet deserving to receive the same blessings from God along with him, and not the ordinary believers who had just approached the truth from the ranks of infidelity, the most prominent of whom proved to be disloyal and who even deserted the Muslim ranks

leaving the Holy Prophet to his fate in the times of danger, in the heat of the battles fought for the survival of the faith and the faithful.

Verse 158

This verse clearly indicates how hardships borne by the holy ones are rewarded by their remembrance by God. Abraham had left his wife Hagar and his baby son Ishmael in the wilderness which Mecca then was. Safa and Marwa are the two hillocks in Mecca between which Hagar ran to and fro in search of water for her baby son Ishmael.

It is by-way of remembrance or as a memorial that the running of this godly lady in search of water for Ishmael (who was to be an apostle of God), has been prescribed as a compulsory part of the pilgrimage (i.e. Hajj). Formerly on the Safa was kept an idol called *Usaf* and on the Marwa was one called *Nu'allah*, the people were averse to going to these hillocks. This verse was revealed to remove the aversion.

'*Sha'airallah*' or the signs of God. Anything which reminds one of God or a godly person (viz. an apostle or an Imam), whose remembrance itself would be an act of virtue or devotion to God, i.e., '*Sha'airallah*.' It is as such that the Shi'as regard the '*Tazias*', '*Alams*', the '*Tabut*' or the '*Zareeh*' of the Holy Imams.

'*Shakir*' meaning thankful, but when used for God it will mean appreciation of merit in effect, Bountiful in rewarding.

Verse 159

The reference is to the Jews who are held as those who knew all about the Holy Prophet and also the sanctity of the Holy Ka'ba and all about it⁸, but they were concealing the facts from the people out of their spite for the Holy Prophet who was an Ismaelite and not an Ishraelite. The Jews were most vehemently cursed by Moses⁹ in the event of their failure to observe all his commandments.

15. "But It shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

16. Cursed shall thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.

17. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.

18. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and

the flocks of thy sheep.

19. Cursed shalt thou be when thou earnest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.
20. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly, because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.
21. The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until He have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it.
22. The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.
23. And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.
24. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.
25. The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shall be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.
26. And thy carcass shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away.
27. The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.

28. The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart:
29. And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee.
30. Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another than shall lie with her: thou shalt build a house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shall not gather the grapes thereof.
31. Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee, thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them.
32. Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand.
33. The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not, eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always:
34. So that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.
35. The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.
36. The Lord shall bring thee, and thy kind which shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known', and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood, and stone.
37. And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations

whither the Lord shall lead thee.

38. Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in–, for the locust shall consume it.
39. Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them, but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes’, for the worms shall eat them.
40. Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil’, for thine olive shall cast his fruit.
41. Thou shalt beget sons and daughters but thou shalt not enjoy them’, for they shall go into captivity.
42. All thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust consume.
43. The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high’, and thou shalt come down very low.
44. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.
45. Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed’, because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and statutes which he commanded thee.
46. And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.
47. Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart,

for the abundance of all things.

48. Therefore, shall thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.
49. The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand.
50. A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young.
51. And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.
52. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.
53. And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:
54. So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave:
55. So that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat

because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates.

56. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter.
57. And toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.
58. If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD.
59. Then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.
60. Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of, and they shall cleave unto thee.
61. Also every sickness, and every plague which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.
62. And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude', because thou wouldst not obey the voice of the Lord thy God.
63. And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off' the land whither thou goest to possess it.

64. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people from the one end of the earth even unto the other–, and thee thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known even wood and stone.
65. And among these nations shall thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:
66. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee–, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:
67. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.
68. And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I speak unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.”[10](#)

The angels and men praying for curse, along with God in this Verse and 3:87 is an expression of the angels and the men being with the will of God.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ۚ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

“While God and the angels bless the Holy Prophet, He enjoins the believers also to join Him and the angels, in the blessing of His Apostle [Muhammad]” (33:56).

Likewise, God takes men and the angels along with Him in cursing the wicked ones like the Jews in this verse. Thus, it becomes the duty prescribed by God himself, upon the true believers to curse the wicked ones as they bless the holy one like the Holy Prophet. Unless we curse the enemies of the Holy Prophet, our blessing him can never be perfect and true.

According to the command of God received through Verse 2: 157 and Verse. 33:56 the Shi’as bless the Holy Prophet and the other godly ones, and following this verse they, to be in harmony with the will of

the Lord, have to curse the wicked ones. There are some who are unreasonably opposed to cursing anyone who professes to be a Muslim, even though his profession be only from his lips and not from his heart and however much his conduct be giving a lie to his lip profession. This unjust and unreasonable defence extends even to the worst tyrants and this stand is mainly to defend those who professed themselves to be the Khalifs or the successors of the Holy Prophet, hailed themselves as the religious leaders like Yazid and others. But justice demands to identify the devil as devil and condemn him duly however much he may pretend to be a devotee of God, for the cloak of virtue and godliness which he puts on, is only to lead others astray. Those who do not want to call the devil as devil and condemn devilishness, will naturally be responsible jointly with the devil for all the beguiling instituted or spread among the general public.

Besides, when infidelity in any individual becomes a declared matter of fact, leaving no shadow of doubt, there cannot be any argument to spare such an infidel being cursed and condemned, however much he may try to escape the condemnation and the curse, by mere profession of faith and fidelity just to serve his own purpose.

Cursing and the expression of hatred and disgust against any evil or evil ones is undoubtedly necessary and rather essential, for the sustenance of any healthy emotion or for sinking it deeper into the nature of the individual, for without expressing itself openly, it is liable to get extinct altogether. It is for this necessity of training the mind of the believers 'Tabarra has been prescribed as one of the basic doctrines of the practice of the faith¹¹.

Verse 160

This verse clears the point that for a sinner to qualify himself for the pardon and mercy from the All-merciful Lord, there is the pre-requisite of his repenting for the evil committed, with the determination to amend for the future. Mere belief in any saviour without genuine repentance and personal amendment of the conduct; will never benefit any sinner, in the least. The personal amendment implies and includes the determination and even promise on the part of the sinner to see that the sin is never repeated thereafter.

Verse 161

'Kufr' or rejection of the truth or the disbelief in that which is preached by the Holy Prophet, wilfully by perversity or indolence. Hence all disbelievers or non-Muslims do not come under the declaration. A clear exception is declared in 4:98. Those mentioned in 9:106 are those who will have to wait for the command of God to be punished or to be pardoned.

They are the weak in intellect who are unable to readily distinguish between the truth and the falsehood or those who being in the lands of enemies, have not the means to go in search of the truth, or those who lived in the days of ignorance during the interregnum between the tenures of the prophets, when the

followers of error preponderated, and the followers of truth remained concealed for their lives. These are those who shall wait God's command, and the salvation of such is possible. Hell is only for those who wilfully and perversely reject the truth, or for those who having the facilities or the means to know it, do not care to do it.

Verse 162

Regarding the eternity of the chastisement the sixth Holy Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq has explained it.

Since the virtuous in this life however long they had lived, they would have been virtuous, they naturally deserve to be recompensed with eternal bliss. Similarly, the wicked in this life however long they had lived in this world they would have been only wicked, they naturally deserve to be condemned for ever.

Verse 163

This verse doubtlessly suggests that Unity of God was the grand object to be set before the believers in God (i.e. the Muslims). It is the main or the sole basic factor upon which the whole edifice or the superstructure of the faith or the religion Islam rests, towards which all guidance and the enlightenment for the human mind had to be focused.

The question is that in what sense the word '*Wahid*' i.e. one, has been used about God. It is not in any numerical sense nor in the sense of order i.e., the First one of any second, nor in the sense of the oneness of a genus or a specie or in any other general term, but it is used in the sense of His being indivisible and unanalysable organically, chemically, geometrically, logically, mentally, or physically or in any sense whatsoever. This unity in essence does not tally with any limitation. Thus, He (God) is unlimited. Being unlimited no second, or an equal or an opposite to Him is ever conceivable.

Thus, He is One in all respects, and in every sense and regard. To this effect there is a statement of Hazrat Ali in the Book of Tawheed of Ibn Babwaih that during the battle of Jamal when the war was going on a Bedouin asked Ali 'Do thou say that God is one?' The people around objected to the question at that moment and blamed the questioner saying that it was no occasion for such a question when Ali was busy in mustering his forces. Ali said 'Object ye not to the man's questioning for what he asks is the very object of the battle here, we are demanding the same faith in the unity of God from our enemy.' Ali proceeded giving the various above-mentioned explanations of the term '*Wahid*' i.e., the Unity of God.

(A.P.)

1. Vide: 3:185.

2. Vide: 36:70.

3. Vide: 6:123.

4. Vide: 4:76.

5. Vide: 2:256.

6. Vide: 3:178.
7. Vide: 33:56.
8. Vide: Psalms 118/22 and Math. 21/42-45.
9. Vide: Duet 28/15-68.
10. Old Testament Deut 28/15-68.
11. Vide: Furu' Ad-Din explained in the introduction.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Al-Baqarah Section 20 – Unity Of God – Fate Of The Polytheists

The Unity of God manifesting in the objects of the Universe and its working, Polytheists, and the punishment to them.

Al-Baqarah Verses 164 – 167

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَّاحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

“Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day and (in) the ships that sail in the sea with what profiteth mankind and (in) the water which God sendeth down from the skies and enliveneth therewith the earth after its death and scattereth therein of (every kind of) animal, and in the changing of the winds and the clouds controlled for service between the heavens and the earth, surely there are signs for (the guidance of) people who understand” (2: 164).

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرُونَ الْعَذَابَ أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ

“And yet of men there are some who take unto themselves equals to God besides Him and love them as the love for God; But the Believers are stauncher in (their) love for God; And if only those who are unjust could see (what they will realise) when they behold the torment, that unto God belongeth all power and verily God is severe in punishing” (2: 165).

إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا وَرَأَوْا الْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ

“When would those who were followed renounce them that followed them, and they would see the torment and the ties between them are cut asunder” (2: 166).

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَتَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّءُوا مِنَّا كَذَلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ

And those who followed shall say, “O’ were there for us a return (to the world’) then we would renounce them even as they have renounced us;” Thus, will God show them their deeds (which shall be the cause of) intense regrets for them; and they shall not get out of the (Hell) fire” (2: 167).

Commentary

Verse 164

The native uniformity and the perfect and the never disturbed harmony in the working of the universe, loudly and most eloquently suggests and clearly manifests the Unity of the Creator and the unchallengeable or unquestionable supremacy of its Single Master or Lord. Man is exhorted to reflect over the creation and realize the divine unity in the midst of the diversity and the manifoldness of the innumerable objects in the heavens and the earth and in the forces of nature and the perfectly harmonious working of the natural phenomena. The uniformity and the harmony in the objects and the working of the universe is constantly referred to in the Holy Qur’an as a sign of the Unity of the Maker. (A.P.)

Another point to be noted here is the logical method adopted by the Holy Qur’an, to prove and reason out the existence of God i.e., the important part to be played by sound reasoning in the establishment of the edifice of the Islamic faith, as the Seventh Holy Imam Musa Ibn Ja’far pointed out in his conversation with his well-known and the celebrated disciple Hisham Ibn Al-Hakam that this and other Qur’anic passages of similar nature confirm the importance of reasoning in establishing the first and foremost article of faith Islam, as the existence and the Unity of God. The Holy Imam says that no argument can be complete without reasoning and said, ‘Verily God perfected His arguments with reasoning and assisted His apostles with miracles and proved His Lordship (*Rububiyah*) with His signs.’

The sixth Holy Imam Ja’far Ibn Muhammad tells us about the part to be played by reasoning, and its limitations and that reasoning is the only means and proof between man and God, and the means and proof between God and man is the Prophet. God has two proofs the Internal and the External. The Internal is Reasoning and the External, the Prophet. There is no use of the External Proof (the Prophet)

if there is not the Internal one (Reasoning). This shows that man in his mental movement towards God has no other means save the sound logical reasoning. Of course, after reaching the final stage of the realisation of His Existence and His Unity, then the means between him and the Absolute becomes the divine revelation.

However, the basis is reasoning. There may be doctrines and assertions beyond the grasp of our limited reasoning but there should be no doctrine or any religious assertion contradictory to sound reasoning. (A.P.)

[Verse 165](#)

The objects associated with God in His matchless position are not only idols but also the religious leaders of the polytheists. This is made clear by the following verses. The Arabic term 'like the love of God' means as much as they would otherwise love God. Their love of their idols and their religious leaders whom they associate with God is so intense that they get wildly furious when their idols or their religious leaders are attacked. This quality is found also among the followers of the false, and self-assumed religious leaders among the Muslims who for their lust for power, authority, and enjoyment in this worldly life, somehow or other assumed sway over the peoples' destiny. Some such selfish tyrants captured the political field and became rulers of states and some gained sway over the realms of religious leadership.

The truly faithful ones, love not only the genuine leaders of the religion but also everything that God loves, for everything they love is only to please God. Even their own family and issues, they love because it is their duty to do it as prescribed by the Lord.

The point which impresses here is that one should love or hate anything or anyone, only for the sake of God (i.e. love for the sake of God and hate for the sake of God). This is the watchword of the Shi'a School of thought i.e. love godliness wherever it is found and hate ungodliness be it in anyone, irrespective of the rank the individual may profess to belong. Love for God's sake termed 'Tawalla' and the hatred for the sake of God, is termed 'Tabarra'.

[Verse 166](#)

This verse gives out the fate of the false religious leaders and their followers, on the day of judgment i.e. the mutual renouncement of the false leaders and their foolish followers which will take place.

[Verse 167](#)

The Ahmadi commentator interprets the torment with which the polytheists will be requited as intense regrets and avoids the chastisement with fire interpreting the fire which shall be the physical suffering for their evils, as a mere mental feeling and this reduces the gravity of the punishment mentioned.

This view clearly indicates that the individuals in the next life i.e., the life after death, will be conscious of their deeds in this life and feel sorry and repentant for their deeds and will aspire to return to this life to redress their shortcomings which desire will not be granted and instead, they will remain condemned to the fire. The continuity of the human consciousness and memory after death as referred to here, is also referred to in several other verses and this dismisses the idea that Qur'an advocates the idea of the transmigration of the souls. (A.P.)

[1] [1]

SHARES

Al-Baqarah Section 21 - To Take Only Lawful And Clean Food

Injunction about the use of foodstuffs, Blind following disallowed, Concealing of truth and corrupting the Word of God and bartering it for worldly gains, amounts to eating of fire.

Al-Baqarah Verses 168 - 176

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ

“O’ ye men! eat of what is in the earth lawful and good and follow not the footsteps of Satan; for verily he is an open enemy unto you” (2: 168).

إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“For, verily, verily he commandeth unto you what is evil and shameful and that ye should say against God that which ye know not” (2: 169).

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ

“And when it is said unto them, “Follow what God hath sent down” They say, “Nay! We follow that which we found our fathers upon” What! even though their fathers had no sense at all, nor were (they) guided aright?” (2: 170).

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً صُمُّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

“The parable of those that disbelieve is the likeness of one who shouteth to (one) which heareth not but a call and a cry; deaf, dumb, blind (are they) wherefore they do not understand” (2: 171).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ

“O’ ye who believe! eat of the good things We have provided you with and thank God if Him it is ye worship” (2: 172).

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ فَمَن اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

“Verily, verily He hath but prohibited that which dieth of itself and blood and the swine flesh and whatsoever hath other name than God’s invoked upon it, but whoever is forced to it without the desire (for it) nor to transgress (the limits) then it is no sin on him; Verily God is Forgiving, Merciful” (2: 173).

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَشْتُرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

“Verily, those that conceal that of the Scripture which God hath sent down and barter for a small price, these, they eat nothing but fire into their bellies, and God will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection nor will He purify them, and for them there shall be grievous torment” (2: 174).

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالََةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَالْعَذَابَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ

“These are they who have purchased error in barter for the right guidance and the torment for forgiveness, Oh! how (bold) they are to endure the Fire” (2: 175)

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِي الْكِتَابِ لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ

“This is (their doom) because God hath sent down the Book with the truth; Verily, those who differ in (the matter of) the Book are in a wide gap” (2: 176).

Commentary

Verse 168

Man eats so many things that to determine a food being lawful or unlawful becomes a very vast subject and an intricate and difficult question. Lawful are not only those things which law has not prohibited but even unforbidden things acquired unlawfully viz. by theft, cheating and bribery etc. Those who lay too much stress upon the ceremonial aspect of religion get utterly indifferent to internal purity. They make a show of abhorrence to forbidden things but devour things unlawfully acquired¹.

There is undoubtedly an undeniable relation between the physical being and the soul or the spirit of man and every animate being. Who can deny the fact that food plays an important and a very effective part in conditioning the character of man. The brain and heart are undoubtedly affected differently by different kinds of food. This same phenomenon works in the whole of the animal kingdom. As Islam is meant for the preservation of the human life on earth in its normal and desirable state, and also for the uplift of the human soul by promoting healthy character and conduct, it prescribes through Holy Qur'an rules and regulations for the necessary control of the physical life of man on earth through the control of the food which man has to essentially consume.

The best and the surest course for faithful believers (i.e. true Muslims) will be to follow the footsteps of the Holy Prophet and the Holy Imams also in food as in other matters of practical life for the godly souls were given advent into this world only to serve as the best models of the correct way of human life on earth. This is clearly hinted by the words 'follow not the footsteps of Satan' which means follow the way of God which has been shown by the Holy Prophet and further explained by the Holy Imams.

Verse 169

A warning against what Satan does and how he leads men astray imputing to God fictitious beliefs like Trinity and setting up of legal and disciplinary injunctions without any authority from God or His apostles.

Verse 170

Blind following of the ancestors is condemned.

This verse read along with the previous one (Verse 169) gives the clear idea as to how much it is abhorred by Islam to be licentious in deeds as well as in thought, attributing to God things without any authority or certainty. It is compared to following blindly any traditions of the ancestors which do not tally with sound reasoning and the divine guidance. (A.P.)

Verse 171

The infidels are compared to cattle or a people who hear the cry and do not at all understand the

meaning of the call. To the infidels, the call of the Apostle of God is a mere cry, and the higher realities of the faith are unintelligible to them.

Verse 172

Unless the food is taken with thankfulness the eating will be an act of infidelity. The Holy Prophet and the Holy Imams have repeatedly enjoined to start eating with '*Bismillah*' and to conclude it with '*Al-Hamdu li 'Llah*'. If the food is eaten with these words of remembrance of God's bounties, and gratitude to Him even the act of eating the food becomes a veritable function of devotion.

Verse 173

The Jews objected to certain food allowed to Muslims which the Jews themselves had forbidden to themselves without any authority². The Law of Moses had also forbidden that which dies of itself and that which was tom by beasts³. There are things prohibited to the Jews and not prohibited to the Muslims⁴. The flesh of swine has been held in great detestation and Jesus has also expressed equal abhorrence against its use. The same prohibition has been repeated in 16:115 and in 5:3.

The force of 'Innama' is 'nothing but' excluding everything besides.

The animals slaughtered invoking the name of the idols or the name of anybody else other than God.

This impresses the fact that everything in the universe belongs only to God and Holy is only His Name which alone shall be invoked when we consume anything in this world.

'*Ghaira Baghin*' denotes not for enjoyment but forced by the unavoidable necessity and '*Aadin*' means without any intention to revolt against the prescribed laws of God or not exceeding the bare limits of the actual want or the bare necessity. If anyone under circumstances beyond his control or forced by necessity to save his life, takes such things it will not be a sin upon him.

When a prohibited food is allowable under circumstances beyond one's control, to save one's life, it is logically inferred that under such similar circumstances of helplessness reconciling temporarily with the situation with an external declaration suiting the circumstances, having the real faith in fact at heart, called 'Taqiah' by the Shi'a School, will also be logically permissible.

Here and in the similar other passages, is laid down the principle of the Islamic law to be observed in the normal conditions and the law of exception for the state of emergency. The things forbidden in the normal conditions may be permissible in the emergency. The spirit of the law to be observed in both the cases is the sense of obedience, and sticking to the prescribed limits. Under no circumstances any revolt against any law is allowed. (A.P.)

Verse 174

Here is a warning to the Muslims that they should not, like the Jews, conceal what God has revealed of His Book and sell away their faith for a mean price, else they would be no better than the wicked Jews.

Concealing of the truth is so grave that it is compared to eating of fire. The metaphor is clear that by doing so the individual burns away his internal life i.e. ruins his own soul.

The punishment in the life hereafter will not be a conventional one as in this life. It will be natural and logical, as the consequence or the reaction of one's own actions in this life. (A.P.)

God will not speak to them and will not purify them indicates that otherwise, on the day of judgment God will speak to them and purify them of their sins by being pardoning to them.

Verse 175

Those who hide the truth are compared to those who purchase error for guidance. This clearly indicates that the address is to the Muslims who had been guided otherwise the Jews had already rejected it.

The word '*Maghfirat*' makes it clearer than the purification referred to in the preceding verse means pardoning of the sins.

Verse 176

The reference is about the people doubting about the Holy Qur'an being the genuinely revealed Word of God. It may also mean the Jews differing among themselves about the declarations in their own scriptures about the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and their displacing the passages of their own scripture or misinterpreting them to suit their spite against the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

[1.](#) Vide: 5:63.

[2.](#) Vide: 3:93.

[3.](#) Vide: Lev. 17/15.

[4.](#) Vide: 6:146.

Al-Baqarah Section 22 – Genuine Righteousness – Retaliation – Bequest

Righteousness consists not in mere formalities but in Piety, in Faith in God, Belief in the Day of Judgment, the Angels, the Book (the Holy Qur'an), the Apostles of God, in Charity to the nearest kith and kin, to the Orphans, to the needy, to the wayfarers, in the regular offering of prayers, in giving the poor-rate, fulfilling the promises – patience in times of trials and sufferings.

Al-Baqarah Verses 177 – 182

لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ
وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ
وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ
هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

“It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces towards the East and the West, righteousness is rather one who believeth in God and the Last Day and the angels and the Book, the apostles, and giveth his wealth out of love for Him to the kindred and the orphans and the poor and the wayfarer and the needy and for those in bondage; And established prayer and payeth the poor-rate; And those who fulfil their promise when they make a promise and the patient ones in distress and affliction and in the time of war these are they who are the Truthful and these are they who are the pious” (2: 177).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلِ الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنثَىٰ بِالْأُنثَىٰ فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ
شَيْءٌ فَاتَّبِعْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ذَلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ فَمَنْ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

“O, ye who believe! Retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the (unlawfully) murdered, the freeman for the freeman, the bondman for the bondman the woman for the woman; but. if any remission is made (to any one) by his (aggrieved) brother then the recognised course be adopted, and payment made to him in handsome manner. This is an alleviation and a mercy from your Lord, and whosoever transgresseth the limit after this, then for him shall be a painful chastisement” (2: 178).

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَاةٌ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

“And for you there is (security of) life in (the law of) Retaliation O, ye men of understanding, so that ye may guard yourself (against evil)” (2: 179).

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةَ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ

“It is prescribed for you when death approacheth (any) one of you, if he leaveth behind any goods that he maketh a bequest for parents and (the nearest) kinsmen in goodness (this is) a duty (incumbent) upon the pious (ones)” (2: 180).

فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“And whosoever altereth the bequest after he has heard it, the guilt shall be on those who alter it. Verily, God is All-hearing and All-Knowing” (2: 181).

فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مَوْصٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“But he who feareth from a testator anything unjust or sinful and establisheth agreement between them (it shall be) no sin for him; Verily God is Forgiving and Merciful” (2: 182).

Commentary

Verse 177

To speak of the importance or the significance of this verse it will suffice to say that the Holy Prophet said that whosoever acts up to this (one) verse has attained to perfection in faith. The spirit of this verse cannot fail to impress upon any reader be he even a non-Muslim. The formal or the theoretical and the real or the practical piety has been made clearly distinct in this verse. Faith in God and benevolence towards mankind have been set as the essence of the religion Islam.

There is no specific virtue in turning towards any particular direction¹. The theories and the practices given here are the real virtues which apart from being ordered by God, appeal as well to human reasoning. (A.P.)

It is also interpreted by some commentators that the turning of faces towards the east and the west refer to aspiration for the conquest of the countries in these directions which is not the aim or the purpose of the faith Islam, but the sole object of the religion is to propagate the truth through the practical virtues mentioned in the verse when conquest will naturally and automatically follow the footsteps of the virtuous ones.

The first and the foremost condition or the pre-requisite of virtue in man is mentioned as faith in God. i.e. in the Unity of God with all His divine attributes.

The Second condition is faith in the Last day of requital or judgment.

The Third condition is faith in the angels.

The Fourth condition is the faith in the Book i.e. the Holy Qur'an being the revealed Word of God. In Verse 98:3 belief in all the revealed scriptures as the true Word of God, is included as one of the articles of the faith.

The Fifth condition – the faith in truthfulness of all the apostles of God in opposition to the belief of the Jews and the Christians in a few of the prophets and disbelief in the others².

The Sixth condition – Spending of whatever wealth or property (i.e. provision) one has been provided with by God, in the love for God, in spite of the love of wealth as it is given out in the verse:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ

“Never shall ye attain to virtue until ye give away (in charity) of whatever ye love” (3:92).

Islam does not demand absolute hatred or indifference to property or the other things of earthly value, but the subordination of the possessions to the Spirit of charity, treating oneself only as a trustee charged with the prescribed duties as regulated and prescribed by God through His Apostle Muhammad. The charity in Islam, is also regulated and ranked:

Firstly – to the nearest in the relations.

Secondly – to the helpless orphans.

Thirdly – to the poor.

Fourthly – to the helpless wayfarers.

Fifthly – to the captives or the slaves in getting them liberated.

Islam is the first and the only religion which has prescribed liberation of slaves as a virtue and a condition of the genuine faith in God. No religion other than Islam has ever preached, while Islam enjoins, how best we can show our love for our fellow beings in bondage even though they may belong to any hostile camp. It shows what kind of a conquering nation Islam demands the Muslims to be. Setting free even the enemies when they are captured, spending of our own wealth has been made the condition of our faith in God.

No nobler teaching is found anywhere outside the pale of Islam. The teaching of the Bible 'Love thine enemies' has till now remained a never-practised ideal in Christendom. But only the practical Benefactor of humanity, the Holy Prophet Muhammad could enforce an ordinance of actual practice in life, saying: "For the love of God give away your wealth in freeing these enemies whom you have captured in war"

In 90:13 setting free of a slave has been prescribed as a cardinal virtue of the faith. And in 5:95 and 58:3 emancipation of slaves has been prescribed as '*Kaffara*' i.e. expiation of sins.

Seventh condition – to keep up the prescribed prayer.

Eighth condition – giving away the poor rate. This condition regarding the prescribed poor rate, indicates that the previous or the fifth condition of giving away or spending of wealth in love of God was the general charity not fixed or prescribed.

Ninth condition – Fulfilling of a promise when it is made – This includes the pledge made to God [3](#).

This condition speaks of the faithfulness to treaties and pledges prescribed for a Muslim nation, for unfaithfulness to treaties and pledges have wrought greater havoc on humanity than any other cause.

Tenth condition – Being patient in distress and in the time of war or a conflict. This quality in a believer in God, is a characteristic excellence for it proves the individual having truly or in fact sold or surrendered his soul to God⁴. Naturally a man who in fact realizes that he has already sold or surrendered himself or his soul, will feel this life to be a burden of responsibility to him, the sooner he is relieved of this life the better. Such a soul can never be shaken in his fortitude in any battle or distress. Those who show the slightest cowardice in war or feel sorrow or melancholy in any disappointments, distress or any affliction naturally indicate that they have not in fact sold or surrendered themselves their souls to God. Their profession of the faith in God is only verbal and not real.

"These are they who are the true ones," and they are the pious ones.' One has to remember the qualities mentioned of the true ones, for in another place in the Holy Qur'an, God wants the believers in Him (i.e. the Muslim) to be with (i.e. to follow) the true ones⁵.

Any intelligent reader of this verse will find all these superb qualities in their perfection or completeness only in the Holy Prophet and the Twelve Holy Imams of the Ahl Al-Bayt, and it is left to every one of the readers of this Holy Book to see if history can present anyone else of any other religions, with all these qualities of faith in God⁶.

This is a very important verse particularly for those who sincerely long to have the correct lead or guidance to truth and the truthful ones.

This verse clarifies another very important guiding factor. If one reads Verse 2:2 in the light of this verse, it guides him to the knowledge that the Holy Qur'an is a guidance given to the pious or the righteous ones who possess all the qualities mentioned in this verse perfectly integrated, with each quality in its

fullness or perfection. The personalities are referred to in plural and they can be no other than the Holy Prophet and the Twelve Holy Imams, each one of whom possessed all the excellence mentioned in this verse. These models of godly humanity, have been deputed, charged with the apostolic mission to guide mankind to divinity through the path of the Holy Qur'an.

Next only to the Holy Prophet, Ali, his cousin, and son-in-law, had been divinely endowed with every one of the qualities in the maximum degree a human being can possibly possess, and in this regard the position of Ali is unique, and this fact is acknowledged even by his enemies. Hence the Shi'as after the departure of the Holy Prophet, follow Ali and the other Holy Imams as the ideals of their life and no others.

The Muslim world as a whole without any exception of any school of thought in it, knows the fact and acknowledges it unreservedly that for the wonderful qualities of divine excellence, it was only Ali who earned exclusively for himself the unique title of '*Mazharul Ajaib*' i.e. the Manifestation of Wonders. It must be remembered that though the Holy Prophet and Ali are of one and the same divine light, as the Holy Prophet had declared 'I and Ali are of one and the same light' but Ali is only next to the Holy Prophet, with the relation in this world, as the follower to a leader. The Holy Prophet has declared similar identity with the rest of his Ahl Al-Bayt.

Verse 178

The world was in a barbarous state. Which was the place in the world where murder and bloodshed was not rampant? The worse was that a murder once effected was sufficient to breed hostility for ages together among the tribes and the clans of the murdered and the murderer. In retaliation for a murder of a single man or woman, people would not be content with the murderer being slain, but a number of men on the side of the murderer were killed and this was considered as a matter of honour and an act of integrity pleasing the soul of the murdered individual. The superstition was that the spirit of the murdered one used to cry for the retaliation of its murder and gets as much satisfied as the number of men and women of the murderer's side, are killed.

The screeches of the owls were held as the cry of the spirit of the murdered individual. The sons and the grandsons of the slain feel themselves bound in duty to their murdered ancestor, to retaliate as much as it may be possible for them. The blood animosities were hereditary and continued for generations together without any symptoms of abatement. The halt to this brutal conduct of the barbarous people ordered by Islam and the marvellous success achieved by this faith, is nothing but one of the wonderful miracles of the Holy Prophet, the blessings of which the human race as a whole will enjoy until the end of the world.

The law of requital enforced by Islam restricted strictly to the limits of justice tempered with the spirit of mercy of a genuine and a practical brotherhood, demanding only the life of the actual murderer himself, be he a man or woman, freeman, or a slave and none other. One unique provision made here is that the

heirs of the murdered are given the choice of pardoning the murder in consideration, for a repenting payment on behalf of the one found guilty for the crime.

This is evidently an act of clemency befitting the brotherhood of the faithful, the murderer still being held as a brother (as addressed in the verse). With the offence mercifully remitted in the graceful spirit of the grant of pardon from one brother to the other in the fellowship of the faith, worshipping one and the same Lord, and also as the children of one and the same parents.

There happen circumstances which alleviate the crime of a murder. Under such state of affairs, a murderer is even today punished with imprisonment or a fine paid to the heirs of the slain as a compensation for the loss of the soul to the family. The amount paid in such cases is called '*diyat*' or bloodwit. The concluding word of the verse plainly terms the moderation in the punishment as an alleviation from the Lord. And Verse 4:92 clearly lays alleviation only when the murder is not intentional and Verse 4:93 declares that the punishment for an intentional murder of a believer, for a Muslim, besides the punishment by the law in this life, there waits for him the hell to abide in it for ever.

Verse 49:9 is clear evidence to the fact as to how much and how far Islam aims at peace, security and order and the fullest possible justice in the world. It is laid for the Muslims that when two parties attack each other, to establish peace, reconciliation, harmony and justice among them, even resorting to arms and force, if necessary, is allowed to bring the situation under control and re-establish order.

Readers of this most practicable law of justice fully tempered with mercy, which has been practised most successfully for ages together by the Islamic States and which even today has been enforced by the civilized world, be compared in contrast to the mere idealist preaching of the Bible of the Church established in the name of Jesus, which has remained merely as a decoration of a faith and its book, never to be practised even by those who profess and propagate the religion. The Bible preaches:

'And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other-, and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.' Luke 6/29

'Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.' Luke 6/30.

Rome, a Christian power, the very heart of Christianity committed unprovoked aggression against Abyssinia, a Christian power, the other powers who joined Mussolini in the aggression against the poor Christian country, were also Christian, and the Pope, the Head of the Christian Church did nothing to stop the aggression.

The law of Islam is to administer justice in the most practicable way possible, fully tempered with reasonable and desirable mercy which can be granted to the guilty to re-establish love, harmony and peace among the members of the fellowship of the faith and the brotherhood of the human family.

'Ma'roof' – means anything known and recognised and approved – as an opposite of *'Munkar'* meaning, rejected, unrecognised, disapproved or detested by common sense, established custom or by the authority of law particularly religious. Generally, in Qur'an it is read in the sense or recognised by common sense endorsed by Islam. In the case of the personal laws (viz. will,) treatment to relatives, charity, maintenance of widows or divorced wives, means a moderation recognised by common sense. In the case of *'Amr bil-Ma'roof'* and *'Nahya anil Munkar,'* *Maroof* means recognised undisputedly as the obligatory duty prescribed by Islam and *'Munkar'* means abhorred and prohibited undisputedly.

Verse 179

Muslims were being put to death and they silently suffered murders. The enemies of Islam were contemplating a wholesale slaughter of the Muslims; the Muslims are warned that unless the law of just retaliation is enforced and put to work, there could not be security of life for them. It is in fact also that life can continue in peace and security only when those who are guilty of homicide are dealt with capital punishment.

'Qisas' – Islam pays the criminal in the same coin, not in the way the modern ingenuity has coined i.e. sending the criminal away from the public eye, in jails. For the desired effect upon the public against the crime, the execution should be publicly done so that it may serve as a lesson to the human mind at large against its ever leaning towards the heinous act. Men should also know that there is the law which is actually enforced in effect.

'La'allakum Tattaqoon'. The object of the ordaining of the penalty for the crime is to make people abstain from evil and guard themselves against the chastisement in this world and in the hereafter.

Verse 180

'Khair' according to most commentators means abundant wealth i.e. large property. In Verse 100:8 wealth has been called *'Khair'*. The Sunni School holds this Verse (Verse 2:180) as abrogated by Verse 4:11 in which the shares of the different heirs are specified but the Shi'a School does not share this belief for there are clear instances of the Holy Prophet and his first divinely commissioned successor i.e. the first of the Holy Imams Ali referring to bequest.

The Holy Imam Ali had a freedman who possessed 700 Dirhams. When in his death-bed the man desired to bequeath a part of his wealth, Ali stopped him saying that he had not a large amount of wealth to bequeath any portion of it. Another instance has been quoted of A'ysha reporting about the Holy Prophet preventing a man who possessed only 400 Dirhams from bequeathing saying the wealth is not much to suffer a bequest. Bukhari and Muslim both report that Sad bin Abi Waqqas that when Sad fell sick, being sure of his death he sought permission from the Holy Prophet to bequeath his property for he had only one daughter. The Holy Prophet prevented him to bequeath the whole of his wealth and permitted him to bequeath only one third of his property. All these instances show that this verse was not

abrogated.

This is one of the instances of abrogation of one Qur'anic passage by the other or by the traditions, held by the Sunni School. But a proper study of the said abrogating passage 4:11 shows that the distribution of the wealth of the deceased among the heirs is affected after paying full regard to the will made by the deceased. The word '*Kutiba*' here should not be taken to mean as compulsory but as 'Laid down' to mean as 'made legal' which according to the context of the circumstances can be compulsory or optional. (A.P.)

[Verse 181](#)

This verse clearly states that misinterpreting the Word of God is sin, and woe unto those who do it, for God warns such people that He hears and knows everything.

[Verse 182](#)

In case of this limit being exceeded and if the rightful heirs are to be deprived of their claims, proper advice be given to the testator and the proper settlement be brought between the heirs and those in whose favour the bequest which has been made.

[1.](#) Refer to note to Verse 2:148.

[2.](#) Vide: 2:285.

[3.](#) Vide: 2:40.

[4.](#) Vide: 2:207 and 9:111.

[5.](#) Vide: 9:119.

[6.](#) For a similar definition or the description of the qualities of the true ones see 49:15.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Al- Baqarah Section 23 - Fasting During Ramadhan, Rights Of Property

To Fast during the month of Ramadhan, Prayer and supplication to God, Discipline to be observed during the month, Rights of property to be respected

Al-Baqarah Verses 183 – 188

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

“O’ ye who believe! Fasting has been ordained unto you as it was ordained unto those before you so that ye guard yourself (against evil)” (2: 183).

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

“For a fixed number of days, but whoso among you is sick or on a journey then (he shall fast) that number of days; and those who are hardly able to do it, may effect a redemption by feeding a poor man, and (even so) whoso of his own accord performeth a good deed, it is better for him; and that ye fast is better for you if ye know” (2: 184).

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

“The month of Ramadhan that in which was sent down the Qur’an a Guidance for mankind and Clear Evidence of guidance and Discrimination (for the Right and the Wrong); So whosoever of you witnesseth the month, he shall fast therein; and whosoever is ill or on a journey (he shall fast) the same number of other days; God desireth fasted ease for you and He desireth not for you hardship that ye shall complete the (prescribed) number (of days) and that ye may glorify God for His guiding you and that ye may be thankful (to Him)” (2: 185).

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

“And when My servants ask thee about Me, then (say unto them) verily I am nigh; I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he beseecheth unto Me, so let them hearken unto Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright” (2: 186).

أَحِلَّ لَكُم لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتُمُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَىٰ اللَّيْلِ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

“It is made lawful unto you on the nights of the fast to go in unto your wives; they are an apparel for you and ye are apparel for them; God Without knoweth that ye yourselves held it fraudulent so He hath turned (in mercy) towards you and forgiven you. Wherefore go in unto them and seek what God hath prescribed for you, and eat and drink until the white streak (of dawn) becometh manifest unto you from the black streak (of night) thereafter complete the fast until night and associate not with them while ye are confined in the mosques. These are the bounds prescribed by God therefore, draw not (yourselves) near them; Thus, doth God make clear His signs unto mankind so that they may guard themselves (against evil)” (2: 187).

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْخِلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

“And do not swallow up your property among yourselves by wrongful means, neither seek to gain access thereby to the authorities that ye may swallow up a portion of the property of men wrongfully while ye know” (2: 188).

Commentary

Verse 183

“As it was laid down for those before” This declaration of the Holy Prophet is clear evidence of the knowledge he was divinely endowed with. This is a sufficient proof of the Holy Qur’an being the inspired Word of God. The information about the past and the future which the Holy Prophet ever gave was that which he had been inspired with.

As prayer, fasting also had been in vogue in every religion in some form or other, but in no religion had been fast so perfectly regulated and decisive as in Islam. In Islam fasting is one of the cardinal doctrines of the practice of the faith, taking its rank next only to the prescribed Five times daily prayers. The words of this verse show that fasting was enjoined by all the Prophets of God who preceded the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Among the Jews it was much done in times of sorrow and affliction. Among the Hindus in India, fasting was undertaken as a penance or to achieve spiritual powers. Jesus had enjoined fasting upon his followers as mentioned in Math. 6/16,17. When the Pharisees criticised the disciples of Jesus not fasting as did John, the reply given to the critics is given in Luke 5/33–35 which means fast among the Christians will be in sorrow after the departure of Jesus.

Sabians the representatives of the oldest Chaldean religion had fast prescribed for one full month, and the object of fasting in the Sabians was almost identical to that of Islam i.e. for mortification of the soul for moral uplift and the devotional communion with the Lord. But there is nothing to show that fasting was a compulsory institution among the Sabians.

In Islam fasting has been prescribed as a compulsory doctrine of the practice of the faith with the object

of disciplining and improving the physical, moral, and spiritual life of the true believer in God. This aim of the doctrine of fast is given out in the concluding words of the verse 'that haply ye may eschew sin.'

Fast in Islam is to train to suppress our natural appetites and shun evil. It does not mean abstaining only from food but from every kind of evil. Abstention from food is only the step towards the realization that if one has to abstain from that which is lawful how much more he must abstain from what has been forbidden by God. The main object of the Islamic fast is to purify the conduct and character and get the soul charged with divine attributes of God in the practical life for one complete month. It helps the Muslims in training themselves to guard themselves against evil as well as conditioning with restraint by habituating themselves to suffer physical affliction and self-control and resistance and fortitude which they must always be prepared to suffer in the defence of the faith and the faithful.

This is another word, wrongly held as abrogated by Verse 187, though the other verse deals with some of the details of the conditions to be observed during the fast and nothing to abrogate. (A.P.)

Verse 184

"For a counted number of days' the count or the number is given in the next verse.

In case of the risk of any illness being aggravated, testified by a reliable doctor, fasting is not allowed.

And in the event of an occasional, lawful, and unavoidable journey fasting is not allowed – be the journey in comfort and in ease or otherwise. In such cases the number of fasts so foregone must be completed in other days.

In cases wherein fast is sure to effect strain on their system viz. old men and women, mothers giving suck to their infant children, wet-nurses etc. they may forego fasting altogether but feed the poor instead, giving away the measure of one man's food every day for the days not fasted.

'*Fidya*' i.e. by means of which a man serves himself, or the money given away to purchase freedom. Here in this verse means the measure of food given away to the poor instead of the fasts not being able to observe.

The Holy Prophet and the Holy Imams who were always abundantly charitable, had been extra or especially charitable, during the month of Ramadhan.

The month of Ramadhan is called the month of God, for man, particularly during this month, has been enjoined by Islam to be godly in all his ideals and practical life, practising the divine attributes of God.

'And if one is able to' means if anyone is able to fast as well as feed the poor, he may do it for a greater return from God. There is a choice in this regard left to every individual's ability and inclination. It also means that those who are advanced in age and weak, are not prohibited from fasting. The giving away of '*fidya*' instead of each fast is only a concession to them but if they know the virtues in fasting and if

they choose of their own accord, they may fast instead of foregoing the fast by means of a *'fidya'* or if they can afford to, they may fast as well as give away *'fidya'* also.

Some commentators interpret *'Yuteeqoona'* . . . as the ability to fast and accordingly they hold the passage to be abrogated by the clause in the next passage (Verse 2:185) 'Whosoever witnesseth the month of Ramadhan shall fast' but the real meaning of *'Yuteeqoona'* is to be able to do something with great difficulty. Hence the reference is made to those who can bear the fast with great difficulty, such as the old people and those who suffer with the disease of a persistent frequent thirst and those seriously ill etc.

Even in this sense the passage stands valid as pointed out by the Holy Ahlul Bait. *'Ataqa'* – root *'Tawaqa'* mean same as *'tawa'a'*, i.e. ability but *'Tawaqa'* is ability with hardship whereas *'Tawa'a'* is ability with ease. This subtle difference between these two words was pointed out by the Holy Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq. Thus, he applied this verse for the invalids who are able to fast but due to their invalidity, it is hard and difficult for them to do it such as the aged ones. (A.P.)

Verse 185

The month Ramadhan is the ninth month of the Arabian Calendar year. The significance of the name of the month Ramadhan is either because when the names of the months were derived from the ancient language, the months were named according to the various seasons in which they then fell, and the month of Ramadhan fell in the days of the excessive heat of the year. Hence the name 'Ramadhan' derived from *'Ramz'* or heat or burning, was adopted for the month. It is also interpreted that the month is named 'Ramadhan' for in this month the sins of a believer in God who fasts as ordained by God are burnt away and the individual is washed of his sins.

The Sunni and the Shi'a traditions agree that the whole of the Qur'an was first sent down to the 'Baitul-Ma'mur' and from thence it was revealed in parts during the course of 23 years.

Tradition says that the Baitul-Ma'mur is the ideal (celestial) counterpart in heaven of the physical 'Ka'ba' on the earth. The author of Safi holds 'Baitul-Ma'mur' an allegorical term for the heart of the Holy Prophet to which the Holy Qur'an was revealed as a complete whole. The knowledge of the working of the phenomenon of human Psyche discloses the wonderful silent and hidden working of the deep regions of the Psyche which is called the unconscious which the upper and the superficial strata of the sub-conscious and the conscious may not at all know or even feel. Even the most advanced research of the current efforts of enquiry into the working of the Psychic phenomenon, has only to confess that all the enquiries made till now is only a drop in comparison to great oceans which have still to be seen.

It is an intelligible factor that the Holy Prophet who was divinely designed, conditioned, and sent for the final guidance of the human race as a whole and for all times till the end of the world was first, vested with the whole of the Final Word of God, destined to be conveyed to the world, and in the practical life in

the Physical world he had to deliver it gradually in graded stages, releasing a part and waiting for the opportunity and the divine command to release the other parts, as if he had but only the part which he delivered and waited for the revelation of the other parts. According to this interpretation the revelation of the portions of the Holy Qur'an in form of inspiration through an angel will mean the direction to the Holy Prophet toward a particular matter already vested with him, to release it on a particular occasion opportune for conveying it to the people. The subject is highly spiritual which needs a sufficient preliminary knowledge of the spiritual excellence of the Holy Prophet and the Holy Imams, and the amount of divinity that these godly souls had been charged with.

In short, to say it in plain words, the Holy Qur'an was first revealed in its wholeness to the Holy Prophet in the night of 'Qadr' in the month of Ramadhan and again in parts it was revealed to him as and when it was divinely deemed opportune to deliver it to the people¹.

'Hudan li 'n-nas' indicates that the Qur'an was revealed as a guidance not for any particular nation or tribe but for humanity as a whole. Similarly the Holy Prophet Muhammad had been sent for the human race as a whole², whereas Jesus according to his own claim was sent only for the lost sheep of the House of Israel.³ and similarly had told the leaders of the other religions whose mission was to reform some people in particular in some part of the earth. These words of the verse clearly indicate Islam being a universal religion for mankind as a whole.

Verse 186

God is nearer to each creature than its own life-vein (i.e. self). The nearness of God mentioned in this verse serves two purposes.

(1) To keep man always alert even against leaning towards evil,

(2) to give him confidence of the Almighty Lord, the Ever-Vigilant Protector of His creation, being with him, which conviction makes the individual feel independent of everybody else and makes him resort only to God for help and succour.

This consciousness, of God always being with him, makes one realize God as an ever-living reality which controls everything in the Universe, not as a mere theory of belief but as a matter of fact.

It is clearly stated in this verse that the prayer of a devout suppliant is heard or responded to, by God. The words of the Verse clearly indicate the acceptance of a sincere prayer, as promise by God. Acceptance of a prayer referred to here does not mean immediate fulfilment or the grant of whatever sought for. Only that which is best in the infinite wisdom of the All-merciful Lord, for the individual, is done.

Response to God's call means fulfilling of God's will, given in His commandments about our ideal and practical life in the world, and faith in God means realization of the ever-living presence of the only All-

knowing and the Almighty Lord Creator of the universe and none else being like Him besides Him.

Reverting to prayer or the efficacy of prayer, it does not at all exclude the necessity on the part of the Supplicant, of the use of the necessary external means of achieving the desired object. The connection between the practical means and prayer is indissoluble. Any sincere seeker of an object will naturally look for the practical means to achieve it. In the search for the means one must endeavour as best as possible for him, employing all his native faculties, devoting the necessary time and attention to achieve the desired object. When one in his search for the means open and hidden, he naturally desires guidance from higher powers from which nothing is hidden and for which nothing is impossible or difficult. Prayer blesses the supplicant by granting him the guidance necessary for the realisation of the desire.

This passage dismisses the fatalist view that man's destiny is predetermined without any regard to his actions; as prayer here is recommended with the promise of a response, and prayer is a human action and it has its effect on determination of the destiny, unless the fatalists say that the prayer is also God's action which philosophy or logic, a fatalist alone can understand. It is to be noted that the prayer to which response is promised is not a mere lip service, but it should be the sincere wailing or the cry of the heart, with the perfect supplicative turn of one's consciousness and conscience, to God. The effectiveness of prayer should not discard the necessity of human strive and effort to secure a better life here and, in the hereafter, as practiced by the monastic hermits or the ascetics, because He Who has ordered us to pray has also ordered us to work hard to earn and spend and to build a healthy society in co-operation with each other. To follow one order and dismiss the other, cannot be a sincere supplication or submission or genuine fidelity. (A.P.)

With the sincerity of intention, and fullness of effort one seeks help from the Almighty Lord, the seeker will naturally be granted his desires if in the view of the All-merciful, All-wise Lord the realization of that object also be profitable to the seeker⁴.

A want or a suffering may also be a trial from the Lord⁵.

Verse 187

The primary thought or the meaning accommodated in the description of clothing used here relating to the mutual relation of husband and wife and the mutual comfort and protection they afford to each other, is superb and unique in its expression. There cannot be a better description of the position of a man and wife and its relation to each other, which is unsurpassed in beauty.

In the start of the propagation of Islam, going into their wives was not allowed to Muslims after the night prayer during the fasting days. But Omar and some others reported themselves to the Holy Prophet and informed him of their transgressing the limits, and this verse was revealed to remove the restriction. (Bd. Jal. F.A.)

Eating and drinking must be abstained from the first streak of dawn to sunset. There are details about this ordinance which may be referred to in the books of the laws (*'Fiqh'*) regulating the practice of the faith.

Verse 188

In accordance with the disciplinary injunction relating to fasting, one has to abstain even from using of many things which are allowed to him by law. The law of wealth and property and the false position the wealthy get in the society makes one greedy and stimulates man to own wealth at any cost, legally or illegally. The purpose of fast is never complete until this evil desire in a man is restrained. When in love and obedience to the Lord, one has to restrain himself from even things legally allowed to him the gravity of using illegal things is automatically proved and established.

The faithful should not enjoy each other's wealth, property or any possession by illegal means and use the same as means to gain access to the authorities, to bribe them for the purpose or wrongly swallowing or enjoying other rights or possessions⁶. (A.P.)

¹. Vide: 97:1; 44:3.

². Vide: 4:80, 7:158, 34:28, 21:107.

³. Vide: Math. 15/22-26.

⁴. Vide: 6:41.

⁵. Vide: 2:155.

⁶. Vide: 4:29.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Al-Baqarah Section 24 - Fighting In Self-Defence, Pilgrimage Under Restrictions

Religious Calendar to be according to the Lunar Year, Regard for the sanctity of the Sacred Month, Fighting in self-defence, Regard for the sanctity of the holy city, Self-defence during the sacred month, Pilgrimage under restrictions, combining 'Umrah' with 'Hajj'

Al-Baqarah Verses 189 – 196

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَى وَأَتُوا
الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“They ask thee (Our Apostle Muhammad) concerning the new moons; say ‘they are indications of times fixed for men and for the pilgrimage; It is not righteousness that ye should enter your houses from behind but the righteous one is the one who guardeth himself (against evil) and enter ye (the) houses by their doors and take shelter in God so that ye may be successful” (2: 189).

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

“And fight in the cause of God (against) those who fight you but be not aggressive; for verily God loveth not the aggressors” (2: 190).

وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
حَتَّى يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنْ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ

“And slay them wherever ye find them and drive them away whencefrom they drove you away for mischief is more grievous than slaughter but fight not with them nigh unto the (Inviolable) Sacred Mosque until they fight with you therein but if they fight with you slay them (for) such is the recompense of the disbelievers” (2: 191).

فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“But if they desist, then verily God is Forgiving, Merciful” (2: 192).

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ

“And fight with them until there is no (more) mischief and religion be only for God but if they desist then there should be no hostility save against the aggressors” (2: 193).

الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمَاتُ قِصَاصٌ فَمَنْ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

“A sacred month (in reprisal) for a sacred month and reprisal (is lawful) in (all) things sacred; whoever then inflicteth aggression on you, inflict ye the like aggression on him as was inflicted by him on you; and fear God, and know that God is (always) with the pious ones” (2: 194).

وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ ۚ وَأَحْسِنُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“And spend in the path of God and cast not yourselves with your own hands into perdition, and do good, for verily God loveth the beneficent ones” (2: 195).

وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ فَإِنْ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ وَلَا تَحْلِقُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحَلَّهُ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِنْ رَأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِنْ صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ فَإِذَا أُمِنْتُمْ فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

“Complete the pilgrimage and ‘Umra’ for the sake of God; but if ye be prevented, then be sent whatever offering easily available (for you) and shave not your heads until your offering reacheth its place; but whosoever among you is sick and hath an ailment in his head then let him effect a compensation by fasting or alms or sacrifice; But when ye are secure (from the hinderance), then whoever enjoyeth from the ‘Umra’ to the ‘Hajj’ let him offer of whatsoever offering easily available (for him) but he who is not able to find (any offering) should fast for three days during the pilgrimage and for seven days when ye return; this (maketh) the ten (days) complete; this is for him whose people (nearest kith and kin) dwell not near the Sacred Mosque; and fear God and know ye! that God is severe in requiting evil” (2: 196).

Commentary

Verse 189

Ahillah is the plural of Hilal (i.e. the Crescent). Fast, Festivals and Pilgrimage etc., prescribed by Islam are timed according to the lunar months. None can count the days and months by the help of the Sun without a formulated Calendar which may be available to some and may not be available to the others. But a man can without any other help count days of the month and enumerate the months of the year by the help of the varying shapes or forms of the Moon. Hence the various religious observances in Islam have been based upon the lunar calculation which even an illiterate one can avail of, through his own personal observation.

‘Enter houses by their gates.’ It is reported by some commentators that it was the practice among the Arabs that after getting into ‘*Ihram*’ (the pilgrim’s garb) they considered it unlawful to enter their houses through the usual doors, but they cut a new entrance from behind the premises. This verse abolished

that superstitious custom. But the object and the significance of the revelation of this verse is reasonably wider and greater. According to Razi, entering from behind is a figurative expression for turning aside from the right course, and entering by the door means sticking to the right path.

The house as the figure used in this verse, is the House of Guidance and the door stands for the Right Course to gain admission to it. The famous declaration of the Holy Prophet clears the point further: 'I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its Gate.' i.e. whosoever desires admission to knowledge, can have it only through Ali. The Shi'a School or the Islam Original derives all its knowledge or guidance through Ali. The Sunni Mo'tazalite (Rational) School and the Sufis (Mystics) openly declare that they also derive their system only from the teachings of Ali.

The other reasons for preferring the Lunar calculation to the Solar one, though both the systems were known to the Arabs, are:

1. So that the devotee should have the benefit of performing the religious rites in all seasons during his lifetime for anything fixed with the solar calculation fixes the season also for it, for all times.
2. To avoid the seasonal ritualism of the Metheric and the other Star-worshippers, which had already affected the Christian cult.
3. The Lunar year being shorter than the Solar one, the devotee will have the benefit of a greater frequency of the opportunities of special devotional services.
4. The tendency of reversion to the Solar Calendar even for ritual purposes is due to the Christian influence which itself has been affected by the pagan cult of the Romans as the result of the compromising attitude adopted by Paul towards the Pagan cult. However this tendency should be resisted wherever it is noticed. (A.P.)

Verse 190

To know what was the creed of the Israelites about fighting in the cause of God, we must read Numbers: 25/1-3 and Numbers 31/7-18.

1. "And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the

daughters of Moab.

2. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.
3. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.” Num: 25/1–3.
4. “And they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses’, and they slew all the males.”
5. And they slew the kings of the Median, beside the rest of them that were slain: namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.
6. And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods.
7. And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire.
8. And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of men and of beasts.
9. And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoil, unto Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at the plains of Moab, which are by Jordan near Jericho.
10. And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp.

11. And Moses was wroth with the officers, of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle.
12. And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive?
13. Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Rear, and there was plague among the congregation of the Lord.
14. Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him.”
15. But all the women, children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.”[1](#)

The details of the heartless and the wholesale massacres reported of Moses and Joshua and the other apostles of God which were nothing but extirpation in the fullest sense of the word, which are heart-rending to know. Let us leave them aside and justify that when the apostles had to fight so relentlessly to meet the devilish characters and the brutal conduct of the infidels, in the way of the Lord, would it not be similarly just and proper if another Apostle of God, placed in exactly the same position with the same sort of people, to meet their force with force in defence of the heavenly guidance he had brought for mankind?

In spite of the brutal and heartless outrages committed by Christendom upon the unarmed Jews under the Edict of Milan, if any Christian authority falsely prides upon saying that they did not take up the sword to force the Gospel on the world, they must disown unconditionally their belief in the word of God which was revealed to Moses which was fully subscribed to by their god their Christ. Moreover, there can never be any comparison between the outrages committed by Moses, and the Christians, and the wars which were forced upon the Holy Prophet in which he had only to defend himself. The words of the injunction in the verse, speak aloud as to what the intention of the Muslims should be and how they should behave in the situation and how the undertaking must be only defensive².

“Nobody who has any idea of the miserable conditions of the early Musalmans, would for a moment imagine that this handful of people could have wantonly set themselves to provoke the active hostility of the whole world about them. They would quietly have borne any provocation rather than take the risk of

fighting with hordes without number. If they did engage themselves in this way, one would presume that circumstances had forced them to it; unless their very existence were in peril, they could not possibly have thought to plunge themselves into a mortal struggle. This is so clear *a priori* that even if in threats, the initiative did appear to be taken by the Musalmans, no sane minded person would for a moment suppose that they were really offensive wars – they must have been offensive with a defensive import. The circumstances had forced them to take action, and if the Prophet had not been quick to it and had waited for a formal assault from the other side, he would only have given the enemy time to collect their forces; and who can doubt that in that case the world would soon have heard the least of this little band of Musalmans.”

“Yet such is the perversity of prejudice that no such considerations, obvious as they are, are allowed to have any weight with writers like Muir, Sell, Noeldeke and others. AU they can see is that in the Battle of Badar and its prelude, the raid of Abdullah bin Jahsh, it was the Musalmans that began the quarrel with the infidels. What the infidels had been doing all the time before is, as a matter of principle, ignored and forgotten.”

“How deep-rooted was the acrimony which drove the infidels on against the new converts, may be easily judged from their pursuing them down even to Abyssinia where they had fled to avoid the horrible tortures they were suffering at their hands. They would not let them live in peace even in other lands. Could it be imagined that they could all complacently see them flourish and develop their mission from a centre only 70 miles away from themselves? What are the facts?

Soon after the emigration of the Prophet they wrote to the chief of Medina Abdullah ibn Obai as follows: “You have given protection to our man. We have sworn by God that you either kill him or expel him, otherwise we will come upon you with all of us, and kill your fighting men and take hold of your women as lawful for us” (Abu Daud Sunan) Ohay bin Kaab says, “When the Prophet and his people came to Medina and the Ansars took them under their protection, All Arabs were united to make an assault upon them” They never lay down to sleep except with their weapons with them” (Haakim).

“This is not the place to give an account of the various wars and battles that were fought. They will be described under the various verses relating to them.”

“This is merely an introduction that may help us to understand the true state of things at the time. All this is quietly passed over by European Critics of Islam.”

“Finally, it should be noted that as without ‘*Jihad*’ the correspondence of our Prophet to the career of our Lord Moses would fail to be perfect, Islam would also fail to be a complete and perfect religion for the world. Fighting has well been said to be the direct necessity of human nature, a religion that did not provide for it, did not regulate its principles, and define its rightful limits, would not be a perfect religion, much less a final religion for the world.”

In spite of all that has been said that Islam prefers peaceful methods of preaching the truth, and that it

never took any initiative in waging war against its opponents, the fact is that Islam recognises the right of taking even the initiative in using force against those who persist in ungodly activities causing human degradation or social or moral deterioration. But this measure cannot be adopted save by the Prophet of God or his Vicegerent authorised by him and none else. As the fifth Holy Imam Muhammad Ibn Ali Al-Baqir says 'A war may be termed as holy or godly (*Jihad*)' if the object be to make people give up submission to any one besides God, and to submit only to God's authority and the Divine will. But if the object be to make them give up submission to one creature in order to submit to any other, it is the usual war waged for selfish and some worldly gain. Hence it is unholy and thus, condemned by Islam. Taking this definition in view, it is obvious that no war is holy unless it is sanctioned and allowed by the person who is perfectly pure from every kind of ungodliness and is constantly in communion with the Universal Will of the Absolute.

However, Islam enjoins on Muslims to be always ready, well prepared, and well equipped to meet all exigencies or an eventuality which may unexpectedly develop against them, then they should gather strength as much as they can so that their opponents, the opponents of the divine cause may refrain from any unprovoked aggression³. (A.P.)

Verse 191

"To kill the enemy wherever one finds him is nothing strange when a state of war exists, and yet the critics of Islam draw the most grotesque conclusions from these simple words. The verse, read together with the first, runs thus: And fight with those who are fighting with you, and kill them wherever you find them. Do the civilized nations fight with each other to spare their enemies? The personal pronoun in the words kill them refers to those with whom fighting is enjoined in the previous verse. In fact, it cannot refer to anything else, nor to unbelievers generally, who are nowhere mentioned in the previous verses, not even in the previous section."

'*Akhrjoohum*' – drive the persecutors out from whence the Muslims were driven out from their homes in Mecca and Mecca in which stood the Holy Sanctuary of the Ka'ba had become the Islamic Centre. The Words clearly mean exterminate the usurper only to be dispossessed of what he had unlawfully taken.

"*Fitna*" persecution or burning with fire, affliction, distress, hardship, slaughter, causing to error, misleading, seduction from faith in any way or means. This part of this verse is self-evident that the main object of Islam is peace, order and harmony among the members of the human family, and to help them always to be on the right path.

The word '*fitna*' is used as explained in Verse 2:217 in which fighting has been abhorred as a grave matter, and persecution has been declared as graver than slaughter.

'*Fitna*' i.e. any action subversive to public peace. A thorough study of this passage dealing with war along with the other passages of the subject matter will leave no doubt that Islam is originally for

universal peace and harmony to be established among mankind as a whole, and is tolerant to all other castes and creeds so long as they have no ill will or ill designs against it, to the extent of recommending the Muslims to be kind and do justice even to the disbelievers who are not hostile to them⁴. Not content with this, even to those hostile ones among the infidels, Islam enjoined and observed strict and utmost justice. There are many verses to this effect but some of them are: 4:135, 5:8, 16:90. It is the definite policy of Islam to avoid killing and destruction, as far as possible.

Of course, when the public peace and safety is at stake, and when the use of force becomes unavoidable, then Islam has no mercy for any persistent aggressor and any intentional mischief monger. To Islam the observation of the sanctity of the Holy Ka'ba and of the sacred months is very important but to defend against any aggression when there is left no other alternative, the ritual or the sentimental sanctity had to be superseded by the cause of public peace, harmony, and security. Islam started its mission with peaceful and convincing methods of argument, reasoning and appealing sermons, and the same method continued throughout the life of the Holy Prophet. The wars waged against the disbelievers during his life-time were confined to the pagans of Mecca (the Quraish) and the pagan tribes who were the active associates of the hostile Quraishites to exterminate the new faith and its adherents, the Muslims.

The Christians were fought when the Syrian vassals of the Roman Empire mischievously counselled the Emperor Hercules to adopt hostilities against, the Muslims, which was wholly unprovoked and unwarranted by any genuine exigency but just to support the pagans of Mecca. The Holy Prophet never waged any war, nor did he order any of his followers to do it, or initiate any assault against any non-hostile person, tribe, or country, to do it either in his lifetime or afterwards. There is no indication whatsoever of even allowing any such offensive measure, neither in the Holy Qur'an nor in the traditions of the Holy Prophet. On the contrary there are many Qur'anic passages and the recommendations of the Holy Prophet which enjoin upon the Muslims to do their best in preaching the truth by peaceful methods of conviction and not of deception practiced by the others⁵.

The point worthy of note in support of what has been said above, is that the sword, which was devoted, right from the beginning to the cause of Islam was the '*Zulfiqar*' and the man whose life was devoted to the same cause was Ali, as it was declared by a divine voice from heaven in the very presence of the Holy Prophet in the midst of the battle of Uhud:

La fata illa Ali... (with God) There is no Hero but Ali.

La saif illa Zulfiqar... There is no sword but the Zulfiqar⁶.

This champion of Islam, Ali, and his sword fought against the pagans of Mecca and their allies, the Jews and the Christians during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet by his order and afterwards his sword was sheathed and Ali withdrew from all wars and war-like campaigns, which developed and were executed after the departure of the Holy Prophet against the non-Muslims of the world. Ali had again to helplessly

resort to his sword, not against any disbelievers but against those who professed to be Muslims and yet acted against the justice for which Islam stood (i.e. against hypocrisy).

Ali had to fight even against A'ysha the wife of the Holy Prophet and those who professed to be the closest followers and the intimate companions of the Holy Prophet at 'Jamal' when they deviated from the prescribed right path of Islam. He fought (at Siffeen) against Mu'awiyah the son of Abu-Sofyan the old arch-enemy of the faith who was persistently busy in his subversive and anti-Islamic activities within the folds of Islam. Ali had to fight many parties who professed and seemed to be very pious and orthodox (the Kharijites) when they tended towards anarchism and disturbed public peace and harmony. Ali said in one of the battles: 'I shall not cease to fight this type of the people until the last hypocrite is driven out of the rank of the faithful:

Ali used his '*Zulfiqar*' against the practice of injustice and the use of religion for worldly purposes.

The last use of the '*Zulfiqar*' was by Ali's son Husayn at Karbala for the same purpose for which it was used by Ali himself. It was thereafter sheathed as the purpose was served, the right and wrong, the false and genuine was clearly and once for all distinguished and the battle of Karbala drew the demarcating line between the divine and devilish camps. The Imams succeeding Husayn, needed not to resort to the sword. They struck themselves to the original method of reasoning and practicing righteousness and piety which they preached. They did their best in the face of the worst of the oppositions, heartless and torturous persecutions and under all sorts of the tyrannical methods adopted by the ruling classes and the satellite priests to crush and destroy the cause of the original Islam advanced by the Holy Ahl Al-Bayt. In spite of all the suppressive activities the cause of truth flourished more and more to the extent that even the greatest despots had to acknowledge their defeat and failure. (A.P.)

Verse 192

The clemency enjoined by Islam upon its adherents even against their bloodthirsty enemies in the battle-field has no match in any other religious order. The Muslims have been definitely commanded to sheath their swords if the enemy desists from fighting. The fight allowed by Islam has to be only against the wrong done, and there should be no rancour against the enemy when they correct themselves or even when they end the hostility.

Verse 193

The '*Fitna*' has been explained briefly under Verse 191. This verse clearly states that the object of the Islamic fight must be to stop '*Fitna*', i.e. persecution, corruption, or mischief and once it is stopped the fight should also cease.

'*Wa yakunuddin lillah*' the religion be only for God. This part of verse clearly sets forth that the object or the ultimate end of the Muslim fight must always be to remove persecution against religious liberty or until everyone is allowed free to choose and practice his or her own faith. And 'Shirk' or associating

anything with God i.e. Polytheism, is the cause of the whole trouble. Hence it will mean that Muslims should endeavour or fight until there remains no 'shirk' in the world and this object will be fulfilled when the last or the 12th Holy Imam Muhammad Al Mahdi appears.

Verse 22:40 discloses that the Muslims fought not only to defend their own faith but also to defend Churches, Synagogues and even Cloisters or the monks, to gain for them their individual liberty of remembering God at their own choice so that there be no compulsion in the matter of religion Verse 256. This speaks of the religious liberty and freedom for individual decision and practice which Islam grants. In short, it means that Islam does not allow Satan or the Satanic forces to interfere in the matters of anyone or any people who want to worship none but the One True God with one's own belief and practice. This freedom and toleration, one would search for in vain elsewhere other than Islam.

The command to stop hostilities when the enemy desists from fighting and to enter into an agreement with the aggressors when they give up aggression, clearly means to content with the cessation of the interference with the belief and the practice of Islam and allowing even the enemy to have their own way if they only stop hostilities against Islam and the Muslims.

'La udwana' There shall be no hostility but only against the aggressors or oppressors.

If the meaning of desisting means their giving up their belief in the false deities and the idol gods, it will mean to fight until the enemy embraces the truth and believes in the One and Only True God (i.e. accepts Islam).

Verse 194

The four months Rajab, Dhu 'l-Qa'dah, Dhu 'l-Hijja, and Muharram were recognised by the Arab-world as whole, as sacred. Muslims are permitted to violate the sanctity of these holy months if it is first violated by the enemies.

The clause 'Bimithli ma a'atada' proves that the Muslims had to be only on their defence if the necessity arises.

Verse 177 clearly indicates who in fact are the pious.

Verse 195

Stinginess is condemned in every religion and creed. About stinginess, Islam says: 'The stingy shall be away from God, away from Paradise and nearer to the Hell'. This verse says that by being stingy you will be leading yourself and your nation to perdition. According to Islam the displeasure of God is perdition of the individual or the people.

In dealing with 'Jihad' which means preparation for the sacrifice of life as well as wealth in the cause of God, God warns the Muslims not to be moved by any sentiment and be aggressive against their enemy

and go beyond justice⁷. They should not also be moved to surrender either their life or wealth where it does not help the cause of the faith or the faithful. In any way the effort has to be constructive and productive and not destructive or in vain, as explained in the notes to Verse 2:2 and 2:156.

Man's life or any of his possessions is not his own but of God, and he is only a trustee. He should not use it to please himself but to please God in promoting His cause and when no promotion is expected nothing of the life or wealth shall be risked and when it is to result in the promotion of the cause nothing should be spared, as did the Holy Prophet at Hudaibia, Ali in Siffin, Hasan and Husayn with Mu'awiyah, and as Husayn staked his all when he realised that in his sacrifices lay the Revival of Islam and the salvation of the human race.

Therefore, '*Tahlika*' ordained to be avoided comprehends in its meaning the unscrupulous sparing of life as well as the risking of it or the wealth unproductively in the way of God.

'*Ahsinu*' i.e., to be ever vigilant to do only the best which is loved by God. (A.P.)

Verse 196

Hajj and Umrah are practically the same visiting the Holy Ka'aba, but with a slight difference. The latter is a briefer pilgrimage which one can perform at any time in the year while the former i.e. Hajj has its month and date fixed. In 'Umrah' the rites to be performed are only a few. However, a very brief note on the routine of the disciplined personal behaviour of the pilgrim which is strictly followed in Hajj is given below just to give an idea of the degree of self-restraint, and submission and sacrifice demanded of a Muslim pilgrim, for the information of those who may not know anything about the significance of the pilgrimage prescribed by Islam:

On arrival at the last stage ('Miqat') near Mecca the pilgrim bathes and performs two 'Rakat' prayers and then divesting himself of his usual clothes, puts on his Pilgrim's Garb called '*Ihram*' which consists of two seamless wrappers only, one being wrapped round his waist, and the other thrown loosely over the shoulders, the head being left uncovered. So, shoes also must be cast off though sandals may be worn. From this time forth, the pilgrim must abstain from all worldly affairs and all thoughts of the comforts of the body, must be given up. He must not even scratch himself, lest the vermin be destroyed; he can only rub himself with the open palm of his hand. (And in this state, he has to live until the prescribed rites of pilgrimage are duly completed).

"He then proceeds to the Holy City, steeped as far as possible in thoughts of devotion and crying '*Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik*' 'Here, I am O Lord' (i.e. in submission to Thee). On arrival at Mecca he performs the prescribed ablutions in the Great Mosque around the Ka'aba and then kisses the Holy Stone (*Hajar Al-Aswad*). He then makes seven circuits '*Tawaf*' round the '*Ka'aba*', reciting the prescribed declaration of his submission to the Lord, hallowing His name. He then proceeds to the '*Maqam Ibrahim*' mentioned in verse 125 above, and performs two '*Rabat*' prayers, thereafter he returns

to the Holy Stone and kisses it.

He then proceeds immersed in thoughts of devotion and in the memories of Abraham, Ishmael, and Hagar to the hillock '*Safa*', and runs between the two hillocks '*Safa*' and '*Marwa*'. seven times repeating the prescribed prayers. This is the sixth day of '*Zulhijja*' the evening of which is again spent at Mecca and circuit (*Tawaf*) is again made round the '*Ka'aba*.' The seventh and the eighth days, are spent in devotion at '*Arafat*' and in the evening the pilgrim proceeds to '*Mina*' and on his way he spends the night at '*Muzdalifa*.'

The next morning, he arrives in Mina when, after a ceremony of casting stones at the devil to symbolize the resolution to keep him off from Satan in future life, the pilgrimage ends with sacrifice in the commemoration of the thrilling sacrifice of his son Ishmael that Abraham prepared himself to make in obedience to the command of the Lord. The pilgrim's dress Ihram is then taken off, and the pilgrim gets himself shaved and his nails pared, and he returns to ordinary life. However, he should stay at Mina for three days, and before starting on his return journey he must proceed to Mecca and perform the circuits round the '*Ka'aba*' and return to Mina and stone the three devils.

In *Umrah* the *Ihram* is put on and circuit is made round the '*Ka'aba*' and the running between '*Safa*' and '*Marwah*' is done but the other ceremonies are omitted.

The above outlines which give only the barest routine of the ceremonies will suffice to show that Hajj is a week of intense devotion continued in the midst of the inconveniences of the journey and a camp life. To say nothing of the vast concourse of some hundred thousand heterogeneous of people in a space barely sufficient for them, which is alone sufficient to make the mind dizzy, even the most elementary comforts of the body are tabooed and yet the mind is expected to be constantly fixed in devotion to God. For the prayers and other rites of devotion that the pilgrim has to perform, refer to the details on Hajj in the book on 'Fiqh

.' The aim of Islam is to enable man to sublimate the self in him to qualify himself to the glorious heights of spiritual bliss. The poor are already humbled. It is the pride, haughtiness and the arrogance of the rich that needs sublimation. A rich man might give away any amount of his wealth in charity but would never subject himself to any inconvenience to humiliate himself before the public. Hajj or pilgrimage is ordained only on those who are rich enough or who can afford to meet the expenses of the journey. Imagine the big land-lords and even mighty kings, who have never known anything but luxury and enjoyment in their life, being compelled by the institution of Hajj to behave and act during Hajj in the humblest desirable humility and sublime manner not allowed even to express their anger or hurt even an ant or pluck a plant. In such a state of being a source of peace, and help to one and all, the Haji has to devote his mind as much as he can, to God and Godliness. Is it easy to subject the Satanic arrogance of the rich and the kingly ones in the human race to such a trying ordinance? And if this is effected, will it be anything short of a miracle? Will not such a strict disciplinary training qualify an individual for loftier and glorious state of real bliss? No difference or any vestige of any of the differences or the distinctions of wealth, birth, caste,

colour, or nationality is tolerated.

The individual, be he a king or a peasant, is subjected to running amidst the huge crowd of the thousands unknown people, pushing one another in the rush. Will this all go in vain? Will it not help man to realize, and remember his nothingness in the sight of God and to influence him to feel and practice the brotherhood of man? Besides everything else of the higher religious and spiritual value, the institution of Hajj has a value of its own as a moral and a spiritual exercise which goes a long way to qualify man for a divine life on earth – there is no other religion in the world which has any institution of this kind or which has succeeded to this extent in bringing the brute in man, under such an effective and voluntary control. Islam would have been sadly lacking as a perfect religion if it had not prescribed some duty analogous to this. All exercises, whether they be physical, or moral, social, or spiritual, may appear “Stupid and meaningless” to the ordinary minds but the institution of Hajj has earned an unreserved acknowledgement of its merits and efficiency even from the stranger to it, and even from its enemies.

There are some who object to the sacrifices, calling it a “callous waste of life” It is said that of all civilized religions, Islam is the only one that has retained animal sacrifice to this day. Such a statement never suits the present age of scientific awakening and the advancing rationalism. It suits only the primitive or the pre-historic age of ignorance. Today even an ordinary student of biology, botany and minerology will reasonably assert to prove that life does stop with the animal world, for the vegetable and even the mineral world has its blessing. Can the objectionists to the animal sacrifice ever count the innumerable number or amount of the life they sacrifice or slaughter every day in the ingredients of their daily food? Can anyone say how many millions of lives one swallows in the one draught of every drink one has? The Truth is that the life in the lower stages of it, has been created to serve the survival of the species in the higher realm. This is the order or the law of nature since its every inception.

The feeling for the slaughter of any animal is reasonable and commendable only when it is against any purposeless slaughter, and it becomes unreasonable when the slaughter is in accordance with the demand of the Author of nature. If the slaughter of any animal is so abhorring what is the device the advocates of life of the animals suggest to spare these animals once for all from dying i.e. not allowing them to suffer the pangs of death at all. If man does not slaughter the animals, they are in any case going to suffer death. To speak the truth that by slaughter the agony or the pangs of death are eliminated by the extinction of life being instantaneous and the pain suffered being very short, whereas if the animal left to die of old age or any disease, is sure to labour under that miserable state for long. When an animal is to die – what reason is there to stop or to object to making the animals’ remains useful for the sustenance of the higher life (human) instead of allowing to waste.

Besides if the extinction of life had been an act of cruelty, the creator of these animals who is universally acknowledged by all schools of theistic thought, as the All-Merciful One, would not at all have allowed it to be enacted. The point is that it is in the fulfilment of the plan of the providence that animals particularly those useful for the sustenance of the human life on earth are created in unlimited abundance.

It is perfectly in accordance with the phenomena of the survival of the fittest that objects of lower stages of creation, have been purposely created to be sacrificed for those of the higher stages and in the same order man has been created to sacrifice the self in him which is the dearest to him, to reach the higher realms of divinity or the spiritual bliss.

Man had given himself up to the extremes in the matter of sacrifice or offerings to God. Either he had totally abstained from offering anything to Him saying it is cruel to sacrifice anything or he went to the extent of the human sacrifice to please his own imaginary deities. Islam struck the *via media* by instituting the sacrifice of the animals, the remains of which can also serve as the sustenance of the higher pace of the Lord's creation (i.e. the human being) as well as to perpetuate the memory of the miraculous rescue of a human life by God, by sacrifice of an animal in the case of the intended sacrifice of Ishmael by the Holy Prophet who was an ideal of perfect devotion to the Lord.

Not only is hunting '*Haram*' (i.e. prohibited) during Hajj but at all times of the year it is a moral sin to shoot any animal purposelessly. Not even a bug or a mosquito shall be killed by a Haji as long as he is in '*Ihram*' (pilgrim's garb). Though for the necessity of it, the killing of animals is allowed elsewhere, the purposeless enactment of it is condemned by Islam. The extent to which Islam, in particular stresses in the matter of animals, can hardly be realized by any, not conversant with the traditions of the Holy Prophet and the Imams of his house. The Holy Imam Ali even on his death bed did not forget the fowls maintained in his house, and he enjoined his children to take particular care of them or to liberate them. A disciple of his, having killed some pigeons in irritation, the sixth Holy Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq made him expiate his act by giving away one Dinar in charity for each one of the birds killed. A dog having come where the second holy Imam Hasan was dining, his companions wanted to have the unclean animal turned out, but preventing them, the holy Imam began to take one morsel for himself and give another to the dog and said, 'I feel ashamed of God that a creature of His should look to my food and I turn him away.'

Islam does not want the unreasonable feeling of impracticable tenderness to overgrow and take possession of the true believer in God, to prevent him from overcoming it when duties call him to act in a manly manner. Few will find themselves prepared to act as an executioner, to put to death a friend, when he is even rightly condemned to death by Law, but the law demands to uphold its decree i.e. the course of justice to have its own way and it is unquestionably allowed to have it, by every civilized and law-abiding nation. The purposeless slaughter of animals is condemned by Islamic Law, but the overgrowth of any tenderness, Islam regards as a moral or a mental weakness, and it can only be removed by a proper exercise. This slaughter of animals is only a token of the great sacrifice which the Holy Prophet Abraham had prepared himself to offer, and in making us accustomed to the pangs of tender emotions, the Islamic Law seeks to train us to rise equal to the task of overcoming the weakness whenever demanded to do it in the way of the Lord.

It is also said that the regard paid to the Holy 'Ka'ba' is a compromise with idolatry. None can prove any

vestige of idolatry in the Hajj. The holy edifice which was exclusively raised for the remembrance of the only true Lord, if the pagans had appropriated it for themselves and used it as their temple, and then if a holy man by the command of the Lord rises and clears the place of the idols and restores it to its original purpose and thereafter men venerating it can that be a compromise with idolatry? Truly Islam has done justice even to idolatry for it has given permanence to what was just and good in it i.e. the spirit of holding in veneration things dedicated to God and godliness without any intention or idea of worshipping them. It has not allowed itself to be carried away by a frenzied spirit of iconoclasm to be unreasonable or foolish, it destroyed the images which purported to represent false gods, but retained and maintained in reverence the things really venerable such as the Black Stone used by Abraham in the construction of the holy edifice, which is reported to have come from heaven. Islam retained the regard attached to the hillocks of 'Safa' and 'Marwah' for their historic association with the event connected with the life of the Holy Prophets Abraham and Ishmael. If this is idolatry, Islam should be rightly proud of it, and shall not wish to part with it. No religion can be truly perfect without making a provision for the cultivation of these sublime emotions.

'Whoever profits by combining, 'Umrah' to 'Hajj.' This means that after performing the rites of 'Umrah' the pilgrim casts off his 'Ihram' and resumes it for Hajj when its season approaches. This gives the pilgrim the advantage of sparing one more journey for Hajj after the 'Umrah' and they are also relieved of the restrictions of being in 'Ihram' in the interval.

This, Omar opposed even in the life time of the Holy Prophet and went to the extent of openly forbidding it during his regime as the Khalif nominated by Abu-Bakar, along with the 'Muta al-Nisa' and the clause 'Hayya ala Khairi al-'amal' in the 'Azan' (call for prayer). However, the later jurists did not follow Umar's ordinance in the case of the 'Muta al-Haf' but his ordinance in the case of the other two i.e. the 'Muta al-Nisa' and 'Hayya ala Khairi al-'amal', pushed the divine law behind not to be practiced by the ignorant ones until now⁸. (A P.)

¹. Numbers 31/7-18.

². See also 22:39-40.

³. Vide: 8:60.

⁴. Vide: 60:1, 60:8-9.

⁵. Vide: 16:125.

⁶. Vide: Sirah Ibn Hisham, Tabari and Ibn Athir.

⁷. Vide: 2:190.

⁸. Vide: 4:24.

Al-Baqarah Section 25 – No Warfare During The Pilgrimage Months, Warning Against The Hypocrites

No warfare during the Pilgrimage Months, Warning against the hypocrites, Further instructions regarding Hajj, Invitation to complete submission to God (i.e. Islam).

Al-Baqarah Verses 197 – 210

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ
وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

“Hajj is in the months well-known, whosoever then undertaketh the pilgrimage therein, then let there be no intercourse, nor bad language, nor quarrelling during the pilgrimage; and whatever of good ye do, God knoweth it; so make provision (for your journey) and verily the best provision is piety; and fear Me O ye people of understanding” (2: 197).

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَإِذَا أَقَضْتُمْ مِنْ عَرَفَاتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ وَاذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا
هَدَاكُمْ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ الضَّالِّينَ

“It shall be no guilt on your part if ye seek bounty from your Lord (in trade during pilgrimage); then when ye march from Arafat remember God near the Holy Monument, and remember Him as He hath guided you, although ye were surely before this, of those who had gone astray” (2: 198).

ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“Then march ye on from whence the other people march on and seek pardon of God; verily God is Forgiving, Merciful” (2: 199).

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي
الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ

“And when ye have performed your rites, remember God as ye remember your fathers, rather

with a more intense remembrance; for of men there are those who say, ‘Our Lord! give us in this world’ and for him there shall be no portion in the Hereafter” (2:200).

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

“And among them there are some who say Our Lord! give us good in this world and good in the hereafter and save us from the torment of the (Hell) Fire” (2:201).

أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

“These shall have a portion of what they have earned; verily, God is quick in reckoning” (2:202).

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

“And remember ye God on the numbered days; and whosoever hasteneth off in two days it will be no sin on him, and whoso tarrieth (there), on him (also) there will be no sin and this is for him who guardeth (against evil) so take ye shelter in God and know ye (that) unto Him ye shall (all) be gathered” (2:203).

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ

“And among men there are those whose talk concerning the life here marveleth thee and he taketh God to witness as to what is in his heart, yet he is the most violent of adversaries” (2:204).

وَإِذَا تَوَلَّىٰ سَعَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ

“And when he turneth his back (unto thee) he striveth on earth (runs hither and thither) that he may cause mischief therein and destroy the tilth and stock; but God loveth not mischief” (2:205).

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَبِئْسَ الْأَمَهُادُ

“And when it is said unto him, fear God, pride driveth him on to sin; so enough for him is Hell; and it is an evil abode indeed” (2:206).

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

“And among men there is one who selleth his self (soul) seeking the pleasure of God; and verily, God is affectionate unto His (faithful) servants” (2:207).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ

“O’ ye who believe! enter ye all into submission (to God) wholly and follow not the footsteps of Satan; for, verily, he is to you an Open Enemy” (2:208).

فَإِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْكُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَاَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

“But if ye slip after that which hath come unto you of the clear signs then know ye that God is Mighty, Wise” (2:209).

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِنَ الْغَمَامِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ

“Await they aught but that (the wrath of) God come unto them under canopies of bright cloud and the angels (of wrath) (come upon them) and the (whole) matter is decreed away; and to God all matters shall return” (2:210).

Commentary

Verse 197

‘Ash-haro Ma’lumat’ – The well-known months i.e. ‘Shawwal,’ ‘Dhu ‘l-Hijja’ In these months one may start the pilgrimage but the principal of which is fixed in the month of ‘Dhu ‘l-Hijja.’ During these days of solemn resignation to God, all unbecoming acts inconsistent with perfect devotion must be stopped, including even those acts which in other days may be lawful. The aim being spiritual progress through a whole-time devotion to God in godliness, the pilgrim has to fully restrain all his passions of selfishness about his self, controlling himself even from uttering any word of annoyance to anybody or hurting anything.

‘Rafas’ means obscene or foul speech or vain words or even the lawful sexual intercourse and all that appertains thereto.

‘Jidal’ i.e. contending in an altercation disputing or litigating.

'*Tazawwadu*' meaning make provision for the journey to Mecca for Hajj. Some people used to go on journey to Mecca on pilgrimage without sufficient provisions for their sustenance on the pretence that they trust in God's help. As such people become a burden to their fellow travellers and the other people on their way. Islam enjoins upon the pilgrim to first make the necessary provisions for the whole journey and then start on it. Making provision, here, may also mean making provision for the life journey with piety and righteousness for the life hereafter.

Thus, provision also means the provision every man and woman has to make for his or her life after death.

'*Taqwa*' means guarding one's self against every evil i.e. Guarding one's self against evil is the best provision for a human soul for this as well as the next life.

Verse 198

'Fadi' meaning favour or bounty i.e. your sustenance and needs of life through trade.

'*Mash'aral Haram*' the holy sign or monument i.e. the place known as '*Muzdalifa*' where the pilgrims halt for the night on the return from Arafat on the evening of 9th Dhu 'l-Hijja.

Verse 199

'Afizu' (advance) proceed on the journey with the multitude.

The Quraish and the Kanana by virtue of their tribal strength, imagined themselves superior to the people of the other tribes and hence stayed to avoid joining the other pilgrims in proceeding to the plain of '*Arafat*.' As Islam does not recognise any such distinctions and had already levelled every such difference and distinction, the pilgrims are enjoined to consider themselves at a part of the assembly with the others.

Verse 200

Remembrance of the ancestors refers to the old custom of the days of ignorance, the people praising or boasting of the greatness of their fathers or ancestors. The pilgrims are bidden to remember God and glorify Him who would make them much greater than their forefathers.

Verse 201

Those who pray either for the present life only or only for the hereafter show that they feel themselves secure in the life for which they do not pray for, without the help of God. Hence the prayer of a true or a sincere believer must be for both the life here and also for the life hereafter.

The prayer for both the lives, enjoined upon the Muslims by the Holy Qur'an indicates that Islam wants a

human soul to adopt the middle course between materialism and asceticism or the one-sided spiritualism discarding the material life altogether.

Verse 202

Prayer on the part of the doer of the best deeds, is essential for the acceptance of the deeds. Thus, praying also is a duty along with the other good deeds one does.

This verse indicates that the account of each human individual of his personal goodness as well as his badness, is always then and there effected, both on the debit as well as on the credit side. Our accounts go in advance of ourselves.

Verse 203

Referring to the three days following the day of sacrifice in Mina. They are called the days of '*Tashriq*.'

Verses 204 – 206

Many conjectures have been made as to the particular person meant in this verse and the name of '*Akhnas bin Shuraiq*' is suggested. But the other reliable authors think that no particular person is meant. The words evidently refer to the mischief mongers in general, who assured the Holy Prophet of their sympathy, but they were only waiting for the opportunity to inflict some loss or other, on the Muslims.

Verse 207

The Sunni commentators¹ and all the Shi'a commentators are unanimous, saying that this verse was revealed in the praise of Ali when he readily slept in the bed of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, when the latter in response to the will of the Lord, had to suddenly migrate from Mecca to Madina. It happened thus:

The infidels of Mecca at last had decided to join together and kill the Holy Prophet in his bed. Representatives from each tribe had been chosen for the murder of the Holy Prophet, so that every tribe might have a share in the act and the charge of the crime be not upon any single tribe but be divided, in which case no single tribe need fear the retaliation from the tribe of the Bani-Hashim to which the Holy Prophet belonged.

It was night when this gang of the chosen murderers had surrounded the house of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and God commanded the Holy Prophet to leave Ali in his bed and to immediately leave Mecca for Madina. The Holy Prophet could not leave the house leaving his bed vacant for the enemies were watching from outside every now and then, peeping into the house, and if they find the bed vacant, they would naturally come to know of the escape of their object and would immediately start the chase. Since one must necessarily lie down in the bed covering himself with the same mantle-cloth which the

Holy Prophet used, under the circumstances lying in the bed of the Holy Prophet, was nothing but courting death. It can be easily imagined that it was a known fact that the bed-room had been surrounded by the bloodthirsty enemy bent upon killing the occupant of the bed, who on earth would never agree to lie in it covering himself with the same cloth which the object of the enemy used to cover himself with. The one who would agree to offer himself instead of the Holy Prophet who was wanted by the enemy, must essentially have:

1. The safety of the Holy Prophet preferred to his own safety.
2. Implicit faith in the duty of man to earn the pleasure of God and His Holy Prophet at any cost even at the cost of his own life.
3. The courage of surrendering himself willingly with the utmost peace of mind, to sleep under the swords, ready to fall upon him.
4. The confidence and faith in God's protection.
5. The external as well as the internal resemblance to resemble the Holy Prophet to the watching eyes, when under the mantle.

The Holy Prophet called Ali and intimated to him the Lord's plan of his migration and asked him to lie down in his bed, covering himself with the mantle cloth as he (the Holy Prophet) himself did. Ali immediately agreed and asked to be assured if he (the Holy Prophet) would be safe without Ali to serve him in the great venture, to which the Holy Prophet said that it was God's plan. Ali immediately laid himself in the Holy Prophet's bed and covered himself with the mantle, as the Holy Prophet used to do when in the bed. The bed room had been encircled with the enemy, but the Holy Prophet opened the door and passed through the crowd of the enemy, but none saw him. The Holy Prophet passed unnoticed.

When the enemy rushed into the room to kill the occupant of the bed, removed the mantle cloth from the one fast asleep in the bed, they were surprised to find Ali there instead of the Holy Prophet. When asked as to where the Holy Prophet had gone, Ali with the perfect peace of mind and the natural courage, without, in the least being moved by the enemy's crowd standing around him, answered saying: 'Had ye appointed me to watch the movements of the Holy Prophet that you asked me to tell you the whereabouts

of him?

After leaving his residence the Holy Prophet proceeded out of the township to take his way to Madina, when he found Abu Bakr, (later the 2nd Khalif) who according to the orders issued by the Holy Prophet to all his followers, had not to have left his residence. However, the Holy Prophet took Abu Bakr with him and look refuge into a cave in a mountain. By that time the chasing enemy approached near the cave. At the command of God, a spider had woven a web at the mouth of the entrance to the cave and a wild pigeon had laid eggs in a bush at the mouth of the cave to indicate to the enemy that for a long time none had crossed the entrance. When the enemy approached the mouth of the cave and their voices were heard into the cave, Abu Bakr got frightened and began to cry aloud saying that they were lost. The Holy Prophet had to console him saying

لَا تَحْزَنُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا

'La Tahzan inna Allaha ma'ana.'

"Fear not thou, God is with us" (9:40).

Any intelligent reader of this note would naturally compare and contrast the faith in God, the Love of the Holy Prophet and the Matchless Courage of the One lying in the bed of the Holy Prophet, with the faith and courage of the companion of the Holy Prophet into the cave.

Even the infidels of Mecca had trusted many valuables of their own, to the care of the Holy Prophet who in spite of their bloodthirsty antagonism, was called the Al-Ameen the Trustworthy.

On the morning, following the migration of the Holy Prophet to Madina, Ali announced in the whole of the township of Mecca that whosoever had entrusted anything to the care of the Holy Prophet, go over to him (i.e. Ali) and receive their deposits. Thus, Ali discharging the trust entrusted to him by the Holy Prophet, left for Madina.

This verse was revealed in the presence of Ali who had sold his soul to earn the pleasure of God.

But what a pity that such unsurpassed merits of Ali, the praise of which even Providence sang, were of no avail to the masses of the Muslims in guiding them to the right man for them to follow after the departure of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and the ignorant world preferred to Ali, those who had not the courage or the faith to stand by the Holy Prophet in the trying times of the battles fought for the faith and fled for their own lives leaving the Holy Prophet amidst his bloodthirsty enemies.

Verse 208

The address in this verse is to the faithful i.e. the Muslims and it cannot be to any who had not yet then

embraced the faith to be addressed as the faithful. Hence the word ‘the faithful’ used here can reasonably mean only those who had given only a verbal declaration of their acceptance of the bare outlines of the religion called Islam. ‘*Silm*’ means here the inner circle of Islam called ‘*Iman*.’ To illustrate this meaning, a reference to the verse may be made which clearly differentiates Islam with Iman i.e. surrender or submission with perfect belief or the fullest conviction Hence at Ayashi reports from the 5th Holy Imam Muhammad al-Baqir the address in this verse is to the Muslims and not to the non-Muslims and ‘*silm*’ means not the bare outer limits of Islam but the inner probe of the faith.

The verse refers to the need of the Muslims becoming perfect believers. It is related from the Holy Imam Muhammad al-Baqir that this verse enjoins the faithful i.e. the Muslims to believe in the institution of Imamah or the divine guidance instituted immediately succeeding ‘*Risalah*’ (i.e. the prophethood) which concludes or ends with the Holy Prophet Muhammad and particularly the Imamah or the divine guidance through Ali, for it opens the highway to the correct guidance of the faithful to the destiny of man desired by his Creator.

Without following Ali, the Muslims, after the departure of the Holy Prophet Muhammad had fallen easy victims to the whims and fancies of unqualified leadership. The truth in the divine guidance given in this verse is proved from the fate of those who failed to act up to the direction of this verse. How many sects and sub-sects and how many schools and Schisms, the poor ignorant Muslims had to be divided into. The safest course is following the Holy Prophet and after him the Holy Ahl Al-Bayt i.e. the Holy Imams of his house.

[Verse 209](#)

This verse indicates that the Holy Prophet through this revelation was informed of what will happen to those who joined the ranks of Islam for some interest of their own or the other. It is clearly stated in this verse that those who backslide after adopting the faith, may not foolishly imagine that their going astray is going to affect in the least, the cause of God or would cause any inconvenience to the cause of those who believe in God. Those who go astray, need not be arrogant as to imagine that they will defeat God’s power or Wisdom, the loss will be of those who go astray and not in the least of anybody else.

[Verse 210](#)

The coming of God stands for the execution of His will to punish the disbelievers. The beauty of the Holy Qur’an is that its one verse is illustrated or explained by the other. This meaning is brought out clearly in 16:33–34. The same phrase is used in the first part of the verse. Again in 59:2 it is used referring to the arrogance of the Jews who were ultimately banished for their persistent mischief-mongering and their continued molesting the peaceful life of the people in Madina.

¹. Viz. Tha’labi, Ghazali, and the author of Ahyaul-uloom.

Al-Baqarah Section 26 – Rejection, Of The Signs And The Apostles From God

Children of Israel’s rejection of the signs and the apostles from God, To spend out of what God has provided with, To fight for the cause of God

Al-Baqarah Verses 211 – 216

سَلُّ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ كَمْ آتَيْنَاهُم مِّنْ آيَةٍ بَيِّنَةٍ وَمَنْ يُبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

“Ask the Children of Israel how many of clear signs have We given them; and whosoever changeth the bounty of God after it hath come unto him, then, verily God is severe in requiting (evil)” (2:211).

زُيِّنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۗ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

“The life of this world hath been made alluring to those who disbelieve and they scoff at those who believe; but those who guard (against evil) will be above them on the Day of Judgment; and verily God provideth with sustenance for whomso He willeth without (any) measure” (2:212).

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا اختلفُوا فِيهِ وَمَا اختلفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَا اختلفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

“Mankind was but one people; and God sent apostles as bearers of good tidings and warners and sent down with them the Book with the Truth that it might judge between men in that wherein they differed; and none differed therein; but those very (people) whom it was given unto, after clear signs had come unto them, through revolt among themselves; whereupon God guided those who believed, by His Will, regarding that which the people differed about the Truth and verily God guideth whomso He willeth to the Right Path” (2:213).

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزَلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ
الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ أَلاَ إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ

“Or think ye that ye will enter the Garden while yet upon you hath not yet come the like of that which befell those who passed before you; distress and affliction came upon them, they were shaken so that (ultimately) the apostle saith, and (when) those who believed with him (asked the Apostle) “when will come the help of God”? “(Fear not) Verily God’s help is nigh” (2:214).

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ
خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

“They ask thee (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad) what they should spend; Say, whatever good ye spend let it be for parents, the near of kin, and the orphans, and the poor and the wayfarer; and whatever good ye do, verily God knoweth it” (2:215).

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Fighting (in the cause of God) is ordained unto you, and it is hateful to you, and perchance ye hate a thing whereas it is good for you, and perchance ye love a thing whereas it is bad for you; and verily God knoweth while ye know not” (2:216).

Commentary

Verse 211

‘Ne’mat’ literally means ‘bounty’ but here in this verse, particularly means the ‘Word of’ God the Holy Qur’an.

He who effects any change either in its wording or in its meaning after it has been revealed to the Holy Prophet and after it has been explained by him; such corrupters are warned against the punishment from God.

Verse 212

The Muslims who had left all their fortune at Mecca and emigrated to Madina, were reduced to the last straits of poverty. The wealthy Jews of Madina, who had hoarded wealth through their usurious lending of money, used to mock at the poor Muslims. The concluding words clearly indicate that the actual worth of a human being does not depend upon the material wealth one possesses but it depends upon the

individual's piety and virtues. The verse can be taken also as prophetic to say that there would come a time when those mocked at by the Jews i.e. (the Muslims), would have abundance even of the material possessions in the present life.

Verse 213

The whole mankind was one nation. The differences effected in the Scriptures given to the people through the apostles sent to them, refers to the corruption worked by the Jews and the Christians.

It may reasonably refer to the Muslims also who corrupt the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an.

The passage expressively goes against the view held generally by the people that the purpose of the divine mission was to bring unity among the people i.e. to unite men who differed from each other in their religious ideology. Here Qur'an gives different account that people were one in their straying and that the differences were subsequent to the advent of the divine mission. The unity here refers to the undeveloped state of the human mind in which regard no distinction between them was evident. The Prophets came to make the latent aptitude in men manifest by laying down criterion to judge the right and the wrong in the human conduct after the development of their aptitudes. This passage agrees with 10: 19 to the unity of mankind in the pre-development state and the other to the disunity and unity in the post-development state. (A.P.)

Verse 214

This verse is reported to have been revealed on the occasion of the battle of 'Ahzab' or the Confederates, when the Muslims got impatient and began asking when the help of God will come. The battle of 'Ahzab' or 'Qandaq' (or the Ditch) was one of the greatest calamities with which the Muslims were tried in their patience and their faith in God and His Holy Prophet.

There was none in the ranks of the Muslims to go against 'Amr Ibn Abd Wadd, the famous warrior hero of the Arabs, who dashing forward from the ranks of the enemy sitting on his horse, proudly repeated his challenge to the Holy Prophet Muhammad to send someone from his ranks to meet him in the field. Everyone was hiding his face lest the Holy Prophet might command him to proceed against the giant of the enemy. Some in the Muslim ranks, began enumerating the wonderful acts of the matchless strength and the bravery of the challenging foe, discouraging others from getting out to meet Amar. Many among the Muslims who later were made to be known as the great Heroes of Islam and the Muslims, refused to go against the challenging enemy even when they were asked by the Holy Prophet to do it.

And every time the Holy Prophet asked as to who would go to meet the enemy, none but Ali responded. And ultimately Ali was sent, and he killed 'Amr Ibn Abd Wadd, who was the strongest and the most formidable hero of the enemy. With the death of Amar and the many others, the trend of the battle changed. After the matchless loyalty of Ali to God and the Holy Prophet, and his wonderful strength, prowess and bravery was made known to the world, there came a violent storm of wind and rain which

effected a total ruin of the enemy's camp and their forces were routed to run back in disorder and chaos, to Mecca with utter defeat and disappointment for ever.

Thus, the promised 'Nasrallah' or the help from God came in the loyalty, strength and the bravery of Ali and the sudden arrival of the ruinous storm and rain from heaven but for which, the Islamic camp as a whole would have been routed and annihilated and wiped out for ever.

It is reported by historians that the Holy Prophet while sending Ali to meet Amar in the battlefield, declared '*Qad Barazal Iman Kulloh Ilal Kufre Kulleh*' i.e. indeed the whole of the faith goes against the whole of infidelity. As regards Ali's success over Amar, the Holy Prophet declared: '*Zarbato Aliyyin Yaumal Qandaq Afdhalun min ibadatis thaqalain*' the one stroke of Ali on the day of 'Qandaq' is superior to the prayers of both the worlds (i.e. the seen and unseen). It is a matter for the intelligent reader just to reflect a little to imagine as to what would have been the fate of Islam and the Muslims if Ali had not met the enemy as he did. This passage is connected with the battle of Ahzab¹. (M.S.).

This passage supports what is narrated from the Holy Prophet that he told his companions that they would follow the footsteps of the Jews and the Christians in deviating from the right path and would waver in faith.

This passage and the one immediately preceding, it shows that the advent of the prophets was the testing point aimed at the development of the latent aptitude in man which differs from man to man. Hence the reaction of each to the apostolic mission, would differ from the other, and that the followers of the Last Prophet are not an exception to this general rule. Hence, they cannot be treated as having equal footing in faith and loyalty to it. Some were firm, while the others were shaky in their belief; and some were true and sincere while the others were hypocrites. (A.P.)

Verse 215

The order in which charity should proceed is given in this verse. The claim of the parents and of the nearest relatives is made the first concern of the charitable. The verse as a whole makes provision for those mentioned in it and also those not expressly mentioned therein. Charity meted or not in this Qur'anic order is not commendable in Islam. Charity to others forgetting the parents and the nearest kith and kin does not qualify for the reward. Parents in particular have never to be put to the need of asking for anything from their children. They must be provided with their needs unasked for. The Holy Prophet had ordered to start charity with the parents, brothers, and sisters and so on, providing the nearest relative first.

Money spent for wars of self-defence is as much as spent for the helpless relatives for the defence is as much in their interest as in the interest of the others.

It is noteworthy that Islam is the first and the only religion which has imposed upon its believers a prescribed charity. And the consideration for the helpless travellers has also been legislated and made

incumbent upon the believers to do as much as they can, of their respective means.

The question is what it that should be dispensed with by way of charity in the way of God? The answer is whatsoever good that may benefit the others. It is to be noted how comprehensive and a wide expression is given to the extent to which good should be done to the others. Here it is recommended briefly to give away whatsoever be good, and it cannot be taken as to mean '*Zakat*' i.e. the compulsory taxation (or the poor-rate) imposed on certain properties because it cannot be spent on those members of the family such as parents etc, whose maintenance is incumbent on the individual (i.e. the dispenser). Hence this verse has no connection with '*Zakat*' in its restricted sense.

Referring to the verse 219 the word '*Af'o*' indicates clearly that one should give the surplus. It may mean all the surplus when it should be restricted by the direction of the Holy Prophet and if it means out of the surplus then the instruction becomes explanatory as to how much and to whom it should be given. In any case, these two passages should not be taken as to deal with '*Zakat*' in particular. It is only a guidance to charity in general to enable naan to think of both the temporal and spiritual advantages, his individual interest as well as his social welfare. However, it means moderation. (A.P.)

Verse 216

Intelligent reading demands judgment of the interpretation with reference to the context and never to give verdict in any distorted fragments of any event without the background of their factual positions. Fighting enjoined upon the ill-equipped and persecuted Muslim converts when they could be counted only on fingers against the hundreds of thousands of the fully equipped enemy with all the necessary equipment and resources, could never have been but in self-defence.

Let those who misrepresent the facts to propagate the false charge that Islam was spread by sword and Muslims fought for booty and not for their faith, be just and fair to their own intellect and conscience and ponder a little as to what strength and resources the poor, plundered, persecuted, tortured and ill-equipped and helpless converts driven away from their homes, stripped even of the necessities of their daily life, could have to fight, to defeat and plunder the mighty forces of the fully equipped enemy with everything necessary at their command to effect a total annihilation, a wholesale massacre and an easy destruction of the miserable as a whole in a single onslaught.

Where were the military forces or the wealth for the Holy Prophet to convert the wealthy, proud, arrogant, and warring multitudes of the idolatrous Arabs, in whose blood and flesh had sunk deep the love of their idol deities for whom they would proudly sacrifice their all?

When the enemy marched with a thousand of their well experienced and fully equipped warriors, the Muslim army at Badr numbered hardly about 313 consisting of ill-equipped and ill-armed followers among whom were also boys of thirteen years of age. Could any sane mind ever imagine that the Holy Prophet with such an army have ever planned or aspired to convert the hundreds of thousands of the

fully equipped barbarous hordes. Verse 214 is sufficient to give a lie to any such fantastic false charge of any unprovoked aggression on the part of the Muslims.

The fighting was prescribed just to avoid Islam and the Muslims being swept away by the violent and aggressive forces of their enemy. The world history can never present any instance of a people being so compelled to fight in the defence of a nobler cause, than that of the Holy Prophet with a very few faithful followers who braved the whole of the land in the midst of enemies sworn to annihilate him, his faith, and his follower, for no reason save that they were the believers in the unity of God and the supporters of the doctrine of submission to Him².

If ever there was a just cause for war, there never was one more just than the cause of humanity at large, the combined cause of the Christian Church, of the Jewish Synagogue, of the Sabian's house of worship, and of the Muslim Mosque, which the early Muslims set before themselves³.

Compare the injunction given here with the permission contained Verses 2:190 and 22:39, and the condition under which this injunction was given, the matter will become clear. It was an injunction to fight against those who took up the sword first and turned the Muslims out of their homes. It was an injunction to fight to end the persecution and to establish religious freedom, and to save the houses of worship of every religion from being ruined.

A true student of the early Islamic history, particularly the life-history of the Holy Prophet will find no justification to present the wars the Holy Prophet had to wage for the cause of Truth, as defensive measures. The Holy Prophet started his mission with such rational doctrines with wide interest of the universal welfare of the human race as a whole, which were against the limited selfish interest of some individuals and the groups of the pagans, of the Jews, the Christians and the others with sectarian and communal views restricted to the place and its surroundings. He arose with the mission to abolish the false dogmatic and the fantastic beliefs and notions and the wicked, devilish and the brutal conduct of the heathens who had created all sorts of imaginary barriers and fanciful class distinctions between man and man, and group and group of the human family and this was undoubtedly provocative and thus, hated by the wicked people and held as an aggression against all that they held for ages together as sacred.

They did their best and even tried the worst possible for them to persuade the Holy Prophet to give up his reformatory attitude towards their faith, which had to take even an aggressive course to bring round the misled ones to the right path, but all was in vain for he declined to give up any part of his divinely commissioned mission in their favour. Thus, there was no alternative left to the people but to resort to force to resist the reformatory move which in their view, was nothing but heresy and rebellion which justifies all the self-termed orthodox ones to use force against anyone who hurts their feelings. This was the case with all the apostles of God, Reformers with a definite mission and the founders of any new movement, and the same is true even to this day.

Therefore, to term the aggressive activities against the pagans, Jews, and the Christians whether at Mecca or Madina, as defensive measures will have to be justified with reference to the context of the facts. Even the supposed peaceful missions of Christ and Buddha were not any exception to this exigency as they also did not fail to provoke the ancient creeds of their respective times and had consequently to bear the consequences. Getting no opportunity to face force with force, or their failure to do so, cannot exempt their movements from being provocative and aggressive, to be termed as peaceful. There is history to bear witness to the fact as to the amount of the innocent human blood that was shed, and the devastating destruction that was affected in the name of the propagation of the faith of Christ and Buddha. The world can never forget the brutal effect of the Edict of Milan and the struggles in India and its vicinity between the orthodox followers of the Vedas and the adherents of the Buddhistic belief.

However, terming the holy wars merely defensive measures, shows the apologetic attitude of the minds which cannot see the justification of the offensive measures taken by the founders of the holy movements against their enemies from the objective value of the new movements. If the movement is in the large interest of the humanity as a whole, the provocative, aggressive or the offensive measures taken by the founders of the new movement and their adherents, in support of the good cause, is a necessity fully justified in its end. Of course, this may make room for some pretenders to guise their personal interest in the garb of reformers fighting for a universal cause, but to guard against such a possibility of the misuse of this principle, the Holy Qur'an has prescribed certain precautionary conditions by laying down the qualifications essential in the person or persons to be entitled to use any offensive measure.

In the very passage here the like and the dislike of man has been devalued in the face of the divine will⁴. (A.P.)

¹. For details refer 33:10-25.

². Vide: 22:40.

³. Vide: 22:40.

⁴. See Note to Verses 190 and 191.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Al-Baqarah Section 27 – Questions About

Various Important Topics

Persecution during the sacred month, Mischief graver than carnage, Pardon and Mercy for the emigrants and those who strive and struggle in the way of the Lord, Question about intoxicants and gambling, Alms, Orphans, Matrimony with believer men and women.

Al-Baqarah Verses 217 - 221

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَكَ حَتَّى يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَن دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوا وَمَن يَرْتَدِدْ مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

“They ask thee (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad) concerning the sacred month, about fighting therein; Say, fighting therein is a grave (sin); and to hinder (people) from the way of God, and to deny Him, to prevent access to the Holy Mosque; and to drive its people therefrom, is graver still with God, and mischief is more grievous than carnage; and they will cease not to fight you until they turn you (away) from your faith, if they can; and whoever of you turneth back from his faith, then dieth while an infidel, such are they whose works shall be in vain in this world and (in) the hereafter, and they are the inmates of the (Hell) Fire, therein shall they abide” (2:217).

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

“Verily, those who believed and those who migrated (suffered exile) and fought (strove and struggled) in the way of God, these are they who (rightly) hope for the Mercy of God; and God is Oft-Forgiving, All-Merciful” (2:218).

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَّفْعِهِمَا وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“They ask thee (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad!) concerning wine and lots (gambling and games of chance); Say, in both these is great sin and also (some) profits for men; but their sin is greater than their profit; And they will ask thee (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad!) as to what they shall spend (in alms); Say, ‘whatsoever can be spared’; thus, doth God maketh clear for you the signs so that ye may ponder” (2:219).

فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَى قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ وَإِنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ
الْمُصْلِحِ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْتَبْتُمْ إِنْ اللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

“Concerning this world and the next; they will ask thee concerning orphans; Say, to set right for them (their affairs) is best; But if ye become co-partners with them, then they are your brethren; and God knoweth the corrupt from well-doer; and if God had willed, He could have surely made it hard for you; Verily, God is Mighty, Wise” (2:220).

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَ وَلَأَمَةٌ مُؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ مُشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ وَلَا تُنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنُوا
وَلَعَبْدٌ مُؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ مُشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ أُولَئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ
لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

“And marry not idolater women until they believe; a believer bondswoman is definitely better than an idolater (free) woman even though she may allure you; and give not in marriage (your women) to idolater men until they believe; a believer bondsman is better than an idolater (free) man; even though he may allure you; they beckon (you) to the (Hell) Fire, and verily God beckoneth (you) to the Garden and forgiveness by His leave and maketh clear His signs for men so that they may be mindful” (2:221).

Commentary

Verse 217

The restriction against fighting during the sacred months is self-evident of Islam’s regard for peace, as far as possible. This verse, if read and studied as a whole, gives out the fact that fighting prescribed was only for self-defence, and not at all for aggression in any sense or meaning of the word. Let alone the brutal treatment and the dreadful atrocities which were inflicted upon the poor helpless converts to Islam while they were in Mecca, the enemy i.e. the idolaters of the Quraish at Mecca, would not content themselves even after the Muslims surrendering the hearth and homes, their fortunes and even the bare necessities of their daily lives to the enemy and migrating to Madina. The poor Muslims at Madina were not allowed to spend a day in peace.

On one side the Meccans threatened to wipe out the new Muslim community as a whole and were fast preparing collecting huge army of the best equipped and the most experienced warrior heroes, while on the other side the Jews and the Christians of Madina who wanted to own the mastery over the place hated the gradual rise of Islam and the growth of the strength of Muslims in the city.

A study of the situation with the knowledge of the actual position of their helplessness and the ever-aggressive plans and plots of the infidels, will give a clear picture of the situation in which the Muslims

were compelled to resort to arm themselves, only in self-defence and never was any unprovoked aggression of even the least manner, committed by them under the command of the Holy Prophet¹.

In continuation of the justification given in the note to Verse 216 the question arises about the fighting in the holy months the sanctity of which Islam acknowledges. Qur'an lays down the principle that though a thing be conventionally sacred to any extent, its sanctity may be sacrificed in the wide interest of mankind. The fighting in the holy months is grave but obstruction in the way of God i.e., reversing against God, against the Holy Shrine of Ka'aba and expelling its inmates, is graver in view of God. Hence the sanctity of the holy months may be bypassed to avoid the graver situation.

It further goes to explain that killing is abhorrent but '*Fitna*' (mischief) i.e. any subversive move against any established or the fundamental right of humanity, is graver, which means that to protect the fundamental rights of humanity, even killing be allowed whatever be the number².

By no means the infidels the opponents of the universal cause will give up the hostilities against the faithful until they turn the faithful back from their faith if they can. In order to make the efforts of the enemy futile the faithful had been instructed to be ready, well prepared to meet any unforeseen exigency. They have also been warned that reversion to falsehood will even render all the good deeds of the past into naught, as the case with Satan, be the reverser from the right path even a companion of the Holy Prophet. (A.P.)

Verse 218

'*Jihad*' literally means striving which can be with wealth i.e. spending money in the way of God or with life which means giving away life i.e. getting killed in God's way i.e. for God's cause³.

Verse 219

Thus, the word '*Khamr*' of grapes⁴. "Those who think that the verse under discussion does not contain a prohibition have only failed to understand the language of the Qur'an. When the harm of a thing is slated to be greater than its advantage, it is sufficient indication of its Prohibition, for no sensible person would take a course which is sure to bring him a much greater loss than an advantage". The principle on which the prohibition in Islam is based. (M.A.)

Though the above interpretation of this verse is by a Sunni scholar and yet Abu Hanifah the founder of the Sunni Hanafi sectarian school, declared Nabeez and the other kind of spirituous liquors prepared from bases other than grapes, to be lawful. Abu-Hanifa seems to have been misled by the conduct of several of the very much revered companions (Sahabas) of the Holy Prophet continuing to use the other kinds of intoxicants. But the actual meaning of the verse of the Holy Qur'an ought to have preferred and not the conduct of any individual against the ordinance. Even after the revelation of this verse some prominent companions of the Holy Prophet were found intoxicated at prayers this occasioned the revelation of Verse 4:43 and finally 5:90-91 left no excuse for anybody thereafter.

The dynamic or the miraculous change which this simple sentence or the verse of the Holy Qur'an brought about in the lengths and breadths of Arabia will ever remain a living miracle of the Holy Prophet and a riddle to the social reformers among drunkard nations in any part of the world. The constant fighting between the tribes and the individuals had added drinking to the nature of the Arabs. Drinking was the chief feature of their feasts, and it was not an evil. The Jews and the Christians who unlike the heathens had some holy scriptures to follow, were themselves sunk deep into this wicked habit. Experience has shown that drinking is the most difficult habit to be suddenly uprooted and yet one sentence of a prohibitive command of the Holy Qur'an was sufficient to blot out the evil from every part of the Arabian Peninsula.

The first Holy Imam Ali said: "If a drop of liquor falls into a well and in its vicinity is raised a minaret, I will not say 'Azan' (call for prayer) on it. And if a drop of liquor falls into a sea and the sea is dried away and, in its bed, grows grass, I will not give the grass to my horse."

The Holy Prophet said: "Curse of God be on liquor, on him who manufactures it, on him who helps its manufacture, on its seller. Its purchaser, its distributor, its consumer, the user of its value, its loader, and its bearer."

About the drinker of liquor there are innumerable sayings of the Holy Prophet and also of the Holy Imams condemning the use of wine and as to what a miserable fate awaits the individual in the hereafter and on the day of judgment.

Liquor is called "*Umm al-Khahais*" the mother of all vices, for once a man gets intoxicated, he ceases to be human and becomes brutal and, in that state, he gets disabled to distinguish or differentiate between good and bad, virtue and vice.

'*Maisir*' the word drawn from '*Yasara*' meaning dividing a thing into parts or portions. '*Maisir*' a game of Hazard, a game of chance – gambling, means of getting a thing too easily, an un-earned profit. The most familiar and popular among the Arabs was the gamble through casting lots by means of arrows, on the principle of a lottery, a method of lottery used in the modern days. Gain or loss was only a matter of chance.

The ordinance enforced through this verse of the Holy Qur'an covers all sorts or kinds of games of chance.

'*Al-Afo*' means that which is spared from meeting the needs. This injunction clearly lays down the law against hoarding so that all superfluities be spent in good works in charity.

Verse 220

Even the earliest revelations to the Holy Prophet contain injunctions regarding helping, feeding and kindness to the orphans, the needy, the wayfarers, the slaves, laying special stress upon service above

self. These ordinances eloquently speak of the ideal character and the matchless personality of the Holy Prophet as well as a true picture of the religion Islam, the chief, or the main object of its being actual good to fellowmen as a primary duty always accompanied with one's duty to God.

Islam allows co-partnership with an orphan, acting a guardian to an orphan, and being a trustee to orphan's property with strict injunctions to maintain correct and separate accounts, always safeguarding the orphan's interest.

Verse 90: 11–16 will be sufficient to speak of the regard and care of the needy, the slaves and the orphans and their interest. Islam makes it incumbent upon every one of its faithful adherents and calls it the Highway of the Faith.

It is noteworthy that God's law has not been made a burdensome fetter, but it puts man on his honour, trusting him to do the best possible under the varying situations and conditions of his practical day to day life in this ever-changing world. Strict probity is demanded of him in following the law, failing which he is warned of the impossibility of his evading God's punishment though he may, in this life, successfully evade punishment at the hands of the individual man, his society, or the state.

Verse 221

The principle upon which inter-marriage between believers in God and the idolaters, had evidently been maintained even by the apostle of God preceding the Holy Prophet. The Law of Moses prohibited intermarriages with all other non-Mosaic people.

“Neither shall thou make marriages with them–, thy daughter, thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou to take unto thy son.

“For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods–, so will the anger of thy Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly” (Old Testament Deut. 7/3–4).

On the same principle, though unwarranted by any utterance of Jesus, Paul has prohibited inter-marriages between Christians and the unbelievers. Vide 2 Cor. 6/14.

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness I and what communion with light with darkness?” (New Testament) 2. Corin. 6/14.

Marriage is essentially a matter of love paving the way for spiritual affinity or spiritual union which necessarily influences one with the other, irrespective of the care for salvation⁵. Besides, idolatry or disbelief or the lack of correct belief or faith in the true God, naturally mars the intellectual progress of the infidel, for without the proper communion through conviction or faith, in God, Who is the only and the true fountainhead of divinity and knowledge, there can never be any spiritual progress or any intellectual development in any individual or society. Hence union through marital ties is prohibited between a

Unitarian believer in One God and the polytheistic worshipper of imaginary deities.

However according to the School of the Ahl Al-Bayt temporary alliance with the women of the people of the Scriptures is allowed see 5:5. This is only a sanction under reasonable exigencies to help a believer to avoid being forced to adultery.

The prohibition is also a precautionary measure against the possibilities apprehended in Deut. 7/4 referred to above.

The reason given for the prohibition may be expanded to discourage any alliance of the faithful men or women with the opposite sexes of those who invite to falsehood or the wrong path which leads to the Hell fire, as there is the risk of the faithful men or women getting influenced by the devilish overtures. Hence one should disassociate one's self from any group or party which calls to the wrong path, for response to it, is the response to the Hell-fire. In Islam, too, there were, and still there are, groups who have deviated from the path presented by God and the Holy Prophet. The celebrated prophecy of the Holy Prophet, narrated unanimously by all traditionists that 'Ammar' will be killed by a group of the rebels who called 'Ammar' to the Hell fire and Ammar invited them to paradise, supports the statement about the existence of such groups within the ranks of the Muslims. Hence one should be very cautious.

Another point to be noted here is that in the case of marriage with a male or female, Qur'an addresses man and not woman saying 'Do not marry O' man any pagan woman nor give in marriage any one of thine to a male pagan' which may be taken to indicate the authority of man over woman to some extent⁶.

Though the nonconformity of one partner in life may not affect the other partner, yet the risk of the offspring being naturally affected, cannot be denied⁷. (A.P.)

¹. See also Note to Verse 216

². See Note to Verse 207.

³. See Note to Verses 215 and 216.

⁴. An Engl. Lexicon by all intoxicating substances as defined by the Holy Prophet and the apostolic Imams of the Holy Ahl Al-Bayt. The prohibition of intoxicants and games of chance is further explained in 5:90-91.

⁵. Vide: 30:21.

⁶. For details see 'Fiqh'.

⁷. See Fiqh for details about marriage among the various schools of thought in Islam.

Al-Baqarah Section 28 – Regulation About Divorce

Men not to go near women during the monthly course, Glad-tidings to the believers about their meeting God, Period of waiting for divorced women, Reconciliation after the divorce and reestablishment of conjugal relations.

Al-Baqarah Verses 222 – 228

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَذَىٰ فَأَعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

“And they ask thee (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad!) concerning menstruation; say, it (is) a pollution, therefore, keep (yourselves) away from women when in menstruation and go not nigh unto them until they be cleansed, then when they are cleansed, go in unto them as God hath ordained unto you; verily, God loveth those who turn unto Him constantly and loveth those who clean themselves” (2:222).

نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّىٰ شِئْتُمْ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلَاقُوهُ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“Your women are your tilth, wherfor enter your tillage as ye please and provide in advance for yourselves (for the life hereafter); and take shelter in God, and know ye Beware) that ye are meeting Him (one day); and bear thou (O’ Our Apostle) glad tidings unto the faithful” (2:223).

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَتُصَلِّحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“And (O’ ye who believe!) make not (the name of) God in your oaths a hindrance against that ye may do good, and be pious and bring about peace among men; and verily, God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing” (2:224).

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

“God will call you not to account for a thoughtless oath but He will call you to account (for such oaths) what your hearts have earned and God is Oft-Forgiving, the Most Forbearing” (2:225).

لِلَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ تَرِيصًا أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ فَإِنْ فَاءُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“For those who swear to abstain from their wives, is ordained a waiting for four months, and if then they go back (from their oath) then verily God is Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful” (2:226).

وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا الطَّلَاقَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“And if they resolve on divorce then verily God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing” (2:227).

وَالْمُطَلَّقاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ وَبَعُولَتْهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

“The divorced women shall await (not wedding anyone else) until three monthly courses; and it shall not be lawful for them to conceal what God hath created in their wombs, if they believe in God and (in) the Last Day (of Judgment): and their husbands shall have the greater right to take them back during the period, if they wish for reconciliation; and for the women shall be similar rights (over men) in fairness, and for men (their rights) on women, is a degree above; and God is Mighty, Wise” (2:228).

Commentary

Verse 222

There had been a similar restriction upon the personal contact between husband and wife when the wife is during her menstruation. Vide Lev. 18/19.

“Also, thou shall not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness.”

and Lev. 20/18. “And if a man shall lie with a woman having her sickness, and shall uncover her nakedness, he hath discovered her fountain, and she hath uncovered the fountain of her blood: and both of them shall be cut off from among their people.”¹

Islam does not speak of the situation in such an open and practically naked way but very gracefully forbids the Muslims even from approaching the women during the course.

When the Word of God (the Holy Qur'an) conveyed to the human race through the Holy Prophet Muhammad warns the faithful even against approaching women during the course of menstruation, one

will surely be naturally grieved to know of the great mischief done against the holy personality of the Holy Prophet through a totally and wholly fabricated report in the name of one of the wives of the Holy Prophet given about the conduct of the Holy Apostle of God mentioned in Book of Menstruation of Sahih Bukhari (S.B.).

If the lady had really given the report, it must necessarily be to show the attachment of the Holy Prophet to her to that extent. By doing so, the poor lady has miserably betrayed her own conscience, her own feminine modesty, besides her faithlessness to her husband, who was no less a personality than that of the Prince of the Prophets of God. Such baseless and disgraceful reports, disclose to an intelligent reader as to the kind or the nature of the sources of the information or the belief, on which the School is based, to which the book belongs and the care for the correctness or the scrutiny of the reports the school takes before accepting it. There are many such false, unscrupulous and mischievous reports the shameless nature of the matter as found in the books does not permit its reproduction here for it will mar the sanctity or the grace of this sacred work. One can refer to Sahih Bukhari and its allied works.

The word '*yathora*' or '*yattaharna*' both may be taken to mean the cessation of menstruation or the state after '*ghusl*' ablution². (A.P.)

'*Min haiso amarakom*' may refer to the natural course of approach on account of the phrase '*Min haiso*' which may mean 'as' or 'from where'³. (A.P.)

'*Inna Allaha yuhibbu at-tawwabeen*' This refers to the equal importance of cleanliness both mental and physical which is the main object of all Islamic instructions and restrictions as the one is not indispensable of the other. Hence one should not be neglected at the cost of the other. (A.P.)

Verse 223

Of all the matters that concern human life on earth, the matter relating to the sexual relation of one human being with the other, is the most delicate one. The Holy Qur'an deals with the guidance relating to the physical, as well as the moral or the spiritual development of mankind. The Holy Qur'an has dealt with the sexual matter in a language unapproached in its purity and grace by any other religious order in dealing with law pertaining to similar questions. A comparison between the Qur'anic language and the wording of similar passages in the Bible⁴ or any other religious scriptures will prove the unsurpassed purity of the language of the Holy Qur'an. It must also be remembered that the Holy Qur'an was revealed through the Arabian Prophet who was not educated at the hand of any mortal in the world, at a time when the poets in Arabia prided over naked and shameless expressions of sexual contact and intercourse.

Woman is compared to the tilth. With this comprehensive and meaningful comparison, it has been most eloquently declared that the real or the sole object of conjugal relations between the sexes should not be the satisfaction of the carnal desires but to produce the best possible fruits with purity of body and mind

worthy of being acceptable to the service of the Lord. Mother is the basic fountainhead from whom the character and conduct of the issue springs or gets its start. This raises the position of woman and establishes her importance to the human society through the importance of the correct marital relationship.

This verse may be taken as explanatory to the previous one in the sense that in the previous one it is said 'Do with them as ordained' and this passage explains the order saying 'do with your tilth as you like' meaning in any way and at any time you like but having in mind that they are a tilth and dealing with a tilth in an unuseful way is foolish and detested by law. Though no unnatural approach has been definitely prohibited, yet been discouraged as a foolish and detestable act.

'*Qaddamo li anfosikom*' clearly indicates that in every manner or behaviour man should be mindful to see that his move advances something good for him for his future (or the life after death) and that it does not displease God, and man should always remember that the ultimate object of his is meeting God, and this means a good tiding to the believers and a warning to the unbelievers. (A.P.)

Verse 224

'*Urdah*' is a thing that is set as an obstacle in the way of a thing, a thing set as a butt for archery. It is a warning against swearing every now and then by God, that you will not do such and such a thing, so that you deprive yourselves of doing good, and owing to your swearing by God, you have alleged Him to be an obstacle in the way of doing the good. Whereas God bids you only to do good. Swear not by Allah when you take an oath not to do anything good, for by doing so you are alleging God as the obstacle in the good being done. It is an injunction to abstain from oath in God's name when you want to refrain from doing anything legal or good. For instance, the oath on the part of a husband in anger, refraining from going to his wife. This verse forbids oaths of this kind⁵.

The commentators differ in the actual implication of this passage. The simple and the more comprehensive meaning is 'Do not cheapen the Holy name of God in your swearing to do or not to do any good or bad, nor in any of your compromising effects as such mere verbal swearing has no value whatsoever.' If one swears not to do something good, he should do it irrespective of the oath or swearing, and evil, he should not do it irrespective of the oath or swearing as explained in the next verse, God will not hold any one accountable for his vain utterance but for his real intentions. Under this principle, Qur'an deals with the particular swearing concerning disassociation with wives wherein Qur'an disregards the swearing and gives the husband four months' time for reconsideration and thereafter if he decides separation he should resort to divorce, the swearing having no value whatsoever⁶. (A.P.)

Verse 225

Vain oath means unintentional swearing which some careless persons develop as a habit to swear in ordinary conversation which is not binding upon the swearer.

By what the hearts have earned means oath taken with full consciousness of the seriousness of a swearing – Such an oath gets binding upon the swearer. Provided the subject or the object be something commendable⁷.

Verse 226

It was an old custom that one swears that he will not go into one's wife. This custom was called '*ila*.'

Under this custom the wife had to remain in suspense, neither as a married wife nor as a divorced one to be free to wed someone else. Islam fixed the law that if any one takes such an oath, the time limit allowed for the husband to reassert his conjugal rights shall be four months failing which the wife with the decision of the '*Hakim ash-Shara'i*', i.e., the duly authorized or competent authority of the Islamic law a 'Mujtahid' gets herself freed from the bond of the marriage to her husband and be at liberty to wed somebody else.

'*Fa-in Faoo*' i.e. if they go back, meaning if they re-establish their conjugal relations i.e. if the husband re-asserts his conjugal relations after the temporary separation, he is forgiven⁸.

Verse 227

Talaq i.e. letting free a woman from the marital bond to have her own way i.e. to get separated from her husband meaning the dissolution of the marriage tie. 'Talaq' is to be resorted to, under unavoidable circumstances. If the husband decides to divorce, then let him act justly and fairly and let him not be guilty of any excess against the wife for he will be punished. To warn the husband against acting unjustly the epithets of God 'All-Hearing and All-Knowing,' are used to keep the man away from any injustice or foul play against his wife.

The special care Islam takes to safeguard the interest of a woman, is noteworthy and is not to be found in any other religious order.

Though '*Talaq*' i.e. divorce is allowed in Islam when a necessity demands it and this right is to be exercised under unavoidable circumstances, according to the Holy Prophet, of all the things permitted to men, divorce is the most hated by God. This disclosure of God's hatred will naturally act as a strong check on any indiscriminate use of the unavoidable sanction.

Marriage is a matter of alliance of two individuals emanating from love. An alliance without the attraction of real or genuine love, is a dead letter or a body without soul, and the sooner it is undone the better. In the mutual course of the events in the practical life of a man and a woman, occasions do arise from time to time when marital alliance gets affected by mistaken and false attractions which can never naturally last long and consequently the lives of both the individuals become an intolerable misery and under such circumstances a separation becomes necessary and also an act of charity. Islam being the universal religion for the human race as a whole and for all times to the end of the world, must necessarily have

laws with the essential provisions or elasticity, to suit the various situations and cases. It is the all-round perfection of Islam, that has prescribed laws to control the collective order of the human society as well as safeguard the interest of each and every individual under various circumstances.

Divorce, though legalized by Islam, has been so much controlled and restricted strictly to an unavoidable necessity, through innumerable pronouncements of the Holy Prophet warning against the displeasure of God, should the law sanctioning divorce be indiscriminately used, that the cases of divorce in Islam are so rare that it can safely be said that divorce in the practice of the Islamic society is almost absent. Whereas the law of divorce evolved by the Jews and the Christians is so loose and extends to such trifling cases that it has given rise to the Special Divorce Courts whose proceedings have continued to furnish a mass of scandalous reading matter for the quick and the extensive sale of the newspapers. Divorce though allowed by Islam is so much discouraged and the indiscriminate use of it so much expressly disapproved by God and the Holy Prophet that it should make even the most reckless character among the Muslims to shudder against enacting it.

Verse 228

'*Qurno*' i.e. course of menstruation. Three courses of menstruation have been fixed on "*Iddah*" i.e. a temporary separation during which conjugal relation between the husband and the wife may be re-established, for if there be any love between the two individuals its pangs would surely assert themselves during this period of separation and will possibly bring about a reconciliation. These chances of reconciliation and also the binding upon the husband to provide for the divorced wife during the "*Iddah*" period serves for the purpose of finding out, beyond all doubts, if the wife has undergone any conception by her divorcing husband to establish the parental propriety over the issue. All these conditions are known only to Islam which also speak of its perfection as a revealed religion.

The details relating to the law of '*Talaq*' i.e. divorce contained in the book of Islamic law will further speak of the perfection of the religious order and the divine wisdom manifesting from the various regulations.

Islam establishes the rights of a wife over her husband as the husband has his rights over his wife. The establishment of the rights of a woman over a man, legally' allowed to her, is another unique feature of Islam which no other religious order has ever thought of it. On the other hand, all the other religions have looked down upon woman as a wicked being, as an agent of the devil. The sudden change in the status of woman against the most degraded position of a mere chattel, hitherto confined to the helpless depth of mere unconditional servitude, was a highly dynamic and a really revolutionizing one which was unknown to the history of the religious orders of the world for the equality of the rights of women as of men, was never till now recognized by any people in any country' or by any' social or religious reformer.

The concluding part of the verse:

وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

“And the men are a degree above them, and God is Mighty, Wise” (2:228).

This part of the verse speaks of the Psychic phenomena of individual differences. The same natural difference plays its role from sex to sex.

None can deny the self-evident fact of the native weaknesses in the fair sex and the superior physical and mental qualities that providence has endowed in man, which undoubtedly the woman lacks. It is this native factor in man which entitles him to call for obedience from his wife. In the matter of divorce, man can at his independent choice decide about the separation whereas woman cannot exercise her judgment.

She can go to the ‘Qazi’ for a flagrant case of maltreatment, when it becomes unbearable for her and demands separation or a dissolution of the marital bond surrendering her right for ‘*Mahr*’ i.e., dowry. The latter part of the sanction i.e. surrender of the *Mahr*, no doubt seems to be an unfortunate feature of the law, but in view of the common weaknesses among women, it is an essential check upon a woman easily resorting to a separation.

There is one important factor one should never lose sight of; that is Islam gives woman the right of choosing her partner in life, by holding for herself the right of offering herself to a man or not, and man has only to accept the offer from the woman, to be his wife and partner in life. None can ever compel any woman to offer herself or accept any’ man as her husband, unless she herself independently decides and acts in the matter. Once exercising the right of the choice, she cannot also have the right to undo the wedlock at her own whim and fancy. But she has been given the safeguard of obtaining the desirable relief through the ‘Hakim ash-Shara’ or the accredited or authentic Administrator of the law called the ‘Mujtahid.’

The verse ends with the words ‘God is Almighty, All-wise’ indicating warning against any indiscriminate judgment or action for it is declared that God is well able to punish the guilty and He knows everything manifest and concealed⁹.

The ending clause asserts the right of woman similar to that of man. As established among the human beings the only point is the recognition of man’s superiority to some extent, particularly in the case of divorce, woman has not been given the right of withdrawal from the marital bond initiatively by herself. And in the case of judgment and evidence also she has not been equalised with man. (A.P.)

¹. See Note to Verse 2:223.

². For details refer to ‘Fiqh’.

³. See Note to Verse 2:223.

⁴. Lev. 18/19, 20/18.

5. See also Verse 68: 10.
6. For further details see 5:89; 66:2.
7. See note to Verse 224.
8. For details refer to Fiqh.
9. For details refer to 'Fiqh'.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Al-Baqarah Section 29 – Divorce And The Respect For The Law

When divorce becomes irrevocable, Regard for the limits of the Law fixed by God, Wife to be justly allowed to have her own rights, Eligibility for a voluntary separation at the initiative of the wife when she fears impossibility of living together with the husband.

Al-Baqarah Verses 229 – 231

الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانٍ فَاِمْسَاكَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ اَوْ تَسْرِيحٍ بِاِحْسَانٍ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ اَنْ تَاْخُذُوْا مِمَّا اَتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ شَيْئًا اِلَّا اَنْ يَخَافَا اَلَّا يُقِيْمَا حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ فَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ اَلَّا يُقِيْمَا حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهٖ تِلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوْهَا وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ

“Divorce (shall be lawful) only twice then (you should) either keep her in fairness or send her away with kindness; and it shall not be lawful for you to take away anything ye have given them but if both fear that they shall not (be able to) keep (themselves within) the limits (fixed) by God; and if ye fear that they shall not (be. able to) keep (themselves within) the limits (fixed) by God, there shall be no sin on either of them about what she giveth up to get herself freed (from the wedlock); These are the limits ordained by God, (Beware!) exceed them not; and those that exceed the limits ordained by God, then these are they that are unjust” (2:229).

فَاِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهٗ مِنْ بَعْدِ حَتّٰى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهٗ فَاِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا اَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا اِنْ ظَنَّا اَنْ يُقِيْمَا حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ وَتِلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ يَبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُوْنَ

“So if he divorceth her (for a third time) then she shall not be lawful unto him until she wedeth another husband; and if he (also) divorceth her, then there shall be no sin on either of them if

they return to each other if they think that they shall (be able to) keep (themselves) within the limits ordained by God; these are the limits ordained by God (which) He maketh them clear for a people who understand” (2:230).

وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِنَعْتَدُوا وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ
ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوعًا وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ
يَعْظُمُكُمْ بِهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

“And when ye have divorced women and they reach their prescribed period then (either) retain them in fairness or set them free with fairness, and do not retain them to hurt them that ye may transgress, for whosoever shall do this, he indeed is unjust to his (own) self; and take not the signs (commandments) of God a joke and remember the bounty of God upon you and what He hath sent down unto you of the Book and Wisdom, admonish you thereby; and take shelter in God and know ye that God is the Knower of all things” (2:231).

Commentary

Verse 229

There is another very effective check against any indiscriminate action on the part of the husband in pronouncing ‘*talaq*’ or divorce; that is the revocable divorce can be pronounced only twice. In the days of ignorance preceding the advent of the Holy Prophet, a wife could be divorced as many times as the husband would like and could be taken back. Such a repetition could be made to any extent unlimited. Islam effected a check upon this indiscrimination in the matter of marital life, by limiting the revocable ‘*talaq*’ to be only twice giving the husband a final chance after the second ‘*talaq*’, either to retain his wife permanently or to bring about a final separation for repeatedly marrying and repudiating is simply scandalous.

If there be any genuine affection between the two still left and there be any possibility of an enduring re-union, the too remorseful experience of separation must be sufficient to keep them within bounds for the future, for man is informed under the succeeding verse¹ that should he once again act indiscriminately, he would not be able to get his wife again, save in the most undesirable, degraded and unacceptable condition, i.e. after she becomes somebody’ else’s wife and that somebody else releases her from the wedlock.

It is not lawful for the husband to take or withhold anything out of what he has given or promised to give i.e. ‘*Mahr*’ or dower to the wife. The dower amount is usually large and much of it usually remains unpaid by the husband, the payment of the dower amount, particularly when the divorce is pronounced is another check upon the husband resorting to an indiscriminate and unnecessary divorce of his wife.

The next part of the verse deals with *'Khula'* or *'Mubarat'* as it is called in law. Under this law, if the wife feels unable to pull on any longer with her husband, she may seek to get freed of the wedlock by returning the dower if she has already received it, or to forgo it, if it be still due to her, and take *'Khula'* from the *'Hakim ash-Shara'i'* who is the authentic administrator of the law².

The address in this verse 'if ye fear' refers to the authentically constituted authority i.e. the *"Hakim ash-Shara'i"*. The law of *'Talaq'* i.e. divorce or *'Khula'* the divorce taken at the instance of the wife, has been laid down in all the necessary details of its working.

The main injunction to the husband given under this verse is noteworthy that is, if the wife is to be retained, she must be kept in honour, grace and in respectful fellowship and if she is to be sent away, it should be 'with kindness.' The same injunction is repeated in Verse 231.

The opening words of this verse clearly indicate that the pronouncement of *'Talaq'* more than once at a time is meaningless for if the first pronouncement effects separation the second and the third separation has no meaning. The second pronouncement will be valid only after a reconciliation or the effective withdrawal of the first pronouncement³.

Read the concluding clause *'Tilka hodoodillah'* – these are the divinely fixed limits or ordinances – with Verse 9:97. (A.P.)

Verse 230

The third or the final divorce is mentioned in this verse, and it is laid down here that the husband can get back the same wife only after she becomes somebody else's wife as stated in the note under Verse 229.

The divorce mentioned in this verse is the third i.e. the irrevocable divorce, the two previous divorces having already been referred to in the previous verse.

Verse 231

Note the warning to the divorcing husband against any cruelty, unjust or unfair treatment to the wife to be divorced. No harm or injury shall be done to her and no interest of her i.e. her right of the dower due to her, shall be prejudiced and she shall not be harassed to forego any of her rights, and she shall not be inconvenienced in the least.

The concluding part of the verse indicates the seriousness of the matter of divorce. Its laws should not be treated lightly.

The one distinctive feature of Islam is evident from the words of appeal to the reason of the individual, used in the conclusion of the verse. It clearly indicates that though Islam prescribes laws, but it always gives a man and a woman the liberty to act to the best of their conscience with the full consciousness of God knowing everything. Hence nothing can ever be concealed from His knowledge. Islam wants man

to be free to act according to the laws and be within bounds or the limits fixed by God and earn the reward or the punishment, for his or her own goodness or badness.

The non-Shi'a Schools admit that divorce is proper and regular only when given according to the restrictions given in these verses, but they do not regard these restrictions essential to the validity of the divorce. Thus, they admit the most irregular forms to have legal validity. They give it the name of '*Talaq Bida'at*.' An irrevocable divorce at once, by merely repeating it thrice.

"It may not even be properly expressed, or even expressed in words at all. This is admitted to be irregular but is not the less effective. One form of making a divorce irrevocable, the pronouncing of it thrice, once in each *tuhr* (period of woman's purity) is allowed to be irregular by Hanafees though condemned in the matter of intention. "If a man pronounces a divorce whilst in a state of inebriety from drinking fermented liquor, such as wine, the divorce takes place. Repudiation by any husband who is sane, and adult is effective, whether he be free or slave willing or acting under compulsion; and even though it were uttered in sport or jest, or by mere slip of the tongue instead of some other word"⁴.

It is these things that have brought the Islamic law of divorce into contempt and ridicule. And it is responsible sometimes, for the most unfortunate cases, so some strange methods have been devised by some to get rid of the effects of these irrevocable divorces.

The Shi'a School condemn all regular forms and regard them as void and ineffective. And for Shi'as it is necessary that "the man must be an adult of understanding, of free choice and will, and of design and intention when he divorces his wife."

"It does not take effect if given implicatively or ambiguously whether intent or not" And "it is also absolutely necessary that the sentence should be pronounced by the husband in the presence of two just persons, who shall hear and testify to the wording of the divorce" This last condition is based on the teachings of the Holy Imams who were very strict in this matter. And this is an absolute necessity for disputes about the '*Talaq*,' and without this condition fulfilled the divorce is simply void and nothing. The wife continues to be his wife in fact though he divorces her a hundred times in any irregular manner. The restriction was apparently made to make it sure that no one divorces his wife without previously letting others know of it. This will give them a chance of remonstrating with him in the matter" (B.H.)

¹. Verse 230.

². In the absence of the Holy Imam, the apostolic successor of the Holy Prophet 'Mujtahid' is the 'Hakim ash-Shara'i'.

³. For details refer to 'Fiqh'.

⁴. Fatawas Alamgiri cited by Hughes.

AI-Baqarah Section 30 – Discipline During The Term, Re-Marriage Negotiations.

Divorced women not prevented from re-marriage, Suckling by divorced women to the issue, The waiting term for divorced women before re-marriage, Re-marriage before the completion of the waiting term illegal.

AI-Baqarah Verses 232 – 235

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَاضَوْا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ذَلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَمْ أَزْكَى لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“And when ye have divorced (your) women and they have completed their (prescribed) term (of waiting) prevent them not from marrying their husbands when they agree among themselves in fairness; with this is admonished whosoever among you believeth in God and (in) the Last Day (of Judgment); this (way) is more profitable and purer for you; and verily, God knoweth and ye know not” (2:232).

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا تُضَارُّ وَالِدَةٌ بَوْلِدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَالِدِهِ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

“And the mothers shall suckle their children two entire years, if the father desires to complete the term of suckling; and on the father shall be their sustenance and their clothing in fairness; burdened not is any soul save to (the extent of) his (individual) ability neither shall a mother be made to suffer (any difficulty or loss) on account of her child nor a father because of his child, and (if the father be not there) on the heir (of the father) devolves a similar responsibility, and if both (the father and the mother) decide on weaning, by mutual consent and (with due) consultation there shall be no blame on them; But if ye decide to engage a wet- nurse for your children there shall be no blame on you provided ye pay what ye promise in fairness and fear God and know ye! that God seeth what (all) ye do” (2:233).

وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

“And of you who die leaving (their) wives, these shall wait four months and ten days and when they have completed their (prescribed) term there shall be no blame on you in what they may do with themselves in fairness; And verily, God is (fully) aware of whatever ye do” (2:234).

وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خُطْبَةِ النِّسَاءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّا أَنْ تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجْلَهُ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

“But there shall be no blame on you in indirect proposal of marriage (before the completion of the waiting term) that ye may make to women or keep (the proposal) concealed within yourselves; God knoweth that ye will mention them, but make no promise in secret except ye speak in fairness; and resolve not on a wedlock until the prescribed term is completed; and know ye! that God knoweth whatever is (latent) in yourselves, therefore, be careful of Him; and know ye! that God is Oft-Forgiving and Forbearing” (2:235).

Commentary

Verse 232

This verse contains another point of law protecting the right of a woman exercising her decision independently. The relatives or the guardians or any authority on her behalf are warned against obstructing a divorced wife returning to her husband even after the period of waiting, i.e., ‘*Iddah*’ when both the wife and her husband, after the divorce mutually agree to be reunited in a regular wedlock. Under this sanction, even though the period of waiting might have elapsed, the former husband can marry the divorced wife. This is allowed after the first or second ‘*talaq*’ only.

Verse 233

Though this verse was revealed in a particular context for mothers of children divorced by their husbands, but it applies to all mothers¹. (M.S.)

This passage is to be read with Verse 46. The root, i.e., ‘*Zarara*’, meaning harm; in its original form to do harm (transitive) and in its secondary form ‘*Tazarrar*’, meaning to suffer or to receive harm (intransitive). Here the secondary form ‘*Mozarra*’ has been used which usually means mutual give and take, meaning either to harm or to get harmed. As such this passage means that on account of the child or the disagreement between the parents none of the three (viz. the father, mother, and the child) should be harmful to the other, or should be harmed by the other. This interpretation covers the various commentaries given by the different commentators.

The implication of the passage regarding the mutual rights of the wife and the husband during the period

of the suckling of their issues, and the right and the duty of the heir of the husband and the condition for the permissibility of employment of a wet-nurse for the suckling of the issue, there are very subtle points for which please refer to ‘*Fiqh.*’ (A.P.)

Verse 234

After the waiting of four months and ten days the widow may remarry.

The prescribed waiting period of four months and ten days is compulsorily to be observed by a widow whether she had intercourse with the bereaved husband or not. In the case of her being pregnant the maximum prescribed waiting period or the period of the delivery, whichever be the later, should be observed.

Dealing with the divorce and the waiting period, it was appropriate to deal with the question of an outsider overtly or covertly proposing to marry the divorced one. Qur’an says there would be no harm provided the talk does not exceed the limit of modesty and no contract is finalised before the conclusion of the waiting period. (A.P.)

Verse 235

It is forbidden to talk to a widow about marrying her during the waiting period i.e. ‘*Iddah.*’ The ‘waiting’ referred to is the waiting period written down for women.

¹. See 46:15.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Al-Baqarah Section 31 – Extra Provision For Divorced Women And Widows

Women divorced before consummation to be provided for, Prayers to God even when in danger, Provision for widows for a year’s stay, Maintenance for divorced women.

Al-Baqarah Verses 236 – 242

لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى الْمَوْسِعِ قَدْرَهُ وَعَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ
قَدْرُهُ مَتَاعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“There is no blame on you if ye divorce women while yet ye have not touched them nor settled any dowry on them; but provide for them, the wealthy according to his means and the poor according to his means, a provision with fairness (this is) (the bounded) duty on doers of good” (2:236).

وَإِنْ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ
عُقْدَةُ النِّكَاحِ وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

“And if ye divorce them ere ye have touched them and have already settled a dowry on them, then ye shall give them half of what ye have settled unless they (women) remit it or remiteth it he in whose hands is the marriage knot; and that ye yourselves (voluntarily) remit (the whole) is nigher to righteousness; forget not generosity among yourselves; verily, God beholdeth whatever ye do” (2:237).

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

“Be strict in observance of prayers; and (in particular) The midmost prayer; and stand ye attent in praying (supplicant) unto God” (2:238).

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَنْذِرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ

“And if ye be in fear, (and cannot pray as prescribed) (pray ye) then (as ye may) on foot or riding, but when ye are safe, remember God as He hath taught you (through His Apostle) what ye knew not” (2:239).

وَالَّذِينَ يَتُوفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي
مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَعْرُوفٍ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

“And those of you who die leaving wives, they shall bequeath for their wives a year’s maintenance without causing them to quit their homes, but if they (the wives) of their own accord quit their homes, there shall be no blame on you in what they may do for themselves in lawful

manner; and verily, God is Mighty, Wise” (2:240).

وَالْمُطَلَّقاتِ مَتاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ

“And for the divorced women (too) (shall) be a provision in fairness; (this is) a duty on those who guard themselves (against evil)” (2:241).

كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

“Thus, doth God make clear unto you (for your guidance) His signs that ye may understand” (2:242).

Commentary

Verse 236

‘Faridah’ is the dower commonly called ‘Mahr’ in law. Provision should be made for the woman even though the marriage might not have been consummated. Liberality must be shown to the divorced wife according to the means of the divorcing husband.

Verse 237

‘He in whose hands is the marriage tie’ is apparently the *Wali* (the guardian i.e. the father or the grandfather) in case the girl is a minor. Some commentators have misinterpreted the individual as the husband himself supposing without any reason that he had paid the dowry in full and thus, entitled to the refund of the half of it. Such an interpretation is unreasonable in view of the fact the right over the dower amount is exclusively and wholly of the wife and in case the wife be a minor, it will be of the ‘Wali’ or her guardian acting on behalf of his minor ward (the wife).

Besides the right of foregoing any portion or pardoning any part of any payment of any amount will always rightfully lie with the owner to whom the amount is to be paid, The person to receive the amount is the wife and in case of her being a minor, her *Wali* or guardian. The person to pay is the husband. The pleading will be to the wife or her *Wali* on behalf of the husband and not to the husband. The correct and logical interpretation of the verse is that either the women (i.e. the wives) if they be majors, of their own free will, forego a part of the dower due to them from their husbands or, in case they be minors, these (i.e. their ‘*Auliya*’ or guardians) in whose hands is the marital tie, can do it.

The concluding part of verse again speaks very loudly of the nature of a graceful and voluntary compliance with the ordinance which, though it is binding as a law, looks to be a responsibility

demanding of the nobility and personal goodness of a Muslim husband to act in piety and with the spirit of mutual charity to each other.

The injunction not to neglect or forget mutual kindness, makes the mutual charitable disposition more imperative, extending it to the limits of more or less an ordinance for the promotion of mutual love between the members of the Brotherhood of the believers in the One True God, Whose mercy and grace everyone has to always crave for.

The mention at the end of the verse of 'God knowing everything' is to keep the husband warned against any possible foolish imagination that the individual can ever hide any of his evil intention or wicked action against the divorced wife as in the case of anybody else so that the whole transaction be made with the best of intention on both the sides and of everyone concerned with the affair. '*Fadl*' means an act of grace or bounty, which an individual is not bound in duty to do, but done voluntarily implying giving of free gifts out of good-will with the best intention, so that the separated or the divorced wife may part with her husband at least consoled of the good-will of the divorcing husband.

According to the Holy Ahl Al-Bayt the '*Wali*' or the guardian of a woman can only be her father or her paternal grandfather. In the case of the absence of these two, for a minor, the Legal Authority i.e. the '*Hakim ash-Shara'i*' will be the guardian. (A.P.)

Verse 238

'*Wusta*' middle or the best or the most excellent. Commentators differ as to the exact meaning of this phrase. The weight of the authorities seems to favour interpreting it as the '*Asr*' or the afternoon prayer, since it is mostly neglected and yet it is most necessary to remember God in the midst of the worldly engagements.

As the word '*Wasat*' in Verse 143 has been used meaning excellent – '*Ummat al-Wasat*' some commentators have adopted the meaning as 'excellent.' In which case the verse will mean that the prayer must be offered in the excellent form as well as the intention or concentration. Those who interpret in the sense argue thus:

'*Wasat*' is middle and in Verse 143, it has been used in the sense of good, upright, just or equitable (as not being inclined more or less to any other side). It may mean the best as the middle position can only be occupied by one and therefore, there can be no second to it. It is also a universally accepted fact that the word has been used in praise.

'*Qoomu lillahi Qaniteen.*' i.e. stand ye for God while in prayer. This verse prescribes '*Qunoot*' i.e. the particular prayer one has to recite raising his hand and keeping both his palms in front of the face, standing. Shaafae has accepted the meaning. (See the next verse).

Some commentators say that the very use of the word '*Wusta*' is in answer to the charge that prayer in

Islam consists merely of some formal movements. Islam's first rather the foremost aim is to condition the human spirit or soul with the divine attributes. The Holy Qur'an condemns prayer without the spirit of concentration or the presence of the mind of the individual offering the prayer

فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ

“So woe to the praying ones” (107:4).

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ

“Who are unmindful of their prayers” (107:5).

الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ

“Who do (good) to be seen” (107:6).

Regularity and method in prayer prescribed by Islam has been the great preservative of the institution of the Islamic prayer. Unlike the other religions, prayer is a prescribed, fully regulated and strictly timed system, which is worked daily with the fixed punctuality. As a unique characteristic of Islam prayer is not a mere idealism. It is a matter of wonder and surprise that the Christians in the West who are so carefully particular about the regularity in the habits of food for their body, should be so adverse to the fully disciplined formal regularity for the sustenance and the elevation of the soul.

In the other man-made systems of prayer, a sincere and intelligent scrutiny will disclose a total absence of the very faculty or the spirit of supplication. Islam is the only religion which prescribes the regular five times daily exercise of the communion of the human soul with its Creator Lord, even though one should be facing the enemy or even in his death-bed, as long as his consciousness does not give way¹.

Verse 239

This refers to the manner in which the prescribed daily prayer is to be performed while in danger. The nature of the prayer is called ‘*Salat Al-Kawf*’ i.e. the Prayer in Danger. This indicates the great importance Islam gives to prayer to God which is not to be given up under any circumstances. (A.P.)

Verse 240

This verse which enjoins bequest to be made for the maintenance of wives for one year, if they do not leave their homes, has been held to have been abrogated by Verse 235 and Verse 4:12 in which the law of inheritance has been detailed inclusive of wife's share in the inheritance. Besides there seems to be

nothing inconsistent in the verse. However, making of bequest is not obligatory. (A.P.)

The learned authorities of '*Minhaj as-Sadiqin*' and the '*Majma' Al-Bayan*' state the abrogation of this passage by Verse 235 and 4:12 but a deep study of these three verses makes the matter clear that there is no clash between this verse and the other two. Here Qur'an endorses the system of Will or Bequest which is already customary in favour of the widow. Verse 235 fixes only the obligatory period of waiting for a widow, with nothing to do with the widow's continuing her stay in her husband's residence at her choice according to the bequest and nor does 4:12 contradict the validity of any such will or bequest.

Verse 4:12 grants the widow her share in addition to the advantages of this verse. These two verses aim at safeguarding the right of the widow and the freedom, or the rights given to the widow reduce the utility of the customary will or bequest. Hence there can be no abrogation of this verse in its strict sense. (A.P.)

Verse 241

This is an additional grant to the dower which must be paid to the wife. All these grants after grants to the wife are a clear proof of Islam's regard for woman and its concern to protect her rights as well as to see she is fully provided for, to the maximum desirable extent possible.

Here it is asserted that a moderate grant of an enjoyable nature is an obligatory demand on the piety of the husband. This by no means clashes with the passages regarding the prescribed rights in her favour. This verse and Verse 236 are demands on the piety and the clemency of man. The two qualities which Islam expects every Muslim to attain clearly indicate that even in separation the exercise of piety, grace, love, and clemency should not be neglected but should be practised. (A.P.)

Verse 242

Note the word 'Ayaat' meaning signs, used here for the ordinances or the laws given. In fact, they are the guiding signs, by getting our lives regulated by these laws, we can surely be wise and achieve our salvation.

The divine signs in legislation or the creation are presented in such vividness that man may apply his thinking and reasoning. Qur'an repeatedly invites man towards this, and this indicates the important part thinking and reasoning plays in human progress according to Islam.

[1.](#) See the next verse.

Al-Baqarah Section 32 – Fight In The Cause Of God – References To The Conduct Of The Ancient People.

Death caused by God against those who refused to fight when they were ordained, Muslims enjoined to sacrifice their lives and their wealth in the cause of God Saul's kingdom over the Israel and their demur against Saul being chosen as their king.

Al-Baqarah Verses 243 – 248

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ فَقَالَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ

“Didst thou not see those who went forth from their homes, and they were in thousands, for fear of death; then God said unto them, ‘Die ye!’ (and they died) and thereafter He restored them to life; verily, God is gracious unto them, but most men thank (Him) not” (2:243).

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“And (O’ Muslims!) fight ye in the path of God, and know ye that God is Hearer and Knower (of all things)” (2:244).

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

“Who is he that will lend unto God a fair loan; verily, He will multiply it unto him manifold; for it is God that holdeth and extendeth and unto Him shall ye be returned” (2:245).

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الْمَلَإِ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى إِذْ قَالُوا لِنَبِيِّ لَهُمْ ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلِكًا نُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ الْقِتَالُ أَلا تُقَاتِلُوا قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا أَلا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْ أَخْرَجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَانَنَا فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ

“Hast thou (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad!) not seen the chiefs of the children of Israel, after Moses, when they spake to a Prophet (who was) unto them (saying) “Raise up for us a king, that we may

fight in the path of God”; he said, “May it not be that if fighting were ordained unto you, ye would not fight?” they said, “What aileth us that we should not fight in the path of God, when we have indeed been driven out from our homes and our children?” but when fighting was ordained unto them they turned back save a few of them; and verily, God knoweth the unjust” (2:246).

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا قَالُوا أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِنَ الْمَالِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مَلَكَهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

“And their Prophet said unto them “Verily, God hath raised up for you Saul (to be) the king (over you);” They said, “How can the kingdom be his, over us, whereas we are more rightful for it than he while he is not gifted with abundance of wealth;” he said, “Verily, God hath chosen him over you and hath increased him abundantly in knowledge and physique; and verily, God granteth His kingdom unto whomso He pleaseth; God is Omniscient and All-knowing” (2:247).

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ

“And (then) said their Prophet unto them saying, “Verily, the sign of His kingship shall be that the Ark shall come unto you wherein shall be the tranquillity from your Lord and the Relics of what the family of Moses and the family of Aaron left behind; the angels (of God) shall bear it; verily, therein shall be a sign for you if ye are (indeed) believers” (2:248).

Commentary

Verse 243

Owing to the repeated visits of plague, the children of Israel numbering several thousand left their homes for fear of death. It happened so that the disease once again pestered the town and the people in a huge number of thousands got out of the town being confident of their escape from death which evidently indicated lack of faith in God. God commanded all of them to die and they were all dead and reduced to dust, only their bones were lying on the earth. One of the Israelite prophets ‘Ezekiel’ passed that way and prayed to God to raise the people to life. ‘Ezekiel’ was inspired by God to pray to Him reciting a particular name and to sprinkle water on the rotten bones of the dead, which ‘Ezekiel’ did, and the people were once again alive. Thus, it was manifested for the knowledge of the faithless people that God does whatsoever He pleases, and they could never go their own way against the will of the Lord.

The Ahmadi commentator as usual with him, to deny altogether, miracles ever having been wrought by any apostle of God, has presented the great miraculous event of the death of the people and their revival to life, as a metaphorical example and refers to some events in the Old Testament. There can be

no reason whatsoever, to disbelieve any of the miracles wrought in God's name, on His behalf, if one believes in God being the Almighty Who is the Master of His will Who does whatsoever, He pleases, unless there is some purpose of the selfish motive of the disbeliever to distort the facts to serve some wishful thinking.

Discarding the miraculous event referred to in this verse just to satisfy the materialistic tendency not to accept any event beyond the natural course known to man, can be justified only when man can claim to know all the factors functioning in the mechanism or the working of the universe, and if man can ever claim to have mastered everything in the world of nature with all the details of the process of its mysterious working. When man till now could not know the latent properties of an atom and the wonderful phenomena of its inestimable potential working, what reason can there be for any sensible man to disbelieve things which are decidedly beyond the acknowledged limitedness of human conception?

Man can base his arguments on his own formulated laws, the law' of identity, the law of contradiction, the law of excluding middle and the law of sufficient reasoning, but all these laws of reasoning on the part of man can proceed only until the chemical action in the womb of an expectant mother and stop there without being of any avail at all to say anything about the purpose of the mysterious will active behind the process of creating the issue. This tendency evident in the commentaries of the modern times about the scriptures is a covert attempt towards the denial of the omnipotence of God and the presence of the supernatural forces functioning in the universe on which all the religions are based¹.

However, this passage besides indicating the possibility of the dead coming once again to life implies the moral instruction that a faithful should have trust in God and not to be afraid of death when decreed or enjoined by God. He should know that his life belongs to God, he should guard it at His order and surrender it at His command, the two succeeding passages dealing with the differences and the economic problems are in continuation of this verse.

[Verse 244](#)

Fighting in the way of God meaning fighting for the right i.e. faith².

[Verse 245](#)

'*Qarze Hasanah*' is a goodly loan which is offered without the least consideration for its return. The lender cares not whether the amount lent is returned sooner or later or whether it is paid back to him at all. Any act done for the reward becomes a mercenary service not entitled to any credit. In lending the '*Qarze Hasana*' nothing but the pleasure of the Lord is the thing sought for. The return from the All-knowing All-merciful Lord depends upon the purity or the sincerity of the intention of the lender.

The loan or the offering referred to in this verse is meant for charity or for 'Jihad' in the defence of the cause of God.

The tightening of the means of subsistence and the amplification of the same is exclusively in the hands of God.

Verse 246

The event alluded to in this verse has a reference also in the Bible:

“Nevertheless the people refused to obey the wire of Samuel; and they said, Nay! but we will have a king over us”. 1 Samuel 8/19.

“That we also may be like all the nations, and that our kind may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles” 1 Samuel 8/20.

After ‘Moses,’ prophets after prophets were appointed to succeed him and to maintain the Law (‘Torah’). ‘Moses’ was succeeded by ‘Usha bin Noon,’ ‘Kalib.’ ‘Ezekiel’ and ‘Ilyas’ and ‘Elisha’ and as time passed the people neglected and ultimately gave up the Law’ and became idolatrous. And in the time of the prophet ‘Yasa’ there appeared an enemy for the Israelites who were the people of the land of ‘Shalisha.’ from the tribe of Goliath (‘Jaloot’) who had captured all the land on the shores of the Mediterranean including Palestine and Egypt. They subdued the Israelites, killed 440 Israelite princes and noblemen and had taken the Israelites as their subjects and taken away their lands³.

Now the Israelites had no prophet to guide them out of the calamitous state. They prayed to God for a Prophet. At last, their prayer was heard and God sent a prophet to them in Samuel. When Samuel appeared and claimed apostleship of God, the Israelites asked him to appoint a king for them to lead them in the battle for freedom from the subjection and servitude they had been suffering under the enemy.

In those days battles were fought only under kings and the Prophet was only the adviser or the administrative adviser or a director of the affairs. Prophet Samuel warned them beforehand that they might disobey after it gets prescribed for them to fight in the way of God. Here was the question of fighting for the freedom of the people against the torturous subjection and it has been termed as the fight in the way of God. It is evident that the fight for right means the fight for God.

Verse 247

Their prophet was Samuel. ‘Talut’ is called ‘Talut’ (according to the Bible) on account of his height and the strength of his stature for he was the tallest of his people⁴. The proper names used in Arabic are different from their Hebrew originals. The people despised Saul’s kingship for he lacked wealth while they had it in abundance.

The reply of Prophet Samuel given to the people against their argument needs a serious attention by those who are sincere to know the qualities essentially needed in a ruler, be he a mere temporal one:

1. *'Inna Allah astafaha alaikum'* i.e. "Verily God hath chosen him (Saul) in preference to you" This part of the verse, clearly and very eloquently gives out the fact or the divine law that a ruler of the people be he a mere temporal ruler, is chosen not by the people themselves but by God Himself.

2. *'Wazadahu Bastutanfil ilmi wa al-jism'* i.e. 'He (God) hath increased him (Saul) abundantly in knowledge and physique. These words plainly expose that the one chosen by God to rule His people, is given knowledge and physical strength by God Himself. That the true ruler of God's loved people must possess divinely inspired knowledge and godly strength of the body.

3. *'Wa Allah Youti Mulkuhu maiyasha'* i.e. Verily God (alone) granteth His Kingdom to whomsoever He liketh – which means that kingdom is of God alone, and it is granted only by Him and it is granted to whomsoever He likes, let people like it or not, and the Kingdom of God extends to the Universe as a whole, and the authority to rule His Kingdom on His behalf will always be only with the one whom God Himself grants it.

4. *'Wa Allah Waseon Aleem'* i.e. Verily God (alone) is the Ample-giver and the All-knowing. These words speak out the act that bounties to mankind through the government of their state can come only from the All-bountiful Who alone is the Ample-giver, and no amount of human devices of their diplomacies besides God's will, can ever be of any avail to humanity. And what is good and what is bad for a people is best known only to God, which knowledge can be conveyed to men through His chosen ones to rule over them, and not at all through any other means of the diplomatic election or choice, or by the appointment of a ruler effected by the people themselves.

Let us now reflect seriously upon the need of a ruler the Muslims were put to after the departure of the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet in compliance with God's command had started the succession to his apostolic mission with the appointment of Ali as his Vicegerent, Vizier and Khalif or Successor – in the open assembly of the *'Ashira.'* The details of this event one can find in any book of history of the religion of Islam or the life history of the Holy Prophet.

Again, while returning from the last *'Hajj'* or pilgrimage i.e. the *'Hajjat Al-Wida'* in the huge assembly of thousands of *Hajjis* or the pilgrims at the place called *'Ghadir Khumm'* declared Ali as the *'Maula'* i.e.

Lord or the Master of all those who acknowledged the Holy Prophet as their ‘Maula,’ ‘Lord’ or the ‘Master’. Immediately after the appointment, the Holy Prophet asked every one present there to pay ‘Baith’ or allegiance to Ali. ‘Baith’ hitherto was demanded for the Holy Prophet. Further the Holy Prophet had asked ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattab’ to address Ali then and there as ‘Amirul Momineen’ i.e. the Commander or the ruler of the Faithful. Ali had been providentially endowed with all the qualities of a ruler mentioned in this verse, to a wonderful limit. About Ali’s knowledge and wisdom, the Holy Prophet himself had declared.

‘Ana Madinat ul-‘ilmi wa Aliyun Babuha.’ I am the city of knowledge; Ali is its gate. This saying of the Holy Prophet is well known to every educated Muslim. And about Ali’s physical strength, it is Ali and none else who is known in the whole of Islamic world, and called ‘Asadullah’ i.e. The Lion of God.

As it has already been said that the matter of the appointment of ruler of God’s chosen people rests only with God, and not with the people, and the kingdom belongs to none but God.

Had the people remembered these facts and not subjected themselves to the lust for unearned power and unwarranted authority, after the departure of the Holy Prophet, all the chaos and the confusion in the affairs of their life, which played havoc in the land causing the unrestricted shedding of human blood, would never at all have taken place and they would have enjoyed the blessings of a godly kingdom on earth. The Holy Prophet according to the Command of God⁵ had already declared about Ali’s appointment in his place. Although implicit obedience to the decision of the Holy Prophet and an unconditional submission to whatever he decrees has been prescribed by Qur’an as the first fundamental condition of the faith:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

“But no! By thy Lord! They (Muslims) believe not (in fact) until they make thee a judge in that which has become a matter of disagreement among them, and then find not any straitness in their hearts as to what thou decideth and submit with entire submission” (4:65).

When the Muslims differed about the succession of the Prophet as their ruler and guide, was it not their duty to consult the Holy Prophet by reflecting upon what he had already pronounced, and submit themselves entirely to his declared will against their selfish designs to fulfil their personal aspirations? It is a matter for the necessary scrutiny and a serious study by everyone genuinely interested in having the proper and authentic guide in the place of the Holy Prophet.

And it is said that the Holy Prophet had not done or said anything about the situation. It must be remembered that such a falsehood can never stand against the unique personality of the Holy Prophet who had been sent by God to teach and propagate the religion of peace to establish peace on earth for all times until the Day of Judgement.

The Final Messenger of Peace, the Holy Prophet did not spare any necessary precaution against any of the possibilities of the disturbance of peace among the people after him, but the rebels acted against his declared will, they were only opportunists who had joined the faith with some definite purpose behind, and who only waited for his departure from this world, to have their own way. They reverted to infidelity covered by the show of their devotion to the faith and played havoc.

The truth is that as the people of Moses and Jesus and the followers of the other preceding prophets were taken hold of by Satan who beguiled them after the departure of their respective heavenly teachers, Satan took hold of the opportunists in the Muslim folds and used them to play greater and more miserable havocs, misleading them farther away from the right path, the path of the Holy Qur'an and the Ahl Al-Bayt to which the Holy Prophet had repeatedly commanded the people to be attached to, after him. Since he was the last prophet and no other prophet had to come after him, the Holy Prophet took such special precautions in this regard that no other prophet preceding him had ever taken, and yet the people allowed Satan to have his own way, and deserted the right course.

Whatever be the details of the Israelites' history referred to here, the instructions to be inferred from it regarding the religious authority who can wage war in the way of God is as follows:

1. Besides the presence of a divine legislator and a religious judge sometimes an executor is also needed. It should be borne in mind that all the three aspects of government (*Aamiriyat*)...i.e. legislation, justice and execution are included in the sovereignty of God. He may delegate all the aspects to any one man as His Vicegerent and He may distribute the various functions to different persons. In any case the appointment rests with God and none else. Here the Prophet represents the Divine Authority in law and justice. When the people asked him to appoint a king as an executor, he said that God has appointed '*Talu*' as their king, indicating that he (the Prophet) had no right to do it. This refutes the tendency now developing among the people that in the establishment of the legislative and the judicial bodies the '*Kitab*', i.e., the Book and the '*Sunnat*', i.e., the Tradition to be the final authorities, and the people should have no voice in the matter. But in the establishment of the final executive authority people may have voice and call it the Theo-democratic form of government.

The sovereignty (*Aamiriyat*) is exclusively God's. To allow the public to have any say in it. means return to the age of ignorance and not Islam.

2. '*Jihad*', i.e., war in the way of God was prescribed and practiced by the previous prophets also, and the reaction favourable or unfavourable, to this precept had been the same as in

Islam.

3. The unfavourable reaction of the people to the divine appointment as based on temporal consideration which are known to the limited and narrow views, as was the case with the angels regarding the vicegerency of Adam. The answer to this criticism is almost the same that it was God's selection, and the selection is based on the extensity and the intensity of knowledge, strength, and character and that the Kingdom is God's and He alone has the right to give to any one whom He likes, but His liking is not arbitrary or unreasonable. It is based on the superiority and the excellence of the person, known only to Him as He alone is the all-Pervading and the Omniscient. This discards the importance of the temporal consideration as wealth, seniority in age, racial or parochial. Therefore, whenever the question of the authority succeeding the Holy Prophet in regard to legislation, justice, and execution, is dealt with, the implication of this exemplary passage should be taken into consideration, as the method of the succession to the Holy Prophet has continued to be the same as before⁶. (A.P.)

Verse 248

'*Tabut*' in this verse stands for the Holy Ark or Chest 3 yards long and 2 yards broad with divine signs in it decipherable only by the Apostles of God. This Ark had divine blessings that whenever it was presented by the Israelites against their enemy in the midst of a battle, the enemy forces had no other choice but to take to their heels for their lives. The Israelites used to always keep the Chest in front of their forces whenever any occasion of their proceeding against any enemy had occurred and they used to come out victorious.

This Ark passed from one apostle to another apostle of God. It is reported to contain the shoes, the rod and clothes of Moses, the turban of Aaron and some other sacred relics. This Ark had been certainly endowed with miraculous effects. It was this Ark that was brought out from Shiloh to help the Israelites in the war with Philistines. This Ark has nothing whatsoever to do with the 'Tabut' or ark of bulrushes in which the mother of Moses set him afloat in the waters⁷.

"And when she (mother of Moses) could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink."⁸

The following verse of the Holy Qur'an clears the meaning of 'Tabut' as nothing but Ark for the Ahmadi commentator to note which he has avoided referring to it in his note. The address in the following verse is to Moses:

إِذْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّكَ مَا يُوحَىٰ

“And when We revealed unto thy mother what was revealed” (20:38).

أَنْ لَقَدْ فِيهِ فِي التَّابُوتِ فَاقْذِفِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ

“That; Put him into a chest, then cast it down into the river” (20:39).

If the running of Ark as the Ahmadi commentator wants us to believe to be the heart, can any sensible one interpret the above to suit the word ‘heart’ inserting in it the place of the Ark.

The Ahmadi commentator quotes Verse 48:4 and says that tranquillity from the Lord is not a thing which is placed in boxes, but the heart is its real repository. This is an unacceptable argument for the tranquillity mentioned here need not be the heart but also something else. The safety of Moses which was endowed in the ark in which he was commanded to be placed into was the tranquillity of the mother of Moses. It is nothing but eloquence of the language to call the baby Moses safe in the ark as the tranquillity for the mother who was anxiously mindful to somehow secure her issue.

It is a matter very deplorable that certain commentators in their anxiety to make the meaning of a verse of the Holy Qur’an serve their selfish ends, forget to be reasonable in their interpretation. Could the above verse of the Holy Qur’an ever sensibly mean that God commanded the mother of Moses to put the baby Moses in her heart and cast her heart into the river. The truth is that it has become essential when going through any such literature, more particularly the translation of the Holy Qur’an, to be always very cautious and careful against the novel interpretations which are usually resort to, to extract the meanings needed to serve some sectarian purpose. Since the prophet of Qadian viz. Mirza Ghulam Ahmed could never work out any miracle, it has become the first concern or the foremost duty of each and every Ahmadi to somehow work out as far as possible a denial of the miracles wrought by the apostles of God. It is only for fear of this note becoming too long the details of other such twisting are not given here, otherwise the peculiar interpretation of certain references in the Holy Qur’an and the Hadith, i.e., the sayings of the Holy Prophet, which the Qadiani School resorts to are surprisingly amusing to intelligent readers.

Similarly, to avoid any interpretation which may mean some miracle, the Ahmadi commentator interprets ‘*Baqiyya*’ which ordinarily means residue or that which left behind, as ‘excellence’ or the best of a thing. Commentators who want to have their own purposeful meaning, have always been in search of some imaginable meaning of the word, other than the ordinary and the usual one, be it the most obscure and the far-fetched interpretation, if it could only be, reasonably or unreasonably, somehow, or other, employed to get at least some twisted interpretation to serve their purpose. Such misinterpretations are adopted with the full force of as many arguments as it may be possible for them to coin to enforce their own interpretation of the word or the clause or the sentence or the passage to suit their purpose. The

Qadiani school is diametrically opposed to the faith of the 'Ahl Al-Bayt' who according to the declaration of the Holy Prophet, are the only divinely authorised custodians or the authenticated teachers of the Qur'anic faith and its practice, in its purity and correctness⁹. (S.B. and others).

And about whom the Holy Prophet had also declared: –

'The likeness of my Ahl Al-Bayt is the likeness of the Ark of Noah. Whosoever got into it, got saved and whosoever turned away from it, got drowned and lost.' (S.B.)

None of the Prophets of God or the Holy Imams had any education or training under any mortal, other than themselves. They were divinely inspired with knowledge and their wisdom was a divine endowment in them. Thus, a true or a genuine guide from God is he who is by himself divinely guided, never having been under anybody else for any education or training for the knowledge and wisdom he possesses, this is the Qur'anic or the heavenly identification of him. For the clear Qur'anic words of guidance in this regard, the reader may refer to 10:35 and 67:22 and judge every claimant to apostleship or Imamah in the light of the guidance from these verses, considering the state of illiteracy and ignorance with which the lives of such men had started, and how the knowledge they own now, they had it from the other fallible mortals. It is then the position of the imposters will become crystal clear. For the text of the clearest Qur'anic guidance in this regard refer to 10:35 and also 67:22 and compare any claimant to prophethood or Imamah be that from Qadian or anywhere else. The position of the imposters will be crystal clear.

In continuation of the note to the preceding verse it is to be remembered that the kingship so divinely established should have the divine signs with it i.e. the sacred heritage from the divinely chosen lineage which contains the divine '*Sakeena*' or tranquillity by virtue of which no worldly or any temporal force or consideration would shake him in any stand he takes in the way of God, as praised in 24:37, as opposed to those mentioned in 62:11, which quality is needed specially on the occasions of danger and war. One may refer to the two different attitudes displayed in the event of the Holy Prophet's migration from Mecca.

For the attitude of the one who slept in the couch of the Holy Prophet praised by God¹⁰ and for the perturbation and the perplexity of the mind of the companion of the Holy Prophet in the cave see 9:40, nothing to say about the other events of wars presenting Ali as the only one loved by God and the Holy Prophet and who loves them both who was the only Triumphant Champion of God's cause, who never showed his back to the enemy even while all the other generals the companions of the Holy Prophet had run away from the battle fields deserting the Holy Prophet. Thus, tranquillity never departed from the Holy Prophet and those faithful ones with him who on no occasion did ever desert him see also 9:26 and 48:26.

Besides this consistent tranquillity, he should have the other divine heritage of the same Holy House. If we have in view that in Islam the Holy Prophet plays the part of Moses and Ali the part of Aaron, then

one would have no doubt that the divine kingship of Islam cannot go anywhere out of the Holy House of Holy Prophet¹¹ (A.P.)

-
- [1.](#) Refer to note on Miracles.
 - [2.](#) See Note to Verse 190.
 - [3.](#) 1 Sam. 17/1.
 - [4.](#) Sam. 10/23.
 - [5.](#) Vide: 5:67.
 - [6.](#) Vide: 24:55.
 - [7.](#) Vide: Old Testament, Exodus, 2/3 and 20/38–39.
 - [8.](#) Vide: Old Testament, Exodus, 2/3.
 - [9.](#) Vide: the Hadith ath-Thaqalayn.
 - [10.](#) See 2:207
 - [11.](#) Vide: 4:54.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Al-Baqarah Section 33 – Saul’s Victory Over Goliath

The religious war of the Israelites, God blesses the sincere fighters in His cause with triumph over their enemies.

[Al-Baqarah Verses 249 – 252](#)

فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَنْ لَمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي إِلَّا مَنْ
اِغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ فَشَرِبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ
قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا اللَّهَ كَمَ مِنْ فِتْنَةٍ قَلِيلَةً غَلَبَتْ فِتْنَةٌ كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

“(And) When Saul set forth with (his) armies, he said, “Verily God will try (your patience) at a stream; whosoever (of you) drinketh from it, then he is not of me and whosoever doth not taste of it then verily he is of me save he who drinketh a draught with the hollow of his hand,” but save a few of them they drank of it; and when he had crossed it, those he and those who believed with him said they, “we have no strength this day against Goliath and his hosts;” but those who thought (rightly) that they shall meet God, spoke saying, “How oft by God’s permission a small

army did vanquish a big host; and verily, God is with the patient ones” (2:249).

وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أَدْمَانَنَا وَأَنْصِرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ

“And when they set forth against Goliath and his hosts, they said, “O’ our Lord! shower on us (Thy blessings of) endurance and set our feet firm and help us against the disbelieving people” (2:250).

فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

“Whereupon they routed them by God’s permission and David slew Goliath, and God gave him Kingdom and Wisdom and taught him whatsoever he pleased, and were it not for God’s repelling some men with the others, the earth would have been full of mischief, but God is gracious to all (His) creatures” (2:251).

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

“These are the signs of God with truth do we rehearse them unto thee (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad!); and verily, thou art (one) of (our) apostles” (2:252).

Commentary

Verse 249

There is some similar incident mentioned in the Bible¹ of the trying thirst of the people but that is a different incident. It was that Gideon tried his forces by the ‘Well of Harod.’ The trial of the people under Saul was by the river. From this verse it gets clear that the one who leads the people should have inspired knowledge of good and evil for his followers and be able to conduct trials of the people’s faith as was Saul who directed his men not to drink water with his hand as much of it as fills the hand from the river, even though they were dying of thirst. It was only a trial.

There is one point to be noted here that with Saul there were men no doubt, who complained to Saul above their weakness against Goliath and his forces, but there is no report about Saul’s men deserting Saul leaving him in the midst of the enemy. But the miseries and the calamities which faced the Holy Prophet Muhammed were great and grave in proportion to his greatness and the uniqueness of his position among the comity of the apostles of God.

The Holy Prophet when he was faced to fight to defend the truth, the faith Islam, and the believers in it, his closest companions who later posed themselves as the greatest heroes of the faith and the faithful, deserted the Holy Prophet leaving him in the midst of the enemy. Some of the companions who later on claimed extraordinary prominence and closer social contact with the Holy Prophet, ran away from the battlefield so exasperated and scared of the formidable enemy that while running for their lives jumping from mound to mound, like wild goats on the top of the mountains, shouted to their other fellowmen also to return to their former creed of idolatry, crying aloud that Muhammad was no more. Such deserters did not return to know of what had happened to the Holy Prophet until three days.

On each such occasion the one and the only solitary soul who always stood by the Apostle of God and who with his providential, wonderful and miraculous strength and bravery fought the enemy single-handed and converted the impending defeat into a glorious triumph over the enemy's forces was Ali son of Abu Talib the Cousin Germane, the Vicegerent, the Son-in-law and the declared Heir-apparent and the Divinely Chosen and Commissioned Successor to the Holy Prophet².

But fortune did not fare the Muslims to have such a godly hero, the Saviour of Islam and the Greatest Defender of the Holy Prophet, who always staked his own life to secure the life of the Holy Prophet, the Gate of the city of knowledge, the Lion of God, the Saint of Saints of Islam, to succeed immediately after the Holy Prophet to be at the head of the Muslim empire to rule over the Muslims making the government really the Kingdom of God on earth. Satan did not allow the Muslims to avail of the heaven's blessings. Ali had to retire into seclusion to guide only those who sought his godly guidance, resorting to him in his seclusion.

Similar disloyalty and disobedience to the divinely appointed authority is noticed in many battles waged in the way of God during the life of the Holy Prophet and the short reign of Ali. On all the occasions tranquillity and perseverance was displayed by only a very small group who had in view the ultimate of meeting God. (A.P.)

[Verse 250](#)

The prayer is well graded. First patience or perseverance was prayed for. then steadfastness in the field and as a reward for the above two qualities to be the victory over the infidel people.

Bible says:

“And it was so, that when he (Saul) had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart” (1. Samuel 10/9)

“And the spirit of God came upon him and he prophesied” (1. Samuel 10/10)

Verse 251

An account of the formidable strength of the mighty forces of Goliath, is given in the Bible³. David slew Goliath in a single combat. The Philistines seeing Goliath killed by David all of them fled and that was the end of the battle.

Quite a similar event took place in the early days of the start of Islam. The infidels of Mecca with all the strength of the strongest of their allies with the best and the choicest and the most experienced of their warrior heroes, attacked the Muslim refugees in Madina who then numbered only a few hundred including women and children and who were practically unarmed, and the enemy consisted of several full equipped battalions. The battle is called the battle of 'Ahzab' i.e. the battle of the Confederates. All the idolatrous tribes of Arabia had united in one body against the few hundreds of ill-equipped or practically unarmed Muslims.

The mighty host was Twelve thousand strong and there could be hardly any fight at all. It was the question of life and death for Muslims and Islam including the Holy Prophet himself. The well-known giant-like warrior hero of the enemy's strength leapt across the ditch which the Muslims had dug between themselves and the enemy's forces, and coming forward challenged the Holy Prophet to send any one to fight him in a duel or a single combat.

The Holy Prophet turned towards the small band of his men and asked them if there was anyone who would answer 'Amr' on behalf of Islam and the Muslims. Though there were those present in the Muslim ranks who later, after the departure of the Holy Prophet prided themselves as the greatest heroes and the defenders of Islam and who also claimed to be the closest companions of the Holy Prophet during his life, but none stirred, and some of them even tried to hide their faces lest the choice of the Holy Prophet might fall upon them and they be commanded by the apostle of God to go to fight the giant like warrior standing fully equipped and well prepared to finish anyone that comes to face him.

Every time the call was sounded by the Holy Prophet to his men for a match to meet 'Amr' there was no response even from those who claimed closest companionship with him save Ali Ibn Abi Talib, who at every time readily stood up and cried: 'Ana lahu ya Rasul Allah' (I am here for him O Prophet of God!) But the Holy Prophet asked Ali to sit down. Thrice did the Holy Prophet call for a match from his ranks and every time none but Ali stood up. Once some of the people gave cowardly answers acknowledging the matchless strength and the dauntless courage of the challenging hero of the enemy.

Third time when again none but Ali stood up to fight the giant-like warrior, the Holy Prophet called forth Ali, set right his dress and placed his own turban on his head and bade him go to fight in the way of the Lord, praying to God for the triumph of Islam against the total strength of the idolatrous Arabia and declared:

'Qad Barazal Imanu Kulleh ila Kufre Kulleh' i.e. 'Certainly proceeds the Whole of the Faith against the

Whole of the Infidelity.’ ‘Ali met Amr,’ the details of which one can have from any of the detailed Muslim history, and ultimately within a few minutes Ali brought the severed head of ‘Amr’ the challenging idolator hero of the infidel’s forces, and threw it before the feet of the Holy Prophet saying: “Here is, O Prophet of God! The head of the enemy of God and Islam” at which the Holy Prophet thanked God for the victory and declared:

‘Darbatu Aliyin Youmal Khandaq Af dalu min ibadatus thaqalain’ i.e. “The one stroke of Ali on the Day of the Ditch (The battle is called the Battle of the Ditch), is superior to the service (prayers) of both the worlds”.

This saying of the Holy Prophet is well-known to the Muslim world and is invariably recorded by all historians and the traditionists and unanimously acknowledged and accepted by the Muslim world as a whole. As on the triumph of David against Goliath the enemy fled away. at the triumph of Ali against ‘Amr’ the combined forces of the Confederates of the enemy gave up the battle and left the field in chaos and confusion and the battle ended completely routed and disappointed forever.

It is not improbable that owing to the event related above which the Holy Prophet was destined to experience in the early stages of his ministry that this equivalent or identical event connected with Samuel, Saul, David, and Goliath of the Israelite history, is recounted in the Holy Qur’an. The stories of the prophets of the ancient times, are not related in the Holy Qur’an without any useful purpose in view. Most probably there might not be any instance of any battle besides the instances of the triumph of David and Ali Ibn Abi Talib, in the history of the world, in which a battle had come to an end routing the enemy altogether at the triumph of one single champion vanquishing only one champion from the opposite camp.

‘Wa aatuhu Allahu al-mulka wa al-hikmata’ – And God gave him the kingdom and wisdom. These words of this verse clearly indicate that since Kingdom belongs to none but God, God alone grants the rule over His Kingdom on His behalf⁴ and was accordingly given to David after his triumph over Goliath had proved his extraordinary strength which was for the people as a whole a victory for them over their enemy. God while granting him the rule over the kingdom also granted wisdom and knowledge, the two requisites for the post.

All these qualities were divinely endowed in Ali Ibn Abi Talib, and Ali also had served Islam and the Muslims exactly as David had done. Thus, the kingdom of God over the ultimate destinies of men, was granted to Ali in the Imamah (i.e. the apostolic succession to the Holy Prophet) of which he was the first Imam. Ali’s being the ruler of the state also was a blessing from God which was left to the people to avail of it or not. But the rule of *‘Imamah’* granted to him by God, none could snatch it away from him and his seed.

The concluding clause of this verse clearly indicates that the only aim or object of warfare should be nothing but dispelling of mischief and the establishment of peace on earth and not at all any territorial

expansion.

The Holy Qur'an recognises the clash and struggle for power and authority as an important factor in the development of the terrestrial life which is supported by 22:40. The struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest is a natural factor in the development and the progress of the creation as a whole but with the advent of Adam and the birth of the intellectual faculties and the development of inspiration in man, the natural tendencies and values gave place to the conventional moral and legal values instead of fighting for food and the material necessities, man began to struggle for right and wrong, what ought to be done and what ought not to.

To stop this struggle means deterioration and reversion to animal life. Islam advocates the sublimation of the natural tendencies and the native urge in the best conventional and the highly improved forms by decrying the false values and the evil use of the faculties. There should be competition and fight for such an attainment and rank which takes one closer and nearer to God. Hence one should always be prepared to fight against the evil in his own self which would take him back to animal life; and to fight against the evil in the society and the state in which he lives. He should compete with the others in attaining whatever is good and godly⁵. (A.P.)

Verse 252

This verse clearly testifies to what is said in the end of the preceding note that the stories of the prophets and the people of the ancient times have been recapitulated in the Holy Qur'an to get the minds of the Muslims duly conditioned for similar exigencies and experiences which were destined to occur in their life.

¹. Judges 7/1-6.

². Vide: the details of the events of the battles of Badr, Uhud, Ahzab in the Islamic histories.

³. 1. Samuel 17/4 – 11.

⁴. Vide: the concluding words of Verse 2:247.

⁵. See 2: 148 and 5:48.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Source URL:

<https://al-islam.org/holy-quran-final-testament-juz-2-mirza-mahdi-pooya-sv-mir-ahmad-ali>

Links

- [1] <https://www.addtoany.com/share>
- [2] <https://al-islam.org/person/mirza-mahdi-pooya>
- [3] <https://al-islam.org/person/sv-mir-ahmad-ali>
- [4] <https://al-islam.org/organization/tahrike-tarsile-quran>
- [5] <https://al-islam.org/printpdf/book/export/html/178892>
- [6] <https://al-islam.org/printepub/book/export/html/178892>
- [7] <https://al-islam.org/printmobi/book/export/html/178892>
- [8] <https://al-islam.org/tags/tafsir>
- [9] <https://al-islam.org/tags/surat-al-baqara>