

# The Meaning Of As-Sakinah

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### **The Meaning Of As-Sakinah**

**From: Al-Mizan, An Exegesis Of The Qur'an, Vol. 4, Under Commentary of Surah Al-Baqarah, Verses 244 - 252**

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“**As-Sakinah**” (السَّكِينَةُ = tranquillity) is derived from as-sukun (السُّكُونُ) which is opposite of movement. *As-Sakinah* is used for tranquillity of the heart. When a man is of stable mind and is not perturbed in taking a firm decision, he is said to have *As-Sakinah*. It is a virtue of a wise man who has a strong will. Allah has made it a characteristic of al-Iman (الإِيمَانُ = faith) in its higher degree, and has counted it as one of His most valuable gifts.

Man, according to his nature, bases his action on reasoning. He arranges logical premises, analyses the benefits of a particular action, and sees how it will affect the bliss of his life and bring the good of the society as a whole. Then he decides what to do and what not to do.

When man goes forward on the path of nature in the process of his reasoning, and his only aim is to gain real benefit and happiness in life, then his thinking is accompanied by peace of mind and tranquillity of heart without any nervousness and perturbation. On the other hand, if he clings in his life to the world and follows his low desires, he becomes confused, and his thought and will-power are distorted by his unhealthy vision. As a result, he goes astray from the path of truth; or remains undecided, confused and irresolute in his decisions and cannot perform any difficult and dangerous task which requires strong will-power and firm feet.

A believing man, because of his belief in Allah, relies on a firm support and an unshaking pillar of strength. He bases his life on true knowledge where doubt and confusion cannot intrude; sets forth in his actions in the light of divine commandments which he is sure are the most perfect guide. He knows that his affairs are not in his own hands; he is, therefore, not afraid of any possible loss; and if any harm comes to him, he is not sorry about it. He is not puzzled when he has to distinguish good from evil.

But a disbeliever has no guardian to look after his affairs. His good and evil are in his own hands. He wanders in the darkness of confusion, undecidedness and uncertainty, because his thoughts are permeated by low desires, spectres of unreality, and unhealthy feelings.

Allah says:

***...and Allah is the Guardian of the believers (3:68).***

***That is because Allah is the Guardian of those who believe, and because the unbelievers have no guardian for them (47: 11).***

***Allah is the Guardian of those who believe; He brings them out of darkness into the light; and (as to) those who disbelieve, their guardians are the Satans who take them out of the light into the darkness (2:257).***

***Surely, We have made the Satans to be the guardians of those who do not believe (7:27).***

***It is only the Satan that frightens his friends ... (3: 175).***

***The Satan threatens you with poverty and enjoins you to be niggardly, and Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and abundance ... (2:268).***

***...and whoever takes the Satan for a guardian rather than Allah, he indeed shall suffer a manifest loss (4: 119).***

***He gives them promises and excites vain desires in them; and the Satan does not promise them aught but (in) deception (4: 120).***

***... (it is) a promise of Allah, true (indeed); and who is truer of word than Allah? (4: 122).***

***Now surely the friends of Allah – they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve (10:62).***

These verses, as you see, put all fear, grief, perturbation and deception on the side of disbelief; and the opposite virtues on the side of faith. Even more clear is the verse:

***Is he who was dead then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like him whose likeness is that of one in utter darkness whence he cannot come forth? (6: 122).***

It shows that the disbeliever gropes about awkwardly in his journey of life because he has fallen in utter darkness and cannot see anything. But the believer has a divine light by which he sees his path and knows what is good for him and what is bad. It is because Allah has bestowed upon him a fresh and new life in addition to this material life which he shares with the disbelievers. That new life accompanies this light which illuminates its path. Allah says:

***O you who believe! Fear Allah and believe in His Apostle: He will give you two portions of His mercy, and make for you a light with which you will walk, and forgive you ... (57:28).***

Again, He says:

***You shall not find a people who believe in Allah and the latter-day befriending those who act in opposition to Allah and His Apostle, even though they were their (own) fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kinsfolk; these are they into whose hearts He has written (impressed) faith, and whom He has strengthened with a spirit from Him (58:22).***

It shows that this new life is from a spirit from Allah, and is accompanied by a firm faith deeply impressed into their hearts. These believers are strengthened by a spirit from Allah, which confirms the faith into their hearts, gives a new life to their bodies and creates a brilliant light to lead them forward.

It is easy to see that the import of this verse is similar to that of verse:

***He it is who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers that they might have more of faith added to their faith – and Allah’s are the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is Knowing, Wise (48:4).***

“Tranquillity” in this verse corresponds with the “spirit” in the previous one; and “having more of faith added to their faith” of this one corresponds with “impressing the faith into their hearts” of the previous one. This conformity becomes more obvious when we look at the sentence, “and Allah’s are the hosts of the heavens and the earth”, because the Qur’an often uses the term “hosts” for the angels and the spirit.

Similar in the meaning are the verses:

***...then Allah sent down His tranquillity on His Apostle and on the believers, and made them keep the word of guarding (against evil), and they were entitled to it and worthy of it (48:26).***

***So, Allah sent down His tranquillity upon him and strengthened him with hosts which you did not see ... (9:40).***

From the above discussion; it may be inferred that *As-Sakinah* is a divine spirit, or accompanies a divine spirit, by divine command; it creates tranquillity in heart, firmness of purpose and peace of mind. This does not involve us in far-fetched interpretations which would remove the word from its real meaning. And the traditions on this subject should be interpreted in this light.

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