

That there was nothing wrong originally in what they had introduced as *rahbaniyyah* is proved by a Ḥadīth narrated by Sayyidnā ‘Abdullah Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه and recorded by Ibn Kathīr with reference to Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Ibn Jarīr who have cited a lengthy narration in which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said:

"Allah has split the Children of Israel into seventy-two sects. Only three of them were saved from punishment. These are groups who, after Prophet ‘Isā عليه السلام, stopped the oppressive kings and affluent and powerful transgressors from violating the Divine laws. Among those who raised the voice of Truth against them and invited them to the religion of Prophet ‘Isā عليه السلام, the first group faced the oppressors with whatever power they had at their command, but they were defeated and killed. Then after them a second group stood against the tyrants and aggressors who did not have even that much fighting strength as the first group had. However they conveyed the Truth without caring for their lives. This group too was killed. Some of them were ripped apart with saws and others were burnt alive. But they, for the sake of Allah's pleasure, bore all pains and attained salvation. Then a third group stood against them. But this group was weak: They had no resources to fight the tyrants nor could they live in that corrupt society and follow their religion. Therefore, they took to the jungles and mountains, and became monks. It is to this third group that Allah refers in the current verse وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ 'As for monasticism, it was invented by them; We did not ordain it for them, ...!'"

This narration indicates that the people who originally adopted monasticism from among the Israelites and took care of its essentials and endured its hardships were among those who attained salvation.

According to this interpretation, the present verse shows that the monasticism initially adopted by such people was not bad or evil in itself, though it was not a religious obligation either. They had made it obligatory on themselves at their own will and wish. The element of evil

starts from the fact that after making it binding on themselves, most of them were not able to keep to its essentials. As a result, in keeping with the adage *يَلَاكُثْرَ حُكْمِ الْكُلِّ* (Majority takes the status of all), the Qur'ān attributed this evil aspect to the entire Israelites in that they invented it and could not practice it and did not take care of its requirements : *فَمَارَعَوْهَا : حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا* (...but [they adopted it] to seek Allah's pleasure, then could not observe it as was due.57:27).

It is also learnt from the above discussion that the word *ibtidā'*, derived from *bid'ah*, used in *إِبْتَدَعُوهُمَا* (...it was invented by them ...) is used in its literal sense of invention, and not in its technical or religious sense of heresy. The religious concept of *bid'ah* (which refers to a baseless faith or practice that is made part of the religion) has been denounced in the following narration of the Holy Prophet ﷺ *كُلُّ بَدْعٍ ضَلَالَةٌ* (Every religious innovation is deviation).

The context of the verse is very clear about it. Let us first study the following sentence: *وَجَعَلْنَا فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً* (And We placed in the hearts of his followers tenderness and mercy and the monasticism they had invented; We did not prescribe it for them, except to seek Allah's pleasure. Then they did not observe it as was due...57:27) ⁽¹⁾ The context indicates that just as 'tenderness and mercy' are not evil qualities, likewise 'monasticism' which they adopted is not an evil quality in itself. Otherwise Allah would not have listed it alongside the favorable qualities of 'tenderness and mercy'. Scholars, like Qurtubī, who held monasticism as absolutely prohibited, had to face grammatical difficulties. They had to go out of their way to show that *rahbaniyyah* is not a part of the conjunctive expression joined together by the conjunction '*waw*' [and] They treated the sentence starting with "...and monasticism..." as a separate sentence, and understood the verb *ibtadā'* as omitted. The interpretation adopted above renders this construction unnecessary. That is why the Holy Qur'ān does not reject their adoption of monasticism in principle, but their failure to keep it up, and take care of its rights and

(1) It should be noted that according to the grammatical construction of this verse, it can be translated in two ways. One translation is given above in the text. The second possible translation is that which is given here. Since the following discussion is based on this second translation, we have adopted it here instead of the translation given in the text. **Muhammad Taqi Usmani**

obligations. This interpretation is possible only if the word *ibtidā'* (invention) is taken in its literal sense. Had it been employed in its religious or technical sense, the Qur'ān would have denounced adoption of monasticism in itself, because *bid'ah* (innovation in religion) in its technical sense is deviation.

Sayyidnā 'Abdullān Ibn Mas'ūd's ﷺ foregoing narration makes it clear that the groups that adopted monastic life attained salvation. If they were guilty of committing religious innovation, they would never have been counted among the saved ones, but rather among the deviant ones.

Is *rahbaniyyah* (Monasticism) absolutely Prohibited or is it a relative Concept?

The fact is that *rahbaniyyah* (translated as monasticism) generally means to give up some lawful things and pleasures. It has several stages, one of which is to treat a permissible thing as impermissible doctrinally or practically. This is distortion of religion. From this point of view, monasticism is absolutely prohibited as declared by the Holy Qur'ān at several places, like verse [87] of Sūrah Al-Mā'idah that lays down the principle يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْرِمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ (O believers, do not prohibit the good things which Allah has made lawful to you...) The prohibitive verb ('do not prohibit') in this verse indicates that it relates to a situation where a person holds unlawful what Allah has made lawful, either in his belief or in practice, and as such it will amount to distortion or perversion of the Divine laws.

The second stage is when a person does not, dogmatically or practically, turn a lawful thing into unlawful, but gives it up for some mundane or religious reason. In mundane affairs, a person might give up eating a lawful thing on account of some disease. In religious matters, a person might give up the company of people and mixing with them, lest he should commit moral sins like lying and backbiting, or he might abandon some permissible things temporarily in order to suppress his base desires. This restriction is no more than a treatment of a spiritual disease. When the treatment is over, the restriction is no longer observed. Some Ṣūfī adepts require a novice in the initial stages of his spiritual journey to exercise ascetic discipline, such as eating little, sleeping little and mixing little with people. This brings him to a state of greater harmony and balance [*I'tidāl*]. This ascetic discipline is a 'means' and not an 'end' in

itself. When the perfect balance is attained and the *nafs* (inner-self) is brought under control, and there is no longer the danger of committing sins, they are asked to give up the exercise. This in fact is not monasticism but *taqwā* or righteousness which the religion requires and was practiced by our predecessors, the blessed Companions, their followers and the leaders in religion.

The third stage is when a person does not turn a permissible thing into unlawful. However, he abstains from its use under the belief that its giving up has more virtue and carries more reward, while such use is proved through *Sunnah* (the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ) This is in fact *ghuluww* (over-indulgence). Many of the Prophetic Traditions prohibit *ghuluww*.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: لَا رَهْبَانِيَّةَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ ('There is no monasticism in Islam.) This relates to a situation where someone abandons permissible things with the mistaken notion that it will bring him reward. If the Children of Israel initiated monasticism for the protection of their religion, it will fall under the second category of righteousness. But the people of the book were given to *ghuluww* or practicing religious fanaticism. If they turned lawful into unlawful, they fell under the first category and are guilty of committing *ḥarām*. If they fall under the third category, then too they are guilty of committing something that is condemned. Allah, the Pure and Exalted, knows best!

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ (O those who believe, fear Allah, and believe in His Messenger, and He will give you two shares [of reward] out of His mercy,...28) The vocative expression يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا "O those who believe..." in this verse refers to the People of the Book who believed in Prophet 'Īsā عليه السلام. As a general rule, the Qur'ān uses this vocative expression for Muslims only, not for Jews or Christians. The expression used for them is *ahlul-kitāb* [People of the Book] because their believing in Prophets Mūsā and 'Īsā عليهما السلام is not tantamount to being 'believers'. They need to believe in the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. Only in that case can they be called الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا "O those who believe". But here the Qur'ān deviates from the general rule, and addresses them by the words, "O those who believe" presumably because the concluding verse reminds the Christians that believing in Prophet 'Īsā عليه السلام is not sufficient: the true meaning of believing in Prophet 'Īsā عليه السلام dictates that they should believe

in the Last Prophet ﷺ. If they do, then they deserve to be called as الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا 'those who believe'.

Then the verse promises the People of the Book that believe in the Holy Prophet ﷺ, their reward will be doubled. The first reward is on account of their believing in Prophet 'Isā عليه السلام or Mūsā عليه السلام and following their Shari'ah, and the second reward is for their believing in the Holy Prophet ﷺ and acting upon his Shari'ah. The reason for their double reward is that Jews and Christians were unbelievers until they believed in the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and no worship of an unbeliever is acceptable. It required that any action they had performed according to a previous Shari'ah would go waste. But the present verse clarifies that when an unbeliever embraces Islam, all his good actions are restored, hence he is doubly rewarded.

لَعَلَّآ يَظُنُّ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ (so that the People of the Book may know57:29) The negative particle *lā* [no] is grammatically redundant [but rhetorically it serves to emphasise the expression]. This final verse states that the People of the Book need to know that faith in Prophet 'Isā عليه السلام is not necessarily faith in the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. In the circumstances, they do not deserve any Divine grace unless they embrace faith in the Last Prophet ﷺ. Allah, the Pure and Exalted, knows best!

Alḥamdulillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah Al-Ḥadīd
Ends here

Sūrah Al-Mujādalah (The Debate)

This Sūrah is Madani, and it has 22 verses and 3 sections

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

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

Verses 1 - 6

قَدْ سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِي اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۗ
 وَاللّٰهُ يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَ كُمَا ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِيْنَ يُظْهِرُوْنَ
 مِنْكُمْ مَنْ نِسَايِهِمْ مَّاهِنٌ اُمَّهَاتِهِمْ ۗ اِنْ اُمَّهَاتُهُمْ اِلَّا اَلٰى ۗ وَلَدَنَّهُمْ ۗ
 وَاِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُوْنَ مُنْكَرًا مِّنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا ۗ وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَعَفُوٌّ غَفُوْرٌ ﴿٢﴾
 وَالَّذِيْنَ يُظْهِرُوْنَ مِنْ نِسَايِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُوْذُوْنَ لِمَا قَالُوْا فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ ۗ مِنْ
 قَبْلِ اَنْ يَتَمَآسَا ۗ ذٰلِكُمْ تُوْعَضُوْنَ بِهٖ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿٣﴾
 فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَتَمَآسَا ۗ فَمَنْ لَّمْ
 يَسْتَطِعْ فَاَطْعَامُ سِتِّيْنَ مِسْكِيْنًا ۗ ذٰلِكَ لِتُؤْمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ ۗ
 وَتَلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَلِلْكَافِرِيْنَ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿٤﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يُحَادِّثُوْنَ
 اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ كُتِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَقَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا اٰيٰتِ
 بَيِّنٰتٍ ۗ وَ لِلْكَافِرِيْنَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِیْنٌ ﴿٥﴾ يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللّٰهُ جَمِیْعًا
 فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوْا ۗ اَحْصٰهُ اللّٰهُ وَنَسُوْهُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
 شَهِیْدٌ ﴿٦﴾

Allah has heard the talk of the woman who was debating with you about her husband, and was complaining to Allah. And Allah was hearing the conversation between both of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. [1] Those of you who declare *zihār*¹ against their wives, they are not their mothers. Their mothers are but only those who have given birth to them. And undoubtedly they utter an evil word and a lie. And Allah is surely Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [2] And those who declare *zihār* against their wives, then retract what they said, obligated on them is to free the neck (of a slave) before the two (spouses) touch one another. This is what you are advised with, and Allah is Well-Aware of what you do. [3] But whoever does not find (a slave) has to fast for two consecutive moths before the two (spouses) touch one another. Then the one who is not able to do so has to feed sixty indigent persons. This is (laid down) so that you believe in Allah and His Messenger. And these are the limits set by Allah. And for the disbelievers there is a painful punishment. [4] Surely those who oppose Allah and His Messenger shall be disgraced, just as those before them were disgraced. And We have sent down clear verses, and for the disbelievers there is a humiliating punishment [5] on the Day when Allah will raise all of them, and will tell them what they did; Allah has its full account, while they have forgotten it. And Allah is witness to every thing. [6]

Commentary

Cause of Revelation

The initial verses of this Sūrah refer to a particular incident: Sayyidnā Aus Ibn Ṣāmīt رضي الله عنه said to his wife Sayyidah Khaulah bint Tha'labah رضي الله عنها *أَنْتِ عَلَيَّ كَظَهْرِ أُمِّي* which, literally, means 'You are to me like the back of my mother.' Its underlying meaning is 'You are unlawful to

(1) *Zihār* is a term denoting a custom of the Arabs in the days of Ignorance. In case of disagreement with their wives they used to say to them, "You are for me like the back of my mother." After saying this, they used to take their wives as their real mothers in being prohibited for them, and the ties of marriage were held to have been broken for good, with no possibility of their restoration. These verses have been revealed in a similar case where a husband (Aus ibn. Ṣāmīt) had declared *zihār* against his wife (Khawlah) who approached the Holy Prophet ﷺ and complained about her husband. The custom of the days of Ignorance was condemned, and the rules of Shari'ah about *zihār* were laid down by these verses. (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

me for cohabitation just like my mother.' Such an utterance, in the days of ignorance, amounted to divorce - even worse because it was taken to imply that the husband is rescinding all marital ties with his wife and, in addition, he is classifying her within the prohibited degree or permanently forbidden women like his mother. According to pre-Islamic custom, reunion with the wife was possible after divorce, but not after *zihār*, as she became permanently and absolutely forbidden. When this incident took place, the aggrieved lady went to the Messenger of Allah complaining about her husband and seeking redress for her problem according to Shari'ah. Up to that point in time the Messenger of Allah had not received any revelation concerning that legal issue. Therefore, he pleaded his inability to do anything to help her in the absence of a revealed ordinance and said to her: "مَا أَمَرْتُ فِي شَأْنِكَ بِشَيْءٍ حَتَّى الْآنَ" "I have not yet received any ordinance regarding your matter." However he expressed his opinion according to common custom and said: "مَا أَرَاكَ إِلَّا قَدْ حَرُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ" "In my opinion, you have become forbidden to him." Having heard this ruling, she pleaded: "O Allah's Messenger! He spent my wealth, exhausted my youth and my womb bore abundantly for him. When I became old, unable to bear children, he pronounced the *zihār* formula on me. Where shall I go and how will my children do their living?" According to another version, she said: "مَا ذَكَرَ طَلَاً" "My husband did not mention the word 'divorce', so how can this be counted as 'divorce'?" According to another version, she pleaded to Allah: "اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَشْكُو إِلَيْكَ" "O Allah! I direct my complaint to You . This was the cause of the revelation of verses [1-6] (Al-Durarul Manthūr and Ibn Kathīr) which clearly state that Allah heard Sayyidah Khaulah's ﷺ complaint and revealed the rule of Shari'ah to redress her grievances. Allah not only made matters easy for her, but the rule has been eternally enshrined in the Holy Qur'an for all sensible people to follow.

The noble Companions greatly respected Sayyidah Khaulah ﷺ because her case has been the cause of the revelation of the current set of verses, which abolished once and for all the long-standing social evil that was practiced in Arabia. Once Sayyidnā 'Umar Fārūq, the Great ﷺ, was on his way with some of the blessed Companions when he came across a woman who stopped him. He instantly stopped and listened attentively to her with his head bent down. He did not move till she completed what she

wanted to say. Some of the noble Companions said: "O Commander of the Faithful! You have held back such a large group of people for such a long time on account of this old lady!" Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه said: "Do you know who this lady is? She is Sayyidah Khaulah رضي الله عنها, the lady whose complaint was heard in the seventh heaven. So, how can 'Umar not listen to her? She should be heard for a longer period of time and with greater attention. By Allah! If she did not take leave of her own accord, I would have stood with her here till the nightfall." [Ibn Kathīr]

اللَّهُ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ (Allah has heard...1) The reference in the verse is to Sayyidah Khaulah رضي الله عنها, the wife of Sayyidnā Aus Ibn Ṣāmit رضي الله عنه, as mentioned above. Thus this verse and the rest of the verses lay down not only the rule of Shari'ah pertaining to *ḡihār* and redress the grievances of women placed in such awkward situation, but the first verse also is in honour of the pleading lady which consoles her, in that it says that Allah was listening to her words when she was pleading her case. The word *mujādalah* means 'to plead, argue or dispute consistently and convincingly about one's problem or case'. According to some narratives, when the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم pleaded his inability to do anything for her, as noted above, the aggrieved lady uttered spontaneously that 'you receive ordinances in all matters, then how is it that no ordinance was revealed to you in my case?' Thus the verse was revealed: وَتَشْتَكِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَتَشْتَكِي إِلَى اللَّهِ...[1]. [Qurṭubī]

Sayyidah 'A'ishah رضي الله عنها is reported to have said: "Pure is He, Whose hearing encompasses all things. I heard what Khaulah bint Tha'labah said about her husband while some of it I could not hear despite being so close to her in the same room, but Allah heard all her conversation and said : اللَّهُ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ 'Allah has heard...'. " [Bukhārī, Ibn Kathīr].

Zihār

الَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ (Those of you who declare *ḡihār* against their wives...58:2) The aorist *yuzahirūna* is derived from *ḡihār*. There was a cruel custom in pre-Islamic Arabia, as pointed out earlier, where the husband would utter the *ḡihār* formula أَنْتَ عَلَيَّ كَظَهْرِ أُمِّي 'You are to me as my mother's back', and thus she would become permanently and absolutely unlawful to him for cohabitation like the mother. Here the word *zahr* (back) metonymically refers to batn 'stomach or womb'. [Qurṭubī]

Definition of *ḡihār* and its effect in Shari'ah

In order to understand the definition of *ḡihār* in terms of Shari'ah, it should be noted first that there are some women who are permanently forbidden for a man, such as mother, sister, daughter and others in the prohibited degree. Although looking at such women is permissible in general, yet looking at some parts of their body is not permissible, (like abdomen, back etc.) Now the definition of *ḡihār* is 'to compare one's wife with any of such parts of the body of such prohibited women'. According to the old Arab custom all conjugal relations ceased permanently between a man and his wife when he would use these words; rather it was worse than divorce. In the case of divorce, it was possible to retract and take back the wife. But in the case of *ḡihār*, according to the old Arab custom, it was not at all possible to restore the conjugal rights.

The current set of verses brought about reform in the custom in two ways: [1] *ḡihār* has been declared a sinful act. If a person is placed in a situation where he needs to separate from his wife, he must choose the method of 'divorce'. *ḡihār* should not be resorted to for this purpose, because the utterance of *ḡihār* formula is absurd, nonsense and false. Obviously, their wives are not their mothers, the Quran reads thus: مَا هُنَّ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ إِلَّا الَّتِي وَلَدْنَهُمْ "...Their mothers are but only those who have given birth to them ...[58:2]". The وَأَنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ مُنْكَرًا مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا further says: "...and undoubtedly they utter an evil word and a lie...[58:2]" In other words, their utterance is false, meaning 'calling one's wife mother' is contrary to truth and fact, and also a heinous sin.

[2] The second reform the Qur'ān brought about is as follows: If an ignorant person or a person unacquainted with the legal formalities of Islam were to utter the *ḡihār* formula, his wife does not become permanently unlawful to him, nor does he have an open licence to do as he wishes - like enjoying intimacy with her. The guilty person will have to pay a penalty for uttering such evil, false and obnoxious words. He cannot take back his wife without first paying the prescribed expiation. The following verse prescribes this expiation.

The Expiation for *ḡihār*

وَالَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِن نِّسَابِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا قَالُوا (And those who declare *ḡihār* against their wives, then retract what they said, ...58:3). The preposition *lam* in the phrase يَعُودُونَ لِمَا قَالُوا "...retract what they said..." is used in the sense of

'an [from]. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه interprets 'retract' in the sense of 'regret': 'they regret what they said and wish to be intimate or cohabit with their wives'. [Mazharī]

The verse shows that the penalty has been imposed on the husband for the purpose of making the wife lawful - without it she cannot become lawful to him. *zihār* per se is not the cause of the expiation. In fact, *zihār* is a heinous sin for which repentance and seeking pardon and forgiveness is absolutely necessary. The concluding part of verse [2] **وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ غَفُورٌ** "...Allah is surely Most-forgiving, Very-Merciful." points to this fact. In other words, Allah in His great mercy has made allowance for man's weaknesses and He is always ready to forgive his lapses, provided he comes to Allah with a penitent heart and makes amends. However, if a person did commit *zihār* and does not wish to take back his wife and enjoy intimacy with her, expiation is not obligatory on him. However, destroying a wife's conjugal rights is unlawful. If she demands, it is obligatory for him to pay the expiation and take her back, should he wish to do so; or if she demands, he must divorce her and set her free from the bond of marriage. If he does not divorce her and set her free, then she has the right to apply to a Qādī or an Islamic court to compel him to either pay the expiation and take her back or to divorce her and set her free so that she could contract a second marriage. Islamic works on jurisprudence set down details of the laws pertaining to *zihār*.

The penalty for *zihār* is obligatory, which is given in this and the next verse. There are three options: [1] **فَتَحْرِيرُهُ رَقَبَةً** (...obligated on them is to free the neck [of a slave]...) [2] If a person cannot afford to do that, he must keep fast for two consecutive months; and [3] if he is so weak or ill that he cannot fast, then he must feed sixty poor people. The expiation will be fulfilled if one poor person is given two meals for sixty days. Alternatively, it is possible to give two meals to sixty poor persons on a single day. In each case, the poor should be fed to their fill. Another possible alternative is to give to a poor person about 1.6 kg wheat or 2.12 kg dates or barley for sixty days or the equivalent price of these food items may be given. The details of the law appertaining to *zihār* and its expiation are available in the texts of Islamic jurisprudence.

It is recorded in Traditions that when Sayyidah Khaulah رضي الله عنها complained to Allah's Messenger ﷺ about her husband and pleaded her

case to Allah, verses relating to *zihār* and its expiation were revealed. So, Allah's Messenger called for the husband. When he came, the Holy Prophet ﷺ noticed that he was a weak-sighted old man. He recited to him the verses resolving his case, and commanded him to emancipate a slave, he said that he does not have the means to do that. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then asked him to fast two successive months, to which he replied: "By Him Who has sent you as the true Messenger, if I do not have two or three meals a day, I lose my sight completely." The Holy Prophet ﷺ said 'Then feed sixty poor people'. He said 'I do not have the ability for that either, unless you help me'. The Holy Prophet ﷺ gave him some food grain, and also other people gathered more food grain for him, which amounted to the measure of *ṣadaqatul-fiṭr* for sixty poor men, and in this way the expiation was made. [Ibn Kathir]

ذَلِكَ لِمُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ط وَتَلَّكَ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ط وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (...This is [laid down] so that you believe in Allah and His Messenger. And these are the limits set by Allah. And for the disbelievers there is a painful chastisement. 58:4) This part of the verse contains the phrase 'so that you believe'. Belief here implies 'to act upon the sacred laws, ordinances and injunctions or obey the commandments of Allah and His Messenger'. Then the verse says that the laws of expiation are limits set by Allah. It is prohibited to exceed them. It indicates that in matters of marriage, divorce, incestuous comparison and so on, Islam has abolished all traces of pre-Islamic pagan elements of customs and practices, and set down the just and approved code of conduct. Man is required to stick strictly to the parameters of Islam. Those who oppose and deny the Divine limits will be tormented most severely.

The Fate of those who Challenge Allah and His Apostle

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادُّونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ، كُتِبُوا كَمَا كُتِبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ (Surely those who oppose Allah and His Messenger shall be disgraced, just as those before them were disgraced....58:5) In the preceding verse, stress was laid on keeping to Divine limits and to the sacred laws of Islam. The current verse warns those who oppose or reject them. Their profane designs shall be foiled and they shall be humiliated in this world and a condign torment shall be inflicted on them in the Hereafter.

أَحْصَاهُ اللَّهُ وَنَسَوهُ (...Allah has its full account, while they have forgotten it....58:6) Man is very forgetful. He persists in committing sins and

transgressions, but because he treats them as trivial and insignificant, he is unable to remember and recall them. However, they are all recorded and kept safely with Allah, even though the humans have done the actions and forgotten them. Allah will call them to give an account of them on the Day of Resurrection and chastise them.

Verses 7 - 13

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ط مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ
نَجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةَ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا أَدْنَى
مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا ؕ ثُمَّ يَنْبِئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نُهُوا
عَنِ النَّجْوَى ثُمَّ يُعَادُونَ لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَيَتَنَجَّوْنَ بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ
وَمَعْصِيَةِ الرَّسُولِ ۖ وَإِذَا جَاءُوكَ حَيَّوْكَ بِمَا لَمْ يُحَيِّكَ بِهِ اللَّهُ ۖ
وَيَقُولُونَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَوْلَا يُعَذِّبُنَا اللَّهُ بِمَا نَقُولُ ط حَسْبُكُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ
يَصْلَوْنَهَا ؕ فَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٨﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَنَاجَيْتُمْ فَلَا
تَتَنَاجَوْا بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَمَعْصِيَةِ الرَّسُولِ وَتَنَاجَوْا بِالْبِرِّ
وَالتَّقْوَى ط وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّمَا النَّجْوَى مِنَ
الشَّيْطَانِ لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَيْسَ بِضَارِّهِمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ط
وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ
لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجْلِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ؕ وَإِذَا قِيلَ
انشُرُوا فَانشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ
دَرَجَاتٍ ط وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا
نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ ط ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ
وَاطْهَرُ ط فَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ ؕ أَشَفَقْتُمْ أَنْ

تَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَانِكُمْ صَدَقْتُمْ ۖ فَادْكُم تَفْعَلُوا وَتَابَ اللَّهُ
 عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
 خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

Have you not seen that Allah knows all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth? No secret consultation takes place between three, but He is fourth of them, nor between five, but He is sixth of them, nor between fewer than that or more, but He is with them wherever they may be. Then He will tell them on the Day of Judgment what they did. Surely Allah is All-Knowing about every thing. [7]

Did you not see those who were forbidden from holding secret counsels, then they do again what they were forbidden to do? And they whisper for sinful act and wrongdoing and disobedience of the prophet, and when they come to you, they greet you the way Allah does not greet you, and say to themselves, "Why does Allah not punish us for what we say?" Enough for them is *Jahannam* (Hell); they will enter it, and it is an evil end. [8]

O those who believe, when you hold secret counsel, do not whisper for sinful act and wrongdoing and disobedience of the prophet, and do whisper for righteousness and *taqwā* (God-fearing). And fear Allah, before whom you will be gathered together. [9] Whispering (for sinful acts) comes from the *Shaiṭān* (Satan), so that he may grieve those who believe, while it is not harmful to them in the least, except with Allah's permission. And in Allah the believers must place their trust. [10] O those who believe, when it is said to you, "Make room (for others) in the sittings", then make room, and Allah will make room for you (in the Hereafter). And when it is said, "Rise up", then rise up, and Allah will raise those, in ranks, who have believed and are given knowledge. And Allah is well-aware of what you do. [11] O those who believe, when you consult the Messenger in private, then offer something in charity before your consultation. That is better for you and purer. But if you find nothing (to offer), then Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [12] Have you become afraid of offering charities before

your consultation? So when you did not do so, and Allah has forgiven you, then establish *ṣalāh*, and pay *zakāh*, and obey Allah and His Messenger. And Allah is well-aware of what you do. [13]

Commentary

Circumstances of Revelation

There are several incidents related to the revelation of the current set of verses. [1] there was a peace agreement between the Jews and Muslims. But when one of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Companions would pass by a gathering of Jews, they would speak among themselves in secret, prompting the believer to think that they were plotting to harm or hurt him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ advised them to give up their secret plots and conspiracies but they did not heed. As a result, verse *أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نُهُوا عَنِ النَّجْوَى* was revealed.

[2] Likewise, the hypocrites used to hold secret counsels or conferences, in consequence of which verses: *إِنَّمَا النَّجْوَى إِذَا تَنَا جَيْتُمْ فَلَا تَتَنَاجَوْا* and *مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ* were revealed.

[3] When the Jews came to see the Holy Prophet ﷺ, they, with a little twist of the tongue, would invoke curses upon him by greeting him mischievously 'As-Sāmu 'alaykum' *السَّامُ عَلَيْكُمْ* [death to you!] instead of saluting him with the usual *السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ* 'As-Salāmu 'alaykum' [peace be upon you]. On this occasion, verse *وَإِذَا جَاءُوكَ حَيَّوكَ* was revealed..

[4] Ibn Kathīr cites Imām Aḥmad's narration in which it is reported that the Jews used to greet in this way, changing the meaning of Islamic greeting into an abusive statement, and then say, *لَوْلَا يُعَذِّبُنَا اللَّهُ بِمَا نَقُولُ* 'Had he been a Prophet, Allah would have punished us for the sin we committed - why did He not punish us?'

[5] Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting in the *ṣuffah* of the mosque. The congregation was large in the mosque. Some of the participants of the battle of Badr arrived late and they could not find place to sit, nor did the people sitting in the mosque make room for the late-comers. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked some of the people to stand up and leave. The hypocrites, however, found this objectionable. He also asked the people to spread out and make room for their fellow-believers and he prayed Allah for such people to show His mercy them. Verse *يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا*

was revealed on that occasion. [Transmitted by Abū Ḥātim]. Piecing all the elements of the narrations together, it is possible that at first the Holy Prophet ﷺ might have asked the Companions to spread out and make room for their companions. Some of them might have complied and others probably did not. So, the Holy Prophet ﷺ might have admonished them to stand up and leave as the students of seminaries are admonished to do in a similar situation. Probably, the hypocrites objected to this.

[6] Some wealthy people used to come to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and consult him in private for a long time which inconvenienced him and the poor people would not get much time to consult him. For this reason, verse إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ was revealed. It is cited in Fathul Bayān from Zaid IbnAslam, without any authoritative source, that the Jews and hypocrites used to hold unnecessary private conferences with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Muslims were perturbed by this because they gained the impression that this type of consultation might be harmful. As a result verse نَهَوْا عَنْ النَّجْوَى was revealed. When they did not heed, verse 12 إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ was revealed which required them to spend something in charity before their holding a private conference. At this point the fallacious people stopped from consulting the Holy Prophet ﷺ, because their greed for wealth did not allow them to do so.

[7] When verse إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ was revealed requiring people to give alms before private conferences with the Holy Prophet ﷺ, many people stopped even the necessary private consultation with him. So, verse [13] ءَأَشْفَقْتُمْ أَنْ تُقَدِّمُوا was revealed. Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thanawī رحمه الله تعالى says that the concluding part of verse [12] فَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدُوا (...but if you find nothing [to offer], then Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful...58:12) had already given a concession to poor people from the requirement of charity before consultation with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. However some people are neither completely destitute nor are they completely wealthy, even though they might have the minimum *zakātable* wealth. Probably, people in this category might have felt it difficult to advance freewill alms, because on the one hand, their means were limited, and on the other hand, they were unsure whether they were indigent. As a result, they could neither pay the charity, nor could they deem themselves exempt from the requirement of the verse. They felt that consultation was not an act of worship or devotion; and if they abandoned it, it could not be the cause of reproach.

Therefore, they stopped consulting altogether. [All narratives are from Ad-Durr-ul-Manthūr]. These causes of revelation will help and facilitate the comprehension of this passage. [Bayān-ul-Qur'ān].

Ethics and Etiquette of Secret Consultation

Although the present verses were revealed in some particular events, as detailed above, the rules laid down by them are of general application, regardless of their cause of revelation. Thus the present verses contain instructions about secret or private consultations. They are explained below.

Secret conferences are normally convened with special confidants to whom secrets are imparted trustingly. Members of the secret society are satisfied that they will not be betrayed. It is on the basis of this confidence that evil people design plots to oppress someone, or to kill him, or to usurp his wealth and property, and so on. In verse [7], Allah mentions that His knowledge is All-encompassing - it encompasses the entire creation. He is observing or watching them, perfectly hearing their speech and seeing them - whether in public or private, wherever and in whatever condition they may be. No plots or conspiracies of any kind are hidden from Him. If they commit any sin, they will not be able to escape the Divine chastisement. Allah is present in all their secret meetings or conferences - no matter how few or many people constitute their assembly. For example, if there are three people in the assembly, Allah will be the fourth one; and if there are five people in the gathering, Allah will be the sixth one - nor numerically less or numerically more but He is with them wheresoever they may be.

Verse 7 specifies 'three' and 'five' numbers probably because Allah prefers that an assembly or congregation should comprise an odd number of members. This is the essence of verse [7].

Mischief of the Jews

It was narrated earlier that there was a peace treaty between the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Jews. During this period, if one of the noble Companions passed by an assembly of the Jews, they would confer secretly among themselves in such a manner as to arouse suspicion and anxiety in the mind of the believer making him think that they were conspiring to injure or hurt him. Verse [8] أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نُهُوا عَنِ النَّجْوَى (Did you

not see those who were forbidden to hold secret counsels,...58:8) prohibits the holding of such secret conferences. This rule applies not only to the enemies but also to the Muslims, in that they should not hold secret conference to harm or hurt another Muslim. However, the Muslims and others are allowed to hold secret conferences to promote good and righteous causes . A narration of Sayyidnā ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه is recorded in Bukhārī, Muslim and other authentic collections, according to which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has stated: إِذَا كُنْتُمْ ثَلَاثَةً فَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ رَجُلًا رَجُلًا دُونَ الْآخِرِ حَتَّى يَخْتَلِطُوا بِالنَّاسِ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ يَحْزُنُهُ (If you were three, then two of you should not hold secret conference leaving aside the third person [in another narration of Muslim : 'except with his permission'] because this bad manners would cause him anxiety and wound his feelings", [i.e. because he will feel estranged or alienated and possibly suspicions may arise that the two are plotting something against him and keeping it as a secret.] [Maḏharī]

Manners of the Secret Conference

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَسَاءَلْتُمْ فَلَا تَتَسَاءَلُوا بِالْأَيْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَمَعْصِيَةِ الرَّسُولِ وَتَنَاجَوْا بِالْبُيُوتِ وَالسُّكُونِ (O those who believe, when you hold secret counsel, do not whisper for sinful act and wrongdoing and disobedience of the Messenger, and do whisper for righteousness and *taqwā* [God-fearing]... 58:9) In this and the preceding verses secret societies of the unbelievers have been condemned, but the condemnation is not unreserved or unqualified. The current verse guides the Muslims to be conscious of the fact that Allah is fully aware of their conversation and all of their conditions. Therefore, all their secret conferences must be held for good purposes. It is the object or motive of a particular conference that determines its nature. Thus in the present verse, as indicated earlier, the believers have been allowed to hold secret conferences only to promote good and righteous causes.

Return Good for Evil

It was narrated earlier that one of the evil practices of some of the Jews of Madīnah was that when they came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, they greeted him by invoking curses upon him, thus: 'As-Sāmu 'alaykum' [death to you!] instead of saluting him with the usual 'As-Salām 'alaykum' [peace be upon you]. The word 'As-Sām' means 'death' instead of 'As-Salām' which means 'peace'. The latter word was distorted and pronounced with a little twist of the tongue, which

sounded like the former word, but the difference between the two words was so subtle that the Companions could hardly detect the difference. One day, however, Sayyidah Şiddīqah ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها detected that the Jews were invoking curses upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ by saying *السَّامُ عَلَيْكُمْ* 'As-Sāmu ‘alaykum' [death to you!], so she replied: *السَّامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَنَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ* 'As-Sāmu ‘alaykum wa la‘anakumullah wa ghaḍiba ‘alaykum' [death to you, and the curse of Allah be on you, and His wrath!]. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prevented her from this and said: "O ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها, Allah does not like rudeness and foul speech." Sayyidah Şiddīqah ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها said: "O Messenger of Allah, did you not hear what they said." He said to her: "Did you not hear my answering them back by saying *وَعَلَيْكُمْ* 'wa ‘alaykum' [same to you]?" He further said to her 'Allah accepts our supplication against them, but not theirs against us'. This event tells us that even in response to the mischievous words of the infidels, the Muslims should always adopt a soft and noble way.

Manners for Assemblies

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجْلِسِ فَافْسَحُوا (O those who believe, when it is said to you 'Make room [for others] in the sittings', then make room, ...58:11) Allah teaches His servants good manners and enjoins upon them to be kind to each other when they are sitting together. There are two main rules of assemblies: The first rule states that people sitting in an assembly should make space for those who came late. They should sit together in such a way that there is enough room for others. If this is done, Allah promises that He will widen their scope in the Hereafter. However, it is not inconceivable that this space or room might be created for them in the life of this world as well.

The second rule states: إِذَا قِيلَ انْشُرُوا فَانْشُرُوا ('When it is said to you, 'Rise up', then rise up...58:11) This means when people sitting in an assembly are told to stand up and leave, they should stand up and leave. This verse uses the passive voice [it is said] but it is not mentioned who says it or who should say it. Authentic traditions make it plain that the late comer himself cannot move somebody out of his place and use it for himself, nor force his way into a gathering. Thus it is recorded in the Şaḥīḥain and in the Musnad of Aḥmad on the authority of ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: *لَا يُقِيمُ الرَّجُلُ الرَّجُلَ مِنْ مَجْلِسِهِ فَيَجْلِسُ فِيهِ وَلَكِنْ تَفَسَّحُوا* "One of you should not move some other person up from his place and take his place" *وَتَوَسَّعُوا*

and sit in it, but instead, spread out and make space for the comer." This explicitly shows that it is not possible for the late-comer to tell anyone to move out of his place and take his place. Therefore, it would appear that the rule would apply to the master of ceremony or the organisers of the assembly or the host. Hence, the meaning of the verse is: When the host or his representative requests a member of the audience to stand up and leave for a legitimate reason, they should comply and avoid clash with the host. There are several reasons why this might become necessary. [1] Occasionally, the host himself might need privacy for his own reason. [2] He might need privacy to share confidential information with special guests. [3] The capacity of the room cannot accommodate the late comers, and no alternative arrangement can be made. So, the host is allowed to courteously request some of the familiar guests to leave the room to make space for the late-comers, provided it is certain that the leaving guests will not suffer any loss. They will be able to benefit in another session. However, the host or his representative must ensure that the guests do not feel belittled or hurt in the process.

It was alluded earlier that this verse was revealed when the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting in the *şuffah* of the mosque. The congregation had filled up the *şuffah*. Some of the participants of the battle of Badr arrived late and they could not find place to sit, and remained standing. As a mark of respect for them, the Holy Prophet ﷺ gave a general order to the entire congregation to spread out and make room for their fellow-believers, and prayed to Allah to make room for such people. Some of them might have complied and there was no problem with them; and probably others did not comply. So, the Holy Prophet ﷺ might have admonished them to rise up and leave.

At any rate, this verse and Traditions related to the verse yield several rules:

[1] The members of a conference must spread out and make space for the late comers. [2] The late comers should not remove other members of the conference and make room for themselves. [3] At times of need, the host or the master of ceremony may courteously request some of the members of the audience to leave. Late comers may not force their way into a congested congregation, but take their position in a corner or a side as recorded in Bukhārī: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was once sitting in the

mosque and the people with him, when three persons arrived, one of them could not find space in the congregation but found some space on one side or in a corner and sat there. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ lauded him or praised him highly.

Ruling

Another etiquette of an assembly is that if two persons are sitting closely, a new comer should not intrude between them. In a *ḥadīth*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained this etiquette in the following words: لَا يَجْلُ لِرَجُلٍ أَنْ يُفْرَقَ بَيْنَ اثْنَيْنِ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِمَا "It is not permissible for any man to break up the meeting of two persons, who are sitting together, unless they themselves permit him." [Ibn Kathīr cited this Tradition and said that Abū Dāwūd and Tirmidhī transmitted it on the authority of Usamah Ibn Laithiy ؓ].

The reasoning behind the ruling is that sometimes two persons sit together for some specific purpose, and breaking them up might defeat that purpose.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ (O those who believe, when you consult the Messenger of Allah, ...58:12) The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was preoccupied day and night with educating the people and improving their quality of life. In his general assemblies, all the members of the audience benefited from his teachings. However, there were people who wanted private meetings with the Holy Prophet ﷺ and he would grant them that. Obviously, it was not possible to grant everyone's request as it required time and effort, and that was difficult. The hypocrites made matters worse when they asked for private audiences with the Holy Prophet ﷺ in order to hurt the sincere Muslims. Besides, the hypocrites held protracted conferences with him. Some of the illiterate Muslims also held private audiences with him for a longer time than normal or necessary. This made things difficult for him. Allah provided a way to stop their irksome behaviour by this verse which lightened the burden of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Initially, the verse provided that anyone who wishes to hold a private conference with him must advance a freewill charity, the amount or measure of which is not specified in the Qur'ān. However, when this verse was revealed Sayyidnā 'Alī ؓ was the first Companion to act upon it: He offered one Dinar in charity and requested a private audience with the Prophet ﷺ.

Only Sayyidnā 'Alī عليه السلام Acted upon the verse

It is a remarkable co-incidence that most of the blessed Companions, because of financial constraints, were unable to act upon this verse. Its provision was repealed. Sayyidnā 'Alī عليه السلام used to say that there is a verse in the Qur'ān that none before me and none after me has ever acted upon it. The meaning of the phrase 'none before me' is obvious. The phrase 'none after me' means 'none after me will practise it' because the verse is abrogated. Although the ordinance is repealed, it achieved its basic purpose. The Muslims, because of the dictates of their sincere love, avoided their protracted audiences with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so that he is not inconvenienced in any way. The hypocrites avoided protracted audiences with him because they feared that they would be recognized for what they are and their hypocrisy would be exposed. Allah knows best!

Verses 14 - 22

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ مَا هُمْ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَيَحْلِفُونَ عَلَى الْكُذِبِ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ اتَّخَذُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿١٦﴾ لَنْ تَغْنِي عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُ كَمَا يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ اسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَأَنسَهُمْ ذِكْرَ اللَّهِ ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ الشَّيْطَانِ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادِّثُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي الْأَذْلٰلِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا وَرُسُلِي ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢١﴾ لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ

وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ
 كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ ۗ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ
 تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۗ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ۗ
 أُولَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

Have you not seen who have friendship with a people with whom Allah is angry. They are neither of you nor of them. And they swear false oaths while they know. [14] Allah has prepared a severe punishment for them. Indeed, evil is what they used to do. [15] They have taken their oaths as a shield, then have prevented (people) from the way of Allah. Therefore, for them there is a humiliating punishment. [16] Their riches and their children will never benefit them against Allah. They are the people of the Fire. They will live there for ever [17] (It will be) on the Day when Allah will raise all of them, and they will swear before Him as they swear before you, and will think that they have some standing. Beware that they are sheer liars. [18] The *shaiṭān* (Satan) has prevailed upon them, so he has made them forget the remembrance of Allah. They are the party of *shaiṭān*. Be sure that it is (the members of the) party of *Shaiṭān* that are the losers. [19] Indeed, those who oppose Allah and His Messengers, they are among the lowest. [20] Allah has written (in His pre-destined decree), "I will certainly prevail, both I and My messengers." Surely Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty. [21] You will not find those who believe in Allah and in the Hereafter having friendship with those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their clan. They are such that Allah has inscribed faith on their hearts, and has helped them with a spirit from Him. And He will admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will live forever. Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Allah. Those are the party of Allah. Be sure that it is (the members of) the party of Allah that are the successful.

Commentary

Chastising the Hypocrites for their Secret Alliance with the Jews

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ (Have you not seen those who have friendship with a people with whom Allah is angry?58:14) Allah condemns the hypocrites who secretly formed an alliance with the Jews who challenge Allah and His Apostle, while in effect they belong neither to the Muslims nor to the Jews. Consequently, Allah has prepared for them a humiliating and condign chastisement. It is not permissible to have a friendly intimacy with the enemies of Allah and His Messenger - whether the unbelievers are Jews, or Christians, or pagans or of any other creed. Even rationally this is not possible, because the capital asset of a believer is the love of Allah, while a non-believer relishes in opposing and challenging Him. It is not possible for a person to have sincere love and affection for someone and to love and have intimacy with the latter's enemy. Here 'love', 'affection' or 'intimacy' refers to the one coming from the heart involving intense emotional commitment (which necessarily includes having love with his way of life. Ed.). This is called *Muwālāh* or 'intimate friendship'. This type of friendship is limited to sincere Muslims. Therefore, the Qur'ānic verses on many occasions strictly prohibit Muslims from having this sort of relationship with non-Muslims. Any Muslim who has such intimate friendship with non-Muslims will be seen to fall in the circle of unbelievers.

In contra-distinction to *Muwālāh* [intimate friendship], there is a concept of *Muwāsāh* which refers to the relationship based on sympathy, kindness and concern. It includes charitable assistance and support, business, commercial, trade dealings and economic co-operation, condolence and consolation and any well-meaning attitude of well-being and welfare. Barring unbelievers who are at war with the believers, this kind of relationship is permissible with all other non-Muslims. The paradigm of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the noble Companions in this direction is ample testimony to this practice. However, it is necessary to ensure that the relationship of *Muwāsāh* is not harmful to the cause of religion; it should not create laxity in 'faith and practice' of Islam nor should it 'harm, hurt or injure' other Muslims. Please see Ma'āriful Qur'ān, Vol. 2/ pp 54-61: under Surah Al-Imran: v.28-30 for a detailed account of the distinction between *Muwālāt* [intimate friendship], *Muwāsāt*

[sympathy] and *Mu'āmalāt* [dealings] or *Mudārāh* [cordiality].

وَيَحْلِفُونَ عَلَى الْكَذِبِ (and they swear false oaths ...58:14). It means they swear oaths profanely. According to some reports, this verse was revealed in connection with 'Abdullah Ibn 'Ubayy and 'Abdullah Ibn Nabtal: One day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting with his noble Companions and said to them: "Soon a person will come to you whose heart will be the heart of a tyrant and who sees through the Satan's eyes." Soon afterwards 'Abdullah Ibn Nabtal, the hypocrite, entered. He was blue-eyed, wheat-coloured, short-statured and skimpy-bearded. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked him: "Why do you and your comrades use obscene words against me?" He swore that he did not do that. Then he called his comrades and they too took this false oath. Allah told the Holy Prophet ﷺ about their lie and profane oath. [Qurṭubī]

Believers cannot entertain intimacy with non-Believers

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ (You shall not find those who believe in Allah and in the Hereafter having friendship with those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they were their fathers....58:22). The preceding verses showed that those [hypocrites] who are in intimate friendship with unbelievers and pagans shall incur Allah's wrath, indignation and severe torment. This verse describes the condition of sincere believers who would not take an enemy of Faith, the opponents of Allah, for intimacy and friendship, even though such people are their own fathers, children, brothers or any other blood relatives. The bond of belief transcends all other bonds, even the close ties of blood. This description fits all noble Companions. Commentators on this occasion have cited a number of incidents of the blessed Companions which describe how, when they heard their fathers, sons and brothers or other blood relations utter blasphemy against Islam or the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, they left all ties aside and punished them or even killed them.

'Abdullah, the son of 'Abdullah Ibn 'Ubayy, the leader of the hypocrites in Madīnah, heard his father make some blasphemous remarks against the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The son came up to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and sought his permission to kill his father. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stopped him. Sayyidnā Abū Bakr ؓ heard his father, Abū Quḥāfah, uttering some insulting words against the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The

most compassionate Ṣiddīq ﷺ became indignant and unexpectedly gave him such a hard slap that he fell down. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ heard about it, he advised Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq ﷺ not do it again. In the battle of Uḥud, Sayyidnā Abū 'Ubaidah's father, Jarrah, was fighting on the side of the unbelievers against the Muslims. In the battlefield, while the battle was on, he purposely came time and again face to face with Sayyidnā Abu 'Ubaidah ﷺ and pursued him. Every time his father came in front of him, Sayyidnā Abū 'Ubaidah ﷺ would, as a mark of respect, move out. But when he persisted, Sayyidnā Abū 'Ubaidah ﷺ had no choice but to kill him. The biography of the blessed Companions is replete with similar incidents. The present set of verses was revealed to laud them. [Qurtubī]

Ruling

Many jurists have ruled that this rule applies equally to all Muslims who transgress or violate the sacred laws of Sharī'ah or in their practical life turn away from them, in that the sincere Muslims should not maintain an intimate friendship or relationship with such transgressors. As explained earlier, *Muwālāh* [intimate friendship] with a *fāsiq* [transgressors] is not possible because intimacy with them is possible if and only if the germs of *fiṣq* [transgression] are lurking in the people befriending them. *Muwāsāh* [sympathy] and *Mu'āmalāt* [dealings] or *Mudārāh* [cordiality] are, however, a different matter to the degree of necessity. This is the reason why the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to pray: "اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَجْعَلْ لِفَاجِرٍ عَلَيَّ يَدًا" "O Allah, do not give any transgressor the upper hand over me." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed thus because if anyone has the upper hand in a situation, he is most likely to get his own way. He will, for instance, show kindness to people and thus gain the upper hand; and the noble persons, on account of the kindness, will feel obliged or duty-bound to return his kindness with love. Thus the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sought refuge with Allah from this situation. [Qurtubī]

وَإِيْدَهُمْ بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ (...and has helped them with a Spirit from Him....58:22)
The word *rūḥ*, according to some authorities on Tafsīr, stands for 'light', which radiates or emanates from Allah and enters the heart of a believer which urges him to perform righteous deeds, and is the source of peace and contentment of the heart. This tranquility and satisfaction is the source of great strength and power. Other authorities say that this word

stands for the Holy Qur'an and the arguments of the Holy Qur'an. This is the real strength and power of a believer. [Qurtubī]. Allah, the Pure and Exalted, knows best!

**Alḥamdulillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah Al-Mujādalah
Ends here.**

Sūrah Al-Ḥashr

(The Mustering)

This Sūrah is Madanī, and it has 24 verses and 3 sections

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

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

Verses 1 - 5

سَبَّحَ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿١﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي اَخْرَجَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِاَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ ۗ مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ اَنْ يَّخْرُجُوْا وَظَنُّوْا اَنْهُمْ مَّانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُوْنُهُمْ مِنَ اللّٰهِ فَاتَّخَذَهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوْا وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوْبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ يُخْرِبُوْنَ بُيُوْتَهُمْ بِاَيْدِيْهِمْ وَاَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۗ فَاعْتَبِرُوْا يَا اُولِي الْاَبْصٰرِ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَوْ لَا اَنْ كَتَبَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَلَاءَ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ عَذَابُ النَّارِ ﴿٣﴾ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنْهُمْ شَاقُوْا اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهُ ۗ وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ اللّٰهَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٤﴾ مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِّنْ لِّيْنَةٍ اَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوْهَا قَائِمَةً عَلٰى اُصُوْلِهَا فَبِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيُخْرِى الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿٥﴾

Allah's purity has been proclaimed by all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. [1] He is the One who expelled

the disbelievers of the People of the Book from their homes at the time of the first gathering.¹ You did not expect that they would leave, and they deemed that their fortresses would protect them from Allah. But Allah came to them from where they did not expect, and cast fear in their hearts when they were spoiling their homes with their own hands and with the hands of the believers. So, learn a lesson, O those who have eyes. [2] And if Allah had not destined exile for them, He would have punished them in the world. And for them in the Hereafter is the torment of the Fire. [3] That is because they were hostile to Allah and His Messenger. And whoever has hostility with Allah, then Allah is severe in punishment. [4] Whatever palm-trees you have cut down, or have left them standing on their roots, it was with Allah's permission, and so that He might disgrace the transgressors. [5]

Commentary

Sequencing of Sūrahs

The preceding Sūrah had condemned the close friendship developed by the hypocrites with the Jews. The present Sūrah describes the punishment faced by the Jews in this world in the form of exile and in the Hereafter in the form of grievous torment.

Cause of Revelation

The story of their banishment from Madīnah is that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ migrated to Madīnah, he concluded a peace treaty with the Jews. Banū Naḍīr, one of the Jew tribes living around Madīnah, were one of the three signatories. The latter tribe lived about two miles

(1) The original word used in the text is '*ḥashr*' which means 'gathering' or 'mustering' and after which this Sūrah is named. In the present context, it may be interpreted in two different ways. One, that it refers to the gathering of the Muslims who ordered the Jews to leave Madīnah due to their constant conspiracies and breaches of the treaty they had with the Muslims. According to this interpretation, the verse means that the Jews of Bani Naḍīr were made to leave the city at the first gathering of the Muslims without fighting and without any further attempt to attack them. The second interpretation is that it refers to the gathering of the Jews for the purpose of emigration. In this case the verse indicates that it was their first exile before which they did not face such a situation. It has another subtle indication to the fact that this was their first exile which will be followed by another one, i.e. the exile faced by the Jews in the days of Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ. (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

away from Madīnah. Once it happened that ‘Amr Ibn ‘Umayyah Ḍamurī killed two persons by mistake. According to Law, the Muslims jointly had to settle the blood-wit. The Holy Prophet ﷺ first collected money from the Muslims for this purpose. Then he decided to collect money from the Jews as well in terms of the treaty he already had with them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ visited the tribe of Banū Naḍīr for this purpose. Before his arrival, they conspired to put an end to his life. When he reached there, they made him sit against a wall and said to him that they were going to gather the blood money. In the meanwhile, they secretly plotted that someone should climb the particular wall in the shade of which the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting and drop a rock on him and kill him. But before the Jews could execute their sinister plan, Allah revealed to him in time about their plot and conspiracy. The Holy Prophet ﷺ instantly left the place, returned to Madīnah and sent a message to Banū Naḍīr that they have betrayed the treaty. Therefore, they are given ten days in which to leave the town and go into exile, and were warned that if they would not meet the deadline, they might be killed at sight. They decided to leave, but ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Ubayy prevented them. He said that they did not have to leave because he had an army of two thousand men who were willing to lay down their lives to protect the Jewish lives. It is stated in Rūḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī on the authority of Ibn Ishāq that along with ‘Abdullāh were Wadī‘ah Ibn Mālīk, Suwaid and Rā‘ish. The Jews fell into the trap of the three and sent a message to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that they would not leave. As a result, he together with the noble Companions marched on that tribe. The Jews locked themselves up in the fortresses, but the hypocrites, being essentially cowards, hid themselves. The Holy Prophet ﷺ laid a siege to the Jewish fortresses. Some of their date palms were felled and others were burnt down. Eventually, they agreed to go into exile. So, the Holy Prophet ﷺ forced them to evacuate and abandon their fortresses and, in kindness, allowed to take with them enough provisions, whatever their cavalry and camelry could carry except arms and weapons, which, they were told, would be confiscated. Some of them went to Syria, while others went to Khaibar. On account of their greed, they carried with them even beams, rafters, woods and the doors of their houses. This incident took place after the battle of Badr in Rabī‘-ul-Awwal 4 AH. Sayyidnā ‘Umar ؓ, during his caliphate, sent them away to Syria to live with the rest of the Jews. The two banishments go under

the names of the 'first banishment' and the 'second banishment'. [Zād-ul-Ma'ād].

The Characteristics of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr and the History of Banū Naḍīr

The entire Sūrah Al-Ḥashr was revealed in connection with Banū Naḍīr [Ibn Ishāq]. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه used to call this Surah, Sūrah Banī Naḍīr. [Ibn Kathīr]. Banū Naḍīr were the descendents of the Holy Prophet Hārūn عليه السلام. Their forefathers were scholars of Torah, which contained a full description of the Last Prophet ﷺ such as his physical features, his signs of Prophet-hood and his migration to Yathrib (Madīnah). This tribe was under the impression that the Last Prophet would be one of the descendents of Holy Prophet Hārūn عليه السلام and they would have the pleasure of being in his company. For this reason, they migrated from Syria and settled in Yathrib. Some of the contemporaries of the Holy Prophet ﷺ were also scholars of the Torah, who saw his physical features and other signs of Prophet-hood and recognized him as the Final Messenger but, as they thought that he would be one of the descendents of Hārūn عليه السلام, they were disappointed when he was raised among the descendents of Ismā'īl عليه السلام. They were jealous and, on account of their jealousy, they were inhibited from embracing the Faith. But in their heart of hearts they knew that Sayyidnā Muḥammad ﷺ was the Final Messenger of Allah. When, in the battle of Badr, they saw the amazing victory of the Muslims and the humiliating defeat of the pagan Quraish, their degree of certainty was somewhat augmented. They even expressed their amazement. But distinguishing between truth and falsehood on the basis, measurement, or standard of the apparent victory and defeat is a weak yardstick. As a result, when in the battle of Uḥud, Muslims initially suffered a temporary setback and some of the Companions were martyred, their certainty was shaken. After that they started conspiring with the pagan Arabs.

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ migrated to Madīnah, as stated earlier, he with his political sagacity felt his first task was to enter into a peace treaty with the Jews of Madīnah and other neighbouring Jewish tribes, stipulating that he would not fight them and they would not fight him, nor would they aid and abet those who take up arms against the Muslims, and if the Jews were attacked, the Muslims would assist them.

There were many other clauses in the peace accord, the details of which are available in 'Sīrah of Ibn Hishām'. All the Jewish tribes, including Banū Naḍīr, had their area, strong fortresses and orchards at a distance of 3.2 kilometers from Madīnah.

Up to the point of the battle of 'Uḥud, they apparently kept to the terms of the treaty. But after that battle, they betrayed the treaty and started conspiring secretly, in that a leader of Banū Naḍīr, Ka'b Ibn Ashraf, went to Makkah with a caravan of forty Jewish members to curry favour with the pagan Quraish who were anxious to avenge the defeat of the battle of Badr, and had gone to the battle of 'Uḥud for that reason but were eventually defeated in the latter battle as well. The defeated men returned and the Jews met them. They conspired and agreed to wage a war against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the Muslims. Ka'b Ibn Ashraf with his forty Jewish members and Abū Sufyān with his forty members of pagan Quraish entered the Sacred Mosque and, holding on the curtain of the House of Allah, pledged that they would jointly fight the Muslims and annihilate them.

When, after this pledge, Ka'b Ibn Ashraf returned to Madīnah, Jibra'īl ﷺ descended and informed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about the entire episode and the details of the pledge. In the meantime, the Holy Prophet ﷺ issued the command to kill Ka'b Ibn Ashraf. A noble Companion Muḥammad Ibn Maslamah killed him.

Subsequently, Banū Naḍīr hatched many different plots to harm the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, one of which was, as reported earlier, their plot to kill him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, after collecting blood money from the Muslims in a particular case of murder, decided to collect money from the Jews in terms of the treaty that was concluded between himself ﷺ, the tribes of Banū Naḍīr, Banū Qainuqā' and Banū Quraizah. Before his arrival, they planned to kill him, as detailed above. The person who was entrusted with the task of throwing a rock on the head of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was a Jew 'Umar Ibn Jaḥḥāsh by name who had volunteered himself for the task. Had it not been for the revelatory information the Holy Prophet ﷺ received from Allah, their plot would have worked. But Allah protected His Messenger ﷺ and the conspiracy was thus thwarted and their plan failed.

A Lesson

It is a remarkable co-incidence that subsequently the entire Banū Naḍīr clan was expelled from Madīnah except for two persons who embraced the Islamic Faith and were spared: One of them was 'Umar Ibn Jaḥḥāsh and the other was his paternal uncle Yamin Ibn 'Amr Ibn Ka'b. [Ibn Kathīr].

The Story of 'Amr Ibn Umayyah Ḍamurī

Under the rubric of 'cause of revelation' above, reference was made to the incident that 'Amr Ibn Umayyah Ḍamurī accidentally killed two men. The Muslims as well as the Jews had to jointly settle the blood-wit in terms of the treaty existing between them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ collected money from the Muslims for this purpose. Then he decided to collect money from the Jews. The Holy Prophet ﷺ visited the tribe of Banū Naḍīr in their area for this purpose. Ibn Kathīr writes that the enemy plans to harm the Muslims are many and long-drawn-out. One famous incident in Islamic history is that of Bi'r Ma'ūnah: Some of the hypocrites and the non-believers requested the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to send a band of the noble Companions to preach the religion of Islam. He dispatched about seventy Companions for the purpose. Later on it was discovered that this was a mere conspiracy. The plan was to surround them and kill them, in which they succeeded. Of the seventy Muslims, only 'Amr Ibn Umayyah Ḍamurī managed to escape. He had seen and experienced the dishonesty and treachery of the non-believers, and how they mercilessly massacred sixty-nine of his brethren. In the circumstances, one can imagine how his emotions would have been against the enemies. Co-incidentally, when he was returning to Madīnah he encountered two non-believers and killed them. Later on it was discovered that the two men killed were members of Banī 'Āmir, a tribe which was an ally of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Banū Naḍīr was also an ally of Banī 'Āmir tribe.

The agreements of Muslim politicians were not like the political agreements of today in which every effort is made at the very beginning to find out ways to escape or violate it. In the case of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the early sincere Muslims, whatever the tongue uttered or the pen wrote was treated as part of religion and Divine law and binding. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ learnt about 'Amr Ibn 'Umayyah Ḍamurī's error of judgement, he decided to pay the blood-wit, in terms of the sacred

law of Shari'ah, for the two men killed. In this matter, he first collected money from the Muslims and then he had to go to Banū Naḍīr for collection. [Ibn Kathīr]

Tolerance and Human Rights in Islam: A Model for Present-day Politicians

There are many lessons in the incidents cited above for the heralds of human rights, and for the political leaders and the big powers who talk highly about them and are deemed as 'Champions of Human Rights'. Let us look at the case of Banū Naḍīr: They unceasingly were involved in conspiracies, endlessly behaved treacherously and continuously plotted to kill the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Would the present-day political leaders or heads of governments tolerate all this? How would they treat them? Nowadays, the opponents are killed even by sprinkling petrol on them or in some other execution style. There is no need for political leadership or government for that purpose. A few wicked hooligans gather together and carry out the executions. The official wrath and anger manifest itself much more grievously .

But here we are describing the government of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ: Even when the enemy conspiracies and treacheries reached the peak, no massacre was contemplated. No thought of usurping their property and wealth was ever considered. In fact, the following humane punitive measures were taken:

[1] They were allowed to take all their wealth with them, and were ordered only to evacuate the town.

[2] To do this, they were given ten days, so that they might be able to take their things comfortably and transfer themselves to some other place. When they did not comply, it became necessary to take a sterner measure at national level.

[3] Some trees were though cut down and others were burned down, but even at that stage, no edict was issued to burn down their fortresses or attack them and kill them on a large scale.

[4] When they expressed that it was in their best interests to go into exile, they were given the choice that each man could take with him as much provisions as his camel could carry. As a result, they carried their

hooks, latches, doors, planks, beams and rafters.

[5] No Muslim ever frowned upon any of the persons transferring his stuff. They took their things and moved out peacefully and safely.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ showed this kindness to them when they were completely subdued and he was in complete command of the situation. He had the power to fully avenge their treachery, dishonesty and conspiracy. But he did not do it. This behavior of the Holy Prophet ﷺ corresponds to his behavior with the pagans of Makkah when he entered the city after the triumph.

Let us now explain some expressions of these verses in the background of these events.

لَاوِلِ الْحَشْرِ (...at the time of the first gathering...59:2). The word *ḥashr* means 'to rise'. One reason for referring to it as the 'first mustering' is given by Maulānā Thanawi in his Tafsīr. They were settled at one place since ancient times. This event of banishment took place for the first time in their life. The second reason could be that all the non-Muslims of the Arabian peninsula would have to be evacuated in future, so that the peninsula might become a strong fortress of Islam. As a result, a second banishment was to take place at some later time. This happened during the caliphate of 'Umar رضي الله عنه, the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Second Successor. He banished all the Jews who had settled in Khaibar. He ordered all the Jews to leave the Arabian peninsula. From this point of view, Banū Naḍīr's banishment is the 'first banishment' and the 'second banishment' took place in the time of Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه.

فَاتَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا (...But Allah came to them from where they did not expect...59:2). The phrase 'Allah came' means 'the command of Allah and His obedient angels came'.

يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (...they were spoiling their homes with their own hands and with the hands of the believers....59:2) Banū Naḍīr had spoiled their houses by removing their doors and shutters. 'Spoiling their homes with the hands of the believers' means that when the Jews locked themselves up in their fortresses, the Muslims destroyed the trees and homes outside the fortresses to make them surrender.

مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِّن لِّينَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا قَائِمَةً عَلَىٰ أُصُولِهَا فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيُخْرِجَ الْفَاسِقِينَ (Whatever

palm-trees you have cut down, or have left them standing on their roots, it was with Allah's permission, and so that He might disgrace the transgressors....59:5). The word *līnah* refers to a 'palm-tree'. Another opinion states that besides '*ajwah*', all other palm trees are referred to as *līnah*. Banū Naḍīr's orchards were comprised of palm trees. The reference in the verse is to the cutting, by the orders of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, of the palm trees of Banū Naḍīr who had shut themselves in their fortresses in defiance of the Holy Prophet's orders to surrender. So, some of the blessed Companions, in order to anger them or cast terror into their hearts, cut and burned down some of their date trees. Other Companions felt that the palm-trees should not be destroyed because soon, God willing, the Muslims will be victorious and the orchards will fall to their lot as booty. Thus they did not participate in the destruction of the trees. This was a difference of opinion. Later on when this disagreement was discussed, the Companions who participated in the destruction of the trees or orchards felt guilty. They asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ whether they were really guilty of a sin, in that they destroyed the property that was going to fall to the lot of the Muslims. Verse [5] was revealed on that occasion to assuage the guilt-feeling of the Muslims that whatever they have done, whether they cut the trees or left them uncut, was by Allah's leave and it was done to degrade the ungodly Jews.

Commandment of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is in fact the Commandment of Allah: A Warning for those who Refute the authority of the Aḥādīth

In verse [5], the cutting down of the trees or leaving them uncut is called *bi-idhni-llah* [with Allah's permission] whereas neither of the actions was the explicit command of Allah. Apparently, whatever each group did was on the basis of independent reasoning [*Ijtihād*]. At most, it is possible that they might have sought the permission of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which is a Ḥadīth. The 'Prophet's permission' is referred to as 'Allah's permission' in the Qur'ān. Thus the Qur'ān makes plain that Allah has given His Messenger the right to legislate laws. The forthcoming verse [7] of this Surah puts it that believers need to hold fast to what the Messenger bids them and abstain from what he forbids them. This shows conclusively that the Sunnah is an independent source of the Islamic Law .

Disagreement in *ijtihād* is not a sin

Another important principle derived from this verse is that if those who are competent to undertake *ijtihād* disagree with another on a particular issue, so as one of them holds something as permissible, while the other takes it as impermissible, neither of them would be counted as sinners, nor will the principle of *nahy 'anil-munkar* (forbidding evil) be applied to this situation, because none of the two rulings is an 'evil' in the sight of Allah. Under the concluding phrase of verse [5] *وَلِيُخْزِيَ الْفَاسِقِينَ* (...and that he might disgrace the transgressors) it was explained that the act of cutting or burning down the trees cannot be construed as disorderliness. But it was done to degrade the unbelievers, and therefore it carries reward in the Hereafter.

Ruling

Is it legitimate to demolish or burn down the homes of the infidels, or cut or burn down their trees, or destroy their fields and farms? The leading authorities on Islamic Jurisprudence are not unanimous on this question. Imām A'zam Abū Ḥanīfah رحمه الله تعالى rules that all of these actions are permitted. Shaikh Ibn Humam رحمه الله تعالى, however, qualifies the ruling and restricts it. He rules that all of the above are permitted if and only if the enemies cannot be vanquished or overpowered without resorting to the above measures, or if the victory of Muslims is not probable or likely. The whole purpose of this ruling is to break the might and power of the enemy. In the case where Muslims do not win the struggle, destruction of their moveable and immovable properties may be included in weakening their might and main. [Maẓharī]

Verse 6 - 10

وَمَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ فَمَا أَوْجَفْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَلَا رِكَابٍ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ رُسُلَهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٦﴾ مَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَى فَلِلَّهِ وَاللِّرَسُولِ وَلِلَّذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ لَا كَيْ لَا يَكُونُ دَوْلَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ

وَمَا نَهَيْكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٧﴾
 لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ
 فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۗ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ
 الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ
 هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ
 عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۗ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ
 فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ
 رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي
 قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

And whatever *fai'*¹ (left over property) Allah has passed on to His Messenger from them, you had not urged on your horses or camels for it, but Allah gives predominance to His messengers over whomsoever He wills, and Allah is Powerful over every thing. [6] Whatever *fai'* Allah has passed on to His Messenger from the people of the towns is for Allah and for the Messenger, and for the kinsmen and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, so that it may not circulate only between the rich among you. And whatever the Messengers gives you, take it, and whatever thing he forbids you, abstain (from it). And fear Allah. Indeed Allah is severe in punishment. [7] (And *fai'* is especially) for the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and properties, while they were seeking the grace of Allah and (His) pleasure, and were helping Allah and His Messenger. They are the truthful. [8] And (*fai'* is also for) those who established themselves in the homeland (of Madīnah) and in faith before the former ones (arrived in Madīnah), who have love for those who emigrated to them, and do not feel in their hearts any

[1] *fai'* is a term for the properties left over by the non-Muslims and possessed by a Muslim state without fighting. As opposed to this, *ghanimah* (booty) is a property taken over by fighting. The properties of Bani Naḍīr were taken over without fighting, hence the word *fai'*. That is why we did not translate *fai'* as 'booty'.

need for what is given to the former ones (from *fai'*), and give preference to them over themselves, even though they are in poverty. And whoever is saved from the greed of his soul, then such people are the successful. [9] And (*fai'* is also) for those who came after them saying, "Our Lord, forgive us and those of our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not place in our hearts any rancor against those who believe; Surely, Our Lord, you are Very-Kind, Very-Merciful." [10]

Commentary

The Concept of *Fai'* and its Law of Distribution

وَمَا أَقَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ (And whatever *fai'* [left over property] Allah has passed on to His Messenger from them, ...59:6). The word *afā'a* is derived from *fai'un* which means 'to return'. Thus the time of the afternoon when the shade of things returns to the east is referred to as *fai'*. The real ownership of the entire universe belongs to Allah. The ownership of things can be ascribed to human beings when Allah Himself declares them, through His Law, to be under the ownership of a human being. However, when people rebel against Allah, indulging in disbelief and *shirk*, their lives and properties are confiscated through properly constituted Authority and their ownership return to the Real Owner, Allah. From this point of view, all properties acquired from the unbelievers should be called *fai'*. However, the sacred Law of Sharī'ah draws a distinction between the terms *ghanīmah* [spoils] and *fai'*. The former refers to a property which is acquired from non-Muslims through active armed struggle, as in [8:41] *وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ* (And know that whatever spoils you receive...). However, the word '*fai'*' refers to a property acquired without resorting to an actual fight, (like in a state of peaceful surrender.) These two terms have been used to set down rules of these two types in the Holy Qur'ān. Sūrah Al-Anfāl dealt with injunctions relating to *ghanīmah* or spoils, which is acquired from non-Muslims in the wake of armed struggle. The present Sūrah takes up the subject of *fai'* and the law of its distribution. The term *fai'* includes any property or wealth which the non-Muslims might leave behind and run away, or make over to the Muslim Authority willingly or with consent like *Khirāj*, *jizyah* or commercial duty.

مَا أَقَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَى (Whatever *fai'* Allah has passed on to His Messenger from the people of the towns... 59:7). The phrase *ahl ul-qurā*

or 'the people of the towns' refers to the Jewish tribes like Banū Naḍīr and Banū Quraizah whose wealth and property were obtained without armed struggle. The laws pertaining to the distribution of the two types of spoils are different. Unlike *ghanīmah* [spoils of war], *fai'* is not distributed among the *mujāhidin* (participants in fighting). The Holy Prophet ﷺ is granted full authority to give as much as he likes to whomsoever he likes or to retain for himself at his discretion. However, a few classes of beneficiaries have been clearly defined. The *fai'* must be distributed among the defined five classes.

The foregoing verses set down the rules pertaining to *fai'*, its beneficiaries and its method of distribution. Some details are available at the beginning of Sūrah Al-Anfāl in Volume 4 of Ma'āriful Qur'ān, pages 148-151 and more details of the injunctions are available in the same volume on pages 221-229, under verse 41. It needs to be borne in mind that the wordings of Sūrah Al-Anfāl regarding *Khums* [1/5th] of *ghanīmah* is almost identical to the wordings of *fai'* mentioned in the present verse. Let us compare: 8:41 reads: 'وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَاللرَّسُولِ وَالَّذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ (And know that whatever spoils you receive, its one-fifth is for Allah and His Messenger and for kinsmen and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer... 8:41). Verse [7] of the present Sūrah reads as above which means: "Whatever *fai'* Allah has passed on to His Messenger from the people of the towns is for Allah and for His Messenger, and for kinsmen and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer....59:7). In both these verses, six classes of beneficiaries are mentioned: Allah, the Messenger, kinsmen, orphans, the needy and the wayfarer. It is all too clear that Allah is the Real Owner and Master of this world, the next world and the entire creation. The name of Allah in relation to the shares has been mentioned by way of blessing or benediction, because the wealth or property thus associated with Allah's name attains honour and distinction. It also points to the permissibility and purity of the wealth. This is the view of Sayyidnā Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī, Qatādah, 'Aṭā', Ibrāhīm, Sha'bī and the commentators in general. [Maḥzarī]

In the commentary of Sūrah Al-Anfāl, it was fully and exhaustively explained how wealth attains honour and distinction by the mention of Allah's name which, in brief, amounts to the following: The prophets are

not allowed to avail of Ṣadaqāt or charities, even though they are derived from the pure wealth of the Muslims. The question might arise how the *ghanīmah* and *fai'* are made lawful for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, while they are derived from the infidels? By mentioning Allah's name at the beginning of the verse, this doubt has been removed. The point is that Allah is the real owner of the entire universe. Human beings come to own certain things when Allah by His own grace declares for them to pass into human ownership. However, when a certain segment of human beings rebels against Allah, Jihād is waged against them by Allah's command, which means that, during the war, their lives and properties are no longer sacred. In this way, all their wealth is confiscated in the name of the Authority in command. The confiscated properties are named *ghanīmah*, spoils or war booty - which goes out of the ownership of disbelievers and gets itself deposited separately as being under the ownership of Allah alone. And as stated earlier, the word *fai'* contains the meaning of 'return' and the wealth is so called because its ownership is restored to the original owner, Allah. No human being has any entitlement to it. The beneficiaries who will receive a share of it will receive it direct from Allah, and therefore it will be lawful and pure like water and self-growing grass which are direct Divine gift, lawful and pure.

In short, the mention of Allah's name in this context points to the fact that the entire wealth belongs to Allah, and it is granted to the beneficiaries on His behalf. It is no *ṣadaqah* or *khairāt* [charity].

This leaves us with five classes of beneficiaries: [1] The Messenger ﷺ; [2] kinsmen; [3] orphans; [4] the needy; and [5] the wayfarer. The same five classes of beneficiaries of *khums* [1/5th] were determined in [8:41] and now the same classes of beneficiaries are determined for *fai'* property. The rules relating to both *ghanīmah* and *fai'* properties are identical: They are in full authority of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and after him in the authority of the Caliphs. The Authority may retain them for the benefit of Muslims in general, or they may deposit them in *bait-ul-māl* [public treasury] and do not grant anything to anyone, or they may distribute them. If it is decided to be distributed, it must be done within the five classes defined. [Qurṭubī]

The practice of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and of other noble

Companions shows that *fai'* property was in the Authority of the Holy Prophet ﷺ during his time, and was left to his discretion. He may disburse it as he deemed fit. After him, his Caliphs controlled it and disbursed it according to their best judgement.

After the demise of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, his share of the booty fell into disuse. The word 'Kinsmen' in the verse means the kinsmen of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There were two reasons why they were granted a share from this booty: Firstly, because they helped the Holy Messenger ﷺ and supported him in his Islamic activities. Therefore, even the rich kinsmen of the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to be granted a share from the booty. [2] Ṣadaqah [charity] was unlawful for the Holy Prophet's kinsmen. Therefore, the poor and needy relatives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to be granted a share from the *fai'* rather than from the Ṣadaqah [charity]. After the demise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, helping and supporting him came to an end. The first reason no longer existed. Therefore, the share from the *fai'* of the rich relatives fell into disuse like that of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. However, the poor and the needy relatives continued to receive their share from the *fai'* on account of poverty and need. Priority was given to the poor and needy relatives of Allah's Messenger ﷺ over other poor and needy people. [Hidāyah]. See Ma'āriful Qur'an, Vol. 4/pp 228-229.

كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ (...so that it may not circulate only between the rich among you.59:7). The word *dūlatah* refers to the 'wealth or good fortune that exchange hands'. [Qurṭubī] The verse means that Allah has determined the heads of expenditure for the *fai'* in this way so that the wealth does not circulate among the wealthy, who would spend it as they wish and desire and give none of it to the poor. The verse is aimed at abolishing an old practice of the Days of Ignorance where the circulation of such wealth used to remain confined to the privileged and propertied class or caste. The poorer segment of the society had no entitlement to the wealth of the nation.

Effective Measures taken by Islam against concentration of wealth

Allah is the creator, cherisher and sustainer of the universe. He knows the human needs. All human beings, whether believers or non-believers, whether lineally rich or poor, are equal in the sight of

Allah. Allah has to a very large extent kept the distribution of man's natural and basic needs in His own Hands, so that every class, every region, every weak and strong people might be able to benefit equally. Allah has, through His consummate wisdom, kept all such needs beyond man's personal domination. No human being dare take possession of these things personally. Air, wind, atmosphere, the Sun, the Moon, the light of the stars and planets, the rain-laden clouds – all these things are such without which no human can survive for a moment. Allah, the Almighty, has declared all natural resources a public endowment for all. Not even the greatest of sovereign authorities, by virtue of their ruling powers, can ever monopolize or take possession of them. Allah's creation avails of them equally everywhere.

The second category of necessities of life is what the earth produces, as for instance water and other food-stuff. This is not commonly available. However, Islamic law has declared hills and mountains, unpopulated jungles and natural springs as public endowments. However, legitimate right of ownership of some parts of the earth are allowed under special laws to specific human beings. Some people illegitimately grab the land, but naturally even the greatest capitalist cannot derive benefit from the land without the help of the poor, the farmers or the laborers. Thus despite a sort of ownership of it, he is forced to give shares to other powerless and the indigent.

The third category is gold, silver and money, which do not fall under the basic and natural necessities of life. But Allah has made them the means of acquiring all essentials of life. People who mine gold and silver from the ground become their owners subject to certain rules. The right of their ownership is transferred in various ways to other people. If they are widely distributed and are in easy circulation in human society, no individual will go without food and clothing. But what happens in our days is that the greedy people want to benefit from the wealth to the exclusion of others. This led to miserliness and greed which, in turn, led to some old and some new systems of monopolization and concentration of wealth. As a result, people's wealth concentrated in the hands of a few capitalists and people at the helm of affairs. The rest of the population who were poor and indigent had to suffer, because they were deprived of their share in the nation's wealth. This economic situation, as a reaction, gave birth to such unreasonable economic systems as communism and

socialism.

Islamic economic system, on the one hand, shows the highest respect to individual property rights, in that an individual's lawful property is as sacred and inviolable as human life itself, and human life is as sacred and inviolable as the House of Allah. Its violation has been most strongly prohibited. On the other hand, if a hand filches or steals it, it is, under penal law, amputated. In the third place, all such doors have been shut, through which a particular individual or group of individuals might monopolize it and deprive the general public.

The unjust and unbalanced way of acquisition of wealth, such as by usury, speculation, gambling and betting, allows wealth to concentrate and circulate in the hands of a few individuals. Islam has declared all such gains as unlawful and cut at the root of all such transactions in trade and tenancy that are based on unlawful practices. Wealth that is gained through lawful means has specific ways of spending: The needy and the indigent are shareholders in the wealth in the form of *Zakāh*, *Ushr*, *Ṣadaqat-ul-Fiṭr* [*Id* charity], various forms of expiation and so on. The surplus wealth may be given away in voluntary charity. If a man leaves behind assets at the time of his death, Divine wisdom has set down specific rules according to which it must be distributed. The shareholders in the assets are the relatives of the deceased, the principle in this case being *al-'aqrab- fal-'aqrab*, that is 'relatives in order of relationship'. In other words, Islamic law of succession is based on blood relationship; the nearer in degree to the deceased excludes the more remote. The needy in general have not been made the shareholders, because if that were the case, the dying person would have felt the need to spend his assets anyhow, rightly or wrongly, before his death. When he sees only his near and dear ones receiving, this urge does not develop in his heart.

This means of acquiring wealth blocks the way to monopolization. The second means of acquiring wealth is war and *jihād*. The gains made in this way are distributed according to the Islamic rules. Some of them have been set down in Sūrah Al-Anfāl and others in this Sūrah. How unwise and short-sighted are those people who give up Islam's balanced system of economics based on justice, fair-play and compassion, and innovate new systems of wealth distribution, which are unjust and unbalanced, and disturb world peace?

... Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatever thing he forbids you, abstain [from it]. And fear Allah....59:7). This verse is in connection with *fai'* property, and it purports to say that Allah has set down the beneficiaries of this property. However, the question which beneficiary will receive how much have been left to the discretion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, the Muslims are advised to happily accept the amount the Holy Prophet ﷺ grants them, and they should not be anxious to receive what he has not given to them. This has been further emphasized by the injunction اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ (Fear Allah). If anyone collects under false pretext more than what he is granted, Allah is fully aware and will punish him.

The Messenger's Command is Binding like the Qur'ānic Command

Although the verse was revealed in connection with *fai'*, its words are general. They are not specific to wealth. They cover all the commands as well. Hence, the generalized meaning of the verse is that whatever the Holy Prophet ﷺ gives to a person, be it wealth, any other grant or any command, the people must show their willingness to accept it. And whatever he forbids them, they should stay away from it.

Many of the Companions took the generalized sense of the verse, and on the basis of it, they took the Holy Prophet's ﷺ commandment as binding as the Qur'ānic commandment. Qurṭubī said that in this verse the antonym of *ātā* [gives] is *nahā* [forbids]. This shows that the verb *ātā* [gives] is used in the sense of *amara* [commands] which is the direct antonym of *nahā* [forbids]. The Qur'ān, instead of using the direct opposite of *naha* [forbids] which is *amara* [commands], employed the verb *ātā* [gives] presumably to embrace the context of the subject-matter where the verse occurs, that is, the disbursement of *fai'* property.

Sayyidnā 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ once saw a person in the state of *iḥrām* wearing sewn clothes (which is impermissible in that state). He asked him to take off the clothes. The person asked him to recite a Qur'ānic verse in support of his claim that a pilgrim is prohibited to put on a sewn garb. Sayyidnā 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd ؓ recited this very verse مَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ (Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it....").

Imām Shāfi'ī رحمه الله تعالى once said to his congregation: (Ask whatever question you wish, and I will answer from the Qur'ān.) A person said that

a pilgrim killed a wasp in the state of *iḥrām* and asked: "What is the rule about it?" Imām Shāfi'ī رحمه الله تعالى recited this verse of the Qur'an مَا آتَاكُمْ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ (Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it...." and coupled it with a Tradition which gives the injunction relating to the killing of a wasp. [Qurṭubī].

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ ([And *fai'* is especially] for the poor emigrants...[59:8]". The few verses from here till the end of the section describe the poor emigrants (*muhājirīn*), helpers (*Anṣār*) and the general members of Ummah that were yet to come in this world. Grammatically, the prepositional phrase 'for the emigrants' is a complement to the prepositional phrase 'for the kinsmen' occurring in verse [7] [Maḥzarī]. What this verse purports to say is that although the beneficiaries of *fai'* are orphans, the needy and the wayfarers as mentioned in the preceding verse, priority and precedence will be given to those whose service to religion, personal qualities and religious perfection are well-known.

Priority should be given to the Indigent Righteous and Religious Scholars serving the Cause of Islam when distributing Charity

This shows that although charities, especially *fai'* are meant to fulfill the needs of the indigent Muslims in general, the righteous, especially students and learned scholars serving the cause of religion should be given priority over all others. This is the reason why Islamic governments gave allowance from the *fai'* fund to learned scholars, *muftīs* and judges for serving the cause of education, propagation of Islam and reform of human beings, because these verses establish two categories of the noble Companions. Under the first category fall the emigrants who in the very first instance made great sacrifices for Islam and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They endured great hardships, and eventually bid farewell to their wealth and property, to their land and country, and to their relatives and the near and dear ones, and emigrated to Madīnah. Under the second category fall the *Anṣār*, the natives of Madīnah who helped the emigrants and cooperated with them. They invited the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and with him the emigrants and thus caused the whole world around them to stand in their opposition. Their hospitality is unparalleled in the annals of the nations of the world. After these two major categories, comes a third category which comprises those people who embraced Islam after the blessed Companions and followed their footsteps closely. The last category

embraces all Muslims who will follow until the Last Hour. The three categories are discussed below, in succession.

The Merits of al-Muhājirīn [The Emigrants]

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

([And *fai'* is especially] for the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and properties, while they were seeking the grace of Allah and (His) pleasure, and were helping Allah and His Messenger. They are the truthful....59:8)

This verse describes all the characteristics of the emigrants. The first of them is that they were driven from their homes and wealth, that is to say, their only crime was that they had embraced Islam and supported the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as a result of which the pagans of Makkah persecuted them, so much so that they had to abandon their hearths and homes and emigrate to Madīnah. Some of them had to tie stones to their stomach in account of unbearable hunger, and others used to protect themselves against cold by digging holes in the ground, because they did not have clothes to save them from the chill of winter. [Maḏharī, Qurṭubī]

An Important Issue: The rule about the control of unbelievers over the wealth and property of the Muslims

This verse describes the emigrants as poor, whereas a *faqīr* [poor] in Islamic law refers to a person who has no property whatever, or a person who possesses a little property, but is poor because he does not possess the minimum amount of property constituting *niṣāb* of *Zakāh*. However, most of the emigrants were rich, wealthy and affluent while they were in Makkah. Even after migration, if the wealth had remained in their ownership, it would be inappropriate to refer to them as 'poor' because they had *niṣāb* of *Zakāh*. But the Qur'ān refers to them as 'poor' and thus points out that the wealth and property which they had left behind in Makkah, and the pagans subsequently took possession of them, became the property of the pagans and the Muslims lost its ownership.

Therefore, Imāms Abū Ḥanīfah and Mālik رحمه الله تعالى ruled that if Muslims abandon their homes and possessions and migrate to some other land, and the non-believers take control of their abandoned homes and property, the ownership passes into their hands and Muslims lose

ownership. Similarly, if - God forbid! - the unbelievers conquer an Islamic country, usurping Muslim property and wealth, then after having full control over it, they are deemed as owners of that property. Consequently, their transactions of sale and purchase of such properties are recognized in Shari'ah. Maḥzarī has, on this occasion in his commentary, cited all the relevant Traditions supporting this view.

The second characteristic of the emigrants is described thus: **يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا** (...seeking the grace of Allah and [His] pleasure...59:8). When they embraced Islam, abandoned their country and wealth and migrated, they did not have any ulterior motive. They did all this only to seek Divine favour and gain His good pleasure. This indicates their perfect sincerity. The word *faql* [bounty, grace] is normally used for worldly blessings and *riḍwān* [good pleasure] for blessings of the Hereafter. From this viewpoint, the verse purports to describe that the emigrants gave up all their previous means of luxury, such as their hearths and homes, and now they were in quest of their worldly needs and the blessings of the Hereafter in the shade of Islam. Their objective was to seek the necessities of worldly life under the banner of Allah's and His Messenger's ﷺ efficacious grace.

The third characteristic of the emigrants is described thus: **وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ** (...and were helping Allah and His Messenger...59:8). The phrase 'help Allah' means to help His religion, for which they made tremendous and amazing self-sacrifices.

The fourth characteristic of the emigrants is described thus: **أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصّٰدِقُونَ** (... They are the truthful...59:8). That is, such people are sincerely true in words and deeds. The covenant they made with Allah and His Messenger by reciting the *kalimah*, they duly fulfilled it and proved themselves to be true about it. This verse candidly testifies to the truthfulness of all emigrant Companions. Anyone calling any of them a 'liar' cannot be a Muslim, because he is rejecting this verse. God forbid! Rawāfiḍ call these Companions 'hypocrites'. This is a clear rejection of the verse. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ held the emigrant Companions in such high esteem that when he prayed to Allah, he would supplicate through their *wasīlah*. [as transmitted by Al-Baghawī and Maḥzarī].

The Merits of Anṣār [The Helpers]

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ (And [*fai*' is also for] those who established

themselves in the homeland [of Madīnah] and in faith before the former ones [arrived in Madīnah] ...59:9). The word *tabawwu'* means 'to make dwelling in the abode'. The word *dar* refers to Madīnah which has a special distinction. Therefore, Imām Mālik رحمته الله, from one point of view, regarded Madīnah Ṭayyibah as the most distinguishable of all the cities in the world. He used to say that wherever Islam reached and any city that was conquered, it was conquered by means of *jihād* - including Makkah Mukarramah. Madīnah Ṭayyibah is the only exception. It was conquered by means of *'Imān*. [Qurtubī].

In this verse, under the word *tabawwu'* [to settle in an abode] the words *dār* [home] and *'imān* [faith] are coupled. It could be objected that a 'home' can be found in a place where a person might settle in, but 'faith' is not an 'abode' where a person might find a place to settle in. Some of the scholars take the position that in this context the following verbs *أَخْلَصُوا* or *تَمَكَّنُوا* to be understood and they mean "These are the people who settled in their abode and became sincere and strong in their faith". It is possible to take the word 'faith' in its metaphorical sense, that is in the sense that 'it is a fortified house' where refuge is taken. The phrase *min qablihim* [before them] describes another characteristic of Anṣār, which means that they had settled in Madīnah before the Emigrants, while Madīnah was so important a city that all the Muslims living in Makkah were ordered to emigrate to it and it became the center of Islam.

The second characteristic of the Helpers is described in *يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ* (...have love for those who emigrated to them...59:9) The Emigrants from Makkah came to the Helpers, deprived and denuded of all their possessions. Normally, no community is willing to allow such a large number of distressed people to settle in their city. Instead, the quarrels between natives and emigrants are found everywhere. But the Anṣār received them with open arms and made them equal partners in their belongings. The bond of love and brotherhood which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ established between the Emigrants and the Helpers, and to which this verse bears an eloquent testimony, stands unrivalled in the whole history of human relationships. There was no dearth of the Helpers who were eager to take on the Emigrants. In fact, for each Emigrant there were several applications to take him on. There were many instances in which lots had to be cast. When the lot of a particular Helper

fell in favour of a particular Emigrant, he was handed to him. [Mazharī]

The third characteristic of the Helpers is described in *وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا* (...and do not feel in their hearts any need for what is given to the former ones [from *fai'*], ...[59:9]). This statement is concerned with the banishment of Banū Naḍīr and their orchards and homes falling into Muslim hands.

Distribution of Banū Naḍīr's properties

As stated earlier, the relevant verse has given discretionary powers to the Holy Prophet ﷺ in matters of distributing the *fai'* property. It was a time when the Muhājirīn (Emigrants) had neither homes of their own nor any property. They lived in the homes of the Anṣār, and worked on their farms to earn their livelihood. When the wealth of Banū Naḍīr and Banū Qainuqā' were obtained as *fai'*, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ called the leader of the Anṣār, Sayyidnā Thābit Ibn Qais Ibn Shammās ؓ, and asked him to bring his people to him. He asked: "O Messenger of Allah, should I call my tribe of the Anṣār, Banū Khazraj, or all of the tribes of the Anṣār?" He replied: "All of them." They all gathered. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered a sermon in which he spoke highly of the Anṣār as to the manner in which they accommodated the Refugee brethren. He said it was a work of great determination and courage. After that he said: 'Allah has granted you the wealth of Banū Naḍīr. If you wish, I will divide the wealth between the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār; and the Refugees will remain as usual in the homes of the Anṣār. Or if you wish, the wealth may be distributed among the homeless Refugees; and they may move out of your homes and settle in their own homes.'

Having heard this sermon, two of the great chiefs of the Anṣār, Sayyidnā Sa'd Ibn 'Ubadah and Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh ؓ - stood and said: "O Messenger of Allah, we are of the view that the entire wealth of *fai'* be distributed among the Refugee brethren, and in addition they may continue to reside in our homes as usual." At this all the Anṣār unanimously said, "We concur with this decision and are happy with it." On that occasion, the Holy Prophet ﷺ supplicated for the Anṣār and their children. He then distributed the entire *fai'* among the Muhājirīn. Only two of the Anṣār received a grant from the *fai'*, because they were very poor. Their names are Sayyidnā Sahl Ibn Ḥunaif ؓ and Abū Dujānah ؓ. Sayyidnā Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh ؓ was given a sword which was a

distinguished sword of Ibn Abil-Ḥuqaiq. [Maẓharī with reference to Sabī-ur-Rashād by Muḥammad Ibn Yūsuf As-Ṣāliḥī]

The present verse admires the Anṣār on this attitude by saying, وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا (...and do not feel in their hearts any need for what is given to the former ones [from *fai'*], ...59:9). The word 'need' means 'any item of need'. The verse means 'Whatever the Muhājirīn were granted in this distribution, the Anṣār happily accepted it as if they had no need for any of those items. It was inconceivable that they would complain about it enviously.' When Baḥrain was conquered, the same spirit of self-sacrifice was displayed again by the Anṣār. The Holy Prophet ﷺ expressed his intention to distribute the entire conquered lands of that territory among the Anṣār, but they courteously refused to accept any share of it unless a similar share was granted to the Muhājirīn.

The fourth characteristic of the Anṣār is described in the verse is: وَيُؤْتُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ (...and give preference (to them) over themselves, even though they are in poverty ...59:9). The word *khaṣāṣah* means 'poverty' and the word *īthār* means 'to prefer the wish, need and desire of others above those of oneself'. The meaning of the verse is that the Anṣār used to prefer the needs of others (i.e. the Muhājirīn,) to their own needs. That is, the former used to fulfil the needs of the latter first, then they would fulfil their own needs, even though they themselves were poor and needy.

For the interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses, there is no need to recount incidents. But because they develop in human beings the highest degree of human qualities and bring about a reform in their lives, the commentators have recounted these events in detail on this occasion, especially Qurṭubī. We cite below a few of them from his commentary.

It is recorded in Tirmidhī on the authority of Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه that one night a guest came to an Anṣārī's house. The latter had only as much food as he and his children could eat. He said to his wife: 'Put the children off to sleep somehow, and put out the lamp. Then place the food in front of the guest, and sit next to him so that he may be under the impression that we too are eating, but we will not eat so that the guest may be able to eat comfortably.' At this, the present verse was revealed. [At-Tirmidhī has rated this *ḥadīth* as '*ḥasan, ṣaḥīḥ*'].

Tirmidhī records another narration on the authority of Sayyidnā Abu Hurairah ؓ that a person came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said: "I am hungry and distressed." The Holy Prophet ﷺ sent a message to one of his blessed wives, but she replied: "We do not have anything except water." Then he sent a message to his another wife, and she made the same reply. Then to a third one and then to a fourth one until the message went to all the mothers of the faithful, and they all replied that they had nothing besides water. Then he addressed the congregation and asked if any of them would be willing to entertain the guest, in response to which a venerable Anṣārī said: "O Messenger of Allah, I will entertain him." So he took him with and asked his wife whether there was anything to eat. She replied: "Only as much as our children could eat." He asked his wife to put the children to sleep and then said: "Place the food in front of the guest, sit and then get up and put out the lamp. The guest should not feel that we are not eating." The guest ate the food. In the morning, the Companion went to the Holy Prophet ﷺ who informed him that Allah was very pleased with the way he handled the situation the previous night.

Mahdawī narrates a similar incident of Sayyidnā Thābit Ibn Qais ؓ, a venerable Anṣārī who entertained his guest one night by putting the light off. There is a common statement appended to all these incidents: 'The above verse was revealed in connection with this event.'

Qushairī cites a story on the authority of Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar ؓ who reports that a person sent the head of a goat as a gift to a venerable personality from among the blessed Companions. He thought that about a Muslim brother that he and his family are more in need of this, so he sent the head to him. When the second venerable Companion received it, he sent it to a third person who in turn sent it to a fourth person. In this way it circulated in seven houses and eventually it returned to the first venerable personality. On this occasion, the verse was revealed. Tha'labī has also recorded this narration on the authority of Sayyidnā Anas ؓ.

It is recorded in Muwaṭṭā' of Imām Mālik رحمه الله تعالى on the authority of Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah ؓ that a poor person wanted something to eat. She had only one bread, and she was fasting that day. She asked her maid to give him the bread. The maid said that if it was given away,

there would be nothing left for her to break her fast in the evening. Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها insisted and gave the bread to the poor person. The maid says: "It so happened after this that a person, who was not accustomed to send any gift, sent a whole roasted goat which was completely covered with batter on the outside, which is thought to be the best Arab dish." Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها called the maid and said: "Come, eat this. This is better than that bread of yours."

Nasā'ī has recorded that once Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما fell sick and he felt like eating grapes. A bunch of grapes was bought for him for a dirham. Co-incidentally, a poor person came begging. Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما said that the bunch be given to him. One of the Companions furtively followed him, and bought off the bunch from the beggar and gave it back to Sayyidnā Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما, but the beggar came again and begged, Sayyidnā Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما gave it to him again. Again someone went behind the beggar secretly and bought off the bunch from him for a dirham and gave it to Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما. The beggar wanted to turn up the third time and beg, but the people stopped him. If Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما knew that the bunch is the same one that he gave out in *ṣadaqah*, he would never have accepted it and eaten it. He probably thought that someone had brought it for him from the market-place, and therefore he had eaten it.

Sayyidnā Ibn Mubārak reports on the authority of his chain of transmitters that once Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه sent four thousand Dīnārs in a moneybag to Sayyidnā Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه with his servant, with the message that the money was being sent as a gift. He should use it as he deemed fit. The servant was instructed to remain for a while in the house to see what he would do with the money. The servant, accordingly, gave the moneybag to him and waited for a while. Sayyidnā Abu 'Ubaidah رضي الله عنه took the bag full of money and supplicated for Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه that Allah may reward him and shower his mercy upon him. Instantly, he called his slave-girl and instructed her to give seven Dīnārs to so-and-so, five Dīnārs to so-and-so until all four thousand Dīnārs were distributed then and there.

The servant came back and narrated the story. Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه filled another moneybag with four thousand Dīnārs and sent it with the servant to Sayyidnā Mu'adh Ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه, with the same message to him

and with the same instruction to the servant. The servant followed the instruction. Sayyidnā Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal رضي الله عنه took the bag of money and supplicated to Allah for Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه, thus: رَحِمَهُ اللهُ وَوَصَلَهُ "May Allah shower His mercy upon him and reward him." Then he too immediately sat down to distribute the money. He divided the money into many portions and sent them to different houses. His wife was watching all that was happening. She could not hold herself and eventually spoke out: "By Allah! We too are poor and we should also receive something." At that time only two Dīnārs had remained in the bag, and he gave them to her. The servant saw all this, returned to Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه and reported to him all that he saw. He said: "They are all brothers, and they all have the same disposition."

Sayyidnā Ḥudhaifah 'Adawī رضي الله عنه narrates: "During the battle of Yarmūk, I went out in search of my paternal uncle's son [cousin] among the martyrs, and took with me some water just in case there was the last breath of life left in him, so I would give him a sip of water. When I reached him, there was the last spark of life left in him. I asked him whether he would like to have a sip of water, and he nodded 'yes'. Just as I was going to pour the water into his mouth, another martyr next to him heaved a sigh. My cousin indicated to give him the water. When I reached him and was about to give him the water, I heard the voice of a third martyr. The second martyr indicated to give the water to the third one. This series of events continued up to seven martyrs. When I reached the seventh martyr to give water, he had already breathed his last. From there I went back to my cousin, he had also met his end."

These are a few events, some of which relate to the Anṣār, and others to the Muhājirīn. About a number of these incidents, it is said that the verse under comment was revealed regarding them. In fact, there is no contradiction in these narrations, because it is a well-known habit of narrators that if a verse was revealed under a certain circumstance, and a similar incident took place on another occasion, they mention the second incident as a cause of revelation of that verse as well. In fact, all similar incidents can be said to be the cause of revelation of the verse or, at least, included in its purport.

Disposing of a Possible Doubt

Here we need to dispose of a possible doubt that might arise from the

noble Companions' narratives of self-sacrifice that were recounted above. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has prohibited for a Muslims to give away all his wealth in charity. For instance, it is reported in a Tradition that a person came with a piece of gold, about the size of an egg, so that it may be given in charity. The Holy Prophet ﷺ threw it towards himself and said: "Some of you bring all your wealth to be given away in charity, then they become poor and go around begging." The question is how and why did the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ give away whatever they had in the incidents cited above despite the prohibition of such an act?

Answer to this question can be inferred from these very narratives. In fact, people's conditions are different. Accordingly, the rulings differ from condition to condition. The ruling of prohibition applies to those people who, after giving away all their wealth in charity, regret, and cannot endure their poverty but go around begging. But those people who, after giving away all their wealth in charity, do not regret or feel distressed or agitated, they in fact face the situation with calm courage and resolute endurance. For such people, it is permitted to spend all their wealth in Allah's way. Let us take the case of Sayyidnā Ṣiddīq Akbar ؓ who donated all his belongings when fund was being collected for a *jihād*. The stories narrated above belong to this category. Such people trained and developed their families also to face the ordeals of life with the same calm courage and resolute endurance. Therefore, their rights were not usurped or destroyed either. If the wealth were in the control of their families, they too would have done the same thing.

Muhājirīn [The Refugees] Reciprocate the Anṣār's Self-Sacrifice

No social activities or self-sacrifice is possible unilaterally. It has to be bilateral. Therefore, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has urged the Muslims to exchange gifts with each other and thus enhance their mutual love. So likewise, if a Muslim has given a gift to another, he should repay the gift as a gesture of goodwill. If Allah has granted him abundant wealth, then he should use the wealth to reciprocate. Otherwise, supplication should be enough to reciprocate. It is not in keeping with the principles of ethics or good manners to owe a debt of gratitude to people.

The Anṣār displayed a great deal of self-sacrifice in the matter of the Muhājirīn. The former made the latter partners in their homes, their shops, their businesses, their land and their agriculture. When Allah gave

the Muhājirīn affluence, they did not fall short in doing a good turn in return for their favours.

Qurṭubī cites a narration of the two Ṣaḥīḥs on the authority of Sayyidnā Anas Ibn Mālīk ؓ that when the Muhājirīn arrived in Madīnah from Makkah, they were absolutely empty-handed. The Anṣār, on the other hand, had properties and lands, and they shared half-and-half of all their holdings with the Muhājirīn. The former gave half of their fruits to the latter annually. Umm Sulāim ؓ, the mother of Sayyidnā Anas ؓ, gave a few of her palm trees to the Holy Prophet ﷺ which he granted to Usāmah Ibn Zaid's mother, Umm 'Aiman ؓ.

Imām Zuhrī says that Sayyidnā Anas Ibn Mālīk ؓ reports that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ returned successfully from the expedition of Khaibar to Madīnah, the Refugees - all of them - calculated all the gifts of the Anṣār and returned them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ took back the trees that were granted to 'Umm 'Aiman and returned them to 'Umm Sulāim ؓ, and granted trees to 'Umm 'Aiman from his own orchard.

وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحْ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (... And whoever is saved from the greed of his soul, then such people are the successful....59:9) After the mention of the Anṣār's selflessness and self-sacrifice, a general rule of law or a universal principle is being laid down in the concluding part of verse [9]. The words *shuḥḥ* [avarice] and *bukhl* [greed, miserliness] are near synonyms. The word *shuḥḥ*, however, yields the sense of intensive greed for money and possessions. *Shuḥḥ* [avarice] and *bukhl* [greed, miserliness] are absolutely forbidden when a person fails to fulfil obligatory rights, which might be Divine rights, such as *Zakāh*, *ṣadaqat-ul-fiṭr*, 'Ushr, oblation and so on, or they might be human rights, such as the maintenance of the family, needy parents and relatives. It is repugnant and reprehensible if *shuḥḥ* [avarice] and *bukhl* [greed, miserliness] prevent one from spending for laudable and rewardable acts. If one does not spend on customary things, it is not *shuḥḥ* [avarice] and *bukhl* in terms of the sacred laws of Shari'ah.

Avarice, niggardliness and jealousy are such evil qualities as the Qur'an and Prophetic Traditions have severely denounced. There are glad tidings for those who avoid them. The Anṣār have many good qualities, among which is their immunity from avarice and jealousy.