

خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ مُضْغَةٍ مُخَلَّقَةٍ  
وَعَرِيرٍ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ ۗ وَنُقَرُّ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ آجَلٍ  
مُسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشُدَّكُمْ ۗ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يَتُوفَىٰ  
وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا ۗ وَ  
تَرَىٰ الْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فِإِذَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ وَأَنْبَتَتْ  
مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ ﴿٥﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُ يُحْيِي  
الْمَوْتَىٰ وَأَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٦﴾ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ لَا رَيْبَ  
فِيهَا ۗ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَنْ فِي الْقُبُورِ ﴿٧﴾ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ  
فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُّنبِئٍ ﴿٨﴾ ثَانِي عِطْفِهِ لِيُضِلَّ  
عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۗ لَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَنُذِيقُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَذَابَ  
الْحَرِيقِ ﴿٩﴾ ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتَ يَدَكَ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ  
﴿١٠﴾

And among the people there is one who debates about Allah without knowledge and follows every rebellious Satan, [3] about whom it is destined that if someone takes him as friend, he will misguide him and lead him to the punishment of the Fire. [4]

O men, if you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then (recall that) We created you from dust, then from a drop of semen, then from a clot, then from a piece of flesh - shaped or unshaped - so that We manifest (Our power) to you. And We retain in the wombs whatever We will to a specified term. Then We bring you out as babies, then (We nourish you) so that you reach your maturity. And among you there is one who dies, and among you there is one who is carried to the worst part of the age, so that he knows nothing even after having knowledge. And you see the land dry. Then when We send down water on it, it stirs and swells and puts forth every kind of good looking growth. [5]

That is because Allah is the truth and that He gives life to the dead and that He is powerful to do everything, [6] and that the Hour (of Doom) has to come in which there is no doubt and that Allah will raise again all those in the graves. [7]

And among men there is one who debates about Allah with no knowledge, no guidance and no book to enlighten, turning his side away to lead (people) astray from the way of Allah. For him there is disgrace in this world, and We will have him taste the punishment of fire on the Day of Judgment (and will say to him) "All this is due to what your hands sent ahead, and that Allah is not unjust to His servants." [10]

### Commentary

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ (And among men there is one who debates about Allah with no knowledge - 22:8.) This verse was revealed with particular reference to Naḍr Ibn al-Ḥārith, who was a very quarrelsome person. He claimed that the angels were Allah's daughters, and that the Qur'ān was a storybook, which contained fables about people of bygone ages. He denied the Day of Judgment and the Resurrection of the dead. Although this verse relates to a particular person, its message applies to all who are in a similar situation, and practice such wickedness.

### Different stages in the development of foetus in mother's womb

فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ (We created you from dust - 22:5.) This verse deals with the different stages through which the foetus passes in its mother's womb before taking a human form. There is a detailed *ḥadīth* on this subject, which is reproduced in Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī on the authority of Sayyidnā Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه to the effect that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Human matter retains its original form in the woman's womb for forty days after which it becomes a clot of blood. After a further period of forty days it becomes a lump of flesh. Thereafter an angel is sent by Allah Ta'ālā who breaths a soul into it and records four things about it, namely how long it will live, how much sustenance it will receive, what acts he will do, and finally whether its end will be wretched or fortunate. (Qurṭubī).

There is another narration which has been related by Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Ibn Jarīr, also on the authority of 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه, that

when the seed becomes a lump of flesh after passing through different stages, the angel responsible to watch the progressive development of each individual then seeks guidance from Allah Ta‘ālā saying: **يَا رَبِّ مُخَلَّقَهُ** أَوْ غَيْرِ مُخَلَّقِهِ. That is, whether it is His will that the lump of flesh should be allowed to grow and become a living human being. If Allah says it is: **غَيْرِ مُخَلَّقِهِ** then the womb aborts the foetus and it does not reach the higher stages leading to a live birth. On the other hand, if Allah says that it is: **مُخَلَّقَهُ** then the angel asks Him whether it is to be a boy or a girl, wretched or fortunate, how long it will live, how it will spend its life and when it will die. The angel is given information on all these matters then and there. (Ibn Kathīr) Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه has also interpreted the words (**مُخَلَّقَهُ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقِهِ**) in a similar manner. (Qurtubī)

**مُخَلَّقَهُ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقِهِ** (shaped or unshaped - 22:5). It is evident from the *ḥadīth* referred to above that the human seed which completes its full term in the womb and is destined to be born as a normal human being is meant by **مُخَلَّقَهُ** (shaped), whereas a seed which is destined to be aborted is **غَيْرِ مُخَلَّقِهِ** (unshaped). However, there are other commentators who have explained these two words differently. According to them a foetus which completes all the stages of growth and development and whose limbs and other organs of the body are healthy, normal and proportionate is **مُخَلَّقَهُ** (shaped). On the other hand, a foetus whose limbs are deformed or disproportionate is **غَيْرِ مُخَلَّقِهِ** (unshaped). The latter interpretation is close to the translation adopted above. Allah knows best.

**ثُمَّ نُنْخِرُكُمْ طِفْلًا** (Then We bring you out as babies - 22:5) Then Allah brings forth the baby from its mother’s womb as a totally helpless thing. Its body is weak and so are its other faculties, such as hearing, vision, senses, brain function, and overall physical movements including its grasp. All these faculties grow strong as time passes until they reach their full capability. This is the meaning of the words **ثُمَّ لِيَتَلَفَّوْا أَشُدَّكُمْ**. (Then [We nourish you] so that you reach your maturity - 22:5). The word *Ashudd* **أَشُدَّ** is the plural of *shiddah* **شِدَّة**, just as *An‘um* **أَنْعَمَ** is the plural of *Ni‘mah* **نِعْمَةٌ**. The meanings of these words are that the process of gradual development continues until all the faculties reach their peak and this happens when a person is in the prime of his youth.

**أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ** (The worst part of the age - 22:5). It means the stage of life when human faculties and senses begin to degenerate. The Holy Prophet

ﷺ had sought Allah's protection from such life. Nasa'ī has quoted Sayyidnā Sa'd رضي الله عنه as saying that the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to repeat the following prayer very frequently. (Qurṭubī)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبُخْلِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْجُبْنِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ أَنْ أُرَدَّ إِلَى أَرْدَلِ  
الْعُمُرِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الدُّنْيَا وَعَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ

(O Allah! I seek Your protection from miserliness, and I seek Your protection from cowardice, and I seek Your protection from that I am carried to the age of helplessness, and I seek Your protection from the seductions of this world and the chastisement of the grave.)

### An account of the different stages of human life after birth

Musnād of Aḥmad and Musnād of Abū Ya'lā quote Sayyidnā 'Anas Ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه that the Holy Prophet ﷺ once said "The good deeds of a minor child are recorded in the account of his father or both his parents, but his evil deeds are not recorded, neither in his parents' account nor in his own. After he has attained majority, an account is opened in his own name and the two angels who are attached to him are commanded to afford him protection and provide him strength. When he reaches the age of forty years and is still a Muslim, then Allah Ta'ālā grants him immunity from three diseases: insanity, leprosy and leucoderma. When he reaches the age of fifty years, Allah eases and abates his record. At the age of sixty, Allah Ta'ālā creates in him an urge to turn his thoughts towards Him. At seventy, all the inhabitants of the sky begin to love him. When he is eighty, Allah Ta'ālā records his good deeds but ignores his lapses. At ninety, Allah writes off all his sins, and grants him permission to intercede on behalf of his relatives and also accepts his intercession. He is then given the titles of امين الله (Allah's trustee) and اسير الله في الارض (that is the prisoner of Allah on earth, because at that age all his strength is gone, he loses interest in his surroundings and spends his life like a prisoner). And when he reaches the worst of age, then all the good deeds which he used to perform when he was strong and healthy continue to be recorded in his account while his sinful acts remain unrecorded."

Having reproduced this tradition from Musnād Abū Ya'lā, Ḥafiz Ibn Kathīr says:

هذا حديث غريب جدا وفيه نكارة شديدة

This *ḥadīth* is *gharīb* (i.e. reported by one narrator only), and is

extremely *munkar* (i.e. reported by a weak narrator against the authentic traditions).

He then adds:

ومع هذا قد زواه الامام احمد بن حنبل في مسنده موقوفاً ومرفوعاً

(And in spite of all this Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal has related it in his Musnād both as a saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and as a saying of a Ṣaḥābī, that is traced.

ثَانِي عِطْفِهِ (Turning his side away - 22:5) The word '*itf*' means 'side of the body', and the expression means 'to turn on one's side' - in other words 'to oppose'.

### Verses 11 - 13

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ حَرْفٍ ۚ فَإِنْ أَصَابَهُ خَيْرٌ اطْمَأَنَّ بِهِ ۚ  
وَأِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ فِتْنَةٌ انْقَلَبَ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ ۚ نَحْ خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ ۚ ذَلِكَ  
هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١١﴾ يَدْعُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُ وَمَا  
لَا يَنْفَعُهُ ۚ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلَالُ الْبَعِيدُ ﴿١٢﴾ يَدْعُوا لِمَن ضَرُّهُ أَقْرَبُ مِن  
نَفْعِهِ ۚ لَبِئْسَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَلِبِئْسَ الْعَشِيرُ ﴿١٣﴾

And among men there is one who worships Allah (standing) on the verge: so if some good thing happens to him, he is satisfied with it, and if a trial befalls upon him, he turns his face back. He loses both this world and the Hereafter. That is the loss which is so obvious. [11] He prays to someone, instead of Allah, who can neither harm him nor benefit him. That is the error which takes him too far (from the right path). [12] He, rather, prays to someone whose harm is more likely than his benefit. Wretched is such a patron and wretched is such a companion. [13]

### Commentary

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُعْبُدُ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ حَرْفٍ (And among men there is one who worships Allah (standing) on the verge - 22:11.) Bukhārī and Ibn Abī Ḥatīm have related from Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ

migrated to Madīnah, people flocked to him and accepted the new religion. But there were some among them whose conversion to Islam was far from being genuine, and whose sole motive for their action was to seek self-advancement, and they lacked conviction. If, after becoming Muslims, favorable circumstances resulted in an increase in their prosperity and their children, they thought Islam was a very good religion, but they were equally ready to condemn it if things went against their personal interests. This verse was revealed to describe such people who were mere opportunists and were easily swayed either way depending on where their selfish interests lay.

### Verses 14 - 16

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ  
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١٤﴾ مَنْ كَانَ يَظُنُّ أَنْ لَنْ  
يَنْصُرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ بِسَبَبٍ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ ثُمَّ  
لْيَقْطَعْ فَلْيَنْظُرْ هَلْ يُذْهِبَنَّ كَيْدَهُ مَا يَغِيظُ ﴿١٥﴾ وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ آيَاتٍ  
بَيِّنَاتٍ ۖ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِيَ مَن يُرِيدُ ﴿١٦﴾

Surely, Allah will admit those who believe and do good deeds into gardens beneath which rivers flow. Surely Allah does what He intends. [14]

If someone thinks that Allah will never help him (the Holy Prophet ﷺ) in this world and in the Hereafter, he should stretch a rope to the sky, then cut (Allah's communication) off (from the prophet) and see whether his effort can really remove what irritates (him). [15]

And this is how We have sent it (the Qur'ān) down as clear signs, and (the fact is) that Allah takes whom He wills to the right path. [16]

### Commentary

مَنْ كَانَ يَظُنُّ (If someone thinks - 22:15). It means that the enemies of Islam who put hurdles in its path and desired that Allah should abandon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his religion must clearly understand that this

can happen only when, God forbid, he is deprived of the office of the prophethood and ceases to receive *wahy* (revelations) from Allah Ta'ālā. It is well understood that when Allah Ta'ālā bestows the prophethood on someone and also favours him with *wahy* (revelations), He also promises him full support in this world and in the Hereafter. Thus the only way to stop the advancement of a prophet and his mission, if someone has the power to stop it, is that he should dispossess the Holy Prophet ﷺ of his mission or that the sequence of Divine revelation should be severed. Anyone wanting to do all this will have to go up to the sky and cut off the chain of revelation, and since such a thing is not possible, no amount of fire and fury can do any harm to Islām. This interpretation is related in al-Durr al-Manthūr from Ibn Zaid and, in my opinion, it is the most appropriate one.

Qurṭubī also thinks that this is the best interpretation of this verse. There are some others who are of the view that the word سماء (sky) occurring in this verse means the ceiling of one's house and the verse means that a person who entertains hostile feelings towards Islām and the Holy Prophet ﷺ must realize that he can do them no harm. Hence the best thing for him to do is to hang himself from the ceiling out of sheer mortification. (Maḥzarī and others).

### Verses 17 - 18

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّبِئِينَ وَالنَّصَارَى وَالْمَجُوسَ  
 وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ  
 كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١٧﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهُ ۖ مِنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ  
 وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَالشَّجَرُ  
 وَالْدَّوَابُّ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ ۗ وَكَثِيرٌ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ الْعَذَابُ ۗ وَمَنْ يُهِنِ  
 اللَّهُ فَمَالَهُ ۖ مِنْ مُّكْرِمٍ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ ﴿١٨﴾ السجدة

As for those who believe and the Jews and the Sabians and the Christians and the Magians and those who ascribe partners to Allah, Allah will judge between them on the Day of Judgment. Surely Allah is witness

to every thing. [17]

**Have you not seen that to Allah prostrate all those in the skies and all those on the earth, and the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the animals and many from mankind? And there are many on whom punishment has become due. And the one whom Allah puts to disgrace, there is none to give him respect. Surely Allah does what He wills. [18]**

### **Commentary**

In verse 17 it is stated that Allah will decide among the believers and non-believers of different faiths on the Day of Resurrection, because He knows everything. What that decision would be, has been related in the Qur'ān at several places, namely that the good Muslims will enjoy a life of everlasting peace and comfort, while the infidels would be condemned to a life of eternal perdition. In the next verse, by using the word "Sajdah" (prostration), it has been declared that all created things, be they living things, minerals or plants, are in obedience and thus submit to the Supreme authority of Allah Ta'ālā, thereby mentioning two groups of humans in this respect of 'submission'. One, which obeys Allah and therefore is included amongst the creatures who 'prostrate' to Him, and the other one which is rebellious and refuses to bow before Him, meaning, refusing to submit to His Will. The word "Sajdah" (prostration) has been used here in the broader sense of 'submission' to the will of Allah and obeying His commands, because all created things act upon this submission in their own way. Human beings perform Sajdah by touching the ground with the forehead, while in the case of other created things their Sajdah constitutes their faithful performance of the functions assigned to them by Allah.

### **The truth about all created things obeying Allah**

Genetically, the entire universe and all created things therein are under the control and subject to the Will of their Creator by virtue of an inherently programmed guidance (guidance of Takwīn) by Allah. The 'submission' in this sense is pre-determined, involuntary and instinctive. There is no created being which can escape this universal law of creation, be it a Muslim or a non-believer, a living thing or dead, mineral or plant. The smallest particle and the highest mountain cannot make the slightest movement without His Will. There is, however, another kind of

submission to Allah, when a person offers homage to Him voluntarily and without constraint. This is what distinguishes a believer from a non-believer. A believer is obedient and sincere in his submission to Allah, whereas a non-believer repudiates His existence. As this verse deals with the difference between a Muslim and a Kāfir (infidel), it is more likely that reference to 'Sajdah' (prostration) does not refer to pre-destined and instinctive obedience alone but covers the voluntary submission as well. Let it not be supposed that only human beings and Jinns who possess intelligence can offer voluntary and unconstrained submission, and animals, plants and minerals being devoid of reason cannot exercise voluntary and intentional obedience. Indeed it can be proved from the text of the Qur'ān that every created thing has reason, intellect and intent, and the difference lies only in degree. Human beings and Jinns possess a perfect level of intelligence, which makes them liable to a strict adherence to the laws governing what is permissible and what is forbidden. As regards other creatures, Allah has given them intelligence according to their needs. Animals possess the highest degree of intelligence after humans, then come plants and last of all are the minerals. The intelligence among the animals can easily be perceived, and that possessed by plants can also be observed if one applies one's mind to the task. However, the intelligence given to the minerals is so little and concealed that it is not easily discernible, though Allah has said clearly that they not only possess intelligence but also have the capacity to decide things. The Qur'ān says about the sky and the earth قَالَتَا أَتَيْنَا طَائِعِينَ (They said, "We come willingly."41:11) that is, when Allah commanded the sky and the earth that they must submit to His Will either by their free choice or by force, they both replied that they accepted His authority by their own voluntary choice. At another place the Qur'ān says وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَنْ يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ (and there are still others which fall down in fear of Allah. - 2:74) which means that there are rocks, which fall down in fear of Allah Ta'ālā. Similarly, there are numerous traditions which provide evidence of mountains conversing with one another, or other created things showing signs of intelligence. Therefore, the homage mentioned in this verse for which the word Sajdah (Prostration) has been used means the voluntary homage. The interpretation of this verse would, then, be that except for the human beings and Jinns all other created things voluntarily and willingly submit to the Divine Authority. It is only the human beings and

Jinns who are divided into two factions, namely those who bow in submission to the Will of Allah, and those who deny His authority and refuse to submit to Him and are, therefore, despised. Allah knows best.

## Verses 19 - 24

هَذَانِ خَصْمَيْنِ اِخْتَصَمُوا فِي رَبِّهِمْ ۚ فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قُطِّعَتْ لَهُمْ  
ثِيَابٌ مِنْ نَارٍ يُصَبُّ مِنْ فَوْقِ رُءُوسِهِمُ الْحَمِيمُ ﴿١٩﴾ يُصْهَرُ بِهِ مَا  
فِي بُطُونِهِمْ وَالْجُلُودُ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَلَهُمْ مَقَامِعٌ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ ﴿٢١﴾ كَلَّمَا  
ارَادُوا اَنْ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ غَمٍّ أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا ۚ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ  
الْحَرِيقِ ﴿٢٢﴾ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَدْخُلُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ  
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهَارُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ اَسَاوِرٍ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا  
وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَهُدُوا اِلَى الطَّيِّبِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ ۗ وَهُدُوا  
اِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْحَمِيدِ ﴿٢٤﴾

These are two opponents who have disputed about their Lord. Now, for those who disbelieve, garments from fire shall be tailored, and boiling water shall be poured from over their heads [19] whereby everything in their bellies, as well as the skins, will be melted. [20] And for them there are hooked rods of iron. [21] Whenever, in their anguish, they will intend to come out of it (the fire), they will be turned back to it and (it will be said to them,) "Taste the punishment of burning". [22]

Surely Allah will admit those who believe and do good deeds to gardens beneath which rivers flow. They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and with pearls. And their dress therein will be (of) silk. [23] And guided they were to the good word (of faith) and guided they were to the path of the Praised One. [24]

## Commentary

هَذَانِ خَصْمَيْنِ اِخْتَصَمُوا (These are two opponents who have disputed about

their Lord - 22:19). This verse, with its general words, deals with two sets of people, namely the Muslims and the infidels whether they belong to the earliest times or to later ages. However, the particular event in the background of which it was revealed about two groups of men who faced each other in combat on the battleground of Badr. Sayyidnā 'Alī, Ḥamzah and 'Ubaidah ﷺ stepped out of the Muslim ranks, whereas 'Utbah bin Rabī'ah, his son Walīd and his brother Shaibah came out to challenge them. In the ensuing fight the three unbelievers were slain, Sayyidnā 'Alī and Ḥamzah ﷺ emerged unscathed, while Sayyidnā 'Ubaidah ﷺ was mortally wounded and expired at the feet of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The revelation of this verse in relation to these warriors of the field of Badr is well established on the authority of traditions contained in Bukhārī and Muslim, but it is evident that its message is not exclusive for them alone, but embraces the entire Muslim community of all times and ages.

### **The philosophy of adorning the dwellers of Paradise with gold bracelets**

Here a point may arise that bracelets are articles of jewellery worn by women only and their use by men is looked upon with disfavor. This objection is not entirely relevant because throughout ages monarchs have embellished their persons with costly jewellery, crowns and bracelets as symbols of their might and wealth. The story is well known that Surāqah Ibn Mālīk, before his conversion to Islam, started out in pursuit of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in order to apprehend him while he was on his way from Makkah to Madīnah. As he approached near the Holy Prophet ﷺ his horse sank, by Allah's Will, in a piece of treacherous sand. At that critical moment he expressed his repentance about his error and sinful way, and begged the Holy Prophet ﷺ to pray for his deliverance from his predicament. When, as a result of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ prayer, his horse was extracted from the quicksand, he ﷺ promised Surāqah Ibn Mālīk ﷺ that when the bracelets of the King of Persia would fall in the hands of the Muslims as spoils of war, they would be given to him. So, when during the caliphate of Sayyidnā 'Umar ﷺ the Muslims conquered Persia and the bracelets worn by the King of Persia were brought to Madīnah along with other spoils of war Surāqah Ibn Mālīk ﷺ laid claim to them and received them from Sayyidnā 'Umar ﷺ. In brief, just as wearing a crown is a royal privilege and not a common practice among men,

similarly wearing bracelets by men is a royal privilege, and thus the men admitted to heaven will wear them as a symbol of honour and Divine favour. According to this verse, and also Sūrah Fāṭir, the bracelets will be made of gold, but in Sūrah Nisā' it is said that they will be made of silver. For this reason commentators are of the view that the bracelets worn by the pious people in heaven will be of three kinds, that is made of gold, silver and pearls. This verse makes a mention of bracelets made of pearls also.

### Silk clothes are forbidden for men

The verse says that those people who are admitted to Paradise will wear silk clothes which means that their dresses, carpets, curtains etc. will be made of silk, which is regarded as the best fabric in this world. However, it should be understood that the silk used in Paradise and the silk used in this world have only the name in common, otherwise from the point of view of quality there is no comparison between the two.

Imām Nasa'ī, Bazzār and Baihaqī have related on the authority of Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that the clothes of the people living in Paradise will be made from silk, which will be extracted from a fruit growing there. There is also a statement by Sayyidnā Jābir رضي الله عنه that there would be a tree in the Paradise which would produce silk and the people of Paradise would wear dresses made from it. (Mazharī)

In a *ḥadīth* quoted by Imām Nasa'ī on the authority of Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه the Holy Prophet ﷺ once said:

من لبس الحرير في الدنيا لم يلبسه في الآخرة، ومن شرب الخمر في الدنيا لم يشربها في الآخرة، ومن شرب في انية الذهب والفضة لم يشرب فيها في الآخرة، ثم قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لباس اهل الجنة وشراب اهل الجنة وانية اهل الجنة

“He who wears silk in this world will not wear it in the Hereafter; he who drinks wine in this world will be deprived of the sacred nectar in the Hereafter; he who uses utensils made of precious metals for food and drink in this world will be denied their use in the Hereafter.” Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ added “These three things are exclusively for the people of Paradise.” (Qurṭubī quoting Nasa'ī)

The meaning is that a person who spent his life in this world in the midst of these three luxuries and did not show contrition, would be deprived of them even if he were admitted to Paradise. According to Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that a person who drank wine in this world and did not repent would be deprived of the sacred nectar of the Paradise in the Hereafter. (Qurtubī)

According to Sayyidnā Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه there is another *ḥadīth* in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

من لبس الحرير في الدنيا لم يلبسه في الآخرة وان دخل الجنة، لبسه اهل الجنة  
ولم يلبسه هو (رواه ابو داؤد الطيالسي في مسنده وقال القرطبي اسناده صحيح)

"He who wore silk in the world will not wear it in the Hereafter even if he is admitted to Paradise. All other people of Paradise will wear silk, but not he."

Here a point arises that if after admittance to Paradise a person remained deprived of something, he will nourish a sense of sorrow and grief, whereas Paradise is no place for such feelings, because every one who is admitted to Paradise should at all times be easy in his mind and free from anxiety. On the other hand, if the deprivation of certain facilities causes no sorrow and grief, then the deprivation loses its purpose. Qurtubī has given a very convincing explanation to this matter. He says that the people of Paradise will be given different grades and places at different levels, depending on how well they stood in Allah's favour on account of their good deeds and devotion to the cause of the True Faith. Everybody will be aware of these differences, but Allah will fill their hearts with tranquility and contentment, so that they will not feel grief and sorrow about these differences. والله سبحانه وتعالى اعلم.

وَهُدُوا إِلَى الطَّيِّبِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ (And guided they were to the good word (of faith) - 22:24) Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه has said that this refers to the Kalīmah ṭayyibah لا اله الا الله. Some others say that it means Qur‘ān. (Qurtubī) As a matter of fact it includes all these things in its meaning.

#### Verse 25

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَيَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ الَّذِي  
جَعَلْنَاهُ لِلنَّاسِ سَوَاءٍ الْعَاكِفُ فِيهِ وَالْبَادِ ط وَمَنْ يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِالْحَادِ

بِظُلْمٍ نُذِقُهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْيَمِّ ﴿٢٥﴾

Surely (We will punish) those who disbelieve and prevent (people) from the way of Allah and from Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām (the Sacred Mosque) which We have made for all men, where residents and visitors are all equal. And whoever intends therein to commit deviation with injustice, We will make him taste a painful punishment. [25]

### Commentary

In the previous verse, mention was made of the mutual hostility between the believers and infidels. One aspect of this hostility has been described in this verse, namely that among the infidels there are those who not only persist in error themselves but also prevent others from following the path of virtue. Those were the people who prevented the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his companions when they wanted to enter the Sacred Mosque wearing the pilgrim's garb. Traditionally the Sacred Mosque and that part of Makkah which has an essential role in the rituals of the pilgrimage was not their property and they had no right to deny entry to any one. The place is open to every one, whether a local resident or a visitor. The verse goes on to say that anyone who commits an impious act in the Sacred Mosque, (meaning the whole of Ḥaram), such as preventing people from entering the Mosque, will be made to suffer severe chastisement from Allah, specially if he is also a polytheist as was the case with the infidels of Makkah. They will be liable for double punishment, one for being non-believers and second for preventing others to enter the Sacred Mosque for pilgrimage. Although all sinful acts especially *shirk* and *kufr* are forbidden and are great crimes and sins which are liable to punishment at all times and in all places, but such acts carried out in the *ḥaram* enhance the crime double-fold, and hence referred here for their special importance.

يَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ (Prevent (people) from the way of Allah - 22:25) The words سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ (the way of Allah) mean Islam and the sense of the verse is that these people not only repudiate Islam themselves but also prevent others from accepting it.

Their second offence is that they stop the Muslims from entering the Sacred Mosque (Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām) (22:25). In reality Al-Masjid

Al-Ḥarām is the name of the mosque which is built around بيت الله (House of Allah - the Holy Ka'ba), and it is a very important part of ḥaram of Makkah. However, the term Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām is usually used for the whole of ḥaram of Makkah, as is the case under this episode. Thus the infidels of Makkah excluded the Muslims not only from the Sacred Mosque but also from the precincts of ḥaram of Makkah (as is evident from numerous traditions), and the words الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ used in this verse cover the entire ḥaram. The Holy Qur'ān has at another place used the word الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ under this episode in the meaning of the whole area of ḥaram: وَصَلُّوْكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ. (48:25)

### The meaning of equal rights of all Muslims within Ḥaram of Makkah

According to al-Durr al-Manthūr the term Al-Masjid Al-Ḥaram in the present context means the entire ḥaram as reported from Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ. The entire Muslim Ummah and all the jurists are unanimous on the fact that all those areas of Makkah and the ḥaram where the essential rituals of the pilgrimage are performed, such as the space between Ṣafā and Marwah, where the pilgrims perform Sa'y, and all the open areas of Minā, 'Arafāt and Muzdalifah are waqf for the benefit of the entire Muslim ummah and have never been, nor can ever be, owned by individuals. Some jurists apply this principle to the private houses in Makkah and the open lands in the area of ḥaram to infer that these too are waqf for all the Muslims, that a Muslim can stay anywhere he likes and that the sale or letting out these properties on rent is not permissible. However, there are other jurists who do not accept this view and believe that the ownership of these properties can vest in private individuals and the houses can be sold or let out on rent. It is well established that Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ purchased the house of Ṣafwān Ibn Umayyah in Makkah for use as prison for the criminals. As for Imām Abū Hanīfah, both views are attributed to him in different reports, but the ḥanafī jurists have issued their Fatwa (ruling) in favour of the latter view. (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī) This verse mentions certain areas of ḥaram where entry was denied to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his companions by the infidels of Makkah, but these areas are waqf by consensus of ummah and nobody can be denied access to them.

وَمَنْ يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِإِلْحَادٍ بِظُلْمٍ (And whoever intends therein to commit deviation

with injustice - 22:25.) The word إِحْدَادٍ literally means deviation from the right path. While Mujāhid and Qatādah have interpreted this word to mean unbelief and denial of the Oneness of Allah (*kufr* and *shirk*) other commentators have given this word its literal meaning which embraces all kinds of sins so much so that even hurling abuses to one's servant is also included in it.

Sayyidnā 'Atā' ؓ has further enlarged the scope of the meaning of this word by declaring that *ilḥād* within the precincts of *ḥaram* means entering it without wearing the pilgrims garb (*iḥram*), or violating any of the prohibition inside the *ḥaram*, such as hunting or cutting down trees within its limits. It needs to be clarified here that all things forbidden by the religious code are forbidden everywhere and will attract punishment wherever committed; and the specific reference to *ḥaram* in this verse is to emphasize the fact that just as a good deed performed within its limits will be generously rewarded, similarly a sin committed there will attract the most severe punishment. (Mujāhid). Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ has related another interpretation of the word *ilḥād* to mean that whereas at any other place the mere intention to commit a sin does not constitute a sin unless it is actually committed, within the limits of the *ḥaram* even the resolve to commit a sin is punishable, as if it has actually been committed. Qurtūbī has adopted this interpretation from Ibn 'Umar ؓ and lends his own support to it. Whenever Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar ؓ went for the pilgrimage, he used to set up two tents – one within the limits of *ḥaram* and the other outside it. If ever an occasion arose when he needed to scold or rebuke any one of his households, he would do it in the tent which he had set up outside the limits of *ḥaram*. When people asked him the reason for this, his answer was that the words كَلَّا وَاللَّهِ or بلى واللّه which a person normally uses when angry also constitute إحداد في الحرم (committing an act of sin within the precincts of *ḥaram*). (Maḏharī)

### Verses 26 - 29

وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ أَنْ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِي شَيْئًا وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ  
لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَآذِنْ فِي النَّاسِ  
بِالْحَجِّ يَتُوَكُّرِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ

﴿٢٧﴾ لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَةٍ  
 عَلَىٰ مَارَزَقِهِمْ مِّنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ ۖ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرَ اللَّهِ  
 الْفَقِيرَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ثُمَّ لِيَقْضُوا تَفَثَهُمْ وَلِيُوفُوا نُدُورَهُمْ وَلِيَطَّوَّفُوا  
 بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ ﴿٢٩﴾

And (remember) when We pointed out for Ibrāhīm the place of the House (of Allah) saying, "Do not associate anything with Me as My partner and purify My House for those who make *ṭawāf* (circumambulation around it), and those who perform Qiyām (standing up in worship) and those who perform Rukū' (bowing down) and Sujūd (prostration), [26] and announce among people about (the obligation of) Ḥajj, so that they should come to you on foot and on every camel turned lean, travelling through every distant hilly pathway, [27] so that they witness benefits for them and recite Allah's name, in specified days, over the provision He gave them from the cattle - 'So, eat thereof and feed the distressed, the poor.' [28] Then, they must remove their dirt and fulfill their vows and make *ṭawāf* of the Ancient House." [29]

### Commentary

The previous verse contains a warning of severe punishment to the infidels who prevented the Muslims from entering the Sacred Mosque and the precincts of *ḥaram*. This verse describes the eminence and the superior status of the Baitullah which magnifies manifold the evil of their deeds.

### The start of founding the structure of the House of Allah (the Holy Ka'ba)

وَأَذْبُونَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ (And [remember] when We pointed out for Ibrāhīm the place of the House - 22:26.) The word بَوَّءَ literally means 'to assign to someone a place for his residence.' The verse calls to attention the fact that Allah assigned to Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام a place where Baitullah was located. There is a hint here that he was not settled there already, since he migrated here from Syria. And a reference to مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ (the place of the House) suggests that the House of Allah pre-existed the

arrival of Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, because according to reliable traditions its first foundations were laid about the time when Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام was sent upon the earth and he, and the prophets who came after him, used to make *ṭawāf* (circumambulation) around it. At the time of Deluge in the days of Sayyidnā Nūḥ عليه السلام its upper-structure was removed but the foundations remained intact. Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام was brought to this place and commanded by Allah Ta'ālā بِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ (Do not associate with Me any one - 22:26). It is quite evident that Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام could not commit *shirk*, because he had himself suffered considerable torment at the hands of polytheists after they accused him of having destroyed their idols. The intention here is to warn the people at large against the great sin of polytheism. The second command was وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرًا رَبِّي (purify My House - 22:26), even though the House of Allah did not exist at that time. But the fact of the matter is that Baitullah is not just a structure of bricks and mortar, rather the term encompasses that entire piece of sacred land where Baitullah once stood and whose structure Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام was now commanded to raise once again on the original foundations. As for the command to purify the place, Qurṭubī says that in those days the tribes of Jurhum (جرهم) and Amalakites (عمالقه) had placed idols there, which they worshipped. (Qurṭubī). Another view is that this command is for the future generations not only to keep the place free from infidelity and polytheism but also to pay special attention to its external cleanliness and purity.

The third command given to Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام was أَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ (Announce among people about the obligation of Ḥajj - 22:27). Ibn Abi Ḥātim has related from Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه that when Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام was commanded by Allah to make this proclamation, he submitted that the place where he stood was an uninhabited desolate plane with nobody to hear the proclamation whereas he lacked the means to convey it to the populated areas. Allah Ta'ālā then told him that he was required only to make the proclamation and the responsibility for conveying it to the four corners of the world rested with Himself, that is Allah Ta'ālā. Thereupon Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام stood at مقام ابراهيم (Station of Ibrāhīm) and made the proclamation and Allah Ta'ālā magnified his voice so that it was heard all round the earth. It is also related that he made the proclamation from the top of the mount Abū Qubais (جبل أبي)

(قيس). He put his fingers in his ears, turned his face in four directions and called out "O people! Allah has established His House and made it obligatory upon you to make pilgrimage to it. So obey the command of your Lord."

It is also mentioned in this narration that Allah Ta'ālā so decreed that the announcement was heard miraculously all over the world, not only by the people living then, but also by all those yet to be born upto the Day of Resurrection. And all those who are destined to perform the pilgrimage responded to the call with the words **لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ**. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه says that the Talbiyah during the pilgrimage has its origin in this response to the call of Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام. (Qurtubī, Maḥzarī)

Further on, the verse describes the tradition which has been established for all times as a result of the proclamation of Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام namely **يَأْتُونَكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ** (22:28) meaning that people will come to Baitullah from the four corners of the earth, some on foot and others on their mounts, which will become lean because of the long distances traversed by them. From that remote time until today, though thousands of years have elapsed, people come to Baitullah to perform pilgrimage, just as they did in the earliest times. All the prophets who came after Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام and their followers strictly observed this tradition. During the long period of ignorance after Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام, the Arabs, even though they lapsed into the evils of idolatry, yet they continued to perform very faithfully all the rituals of the pilgrimage precisely as they had inherited them from the time of Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام.

**لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ** (So that they witness benefits for them - 22:28) means that the arduous journey undertaken by people to perform pilgrimage is to their own advantage. The use of the word "benefits" as a common noun (without definite article) points to the universal benefits that may be derived from the pilgrimage. Apart from the spiritual rewards, many material profits may also be obtained. It is indeed remarkable that people who sedulously save pennies over long years in order to be able to defray the high expenses involved in performing the Ḥajj have never become insolvent, whereas many people are known to have become bankrupt as a result of expenses incurred on marriages or on the construction of palatial houses. It is a common knowledge that no one has become a pauper

because of spending on Ḥajj or 'Umrah, rather it has been noticed, according to some narrations, that Allah Ta'ālā has bestowed such a blessing in this worship that many have gained materially after the ritual. As for the spiritual gains, they are many, one being related by Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه in a *ḥadīth* in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that anyone who performed Ḥajj in order to gain Allah's favour and avoided sins and obscene acts will return as immaculate and innocent as a newborn baby. (Bukhārī and Muslim) (Maḥzarī).

In addition to the spiritual and material benefits to be obtained from Ḥajj mentioned above, there is yet another advantage which may be gained when performing it, which is mentioned in the following sentence: وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَاتٍ عَلَيَّ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ (so that they may recite Allah's name, in specified days, over the provision He gave them from the cattle - 22:28). Here it is important to bear in mind that the main object of sacrificing the animals on this occasion is not their meat, but the mention of Allah's name which is recited while the animal is being slaughtered, which is the essence of the worship. The fact that eating the meat of these animals has been made *ḥalāl* (lawful) for them is an additional reward from Allah. أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَاتٍ (specified days) refer to the 10th, 11th, and 12th days of the month of Dhul-Ḥijjah when animals may be sacrificed. The words عَلَيَّ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ (Over the provision He gave them from the cattle - 22:28) are of general application and include all kinds of sacrifices whether they are obligatory or optional.

فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا (So eat therefrom) Although the word *كُلُوا* has been used in the imperative mood, it does not mean that eating the meat of these animals is obligatory. Rather, it has been used in the sense that it is permitted and lawful to eat this meat, as it is mentioned in verse وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ مُبْطِنُونَ فَاصْطَادُوا (When you are out of *Iḥrām*, you may hunt - 5:2) for granting permission for hunting.

### Ruling

Specially during the period of Ḥajj, and generally at other times too situations arise when animals must be sacrificed in Makkah. There is one kind of sacrifice which is obligatory and performed to expiate a sin such as killing animals within the precincts of *Ḥaram*. Books of jurisprudence describe in detail the kind of animals killed and the type of animals to be slaughtered to atone for each such animal killed unlawfully. Similarly, if

a person commits an act which is forbidden, as long as he is in the state of *iḥrām*, he too must slaughter an animal. Jurists call this kind of sacrifice as *دم الجنابة* (sacrifice to atone for a sin). Here also there are specific rules governing each situation. There are certain irregularities which must be expiated by slaughtering a camel or a cow, while in other cases the sacrifice of a goat or sheep is considered sufficient. There are a third kind of irregularities where slaughter of an animal is not necessary, and one can redeem his error by offering *ṣadaqah*. This is not the place to discuss these matters in great detail, but the necessary information on this subject can be found in my booklet *Aḥkāmul-Ḥajj* (احكام الحج). When an animal is slaughtered for expiating a sin or an irregular act, its meat can be eaten only by the poor and needy persons and it is not permissible for the person making the slaughter or any rich person to eat this meat, and this view is held by all the jurists. As regards other sacrifices, whether obligatory or voluntary, the person offering the sacrifice, his relatives and friends, even though they may be rich, can eat their meat; and the present verse refers to this kind of sacrifice. Here also it is recommended that one-third of the meat be distributed among the poor and needy. The second part of this verse *وَاطْعَمُوا الْبَائِسَ الْفَقِيرَ* (and feed the distressed, the poor - 22:28) explains this point.

*ثُمَّ لِيَقْضُوا تَفَثَهُمْ* (Then, they must remove their dirt - 22:29) The word *تَفَثٌ* means dirt, which gathers on human body. While a person is in the state of *iḥrām*, he cannot shave, trim or pluck his hair, nor can he pare his nails, nor use perfume, and it is quite natural that dirt should collect under his hair and nails and on his body. This verse requires of the pilgrims that after they have performed the sacrifice, they should remove this dirt, meaning thereby that they should now remove the *iḥrām*, (and wear their normal clothes) shave their heads and pare their nails. This verse mentions sacrifice first and then refers to the removal of the dirt, which suggests that these two acts must be performed in that order. It is forbidden to shave one's head or pare nails before the obligatory sacrifice. Anyone who does so must slaughter an animal as *dam* (to atone for his sin).

### **Observance of the correct sequence in the performance of various acts related to Ḥajj**

The observance of various functions of Ḥajj in the same order in

which they are mentioned in the Qur'an and *ḥadīth*, and which have been codified by the jurists is, by consensus, a *sunnah*. However, opinions differ whether it is obligatory as well. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and Imām Mālik hold the view that the observance of the sequence is obligatory and any deviation from it must be atoned for by *dam*, while according to Imām Shafi'i it is only *sunnah* and a deviation from it reduces the reward to be gained by performing Ḥajj but does not make it obligatory to sacrifice an animal. There is also a ruling of Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه من قدم شيئاً من نسكه أو آخره فليهرق دماً (He who alters the sequence of the rites during Ḥajj must slaughter an animal). (Maḥzarī) Ṭaḥāwī has also reported this tradition through different versions. In addition Sayyidnā Sa'īd Ibn Jubair رضي الله عنه, Qatādah, Nakha'i and Ḥasan al-Baṣrī also support the view that any alteration in the sequence of the rites of Ḥajj makes the sacrifice of an animal obligatory. Fuller details on the subject are discussed in the Tafsīr Maḥzarī.

وَلْيُوفُوا نُذُورَهُمْ (And fulfill their vows - 22:29) نُذُورٌ is the plural of the word نَذْرٌ, which means a 'vow'. When a person commits himself verbally to do an act, in order to win the goodwill of Allah Ta'ālā, (which is not otherwise obligatory on him) it becomes a vow (*nadh'r*) and its performance becomes obligatory for him by consensus of Ummah, provided that the act itself is not sinful or forbidden. If a person makes a vow to do something which is sinful, then he is not bound to fulfill the vow, rather it is impermissible to act upon it, but he must make atonement for the unfulfilled vow. According to Abū Ḥanīfah and other religious jurists the vow must be of an act which is an act of a direct worship (*ibādah maqṣūdah*) in some manner. So, if someone makes a *nadh'r* (vow) for voluntary prayers, fasting, *ṣadaqah*, sacrifice of animals etc. all these vows must be fulfilled in all circumstances. The present verse emphasizes on this very issue.

### Ruling

It must be remembered that a resolve made in one's heart to do something does not become a *nadh'r* (vow) unless it is pronounced with the tongue. Tafsīr Maḥzarī has elaborated the rules of *nadh'r* in great detail.

### A question and its answer

One may question the relevance of *nadhr* in the context of Ḥajj. Obviously the preceding sentences speak of the rules of Ḥajj, like sacrifice, removing *iḥrām* etc. Similarly, the following sentence relates to the *ṭawāf* of *ziyārah*. Why the injunction to fulfill vows has been inserted between the rules of Ḥajj, while the rules governing vows have an independent status which are to be fulfilled at all times and at every place and not during Ḥajj only?

A possible explanation for this is that when a person sets out with the intention of performing Ḥajj, his heart prompts him to do the maximum number of good deeds and to spend the maximum time in prayers, and so he makes many vows, specially it was a common practice to make vows for sacrificing additional animals during Ḥajj. According to Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه the word *nadhr* in this context means a vow to sacrifice an animal. One relevance of *nadhr* (vow) appearing with the rites of pilgrimage is that just as vow makes many things obligatory which are not so otherwise and makes many things unlawful for him which are not originally forbidden, similarly the state of *iḥrām*, during a pilgrimage makes certain things unlawful for him which are permitted at other times. Instances of these are: wearing stitched clothes, use of perfume, shaving of hair or paring nails. Therefore, Sayyidnā ‘Ikrimah رضي الله عنه has interpreted *nadhr* in this verse to mean those acts and duties which have become obligatory during the course of Ḥajj.

وَلْيَطُوفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ (And they should make *ṭawāf* of the ancient House - 22:29) Here the word *ṭawāf* refers to *ṭawāf-uz-ziyārah*, which is performed on the 10th day of the month of Zil Hijj after casting stones and making the sacrifice. It is the second obligatory ritual of Ḥajj, the first being *wuqūf-ul-‘Arafāt*, which is performed earlier. After this *ṭawāf* the state of *iḥrām* is fully terminated and all restrictions are removed. (Rūḥ ul-Ma‘ānī).

The word *الْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ* lexically means 'liberated house' Baitullah is called *الْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ*, because according to the Holy Prophet ﷺ it has been liberated from the control and domination of the infidels and tyrants and it will never again be ruled by them. (رواه الترمذی وحسنه والحاكم وصححه وابن جرير والطبرانی). (Rūḥ ul-Ma‘ānī). It is evident by the episode of the People of

Elephant who, with all their might, were frustrated in their attempt to establish their dominion over Makkah.<sup>1</sup>

### Verses 30 - 33

ذَلِكَ ۙ وَمَنْ يُعْظِمِ حُرْمَتِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ، عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ ۗ وَأُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ  
الْأَنْعَامُ إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا  
قَوْلَ الزُّورِ ﴿٣٠﴾ ۖ حُنَفَاءَ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مُشْرِكِينَ بِهِ ۗ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ  
فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَمَ السَّمَاءَ فَتَخْطَفُهُ الطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِي بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ  
سَحِيقٍ ﴿٣١﴾ ۗ وَمَنْ يُعْظِمِ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ  
﴿٣٢﴾ لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ مَحِلُّهَا إِلَى الْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ  
﴿٣٣﴾

That is (what one should remember), and whoever observes the reverence of things sanctified by Allah, it is good for him with his Lord. And permitted to you are the cattle, except those mentioned to you through recitation (of the verses). So refrain from the filth of the idols and refrain from a word of falsehood, [30] being upright for (the obedience of) Allah, not ascribing any partner to Him. And whoever ascribes a partner to Allah, it is as if he falls down from the sky and the birds snatch him, or the wind drives him away to a far off place. [31]

That is (what one should remember), and if one observes the sanctity of the symbols of Allah, then such things emanate from the piety of the hearts. [32]

And for you there are benefits in them (the cattle) upto a specified time. Then their place of sacrifice is by the Ancient House. [33]

### Commentary

حُرْمَتِ اللَّهِ (22:30) are the things sanctified by Allah Ta'ālā, that is the

1. The other meaning of the word عتيق is 'ancient' which is adopted in the translation of the text. (Editor)

religious laws. They are a source of welfare in this world and in the Hereafter for those pious Muslims who seek to learn them and act upon them.

أُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ الْبَنَاتُ إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ (And permitted to you are the cattle, except those mentioned to you through recitation (of the verses) - 22:30) The word *أنعام* (cattle) includes camels, cows, goats, sheep etc. which are made lawful at all times and even when one is in the state of *iḥrām*. Then the verse contains an exception in the words *إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ* (except those mentioned to you.. - 22:30) These are the animals which have been made unlawful in all circumstances, whether one is in the state of *iḥrām* or not. The detail of these animals is given in other verses, such as carrion, an animal which is beaten to death, or slaughtered without reciting the name of Allah, or in the name of someone other than Allah.

فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ (So refrain from the filth of the idols - 22:30) The word *رجس* means filth or moral impurity, and *أوثان* is the plural of *وثن*, which means idol. Idols have been described as filth, because they fill a man's heart and soul with moral impurity.

وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَ الزُّورِ (And refrain from a word of falsehood - 22:30) The phrase *قَوْلَ الزُّورِ* means lies. Anything which is contrary to truth is a lie and false, whether it is corrupt beliefs and practices or whether it is false evidence. The Holy Prophet ﷺ once said 'Among the major sins are associating anyone with Allah, disobedience of one's parents, giving false evidence and telling lies in general talk'. He used the phrase *قَوْلَ الزُّورِ* (word of falsehood) repeatedly. (Bukhārī)

وَمَنْ يُعْظَمِ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ (And if one observes the sanctity of the symbols of Allah - 22:32) The word *شعائر* is the plural of *شعيرة* which means a 'symbol', 'a distinctive sign', and refers to those things which are considered as the specific emblems of certain groups of people or certain faiths. *شعائر* are those special laws which are generally taken to be the identifying features of a Muslim. Most of the rules of Ḥajj fall in this category.

فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ (then such things emanate from the piety of the hearts - 22:32). It means that respect for the *شعائر الله* (Symbols of Allah) is an evidence of the piety of heart, which indicates that the symbols of Allah are respected by the one who has *taqwā* (fear of Allah) in his heart and that *taqwā* is a quality which rests in one's heart. When the heart is

equipped with this quality, it is reflected in all his actions.

لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى (And for you there are benefits in them upto a specified time - 22:33) It means that it is lawful for the Muslims to use the quadruped animals for their benefit (such as using their milk, riding them or using them for transport of goods) unless the animals have been made *hady* (Hady) by reserving them for sacrifice to be offered within the precincts of *haram*. When a person takes along with him an animal for the specific purpose of sacrificing it within *haram*, the animal is described as *hady*, and no benefit may be derived from it, except in extreme emergency. A person leading a camel after it has been nominated as *hady* may lawfully ride it only if he is unable to walk and no other mount is available.

ثُمَّ مَجَلَّهَا إِلَىٰ الْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ (Then their place of sacrifice is by the Ancient House - 22:33) Here الْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ includes the entire precincts of *haram*, as was the case in the previous verse where the word Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām was used for the entire area of *haram*, and *maḥill* (place) means the place of slaughtering the animals of *hady*. Thus the entire *haram* is declared as the slaughtering place of the animals of *hady*. The meaning of the verse is that the *hady* (animals nominated for sacrifice during Ḥajj) may be slaughtered within, and not outside the area of *haram* which includes Minā and all other places of Makkah. (Rūḥ ul-Ma‘ānī)

### Verses 34 - 37

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِّيذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِّنْ  
 بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ ۗ فَالَهُكُمْ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ ۗ فَلَهُ أَسْلِمُوا ۗ وَ بَشِيرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ  
 ﴿٣٤﴾ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا  
 أَصَابَهُمْ وَالْمُقِيمِي الصَّلَاةِ ۗ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَالْبُدْنَ  
 جَعَلْنَاهَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ ۗ فَادْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ  
 عَلَيْهَا صَوَافٍ ۗ فَإِذَا وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطِعُوا الْقَانَعَ  
 وَالْمُعْتَرَّ ۗ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرْنَاهَا لَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ لَنْ يَنَالَ

اللَّهُ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ  
سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ لِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

﴿٣٧﴾

And for every Ummah We prescribed the act of sacrifice, so that they recite Allah's name over the provision He gave them from the cattle. So, your God is One God. Therefore, to Him alone you must submit. And give good news to those who turn to Him with humbleness - [34] those whose hearts are filled with awe when Allah is remembered, and who observe patience against whatever befalls them, and who are steadfast in Ṣalāh, and who spend (in the way of Allah) out of what We have given to them. [35]

And the big animals of sacrifice (like camels) are made by Us among the symbols of Allah for you in which there is much good for your benefit. So recite the name of Allah over them as they are lined up (for sacrifice). Then, once their flanks fall down (after slaughter), eat of them and feed the one who is content and the one who wishes to receive. Thus We have made them (the animals) subjugated to you, so that you may be grateful. [36] It is neither their flesh nor their blood that reaches Allah, but what reaches Him is the *taqwā* on your part. Thus He has made them (the animals) subjugated to you, so that you proclaim the glory of Allah for the guidance He gave you. And give good news to those who are good in deeds. [37]

### Commentary

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنَسَكًا (And for every Ummah We prescribed the act of sacrifice - 22:34) The words *مَنَسَكٌ* and *نُسُكٌ* means several things in Arabic such as sacrifice of animals, the rites of pilgrimage, and also worship of Allah Ta'ālā. This word has been used in the Qur'ān at several places and conveys one of the three meanings. In the present context, the word can carry all the three meanings. Mujāhid and some other commentators think that here the word *مَنَسَكٌ* refers to the sacrifice of the animals in which case the verse would mean that the obligation to offer sacrifice, which has been placed on this Ummah is nothing new, because all the

other peoples were likewise bound to do so. On the other hand, according to Qatādah the word means the rites of the pilgrimage, and thus the verse would mean that these rites which have been prescribed for the present Ummah were made obligatory on the people of earlier ages also. Ibn 'Arafah has interpreted the word **مَنَّسِكَ** to mean worship of Allah, and so the meaning of the verse would be that the worship of Allah was made obligatory on all the peoples of bygone ages and though there were differences in the forms of worship, yet in essence it remained unchanged.

**وَ بَشِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِينَ** (And give good news to those who turn to Him in humbleness) The word **خَبِتٌ** means 'a depressed tract of land' and **خَبِيتٌ** means 'a person who deems himself humble and lowly'. According to 'Amr bin Aws **مُخْبِتِينَ** are those people who do not wrong others and if somebody wrongs them, they do not seek revenge. Sufyān has observed that they are the people who are contented with Allah's will and remain agreeable in all circumstances, comfort or trouble and poverty or affluence.

**وَجَلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ** (Whose hearts are filled with awe - 22:35) The word **وَجَلَّ** means a feeling of awe inspired by something majestic and sublime. These words describe the state of pious people who are overwhelmed by deep awe whenever the name of Allah is mentioned in their presence.

**وَالْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَاهَا لَكُمْ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ** (And the big animals of sacrifice [like camels] are made by Us among the symbols of Allah for you - 22:36.) It has been explained earlier that **شَعَائِرِ** (symbols) mean those special forms of rites and worship, which are the symbols of Islam. Sacrifice of animals is one of them, which must be observed with due importance.

**فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهَا صَوَافٍ** (So recite the name of Allah over them as they are lined up (for sacrifice) - 22:36) The word **صَوَافٍ** (translated above as 'lined up') is used for **مَصْفُوفَهُ**, which means standing in a row. According to Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar **ﷺ** the verse means that the camel, which is to be slaughtered, should stand on three legs and one foreleg should be bent and tied up. This is a better way of slaughtering a camel and is according to *sunnah*. Other animals should be slaughtered in lying position, which is also *sunnah*.

**فَإِذَا وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا** (Then, once their flanks fall down). Here the word **وَجَبَتْ** is used for the meaning of **سَقَطَتْ**, which means when the animal falls and dies.

الْقَانِعِ وَالْمُعْتَرِّ (the one who is content and the one who wishes to receive)  
 In an earlier verse people who have a right on the meat of sacrificed animals have been described by the words *بَائِسٌ فَقِيرٌ*, which mean destitute and without means. These two words have been clarified further by the words *قَانِعٌ* and *مُعْتَرٌّ*. The word *قَانِعٌ* applies to a needy person who does not solicit and is content with what people offer him voluntarily. While *مُعْتَرٌّ* is a person who goes to a place where he expects to receive something, whether he solicits verbally or not. (Maḏharī)

**The real object is not the specific rites of pilgrimage but true devotion to Allah and submission to His will which are inherent in those rites**

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومَهَا (It is neither their flesh nor their blood that reaches Allah - 22:37) It means that the sacrifice of animals is a very high form of worship, but their meat and blood do not reach Allah Ta'ālā nor are these two things the real object of sacrifice. Its real aim is to recite the name of Allah and to comply with His commands with true devotion. This rule applies to all forms of worship. For instance, the object of prayers is not just the movement of limbs, or the object of fasting is not merely a denial of food and drink. The real purpose of these rites of worship is to obey the commands of Allah Ta'ālā with all sincerity. Devoid of sincerity these rites of worship are like a body without soul. Nevertheless these forms of worship are also very important because Allah Ta'ālā has prescribed these forms for different types of worship. Allah knows best. والله اعلم

### Verse 38

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْفِعُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ خَوَّانٍ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

**Surely, Allah defends those who believe. Allah does not love any treacherous, ungrateful. [38]**

### Commentary

The previous verses contain an account of how the infidels of Makkah prevented the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his companions from entering the *Haram* and the Holy Mosque to perform 'Umrah when, having put on *iḥrām*, they had reached as far as Ḥudaibiyah, a place not far from Makkah. In this verse Allah Ta'ālā consoled the Muslims with the promise that He would deprive the infidels of their power to harm them any more.



days before Hijrah the number of the faithful had increased considerably and they sought permission to defend themselves against the oppression to which they were being constantly subjected, but the Holy Prophet ﷺ advised them patience because he had not received Allah's permission so far to resist the infidels with force of arms. This situation persisted for about ten years. (Qurṭubī).

At last, things became so bad that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was left with no choice but to leave Makkah. As he started on his journey accompanied by Sayyidnā Abū Bakr ؓ he said اخرجوا نبيهم ليهلكن (They have expelled their Prophet and the time has come when they will perish). When he arrived at Madīnah this verse was revealed which permitted the Muslims to take up arms against the infidels. (رواه النسائي والترمذی عن ابن عباس - Qurṭubī)

Tirmidhī, Nasa'ī, Ibn Mājah, Ibn Ḥibbān, Ḥākīm and others have reported on the authority of Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ that this is the first verse which permitted the Muslims to offer armed resistance to the infidels, whereas in more than seventy earlier verses armed resistance was forbidden.

### **The philosophy behind Jihād and war against the infidels**

وَلَوْلَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ (And had Allah not repelled some people by means of some others... - 22:40) Had Allah not repelled some people by means of some others, the monasteries, the churches, the synagogues and the mosques where the name of Allah is recited abundantly would have been demolished. The command to take up arms against the unbelievers is nothing new, because the earlier prophets and their followers had received similar orders from Allah Ta'ālā and the philosophy behind this command was that without armed resistance no religion would have felt safe and their places of worship would have been destroyed by the infidels.

There have been many religions which were founded on the worship of one God and built up by means of *Wahy* (Divine revelations). In course of time their basics were changed and so many alterations were introduced in them that they turned into unbelief and polytheism. But before these things happened, they were true religions and it was the duty of their followers to respect and defend their places of worship. This verse refers to such places of worship only and does not include the sacred

places of those religions which were not founded on prophethood and revelation (such as the fire-worshipping Magians, or the idol-worshipping Hindus) because they were at no time considered places deserving of respect.

In this verse صَوَامِعَ is the plural of صَوْمَعَه , which means a monastery which is a place of worship meant for Christian monks and hermits بِيَعٌ is the plural of بَيْعَةٌ , which means a Christian church, and صَلَوَاتٌ is the plural of صَلَوَاتٌ , which means a Jewish synagogue. And of course مَسْجِدٌ is the place of worship of the Muslims.

The meaning of this verse is that if at different times the believers had not been permitted to fight the infidels, no true religion would have felt secure and at different times during the periods of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام , Sayyidnā 'Īsā عليه السلام and the Holy Prophet ﷺ the places of worship of their respective religions would have been destroyed. (Qurṭubī)

### **Qur'ānic prophecy about the Rightly Guided Caliphs (خلفائے راشدین) and its fulfillment**

الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ (Those who, when We give them power in the land - 22:41) In this verse the word الذين (those) refers to those people who have been mentioned in the preceding verse: الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ (Those are the ones who were expelled from their homes without any just reason - 22:40). Referring to such people the verse says that if they are placed in authority in this world, they will use it to promote good deeds, will set up prayers, pay the obligatory charity, enjoin people to do good and abstain from evil deeds. It has already been mentioned that these verses were revealed soon after Hijrah, at a time when the Muslims did not exercise dominion anywhere on earth, which means that Allah Ta'ālā had already made it known that when, at a future date, they would come to power and establish their government, they would serve the Faith in the manner described in this verse. Sayyidnā 'Uthman رضي الله عنه said referring to this verse, ثناء قبل بلاء that this verse praises those people before they actually perform the praise-worthy deeds. In due course Allah Ta'ālā's prophecy was fulfilled in that the four Rightly Guided Caliphs and the Muhajirīn (emigrants) from Makkah were indeed those whom the Qur'ān described by the words الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا (those who were expelled - 22:40) and when they established their government and held sway over vast

territories, they used their power and authority in setting up prayers, strengthening the system of Zakāh, enjoining good and forbidding evil deeds. Many scholars are of the view that this verse is a clear evidence of the fact that accession to power of the four Caliphs (خلفائے راشدین) is a direct fulfillment of Allah's Prophecy, and the system of caliphate which was set up by them was in accordance with His will. (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī)

Having discussed the factual aspect of the circumstances leading up to the revelation of this verse it must, at the same time, be emphasized that where the Qur'ān uses general words and phrases, their purpose is not restricted to a particular situation, but is universally applicable to all similar situations. Following this reasoning, Ḍaḥḥāk رحمه الله تعالى says that this verse contains an injunction for all those whom Allah Ta'ālā grants power and authority to do all those things which the Four Caliphs did when they controlled the rule. (Qurṭubī)

### Verses 42 - 51

وَأَن يُكذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَعَادٌ وَتَمُودُ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَ قَوْمُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَقَوْمُ لُوطٍ ﴿٤٣﴾ وَأَصْحَابُ مَدْيَنَ وَكذَّبَ مُوسَى فَأَمَلَيْتُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهُمْ ۚ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٤٤﴾ فَكَأَيِّنْ مِن قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا وَهِيَ ظَالِمَةٌ فَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا وَبِئْسَ مُعْتَلَّةٌ وَقَصِيرٌ مَّشِيدٌ ﴿٤٥﴾ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۚ فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِن تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبَ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ وَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ ۗ وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَكَأَيِّنْ مِن قَرْيَةٍ أَمَلَيْتُ لَهَا وَهِيَ ظَالِمَةٌ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهَا ۚ وَإِلَى الْمَصِيرِ ﴿٤٨﴾ قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا أَنَا لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٤٩﴾ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ ۖ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

وَالَّذِينَ سَعَوْا فِي آيَاتِنَا مُعْجِزِينَ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥١﴾

And if they belie you, so did belie the people of Nūḥ and 'Ad and Thamūd, [42] and the people of Ibrāhīm and the people of Lūṭ, [43] and the people of Madyan as well. And Mūsā was (also) belied. So, I gave some respite to the disbelievers, then seized them. So how was My censure? [44] How many a town there were which We destroyed, when they were wrongdoers. So, there they are, fallen down on their roofs, and (how many a) deserted well and well-built castle! [45]

Have they not, then, travelled on earth so that they should have had hearts to understand with or ears to listen with? The fact is that it is not the eyes that turn blind, but what turns blind is the hearts contained in the chests. [46]

And they ask you to bring the punishment sooner. And Allah will never go back on His promise. In fact, one day with your Lord is like one thousand years of what you count. [47] And how many a town there were to whom I allowed respite, while they were wrongdoers, then I seized them. And to Me is the final return. [48]

Say, "O people, I am no more than a plain warner for you. [49] So those who come to believe and do good deeds, for them there is forgiveness and dignified provision. [50] And those who strive against Our signs trying to defeat (the prophet or the believers), they are the people of the Fire. [51]

### Commentary

Travels undertaken to acquire insight into things and to learn lessons from the past is one of the religious objectives

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُون لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ (Have they not, then, travelled on earth so that they should have hearts - 22:46) This verse encourages travel, provided the person travelling keeps his eyes wide open and imbibes in his mind the lessons of history. The phrase "فَتَكُون لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ" (so that they should have hearts - 22:46) suggests that a person can gain wisdom and intelligence by a careful study of the history of bygone times and an account of people who inhabited this world in different ages. Every event

of history holds a lesson for a person who has insight and who does not regard history as a mere record of episodes and occurrences. Ibn Abī Ḥātim has written in his book *التفكير* quoting Mālik Ibn Dīnār رحمه الله تعالى that Allah Ta'ālā commanded Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام to wear shoes made of iron and to hold in his hand a staff made of iron and travel around the earth until his shoes would be worn out and his staff broken down. (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī). If this narration is true, then naturally it means to acquire knowledge and lessons from the past.

### How the Day of Resurrection will be equal to one thousand years by our reckoning

In this verse *إِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ* (22:47) means that one day with your Lord is like one thousand years of what you count. This verse can be interpreted in two ways. The first meaning is that the verse refers to the Day of Resurrection and the events which will take place on that day will be so horrifying and of such extreme severity that the day will appear never to end, as if it was equal to one thousand years according to our reckoning. Many commentators have interpreted this verse accordingly.

The other meaning of the verse is that the Day of Resurrection will in actual fact be so long that it will stretch up to one thousand years of this world. This view is supported by a saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as reported in Musnād of Aḥmad and Tirmidhī on the authority of Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه that the Holy Prophet ﷺ once addressed the poor people of the *muhājirīn* (i.e. those who migrated from Makkah) and said, 'I give you good news about the full refulgence on the Day of Resurrection and that you will be admitted to heaven half a day before the rich and the wealthy, and a day in the Hereafter will be of one thousand years, hence the poor will enter the heaven five hundred years before the wealthy'. Tirmidhī has classified this *ḥadīth* as '*ḥasan*'. (Maḥzarī)

### A doubt and its explanation

There is a verse in Sūrah Al-Ma'ārij which says that the day with your Lord will be equal to fifty thousand years *كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ*. (Whereof the measure is fifty thousand yours - 70:4) This can also be explained by applying either of the two explanations of the present verse and in the first case since every person will suffer different levels of severity, to some it will appear as if he has suffered pain for one thousand

years, while to others the period will appear equal to fifty thousand years. If, however, the second explanation is applied to this verse, then there would appear to be a contradiction between the verses where one verse equates the Day of Resurrection to one thousand years and the other to fifty thousand years. But this so-called contradiction has been reconciled by Sayyidi Ashraf 'Ali Thanavi رحمه الله تعالى in his commentary Bayan ul-Qur'an, by saying that this difference may be due to different horizons. Just as we see in our world that the length of day and night is different on different horizons, (on zero latitude it is of 24 hours while at the latitude of 90° it is one year. Likewise it is possible that the length of the Day of Resurrection would be different on different horizons, and if its length right below the day line is one thousand years because of miraculously slow rotation of sun or earth), the areas falling 50 times far from it may have a day 50 times more in length. And Allah knows best.

## Verses 52 - 57

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا إِذَا تَمَنَّى أَلْقَى الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُمْنِيَّتِهِ فَيَنْسَخُ اللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللَّهُ آيَتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٢﴾ لِيَجْعَلَ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ وَالْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٣﴾ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَيُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ فَتُخْبِتَ لَهُ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهَادِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِنْهُ حَتَّى تَأْتِيَهُمُ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمٍ عَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٥﴾ الْمَلِكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٥٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَاُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿٥٧﴾

And We did not send any messenger before you nor a prophet, but (he faced a situation that) when he recited (the revelation), the Satan cast (doubts) about what he

recited. So, Allah nullifies what the Satan casts, then Allah makes His verses firm, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise [52] - (all this is allowed to be done) so that He may make what Satan casts a trial for those in whose hearts there is a disease and whose hearts are hard; and surely the wrongdoers are in the utmost antagonism - [53] and so that those who have been given knowledge may know that it (i.e. the revelation recited by the prophet) is the truth from your Lord, and they may believe in it and their hearts may become humble towards it. And Allah is the One who takes the believers to the straight path. [54]

And those who disbelieve will remain in doubt about it (the Qur'ān) forever, until the Hour (of Judgment) comes upon them suddenly, or there comes to them the punishment of a barren day. [55] The kingdom, on that day, is for Allah. He will judge between them. So, those who believed and did good deeds shall be in gardens of bliss. [56] As for those who disbelieved and belied Our signs, they are the ones for whom there is a humiliating punishment. [57]

### Commentary

مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ (any messenger and any prophet - 22:52) This shows that the words Rasūl رَسُول and Nabī نَبِي carry different meanings, though there is no consensus as to the precise nature of the difference. For our purpose it is enough to understand that Nabī نَبِي is a person whom Allah Ta'ālā designates with a mission to reform his people and who receives revelations from Him. He may receive a Scripture and a code of laws or he may be commanded to convey the message of an earlier Book and code of laws. Sayyidnā Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and 'Isā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام belong to the first category, whereas Sayyidnā Hārūn, who was directed to propagate the teachings of Torah and the Mosaic Laws, falls in the second category. On the other hand a Rasūl رَسُول is a person who receives from Allah Ta'ālā a Scripture and a code of laws. Thus every Rasūl is necessarily a Nabī also, but every Nabī is not a Rasūl. These distinctions are applicable to human beings only. That an angel who carries *waḥy* from Allah Ta'ālā is also named as Rasul does not contradict this position. This subject has already been discussed in detail in Sūrah Maryam in the beginning of this volume.

أَلْقَى الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُمْنِيَّتِهِ (The Satan cast (doubts) about what he recited - 22:52) In this verse the word تَمَنَّى has been used as a synonym for قَرَأَ, thus أُمْنِيَّتُهُ would mean قِرَاءَاتٌ (recitation). This verse explains that the disputes raised by the disbelievers in regard to Allah's message is not something new as similar doubts were raised by earlier people as well when their prophets presented to them the message of Truth, and the Satan cast doubts about it in the hearts of disbelievers. This explanation of the verse is quite clear and straight-forward, and has been adopted by many commentators including Abū Ḥayyān in his Al-Baḥr-ul-Muḥīṭ. However, some books of traditions have reported here an incident which is not proved by authentic sources. The incident is known as حَدِيثُ الْغَرَائِقِ (*ḥadīth-ul-gharānīq*). Some scholars have held that it is invented by some heretics and enemies of Islam. But even those who believe this tradition to be worthwhile have taken pains to remove the doubts, which the words raise about the categorical and undisputed laws of Qur'ān and Sunnah. The plain and simple meaning of the verse has been explained above and the alleged incident in no way affects this meaning. Making this incident as a part and parcel of the commentary on this verse, thereby creating unnecessary doubts, and then attempting to answer those doubts is an exercise in futility and absolutely undesirable وَاللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى أَعْلَمُ .

### Verses 58 - 59

وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ قُتِلُوا أَوْ مَاتُوا لَيَرْزُقَنَّهُمُ اللَّهُ رِزْقًا  
حَسَنًا ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾ لِيَدْخِلْنَاهُمْ مَدْخَلًا  
يَرْضَوْنَهُ ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٩﴾

And those who left their homeland in the way of Allah, then were slain or died, Allah will certainly give them a good provision, and surely, Allah is the best of all givers. [58] He will definitely admit them to an entrance they will be pleased with, and Allah is surely All-Knowing, Forbearing. [59]

### Commentary

Those people who had left their hearth and homes in the cause of

Allah and were killed or died of natural death, they would definitely be rewarded. If they have not benefited in this world, their reward will be there in the Hereafter.

### Verse 60

ذَلِكَ ۚ وَمَنْ عَاقَبَ بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوِّقَ بِهِ ثُمَّ بُغِيَ عَلَيْهِ لَيَنْصُرَنَّهُ اللَّهُ ط  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

**That (is so). And whoever afflicts (someone) with a punishment equal to what he was afflicted with (by the latter), and still he (the former) is (again) subjected to injustice, Allah will certainly help him. Indeed, Allah is Most-Pardoning, Most-Forgiving. [60]**

### Commentary

In an earlier verse it has been mentioned that Allah Ta‘ālā helps those who are wronged unjustly. وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ. (Allah is powerful to give them victory - 22:39) Some people bear their sufferings patiently and do not seek vengeance from their oppressors, but there are others who retaliate and serve a full measure of retribution on their oppressors which should, therefore, place them both on even terms as being quits. But if the oppressor, incensed at the retaliation, attacks him again, then this person once again becomes the victim of oppression. This verse promises Allah’s help for such a person also. On the other hand there are several verses which promise Allah’s goodwill to those Muslims who bear their sufferings with patience and equanimity and do not seek vengeance from their oppressors. Some of these verses are:

فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ

But whoso pardons and puts things right, his wage falls upon Allah - 42:40.

وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ

And that you forgive is closer to Taqwā - 2:237.

وَلَمَنْ صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

But surely he who bears patiently and forgives - surely that is true constancy - 42:43.

In all these verses it is encouraged not to retaliate for revenge and rather forgive and forget, which is a magnanimous way of dealing with fellow human beings. This is the way Qur'anic teachings stand and call it a supreme and superior trait. Thus it may perhaps be argued that the person who retaliates against the wrongs done to him and conducts himself contrary to the course of action preferred by Allah Ta'ālā will be deprived of His support and help. But this doubt has been allayed in the final part of this verse إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ غَفُورٌ (22:60) that is, Allah will not punish him for this lapse and will help him if he is subjected to injustice by his oppressors ever again. (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī)

### Verses 61 - 66

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يُوَلِّجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُوَلِّجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ ۚ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٦١﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٦٢﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَتُصْبِحُ الْأَرْضُ مُخْضَرَّةً ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٦٣﴾ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٦٤﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالْفُلْكَ تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ وَيُمْسِكُ السَّمَاءَ أَنْ تَقَعَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٦٥﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَكَفُورٌ ﴿٦٦﴾

That is because Allah makes night enter into the day and makes day enter into the night and that Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. [61] That is because Allah is the truth and that whatever they invoke beside Him is false and that Allah is the High, the Great. [62]

Did you not see that Allah has sent down water from the sky, whereby the land becomes green? Surely, Allah is All-Kind, All-Aware. [63] To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and surely

**Allah is the All-Independent, Ever-Praised. [64]**

**Did you not see that Allah has subjugated to you whatever there is on the earth, and the ships that sail at sea with His command? And He holds the heavens from falling on the earth, except with His permission. Surely Allah is Very-Kind to the people, Very-Merciful. [65]**

**And He is the One who gave life to you, then He brings death to you, then He will give you life (again). Surely, man is very ungrateful. [66]**

### Commentary

سَخَّرَلَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ (Allah has subjugated to you whatever there is on the earth - 22:65) It means that everything on this earth has been placed under the control of man. This raises the question that the mountains, rivers, beasts and birds and thousands of similar objects do not follow the commands of man. But placing something in the service of someone is also like putting it under his control, and in this verse the word *Taskhīr* (subjugation) has been used to mean 'to serve'. The verse therefore means that all the things mentioned above are all the time working in the service of man by the command of Allah. It was quite within the power of Allah *Ta'ālā* to have placed all these things under the control of man, but in such a situation man himself would have been the loser, because human natures, desires and needs differ. If a person ordered the river to divert towards a particular direction, and some other person ordered to the contrary, the result would have been utter chaos and confusion. Therefore, Allah *Ta'ālā* has retained with Him alone the command of these things, but the benefits to be derived from them accrue to human beings.

### Verses 67 - 70

لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا هُمْ نَاسِكُوهُ فَلَا يُنَازِعُونَكَ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَادْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ۗ إِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَإِنْ جَادَلُوكَ فَقُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ اللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ

فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ط  
 إِنَّ ذَلِكَ فِي كِتَابٍ ط إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

And For every *ummah* (religious community) We have appointed a way of worship they are to observe. Therefore, they should never quarrel with you in the matter. And do call them to your Lord. Surely, you are on straight Guidance. [67]

And if they dispute with you, then say, "Allah knows best what you do." [68] Allah will judge between you, on the Day of Judgment, about what you used to differ in. [69]

Do you not know that Allah knows all that is in the sky and the earth? Surely, that is contained in a Book. Indeed it is so easy for Allah. [70]

### Commentary

لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا (For every *ummah* (religious community) We have appointed a way of worship - 22:67). This sentence has come earlier in almost identical words in verse number 34 of this Sūrah, but the word *منسك* (*mansak*) conveys a different meaning in each verse. In the earlier verse the words *منسك* and *نسك* have been used in the context of the rites of Hajj and mean sacrifice of animals, while in the present verse the word *منسك* has been used in the sense of the rules of slaughter or general rules of worship. That is why, unlike the verse 34, the present verse does not have the conjunctive letter 'و' (i.e. 'and') in the beginning.

One interpretation of this verse is that the infidels used to engage the Muslims in futile arguments regarding the slaughter of animals. They thought it odd that Islam permitted its followers to eat the meat of those animals which they slaughtered with their own hands but forbade to eat the meat of those animals whom Allah Ta'ālā killed, that is the carrion. The present verse was revealed to answer these objections of the infidels. (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī). Thus the meaning of the word *منسك* here would refer to 'the method of slaughter', and the sum and substance of the verse is that Allah Ta'ālā gave each nation a code of laws, and the rules governing the slaughter of animals are different in each code. The rules of slaughter given to the Holy Prophet ﷺ are independent and self-sufficient and it is

not permissible to compare them with those of an earlier Shari'ah, let alone comparing them with someone's own whims and conjectures. As regards the meat of dead animals, it is well known that its oral use was forbidden in all earlier codes. (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī) Therefore, it is sheer ignorance to argue with the Holy Prophet ﷺ on that basis.

However, majority of commentators has interpreted this verse in another way. They say that the word مَنَسَكٌ here means the general rules of Shari'ah. Lexically, the word مَنَسَكٌ means a place which is fixed for a specific purpose, whether the purpose is good or bad, and for this reason the rites of pilgrimage are known as مَنَاسِكٌ , because different rites connected with the pilgrimage have to be performed at places fixed for each rite. (Ibn Kathīr). The dictionary meaning of نُسُكٌ is 'piety and worship of Allah Ta'ālā', and the words أَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا (And show us our ways of worship - 2:128) occurring in the Qur'ān have been used in this sense مَنَاسِكٌ Manāsik means rules governing worship. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās has adopted this second interpretation also. Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Kathīr, Qurṭubī, Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī etc. have adopted this meaning of the word, and the context of the verse also lends support to this interpretation. Having said all this, it is evident that the meaning of this verse would be that the infidels and the polytheists who dispute the Islamic code of laws on the ground that their own ancestral religion did not include those laws must understand very clearly that any comparison between the old book or Shari'ah and the new book or Shari'ah is totally misplaced and irrelevant, because Allah Ta'ālā granted to each nation in its own time a special Shari'ah and a Book which was binding upon it until another book or Shari'ah arrived on the scene after which it becomes the duty of all people to follow the new Shari'ah, and if any of its laws are in conflict with the laws of the old Shari'ah, then the new rules shall prevail and the old laws will stand invalidated, and nobody has the right to raise a dispute on this matter with the Prophet, who is the recipient of the latest book and Shari'ah. This is the meaning of the following words of this verse. فَلَا يَنَازِعُنَكَ فِي الْأَمْرِ (They should never quarrel with you in the matter - 22:67). That is, now that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has brought a new Book and new code of laws no one has the right to dispute them and create any confusion about them.

This also shows that there is in fact no inconsistency between the two

interpretations of this verse. It is quite possible that this verse was revealed with reference to some specific dispute about the slaughter of animals but since, as a general rule, the words must be interpreted in the sense they are understood by the common people and not in reference to a particular event, the words of this verse can be so construed as to apply to all the laws of Shari'ah. The essence of both the interpretations, therefore is, that since Allah Ta'ālā has given each nation its own particular set of rules where differences as to details do exist, the latest set of rules becomes binding on all peoples, and issues relating to these differences cannot be raised. This is the reason why it has been stated at the end of this verse *وَأذْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ إِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى مُّسْتَقِيمٍ* (And do call them to your Lord. Surely, you are on straight Guidance - 22:67) in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been advised not to take any notice of the machinations and disputes raised by the infidels but to continue with his mission, because he was following the path of righteousness whereas his opponents were steeped in error.

### A doubt and its answer

In verse 67 it has been averred that Allah Ta'ālā granted to the earlier nations their own Shari'ah or set of rules, and the Mosaic Code and the Christian Code are instances in point. The Jews and the Christians may, therefore, argue that their Codes also being Divine should be allowed to exist alongside of the Islamic Code. But this is a fallacious argument because it is a well established fact that an earlier Shari'ah is cancelled by a subsequent Shari'ah, and this view is reinforced by the following verses in which the infidels who challenge the Islamic Shari'ah have been warned of severe chastisement. *وَإِنْ جَادَلُوكَ فَقُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ* (And if they dispute with you, then say, "Allah knows best what you do." - 22:68)

### Verses 71 - 74

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَنْزَلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَمَا لَيْسَ لَهُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ  
 وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ نَصِيرٍ ﴿٧١﴾ وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ تَعْرِفُ  
 فِي وُجُوهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْمُنْكَرَ يَكَادُونَ يَسْطُونَ بِالَّذِينَ يَتُلُونَ  
 عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا قُلِ أَفَاتَبِعُكُمْ بِشَرِّ مِمَّنْ ذَلِكُمْ النَّارُ وَعَدَهَا اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ

كَفَرُوا ۗ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٧٢﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَاستَمِعُوا لَهُ،  
 ۗ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ، ۗ  
 وَإِنْ يَسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لَا يَسْتَنْقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ۗ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبُ  
 وَالْمَطْلُوبُ ﴿٧٣﴾ مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ  
 ﴿٧٤﴾

And they worship, besides Allah, the objects for which He did never send down an authority (or proof) and for which they have no knowledge. And for the wrongdoers there is no helper. [71]

And when Our verses are recited to them in all their clarity, you (can) recognize disgust on the faces of the disbelievers. They seem to attack those who recite to them Our verses. Say, "Shall I, then, tell you about something more disgusting than that? The Fire! Allah has promised it to those who disbelieve. And it is an evil end." [72]

O people, here is a parable set forth to you, so listen to it carefully: All those whom you invoke besides Allah can never create (even) a fly, even though they all join hands together for that. And if a fly snatches something away from them, they cannot release it therefrom. (Equally) feeble are the invoker and the invoked. [73]

They did not recognize Allah in His true esteem. Indeed Allah is Powerful, Mighty. [74]

## Commentary

### Illustrating the futility of polytheism and idol-worship by citing a parable

Generally the words "ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ" are used for quoting an incident as an example. However, it is not used here in that sense but the foolishness of idol worship has been illustrated by citing a parable. The infidels are told that the idols from which they seek the gratification of their desires are so utterly helpless that all of them together cannot create a humble thing like a fly. Indeed they cannot even protect the offerings of eatables, which their worshippers bring them daily, against the inroads of flies. Then how

can they protect you from any calamity? The stupidity and foolishness of the idol-worshippers has been described at the end of the verse by the words *ضَعْفَ الطَّالِبِ وَالْمَطْلُوبِ* (Feeble are the invoker and the invoked - 22:73) meaning thereby that if the object of worship is so utterly weak and powerless, those worshipping it must be more so.

اللَّهُ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ (They did not recognize Allah in His true esteem - 22:74). It means that these people are so foolish and ungrateful that they did not recognize the power of Allah Ta'ālā and place their helpless idols at the same level with Him.

### Verses 75 - 78

اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٧٥﴾  
 يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۗ وَ إِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ﴿٧٦﴾  
 يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا  
 الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ ۗ  
 هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ۗ مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ  
 إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۗ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ۖ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ  
 الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ ۗ فَأَقِيمُوا  
 الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ ۗ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۗ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى  
 وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ ﴿٧٨﴾

Allah chooses messengers from angels and from men. Surely, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. [75]

He knows what is in front of them and what is behind them, and to Allah all matters are to be returned. [76]

O those who believe, bow down in *rukū'* and bow down in *sajdah* and worship your Lord and do good, so that you achieve success. [77] And struggle for (seeking the pleasure of) Allah, a struggle that is owed to Him. He has chosen you and did not impose any hardship on you

in the religion - the faith of your father Ibrāhīm. He (Allah) named you as Muslims both before and in this (Qur'ān), so that the Messenger becomes a witness to you and you become witnesses to (other) people.

So establish *ṣalāh* and pay *zakāh*, and hold fast to Allah. He is your patron. So, He is the excellent One to be a patron and He is the excellent One to help. [78]

### Commentary

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَعِبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ (O those who believe, bow down in Ruku' and bow down in Sajdah and worship your Lord - 22:77) Verse 18 of this Sūrah is a verse of *sajdah* by consensus of the jurists, which means that whoever recites verse 18 or listens to someone reciting it must offer a *sajdah*. However, there is a difference of opinion about the present verse. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām Mālik and Sufyān Thaurī رحمه الله تعالى are among those who think that the present verse is not a verse of *sajdah* in the sense that reciting this verse or listening to it does not entail the obligation to offer a *sajdah*, because the command to 'bow down' in *sajdah* in the present verse is combined with bowing down in *ruku'* and this circumstance is a clear indication that in the present context *sajdah* means the normal *sajdah* which is performed during the course of prayers. For example all the scholars are unanimously of the opinion that in the verse وَأَسْجُدْ وَارْكَعْ مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ (And prostrate and bow down (in Ruku') with those who bow - 3:43) the *sajdah* is the normal *sajdah* of the prayers. However, in the context of the present verse Imām Shafī'ī and Imām Aḥmad رحمه الله تعالى hold contrary views and quote a *ḥadīth* according to which Sūrah Ḥajj enjoys a position of greater merit as compared to other Sūrahs because of two verses of *sajdah* occurring in it. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah questions the authenticity of this *ḥadīth*.

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ (And struggle for (seeking the pleasure of) Allah, a struggle that is due to him - 22:78) The words جِهَاد (jihād) and مُجَاهَدَةٌ (mujaḥadah) mean to exert one's utmost effort to achieve an objective and to take pains for it. (That is why the word is translated above as 'struggle'). While waging war against the infidels the Muslims make supreme efforts, and for this reason it is called jihād, and حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ (a struggle that is due to Him) means that all these efforts and sacrifices should aim solely at winning the favours and goodwill of Allah Ta'ālā,

and be free from all considerations of worldly reward, such as fame or spoils of war.

Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ has explained the phrase 'that is due to Him' by saying that it is to strive to the utmost of one's capacity in the course of *jihād*, unmindful of all criticism. Some other commentators have explained the word *jihād* in this verse to mean that one exerts his utmost effort in carrying out the acts of worship and full obedience to rules of Sharī'ah in all sincerity. Ḍaḥḥāk and Muqātil have said that a struggle that is due to Him means to act in Allah's obedience and His worship as due to Him. Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mubarak ؓ thinks that Jihad means to strive against the temptations (*nafs*) and its baser desires. Imām Baghawī supports this view on the basis of a *ḥadīth* which he has from Jābir Ibn ‘Abdullāh ؓ to the effect that when a group of companions returned from Jihād, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said *قدمتم خير مقدم من الجهاد الاصغر الى الجهاد الاكبر. قال: مجاهدة العبد لهواه (رواه البيهقي وقال هذا اسناد فيه ضعف* (You have returned from a smaller *Jihād* to a greater *Jihād*) meaning thereby that the fight against the temptations of self and baser desires never ceases. Baihaqī has also related this *ḥadīth* but he is of the opinion that it has some weak narrators, Tafsīr Maḥzarī has adopted this latter interpretation and proceeded to say that the Muslims were in fact fighting against the coarse desires of Self even when they were engaged in *jihād* against the infidels, but the *ḥadīth* places it after their return from the *jihād*. The suggestion here is that though the fight against temptations continued even on the battlefield, it could by tradition and usage be brought to fruition only under the watchful eye of a perfect spiritual guide, that is the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

### The Ummah of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ is the chosen Ummah of Allah Ta‘ālā

هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ (He has chosen you - 22:78) Sayyidnā Wāthilah Ibn Asqa ؓ has reported that the Holy Prophet ﷺ once said, 'Allah chose the Kinānah from the children of Sayyidnā Isma‘īl ؑ, then He chose the Quraish from the Kinānah, then the Banī Hāshim from the Quraish and from amongst the Banī Hāshim He chose me'. (Muslim – Maḥzarī).

وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ (And did not impose any hardship on you in the religion - 22:78) It means that Allah Ta‘ālā has not imposed any hardship upon you in matters of religion. From this some scholars have

concluded that in Islam there is no sin which cannot be forgiven and save a person from the punishment of the Day of Resurrection if he repents for it truly. On the other hand, among the earlier nations there were certain sins which could not be forgiven even by offering repentance.

According to Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ 'hardship' refers to those rigid and harsh laws which applied to the Banī Isrā’īl and for which the Qur’ān uses the words *إِضْر* (burden) and *إِغْلَال* (shackles). Others have interpreted the word *ḥaraj* (hardship) to mean a hardship which is beyond human endurance. In Islam there are no such laws and rules which are unbearable in themselves, though there are some rules which entail strenuous effort. But such efforts have always been regarded as pre-requisites to success in all human activities. Education, commerce, industry etc. are fields where success depends on unremitting labour but that would not make these tasks impossible to achieve. Sometimes difficulties are experienced due to unfavorable environments or lack of familiarity with the task in hand, but these too cannot be described as hardships and can be overcome by sustained hard work.

Another interpretation given by Qāḍī Thanawillāh in Tafsīr Maḥzarī is that Allah Ta‘ālā having chosen the Muslims for His favours from amongst all other nations, they too willingly opt for the severest hardship in the service of Allah and His religion. In such a situation even hardships and difficulties do not deter their resilience and they endure them willingly and happily. There is a *ḥadīth* related by Sayyidnā Anas ؓ in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ said *جعلت قرّة عيني في الصلوة* (the coolness of my eyes lies in prayers). (Aḥmad and Nasa’ī).

*وَلَمَّا آتَيْنَاكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ* (The faith of your father Ibrāhīm - 22:78). It means that this is the nation of your father Ibrāhīm ؑ. These words are addressed to the Quraish who are descended from Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm ؑ and all other people following them become entitled to the favours which Allah Ta‘ālā has granted to the Quraish. There is a *ḥadīth* which says:

الناس تبع لقريش في هذا الشأن، مسلمهم تبع لمسلمهم، وكافرهم تبع لكافرهم  
(رواه البخاري و مسلم)

All people follow Quraish in this faith; the believers follow the believers among the Quraish, and the infidels follow the infidels among them. (Maḥzarī).

Others say that the words **أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ** (your father Ibrāhīm) are addressed to all Muslims in the sense that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was the spiritual father of All Muslims and had himself descended from Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm **عليه السلام** .

**هُوَ سَمَّيَكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ لَمَّا قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا** (He (Allah) named you as Muslims both before and in this Qur'an - 22:78) Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm **عليه السلام** had named the followers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and all other believers as Muslims even before the Qur'an, and later in the Qur'an itself, as is evident from his prayer which is recorded in the Qur'an: **رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ** (O our Lord, make us both submissive to you, and of our progeny a people submissive to you - 2:128)

And the name "Muslim" given by the Qur'an to the believers, was, though, not given directly by Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm **عليه السلام** , yet since he had suggested this name even before the revelation of the Qur'an, the Holy Qur'an has adopted this name. That is why it is attributed to Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm **عليه السلام** .

**يَكُونُ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ** (So that the Messenger becomes a witness to you and you become witnesses to (other) people - 22:78) On the Day of Resurrection the Holy Prophet ﷺ will depose that he had conveyed the commands of Allah Ta'ālā to his Ummah and the Ummah will acknowledge this fact. But when other prophets will make similar depositions, their Ummahs will deny their claims and at that time the Ummah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ will come forward and bear witness to the fact that all the prophets had indeed conveyed the commands of Allah Ta'ālā to their respective Ummahs. This evidence will be challenged on the ground that since the Muslim Ummah did not even exist in those earlier times it carried no weight, to which the Muslims will reply that they learned about these matters from their own Prophet ﷺ, whose truthfulness and integrity was admitted by all. This is the gist of a *ḥadīth* which Bukhārī and others have related on the authority of Sayyidnā Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī **رضي الله عنه**.

**فَأَقِمْوَا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ** (So establish *ṣalāh* and pay *zakāh* - 22:78) It means that since Allah Ta'ālā has showered on you unlimited benefits, it is your duty also to show your gratitude to Him by striving hard to obey His commands. The two commands relating to prayers and *zakāh* have been

specifically mentioned because prayer is the most important among the obligations performed by human body, while *zakāh* is the most important among the commands about wealth, otherwise the idea is that all commands enjoined by Allah Ta‘ālā be obeyed and followed.

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ (And hold fast to Allah - 22:78). It means that pious Muslims should place their trust in Allah alone in all their affairs and seek help from none but Him. According to Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه the sense of these words is that pious Muslims should seek Allah’s protection from all things which are loathsome in this world and in the Hereafter. Others have interpreted these words to mean that good Muslims should hold fast to the Qur’ān and Sunnah, and have quoted the following *ḥadīth*:

تركت فيكم امرين لن تضلوا ما تمسكتم بهما، كتاب الله وسنة رسوله (رواه مالك في الموطأ مرسلًا - مظهری)

"I have left behind two things with you and if you hold fast to them you will never go astray: one is the Book of Allah and the second is the Sunnah of His Rasūl." (Maḥzarī)

***Alḥamdulillāh***  
**The Commentary on**  
**Sūrah Al-Ḥajj**  
**Ends here.**

# Sūrah Al-Mu'minūn

## (The Believers)

Sūrah Al-Mu'minūn was revealed in Makkah and it has 118 Verses and 6 sections

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

### Verses 1 - 11

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ﴿٢﴾  
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾  
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ﴿٥﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا  
مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٦﴾ فَمَنْ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ  
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعُدُونَ ﴿٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ﴿٨﴾  
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ﴿١٠﴾  
الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ ۗ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١١﴾

Success is really attained by the believers [1] who are concentrative in their Ṣalāh (prayers) [2] and who keep themselves away from vain things [3], and who are performers of Zakāh, \* [4] and who guard their private parts [5] except from their wives or from those (slave-girls) owned by their right hands, because they

\*. Although Zakāh is normally known as the obligatory alms prescribed as a second pillar of Islam, but the literal meaning of the word is 'purification'. Both the meanings are possible here. According to the second meaning the reference would be to the purification of inward qualities i.e. morals. Some commentators have construed this verse in this sense. That is why we have used the word 'performers' as a literal translation of "فاعِلون" (Fa'ilun) instead of 'payers' which admits the first meaning only.

are not liable to blame. [6] However, those who seek (sexual pleasure) beyond that are the transgressors [7] – and (success is attained) by those who honestly look after their trusts and covenant, [8] and who consistently observe their prayers. [9] Those are the inheritors [10] who will inherit Firdaus (the Paradise). They will be there forever. [11]

## Commentary

### Merits and special features of Sūrah Al-Mu'minūn

Musnād of Aḥmad quotes Sayyidnā 'Umar al-Fārūq رضي الله عنه that whenever a *wahy* was being revealed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم those near him used to hear a sound like the buzz of the bees. One day when they heard such a sound, they all waited hoping to learn about the revelation. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم returned to his normal state after receiving the *wahy*, he sat down facing the Ka'bah and prayed to Allah in the following words:

اللَّهُمَّ زِدْنَا وَلَا تَقْصُصْنَا وَأَكْرِمْنَا وَلَا تَهِنَّا وَأَعْظِمْنَا وَلَا تَحْرِمْنَا وَأَبْرِرْنَا وَلَا تُؤْتِرْ عَلَيْنَا  
وَارْضْ عَنَّا وَارْضِنَا

"O Allah, give us more (bounties) and do not decrease (them for us) and grant us respect and do not put us to humiliation, and give us and do not deprive us and give us preference (on our enemies) and do not give preference (to our enemies) against us and be pleased with us and make us pleased."

Then the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to his companions, "Just now ten verses have been revealed to me and anyone who follows them in letter and spirit will go to heaven." He then recited the first ten verses of Sūrah Al-Mu'minūn. (Ibn Kathīr)

Nasa'ī in his *كتاب التفسير* has quoted Yazīd Ibn Babnūs that he once questioned Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها about the habits and the behavior of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to which she replied that it was according to what has been revealed in the Qur'ān. Then she recited these ten verses of the Qur'ān and said, "these verses describe his behavior".

### What is *Falāḥ*? How and from where can it be obtained?

فَدَأْفَلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

Success is really attained by the believers - 23:1.

The word *falāḥ* (translated above as 'success') has been used in the Qur'ān and Sunnah on numerous occasions. The call to prayers invites every Muslim towards *falāḥ* five times a day. The word signifies the attainment of all desires as well as protection from all misfortunes. (Qāmūs). It is so comprehensive in its connotation that it may be regarded as the acme of one's desire - but the total *falāḥ*, where no desire remains unfulfilled or complete immunity from the vicissitudes of fate exists, is not granted even to great kings or to the most revered prophets of Allah. In any case there is an ever-present fear of a decline in or loss of good fortune, or the apprehension of an impending disaster, and no living person can claim to be free from it.

Thus it is evident that total *falāḥ* cannot be achieved in this world which is a place of pain and suffering, where nothing is everlasting and everything must ultimately perish. However this priceless commodity will be available in another world, namely the Paradise and it is there that people will achieve all their wishes very promptly *وَلَهُمْ مَا يَدْعُونَ* (They have all that they call for - 36:57). In that world there will be no sorrow, no distress, and everyone will enter there with the following words on his lips:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ الَّذِي أَحَلَّنَا دَارَ الْمُقَامَةِ مِن فَضْلِهِ

Praise belongs to Allah who has put away all sorrow from us. Surely our Lord is All-Forgiving, All-Thankful, who of His bounty has made us to dwell in the abode of everlasting life - 35:34, 35.

This verse also suggest that in this world there is nobody who at some time or the other has not been afflicted by pain and anguish. Therefore, on entering the Paradise people will say that they have been delivered from all sufferings. In Sūrah al-A'lā while the Qur'ān says that *falāḥ* may be obtained by purifying oneself against sins (*فَقَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى*), it also says that total *falāḥ* may be achieved in the Hereafter only. A Person who aims at *falāḥ* must not succumb to the temptations of this world:

بَلْ تُوْزِنُونَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقٰى

Nay, but you prefer the present life; and the world to come is better, and more lasting. - 87: 16, 17

In brief, while total *falāḥ* may be obtained in the Paradise only, Allah grants *falāḥ* to his servants in this world also in the narrow sense of the word i.e. he grants them prosperity and relief from pain. In the present verse Allah has promised *falāḥ* to those believers who possess the seven attributes mentioned therein, and it includes the total *falāḥ* which can be achieved in the Hereafter only in addition to whatever *falāḥ* may be obtained in this world.

Here one may ask that while the promise of total *falāḥ* in the Hereafter to the believers who possess the seven attributes mentioned in this verse is understandable, the common experience is that in this world the recipients of *falāḥ* (prosperity and success) are generally the infidels and the impious persons. On the other hand the prophets and other reformers have, in all ages, suffered privations of life. The answer to this is that since total *falāḥ* is to be achieved in the Hereafter only, it is inevitable that every body in this world, whether he is a good and a pious man or whether he is a wicked person and an unbeliever, must face a certain measure of pain and hardship. Similarly every person, good or bad, has some of his wishes granted in this world. In these circumstances how is one to decide as to which of these two categories is the recipient of *falāḥ*. The answer to this question can only be provided by the fate which awaits them.

Human experience and observations provide sufficient evidence that although the pious people who possess the seven attributes mentioned above may at times face hardships and tribulations in this world, yet very soon they are released from all distress and they achieve their wishes. They command the respect of the whole world as long as they live and then after their death their memory is cherished and revered by all.

**The seven attributes of a perfect Believer on the basis of which he has been promised *falāḥ* in this verse both in this world and in the Hereafter**

The first and most important attribute which is fundamental and basic to everything else is that a person should be a true believer. The other seven attributes mentioned in the verse are discussed below.

**The first attribute** is *خُشُوعٌ* *Khushū'* (translated in the text as being concentrative) during prayers. The literal meaning of this word is

"calmness", but in religious terminology it means "to bring about a state of perfect concentration in the heart" so that he does not knowingly allow any thoughts to enter his heart other than the remembrance of Allah. It also means that during prayers a person must abstain from moving his body and limbs unnecessarily (*Bayān ul-Qur'ān*). He must, in particular, avoid those movements of the body which have been forbidden by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and which the jurists have compiled under the general heading *مَكْرُوهَات* (things which are disliked during prayers). Tafsīr Maḥzarī quotes the above definition of *خُشُوع* (Khushū') from Sayyidnā 'Amr Ibn Dīnār ؓ. Other scholars have given different definitions of this word, but they are in fact further details of what the serenity of the heart and the body means. For instance, according to Sayyidnā Mujāhid, casting down one's eyes and keeping the voice low is *خُشُوع* whereas Sayyidnā 'Alī ؓ said that *خُشُوع* is to refrain from casting sideways glances obliquely. Sayyidnā 'Aṭā' says that the word means "not toying with any part of the body". There is a *ḥadīth* from Sayyidnā Abū Dharr ؓ that the Holy Prophet ﷺ once said, "Allah keeps an eye over His servant during prayers so long as he concentrates his attention on Allah, but when he turns his attention elsewhere and glances obliquely sideways, Allah also turns away from him." (Maḥzarī) The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have directed Sayyidnā 'Anas ؓ to keep his eyes fixed at the spot which he touched with his forehead when performing *sajdah* (prostration) and not to look right and left during prayers.

Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah ؓ says that the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw a man praying who was toying with his beard and remarked *لو خشع قلب هذا لخشعت جوارحه* (If this man had Khushū' in his heart, his body and limbs would have remained calm).

### How important is Khushū' during prayers?

Imām Ghazzali, Qurtūbī and some other scholars are of the view that Khushū' during prayers is obligatory and a prayer offered without total Khushū' will be deemed not to have been performed. However there are others who believe that while Khushū' is the essence of prayers and its absence deprives the prayers of their true purpose, yet it cannot be regarded as an indispensable condition for the prayers to be valid and its absence will not render it necessary to repeat performance of the prayers.

Hakim ul-Ummah has written in *Bayān ul-Qur'ān* that while

Khushū' is not a necessary condition for the validity of the prayers, yet it is an essential element for the acceptance of the prayers by Allah and from this point of view it is obligatory. Ṭabarānī in his book al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr has related a *ḥadīth* on the authority of Sayyidnā Abū Dardā' ؓ that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "The first thing that will be taken away from this Ummah is Khushū' so much so that a time will come when no one will be left to practice Khushū'".

**The second attribute** of a good Muslim is that he abstains from frivolous and vain things. لغو (Laghw, translated in the text as 'vain things') means useless talk and action which do not bring any religious reward and in its extreme form it may include sinful acts that are positively harmful and must, therefore, be avoided. And in its mild form *laghw* is neither useful nor harmful but it is very desirable to give up this habit. There is a *ḥadīth* in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ said من حسن اسلام المرأ تركه ما لا يعنيه (It is a part of one's being a fair Muslim that he gives up all that is useless for him). For these reasons guarding oneself against useless acts has been described as an attribute of a good Muslim in this verse.

**The third attribute** is Zakāh which, literally means "to purify" but in religious terminology it means giving in charity a portion of one's wealth subject to certain prescribed conditions and the word has been generally used in the Qur'ān in this sense. This meaning of the word can be applied in this verse also. However this meaning of the word in the present context has been questioned by some scholars on the ground that this verse was revealed in Makkah when Zakāh was not made obligatory. (Zakāh was made obligatory after Hijrah to Madīnah). Ibn Kathīr and other commentators have answered this objection by claiming that Zakāh was in actual fact made obligatory in Makkah as will be evident from Sūrah Al-Muzzammil, which is by consensus a Makkan Sūrah, in which the words وَأَتُوا الزُّكُوهَ (and pay *zakāh*) occur alongside of the words أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ

However arrangements for its collection and details regarding the determination of wealth liable to Zakāh (*niṣāb*) were settled after Hijrah to Madīnah. According to this interpretation of the verse Zakāh was made obligatory in Makkah but rules prescribing its various details were formulated in Madīnah. As regards those scholars who hold the view that Zakāh was made obligatory after Hijrah to Madīnah, they believe that