

question before Faṭimah رضى الله عنها. She said, لَا يَرَيْنَ الرَّجَالَ وَلَا يَرُونَهُنَّ [that is, it is better for women that] 'neither they see men, nor are seen by them.' When I reported the answer given by her to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he said, صَدَقَتْ إِنَّهَا بَضْعَةٌ مِنِّي (She said it right. Of course, she is a part of me).

The reason why Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضى الله عنها was left behind in the wilderness during the event of Ifk was no other but that the Ḥijāb of the blessed wives was not simply restricted to the *burqa'* or long sheet, in fact, even while traveling, they used to be in their camel-litter (*shughduf* or *hawdaj*). This *shughduf* itself was mounted on the camel and was dismounted as such. A *shughduf* is like a miniature roomette for the traveler. During the course of this event, when the caravan started leaving, the attendants following their usual practice mounted the *shughduf* on the back of the camel assuming that the Ummul-Mu'minīn was already in there. But, the truth of the matter was that she was not there in it, rather, had gone out of it for physical relief. It was in this misunderstanding that the caravan departed and the Ummul-Mu'minīn was left behind in the wilderness.

This event too is a strong evidence of the fact that the sense of Islamic legal Ḥijāb as understood by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his blessed wives was but that women stay in their homes and, if traveling, in their *shughduf* (camel-litter), their presence was not to be exposed before men. Then, this was the care and concern shown regarding the observance of Ḥijāb from men in the state of travel. From this, one can imagine the level of importance of Ḥijāb when a woman is in her normal residence.

The second degree of Ḥijāb with *burqa'*

On occasions of need, when a woman has to go out of her house, she is required to be covered up from the head to the feet in some *burqa'* or long sheet in a manner that no part of the body is left exposed. This has its proof in the verse (59) of Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb that is coming up a little later: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ (O prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw down their shawls over them - 33:59). The original word used by the Qur'ān for 'shawls' is *jilbāb* (plural: *jalābīb*) which is a long sheet in which a woman gets to be hidden from the head to the feet. (This has been reported from Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضى الله عنه)

Ibn Jarīr has, citing his own chains of authority, has reported from Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه the manner in which a *jilbāb* is used, that is, a woman should be wrapped therein, from the head to the feet, and that her face and nose too be hidden behind it - leaving only one eye uncovered to see the way. A detailed explanation of this verse will appear later. Here, the only purpose is to point out that, on occasion of need, when a woman has to go out of the house, then, she has to opt for this degree of Ḥijāb, that is, she be covered up with a *jilbāb* or something similar from the head to the feet, and that her face too - with the exception of one eye - be hidden.

This form too is permissible on occasions of need in accordance with the consensus of the jurists of the Muslim community. But, there are Ṣaḥīḥ (sound) *aḥadīth* where some restrictions have been placed even on the choice of this form, for example, she should not be wearing perfume, or ringing ornaments, and that she should walk on the side of the street and that she should not enter a crowd of men.

The third degree of Islamic legal Ḥijāb about which jurists differ

The third degree of Ḥijāb is that the whole body of the woman is hidden from the head to the feet, but the face and palms remain open. The question whether this degree of Ḥijāb (where face and palms are exposed) is permissible has been a matter of difference of opinion between Muslim jurists which has emerged from different interpretations of the words إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ (except that which is open) occurring in Sūrah An-Nūr (24:31) Some commentators have interpreted these words to mean the face and palms, and therefore they have exempted them from Ḥijāb, and have held that it is permissible to leave them open. (as reported from Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās). But there are others among them who take the expression to mean *burqa*, *jilbāb* etc. These commentators hold it impermissible to expose face and palms. (as reported by Sayyidnā Ibn Mas‘ūd). But, even according to those who have called it permissible, the permissibility is subject to the condition that there should be no apprehension of *fitnah* (situation resulting in some evil consequence). Since the face of a woman is at the center of her beauty and embellishment, therefore, the absence of any apprehension of *fitnah* is a rare likelihood. Ultimately, for this reason, under normal conditions, opening the face etc. is not permissible even according to the first group of commentators.

Three Imāms - Mālik, Shafi'ī and Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal - out of the four took to the strict position and held it absolutely impermissible to expose face and palms, whether or not there is an apprehension of *fitnah*. As for Imām Abū Ḥanifah, he has, though, taken a different view, yet he has subjected it to the condition that there is no apprehension of *fitnah*, and since this condition remains customarily missing, therefore, Ḥanafi jurists too have not permitted the opening of the face and palms before non-Maḥrams.

The citations regarding the views of the four Imāms have been given in detail with reference to authentic books of these schools in this humble writer's treatise entitled *Tafsīl-ul-Khitāb*, published as part of the major work on *Aḥkam-ul-Qur'ān*. Since the original ruling of the Ḥanafi jurists opts for the exemption of the face and palms from Ḥijāb, therefore, a few citations of the Ḥanafi jurists are being given here in which it is mentioned that, due to the apprehension of *fitnah*, exposing face and palms is forbidden :

إِعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَا مُلَازِمَةَ بَيْنَ كَوْنِهِ لَيْسَ عَوْرَةً وَجَوَازِ النَّظْرِ إِلَيْهِ، فَحُلُّ النَّظْرِ مُنَوِّطٌ لِعَدَمِ
خَشْيَةِ الشَّهْوَةِ مَعَ انْتِفَاءِ الْعَوْرَةِ، وَلِذَلِكَ حُرِّمَ النَّظْرُ إِلَى وَجْهِهَا وَوَجْهِ الْأَمْرَدِ إِذَا شَكَّ
فِي الشَّهْوَةِ وَلَا عَوْرَةَ. (فتح القدير، ص ١٨١ ج ١)

"Let it be understood that there is no incumbency between the non-cover-worthiness of a certain part of the body and the permissibility of looking at it, because the permissibility of looking at it depends on there being no apprehension of sexual desire - although, that part of the body is not included under 'awrah (that which is coverable). For this reason, casting a look at the face of a female stranger (non-Mahram woman) or at the face of a beardless boy is forbidden when there is no doubt about the emergence of any sexual desire, although, the face is not included under 'awrah (that which has to be hidden)." (Fath-ul-Qadīr, page 181, volume 1)

From this observation of Fath-ul-Qadīr, we also come to know the exact meaning of the 'apprehension of sexual desire' i.e. for all practical purposes, though there may not exist any actual desire, but one may have a reasonable apprehension that such a desire will develop by looking at the face, it will be included in the *fitnah*. When such a doubt does exist, then, it is forbidden to look not only at the face of female strangers,

rather, even at the face of beardless boys. In addition to that, another explanation of the 'apprehension of sexual desire' appears in Jami' ar-Rumuz where it is said: 'It means that one's inner self is inclined to be close to her.' It is obvious that the absence of such a degree of inclination was rare even during the time of the early forbears of Islam (*salaf*). That the Holy Prophet ﷺ, when he saw Sayyidnā Faḍl رضي الله عنه looking at a woman, had turned his face to the other side with his own blessed hands is mentioned in Ḥadīth and is a clear proof of it. So, in this age infested with all sorts of corruption, who can claim to be immune to this apprehension?

And Imām Sarakhsi, the famous Ḥanafī scholar, has concluded his detailed discussion on the issue by saying:

وَهَذَا كُلُّهُ إِذَا لَمْ يَكُنِ النَّظْرُ عَنْ شَهْوَةٍ، فَإِنْ كَانَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ، إِنْ نَظَرَ اشْتَهَى لَمْ يَحِلَّ لَهُ
النَّظْرُ إِلَى شَيْءٍ مِنْهَا. (مبسوط، ص ١٥٢، ج ١٠)

And all this (the permissibility of looking at the face and palms) is restricted to a situation where one does not look at a woman with sexual desire. And if the person doing it knows that his looking at the face of a woman may motivate sexual inclinations, then, it is not lawful for him to cast a look towards any part of her body. (Mabsūt, page 152, volume 10)

And in Kitāb-ul-Karāhiyah of Radd-ul-Muḥtār, 'Allamāh Shāmi has said:

فَإِنْ خَافَ الشَّهْوَةَ أَوْ شَكَّ امْتِنَعَ النَّظْرُ إِلَى وَجْهِهَا، فَحِلُّ النَّظْرِ مُعَيَّنَةٌ بِعَدَمِ الشَّهْوَةِ
وَالْأَفْحَرَامِ، وَهَذَا فِي زَمَانِهِمْ، وَأَمَّا فِي زَمَانِنَا فَمُنْعٌ مِنَ الشَّابَّةِ إِلَّا النَّظْرَ لِحَاجَةٍ
كَقَاضٍ وَشَاهِدٍ يَحْكُمُ وَيَشْهَدُ وَأَيْضًا قَالَ فِي شُرُوطِ الصَّلَاةِ وَتَمْنَعُ الشَّابَّةِ مِنْ
كَشْفِ الْوَجْهِ بَيْنَ رِجَالٍ لَا لِأَنَّهُ، عَوْرَةٌ بَلْ لِخَوْفِ الْفِتْنَةِ.

"If there exists an apprehension or doubt of sexual desire, looking at her will stand forbidden, because the lawfulness of looking is tied up with the absence of sexual desire, and when this condition is missing, it will be haram (forbidden) - and this is how it was during the time of the early forbears of Islam (*salaf*). But, as for our time, looking at women stands prohibited in an absolute sense - unless looking is needed for a valid reason recognized by the Sharī'ah, such as, in the case of a judge or witness who have to give a verdict or evidence." And in Shurut-us-Ṣalāh, the author has further observed, "A young

woman is prohibited from leaving her face open before (non-Maḥram) men not because the face is included in the 'awrah, but because of the apprehension of *fitnah*."

The gist of this debate and difference among jurists is that Imām Shafi'ī, Imām Mālik and Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, may Allah have mercy on them, have held the act of glancing at young women as prohibited absolutely, because it is usually a cause of *fitnah*, even though in a particular case it does not cause *fitnah* in actual terms. This approach has many precedents in Shari'ah. For instance, since traveling is usually a cause of difficulties, therefore, traveling itself has been held as a 'difficulty' for allowing concessions meant for difficult situations; thus a person may enjoy all concessions in Ṣalāh and fasting etc. when traveling, even if he does not face any difficulty during his journey and finds it more comfortable than his home. Similarly, since one is unconscious while asleep and wind would pass usually, therefore, sleep itself has been taken by the Shari'ah as passing of wind, and it is held that every sleep invalidates wudu', whether or not wind has passed in reality.

But, Imām Abū Ḥanifah did not hold the exposure of a woman's face and palms as *fitnah* in itself. Instead of that, he subjected the prohibition to the existence of *fitnah* in actual terms. In other words, this would be a situation in which there exists the apprehension or the probability of being attracted towards the woman seeking nearness to her. If so, it would stand prohibited; where this probability does not exist, it will be permissible. But, as we already know, the absence of such probability in this time of ours is absolutely rare. Therefore, the Ḥanafī jurists of later days, too, ultimately gave the same ruling given by the other three Imāms, that is, it is prohibited to look even at the face and palms of a young woman.

Now the outcome of this presentation is that, by a consensus of the four Imāms, this third degree of Islamic legal Ḥijāb, which stipulated that a woman appears before men after having covered her whole body in a burqa' or sheet etc., but leaving her face and palms exposed, stands prohibited. Therefore, what remains now of Ḥijāb is no more than its first two degrees. One of these is the real objective, that is, women remain inside their homes and do not go out without need. The other is going out

covered with *burqa'* or sheet on the basis of need, only at a time of need and to the extent of need.

Ruling

In the injunctions of Ḥijāb mentioned above, there are some exceptions. For example, some males identified as Mahrams are exempted from Ḥijāb and very old women too are somewhat exempted from the purview of the common injunction of Ḥijāb. Some of its related detail has appeared in the commentary on Sūrah An-Nūr. (Mā'arif-ul-Qur'ān, volume vi) Some of it will appear later in the verses of Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb where this exemption finds mention.

In view of the importance of the issue of Ḥijāb, we have reproduced a few essential points from our treatise entitled Tafsīl-ul-Khitāb fi Aḥkam-il-Ḥijāb, something sufficient for common readers. Should someone be interested in an exhaustive treatment of the subject, it could be seen in the treatise under reference. This treatise has been published in Aḥkam-ul-Qur'ān under the section dealing with the Tafsīr of Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb. (And Allah, the Pure, the High, knows best).

Verse 56

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

Surely, Allah and His angels send blessings to the Prophet. O those who believe, do pray Allah to bless him, and send your Salām (prayer for his being in peace) to him in abundance. [56]

Commentary

In verses previous to this, some peculiarities and distinctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ were mentioned as an adjunct to which the command to observe Ḥijāb was revealed while some injunctions of Ḥijāb will also appear later on. In between, the present verse contains a command to do something for which all these peculiarities and distinctions have been instituted in his blessed person, that is, the recognition and expression of the greatness of the station of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as well as an invitation to imbibe into one's own self the virtues of reverence, love and

obedience for him.

The real purpose of the verse was to obligate Muslims to send Ṣalāh (*durood*) and Salām upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ. But the command was given in a manner that, first of all, Allah Ta'ālā pointed out that He Himself and His angels perform the act of Ṣalāh for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. After that, common Muslims were ordered to follow suit. By doing so, it is indicated that the station of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is so high that the act asked to be done by common Muslims in his respect is something already done by Allah Ta'ālā Himself as well as angels with Him. Now then, common believers who are indebted to so many favours done to them by as their noble Prophet should certainly give high priority to making this act their essential concern. Then there is yet another good outcome of this modality of expression. It proves the great merit accredited to Muslims who send Ṣalāh and Salām as Allah Ta'ālā makes them share in doing what Allah Ta'ālā Himself does and so do His angels.

The Meaning of Ṣalāh (*durood*) and Salām

The word: صَلَوة (Ṣalāh) is used in the Arabic language to convey the sense of: Mercy (*rahmah*), prayer (*du'ā'*) and praise (*madḥ* and *thanā'*). The Ṣalāh attributed to Allah Ta'ālā in the cited verse means His sending of mercy, but Ṣalāh from the angels denotes their prayer for him, and the sense of Ṣalāh (*durood*) from common believers is a combination of *du'ā'* (prayer) and *thanā'* (praise). Most commentators have given these very meanings and Imām Al-Bukhārī has reported from Abū-l-'Āliyah that the Ṣalāh of Allah Ta'ālā means the honor accorded to him and the praise showered on him before the angels. As for the honor bestowed on him by Allah Ta'ālā within this mortal world, it translates as the high rank he was blessed with when, on many an occasion, his mention was joined with the mention of Allah Ta'ālā in *adhān* (the initial call for prayers) and *iqamah* (the call announcing the immediate start of the prayer) and elsewhere, and that Allah Ta'ālā made the religion brought by him spread and prevail throughout the world, and that He enjoined upon all people to keep acting in accordance with the Shari'ah brought by him right through the last day of al-Qiyāmah and, along with it, He has undertaken to keep his Shari'ah stand perennially protected. Then, as for the honor bestowed upon him in the Hereafter, it can be said that his station was made to be the most exalted of the entire creation and, at a

time when no prophet or angel could dare intercede on behalf of anyone, it was right at that time that he was blessed with the celebrated station of intercession called: مقام محمود (Al-maqām-ul- maḥmūd: Praised Station).

Given the interpretation that Allah's Ṣalāh in favour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ means praise, someone may raise a doubt that, according to the narrations of Ḥadīth, Ṣalāh and Salām are also offered to the family and companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If so, how can anyone other than him be made to share in the honor bestowed and praise done by Allah Ta'ālā? This doubt has been answered in Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī etc. by saying that the degrees of such honor and praise are many. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has it at its highest, while his family and companions and believers in general are included with him only to a certain degree.

As for the word: سَلَامٌ (Salām), it is an infinitive in the sense of السَّلَامَةُ (as-salamah) and means staying in peace. And السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ (As-salamu-'alaik: conveniently taken as 'peace on you') means: May the state of peace and security from losses, defects and calamities be with you. And since, according to the rule of Arabic grammar, this is not the occasion to use the word: عَلَى ('alā: on, upon), but since the word 'Salām' implies praise, hence the word: عَلَى ('alā) is appended with it.

And some other early commentators have taken the word: Salām here to mean the sacred Being of Allah Ta'ālā, because Salām is among the beautiful names of Allah Ta'ālā. According to this view the sentence will mean that Allah is enough to take care of your security and well-being.

The method of Ṣalāh and Salām

There appears a Ḥadīth in the Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī and Muslim, as well as in other books of Ḥadīth, where Sayyidnā Ka'b Ibn 'Ujrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ has been reported to have said: '(When this verse was revealed), someone asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ " (The verse orders us to do two things, Ṣalāh and salām.) We already know the method of saying salām, (being السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ that is, may peace and safety be on you. O Prophet) now tell us the method of Ṣalāh also." He said: Say these words:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ،

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَّجِيدٌ.

"O Allah, send mercy on Muḥammad and on the progeny of Muhammad, as You sent mercy on Ibrāhīm and on the progeny of Ibrāhīm. Verily, You are Praised, Glorious. O Allah, send blessings on Muḥammad and on the progeny of Muḥammad as You sent blessings on Ibrāhīm and on the progeny of Ibrāhīm. Verily, You are Praised, Glorious."

Some other words in this respect have also been reported in other narrations of Ḥadīth.

As for the reason why the noble Ṣaḥābah asked this question, perhaps it is that they had already been taught the method of offering their Salām in the تَشَهُدُ : (التَّحِيَّاتُ : At-tahiyāt) where it is said: أَلْسَلَامٌ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ (as-salāmu 'alaika aiyuhannabiyyu wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh: Peace and safety on you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings). Therefore, they did not like to determine, on their own, the precise words in the case of the saying of Ṣalāh. Instead of that, they wanted the exact words of saying the Ṣalāh to be determined by the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself. It is for this reason that صَلَاةُ (Ṣalāh) has generally been adopted in these very words as part of the prescribed prayers, Namāz or Ṣalāh. But, it does not mean that the obligation of sending Ṣalāh (*durud*) is restricted to these specific words, because many different forms of Ṣalāh (*durud*), have been authentically reported from the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself. The requirement of sending Ṣalāh and Salām can be fulfilled by every such sentence that has the words of Ṣalāh and Salām in it. Then, it is also not necessary that those words should have been reported exactly as said by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In fact, the obligation may be discharged and the reward of sending Ṣalāh may be achieved by any style of address that conveys the words of Ṣalāh and Salām. But, it is obvious that the exact words reported from the Holy Prophet ﷺ are certainly much more blessed and are the cause of bringing many more rewards. It was for this very reason that the noble Ṣaḥābah had asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself to determine the words of صَلَاةُ (Ṣalāh).

In the Qa'dah (sitting position) of the prescribed prayer (Ṣalāh or Namāz), the saying of the words of Ṣalāh and Salām exactly in the manner reported above is *masnūn* (per Sunnah) right up to the last day

of Qiyāmah, (even though these words are meant to address the Holy Prophet ﷺ by saying ' Salām on you, O prophet') As for occasions outside the prescribed prayers (Ṣalāh or Namāz), these exact words should have been employed when the Holy Prophet ﷺ was addressed during his lifetime. When, after his departure from this mortal world, one has the good fortune of standing before the sacred Rawdah (the holy tomb) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and submitting his Salām to him, then, there too, it is *masnūn* to employ the form of second person: السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ (*as-salamu 'alaik*). Other than that, wherever Ṣalāh and Salām is recited in absentia, then, the use of the third person form has been reported from the Ṣaḥābah, Tabi'in and the Imāms of the Muslim Ummah - for example: ... (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam* i.e. May Allah send mercy and peace to him.- as fully demonstrated by books of Ḥadīth at large.

The wisdom behind the aforesaid method of Ṣalāh and Salām

The outcome of the method of Ṣalāh and Salām which stands proved from the blessed words spoken by him and demonstrated practically through his deeds is no other but that all of us in the Muslim Ummah should pray to Allah Ta'ālā for mercy, peace and safety for him. At this point, a question is worth noting. Is it not that the verse required us to personally fulfill the right of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he be revered and honored, but the method proposed was that we pray to Allah? Embedded here is the hint that fulfilling the due right of honoring and obeying the Holy Prophet ﷺ was not within the power and control of any of us, therefore, it was made mandatory for us that we should supplicate before Allah Ta'ālā. (Rūḥ-ul- Ma'ānī)

The injunctions of Ṣalāh and Salām

In the last *Qa'dah* (sitting position) of the prescribed prayers, (*namāz* or Ṣalāh), the saying of درود شریف (Ṣalāh, that is, the noble *durūd*) is Sunnah Mu'akkadah (emphasized Sunnah) according to the majority of the Imāms. But, with Imām Shafī'ī and Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, it is *wājib* (necessary). If abandoned, it becomes necessary, according to them, to make *namāz* or Ṣalāh all over again.

Related Rulings

1. When someone mentions the name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, or hears someone mentioning it, reciting the words of sending Ṣalāh (the noble *durūd*) becomes *wājib* (obligatory) on him or her. This is a point of

consensus among the majority of Muslim jurists. The reason is that there are warnings in Ḥadīth against not reciting the noble durud when his blessed name is being referred. According to Jamī' of Tirmidhī, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: رَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ ذُكِرْتُ عِنْدَهُ، فَلَمْ يُصَلِّ عَلَيَّ : "Disgraced is the man before whom I am mentioned, yet he does not send Ṣalāh (Durūd) on me". (Tirmidhī calls this Ḥadīth 'Ḥasan', and Ibn-us-Sunni reports it with strong authorities).

And in another Ḥadīth it has been said: أَلْبَجِيلُ مَنْ ذُكِرْتُ عِنْدَهُ، فَلَمْ يُصَلِّ عَلَيَّ "A miser is he before whom I am mentioned yet he does not send Ṣalāh (Durūd) on me". (reported by Tirmidhī who rated it as 'Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ').

2. If his blessed mention is made repeatedly in a single sitting, reciting the Ṣalāh (Durūd) only once may discharge the obligation. But, the desirable (*mustaḥabb*) thing is to recite the noble Durud every time one makes his blessed mention himself, or hears someone else make it. Who can claim to mention the name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ more frequently than the scholars of the Ḥadīth? Their function is nothing but to narrate the aḥādīth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in which they have to mention his name repeatedly. Still, their consistent practice was to recite or write the Ṣalāh each and every time. All books of Ḥadīth bear testimony to this fact. In doing so, they never bothered about this incidence of repetition of Ṣalāh and Salām which would increase the volume of the book in a sizable measure, because fairly often, there come very short aḥādīth in which his blessed name finds mention after every one or two lines - and at places, it appears more than once within one single line - still, these respected scholars and experts of Ḥadīth never abandon or ignore Ṣalāh and Salām anywhere.

3. The way it is Wājib (necessary) to say Ṣalāh and Salām vocally at the time one makes his blessed mention verbally, similarly, it is also wajib to write Ṣalāh and Salām with the pen when one uses it at the time of writing. In this case, there are people who would abbreviate its words and get away by writing صلعم (of which, "SAW" is a counterpart). This is not enough. One should write the full Ṣalāh and Salām (that is: صلى الله عليه وسلم : Ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam).

4. At the time his blessed mention is being made, the better, higher and more desirable choice is no other but that both Ṣalāh and Salām be

recited and written. But, should someone take one of these, that is, only Ṣalāh or only Salām, as sufficient, then, it is no sin in the sight of the majority of Muslim jurists. Shaykh-ul-Islām Nawawī and others have declared it as *makrūh* (reprehensible) to take only one as sufficient. Ibn Ḥajar Al-Haithami said that by *Karāhah* (reprehensibility) they mean its being *Khilāf-ul-awla* (contrary to the preferred choice) which is known as *Makrūh Tanzīhī* (not desirable). And the consistent practice of the 'ulama' of the Muslim Ummah bears testimony to the fact that they invariably put these together while, on some occasions, they would go by only one as well.

5. Using the word: صلوة (Ṣalāh) for anyone other than prophets عليهم السلام is not permissible in the sight of the majority of 'Ulama'. In his Sunan, Imām Baihaqi has reported the *fatwā* of Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه as follows: لا يُصَلَّى عَلَى أَحَدٍ إِلَّا عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَكِنْ يَدْعَى لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ بِالصَّلَاةِ (Ṣalāh is not sent upon any one except the Holy Prophet ﷺ but prayer is made for Muslim men and Muslim women to seek forgiveness for them.)

With Imām Shafi'ī, using the word: صلوة (Ṣalāh) for any one other than a prophet is perennially *Makrūh* (reprehensible, repugnant). Imām Abū Ḥanifah and his pupils also hold the same view. However, it is permissible that after saying Ṣalāh for the Holy Prophet, some other people are also included in the same sentence, like his family members ('Āl), Companions and all believers.

And Imām Juwaini said that the rule about the word: صلوة (Ṣalāh) is the same as the rule about the word: سلام (Salām), since it is not correct to use it for someone other than a prophet - except that one says السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ (as-salamu-'alaikum) as a greeting while addressing someone. This is permissible, and Masnūn. But, saying or writing: عليه السلام ('alaihissalām) with the name of someone absent is not correct in the case of someone other than a prophet (Al-khaṣā'is-ul-kubrā, by Suyūṭī, v.2, p. 262)

'Allāmah Liqa'ī has quoted Qādī 'Iyāḍ saying: Major authentic scholars of the Muslim Ummah have gone by this view, and this is the view of Imām Mālik, Sufyān and many Muslim jurists who hold that its use is not permissible for anyone other than a prophet. This is similar to the case of the use of اللّٰهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى (Subḥanahū wa Ta'ālā) which is

particular to Almighty Allah. Thus, in the case of common Muslims - with the exception of prophets - there should be a prayer for forgiveness and pleasure from Allah. This is as it appears in the Qur'an: رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ (Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him - 5:119, 9:100, 28:22, 98:8). (Rūḥ-ul- Ma'ānī)

A detailed discussion about the injunctions of Ṣalāh and Salām appears in the treatise *Tanqīḥ-ul-kalām fī Aḥkām-is-Ṣalāh was-salām* written by this humble author. It was published as part of the commentary on Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb in the major work *Aḥkām-ul- Qur'an* in Arabic.

Verses 57 - 58

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ﴿٥٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ
بِغَيْرِ مَا اكْتَسَبُوا فَقَدْ احْتَمَلُوا بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٨﴾

Surely, those who annoy Allah and His Messenger are cursed by Allah in this world and the Hereafter, and He has prepared for them a humiliating punishment. [57] And those who hurt believing men and believing women without their having done anything (wrong), they shall bear the burden of slander and a manifest sin. [58]

Commentary

In the previous verses, Muslims were warned against doing what caused pain to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. But, some Muslims used to get involved into doing such things unintentionally simply because of their lack of knowledge or attention. For example, walking into his living quarters without having been invited or, in the event of an invitation to eat at the house, coming in and sitting there much earlier than the time set for it or, once the meals were over, just keep hanging at the house talking to each other and keep delaying their due departure. Upon this, a warning has been served in the verse: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتَ النَّبِيِّ (O those who believe, do not enter the houses of the Prophet - 33:53). This was the pain caused to the Holy Prophet ﷺ without any volition or intention, simply by negligence. On this, only a warning was considered sufficient.

Mentioned in the two verses cited above is the pain that was caused to him intentionally by the disbelievers and hypocrites. It is for this reason that Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thanāvī has parenthetically added the word: قَصْدًا (*qaṣḍan*: intentionally) at this place in his abridged summary which includes many a physical pain caused to him at the hands of disbelievers on different occasions as well as the emotional ones that were caused to him in the form of taunts and insults and false accusations against his blessed wives. The cited verses also gives a warning of Divine curse and punishment to those who cause such pains to him by intention.

Although, in the beginning of the verse, warning is given to those who cause pain to Allah (Surely, those who cause pain to Allah... 33:57), while Allah Ta'ālā is beyond any effect or impression, and no one can cause pain to Him in real terms, yet the deeds that usually cause pain to others have been referred to as 'causing pain to Allah.'

Leading authorities of Tafsīr, however, differ in defining the acts that are termed here as 'causing pain to Allah'. Some of them have maintained that these are the words and deeds about which it has been specifically declared in the spoken aḥādīth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that they cause pain to Allah Ta'ālā. For example, it is mentioned in a Ḥadīth that those who curse the 'time' cause pain to Allah. The background of this Ḥadīth is that the people in the days of ignorance used to blame the 'time' for all sorts of accidents and sufferings, because they believed that the 'time' is the real cause of all happenings in this world. Therefore whenever they faced a suffering, they used to curse and hurl abuses to the 'time', while in fact the real doer of all acts is none but Allah Ta'ālā, and in this context their curse and abuses would turn to Him. It is therefore mentioned in the of Divine curse and punishment Ḥadīth that this behavior causes pain to Allah Ta'ālā. Moreover, as it appears in Ḥadīth narrations, making pictures of living creatures cause pain to Allah Ta'ālā. the expression of 'causing pain to Allah' would be referring to these very words and deeds.

And other authorities of Tafsīr said that the real purpose at this place is to warn against causing pain to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. But, it has been termed in the verse as causing pain to Allah Ta'ālā, because causing pain to the Prophet ﷺ is tantamount to causing pain to Allah Ta'ālā Himself. This interpretation is supported by the context of the Qur'ān, because it is the subject of causing pain to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that was mentioned in

the text earlier and the same subject is repeated again in the forthcoming words. And that the pain caused to the Holy Prophet ﷺ turns out to be pain for Allah Ta'ālā stands proved from the narration of Sayyidnā 'Abdur-Raḥmān Ibn Mughaffal al-Muzanī رضي الله عنه given below:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: اللَّهُ أَلَّهُ فِي أَصْحَابِي لَا تَتَّخِذُوهُمْ عَرَضًا مِنْ بَعْدِي فَمَنْ أَحَبَّهُمْ فَبِحَبِي أَحِبَّهُمْ وَمَنْ أَبْغَضَهُمْ فَبِعِضِي أَبْغَضَهُمْ وَمَنْ أَدْبَهُمْ فَقَدْ أَدَانِي وَمَنْ أَدَانِي فَقَدْ أَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَنْ أَدَى اللَّهُ يُوْشِكُ أَنْ يَأْخُذَ (ترمذی)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: "Fear Allah, fear Allah in the matter of my Companions. Do not make them the target of your objections and criticisms because whoever loves them loves them because of his love for me, and whoever dislikes them dislikes them because of his disliking against me, and whoever caused pain to them has definitely caused pain to me and whoever caused pain to me has definitely caused pain to Allah, and whoever caused pain to Allah, it is likely that he will be seized by Him.- (Tirmidhī)

Just as this Ḥadīth tells us that the pain inflicted on the Holy Prophet ﷺ causes pain to Allah Ta'ālā, very similarly, it also tells us that inflicting pain on any of the noble Companions or being audacious enough as to speak ill of them becomes pain caused to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

There are several narrations relating to the background in which this verse was revealed. According to some of these, it was revealed about the false accusation made against Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها. For example, a narration from Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه says: When false accusation was made against Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها, some people gathered at the home of the hypocrite, 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Ubayy and indulged in the conspiracy of giving currency to this false accusation. At that time, the Holy Prophet ﷺ complained before his noble Companions saying that the man was causing pain to him - (Maḥzarī).

According to some other narrations, this verse was revealed when some hypocrites had thrown taunts at the time of the marriage of Sayyidah Ṣafīyyah رضي الله عنها. However, the the fact of the matter is that this verse has been revealed concerning each such case which caused pain to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Thus, included here is the false accusation made against Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها, the taunts thrown by the

hypocrites on the occasion of the marriages of Sayyidah Safiyyah and Zainab رضى الله عنها as well as calling other noble Companions bad, passing ill remarks against them or maligning them in any other way, public or private تبرء (tabarrā).

Causing pain to the Holy Prophet ﷺ in any form or manner is kufr (infidelity)

Ruling

A person who inflicts any pain on the Holy Prophet ﷺ, suggests any fault in his person or attributes, whether expressly or in an implied manner, becomes a *kāfir* - and according to this verse (57), the curse of Allah Ta'ālā will be upon him in this world as well as in the Hereafter. (As stated by Qādī Thanā'ullah in at-Tafsīr al-Maḥḥarī).

The second verse has declared that causing pain to any believer is also forbidden (*ḥarām*) as being a grave sin a manifest slander, but in the case of common believers the prohibition of causing pain is subjected to a condition that they should not have deserved it by committing a wrongful act. This is because, in their case it is possible that they have done something as a consequence of which causing pain to them is permissible under the dictates of the Sharī'ah, while in the case of the Allah and the Holy Prophet ﷺ it is simply impossible that causing pain to Allah and His Messenger may be justified on any ground. Therefore, no such condition is mentioned in verse 57.

Hurting or causing pain to any Muslim without a valid Islamic legal justification is forbidden (Ḥarām)

It stands proved from the cited verse (58): الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (And those who hurt believing men and believing women without their having done anything (wrong), they shall bear the burden of slander and a manifest sin.) that it is forbidden (Ḥarām) to cause any pain, harm or hurt any Muslim without a justification recognized by Sharī'ah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُ مَنْ أَمِنَهُ النَّاسُ عَلَى دِمَائِهِمْ
وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ، رواه الترمذى عن أبى هريرة (مظهرى)

A (true) Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands all Muslims remain unharmed and safe. And a (true) *mu'min* (believer) is the one

from whom people remain unaffected and safe in the matter of their lives (lit., bloods) and their properties (being his or her duty to ensure that so these do) - reported by Tirmidhī from Sayyidnā Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه. (Maḥzarī)

Verses 59 - 62

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَأَزْوَاجِكُمْ وَبَنَاتِكُمْ وَنِسَاءَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ
 مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ ۗ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا
 رَحِيمًا ﴿٥٩﴾ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَنْتَهِ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ
 وَالْمُرْجِفُونَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ لَنُغْرِيَنَّكَ بِهِمْ ثُمَّ لَا يُجَاوِرُونَكَ فِيهَا إِلَّا
 قَلِيلًا ﴿٦٠﴾ مَلْعُونِينَ ۗ أَيَّمَا تَفُوقُوا آخِذُوا وَفُتِلُوا تَفْتِيلًا ﴿٦١﴾ سَنَّةَ
 اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۗ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٦٢﴾

O prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw down their shawls over them. That will make it more likely that they are recognized, hence not teased. And Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [59] If the hypocrites and those having malady in their hearts and the ones who spread rumors in Madinah do not stop (their evil deeds), We will certainly stir you up against them, then they shall no longer live in it as your neighbors, but for a little while, [60] (and that too in a state of being) accursed. Wherever they are found, they shall be seized, and shall be killed thoroughly. [61] – a consistent practice of Allah in the matter of those who have gone before. And you will never find a change in Allah's consistent practice. [62]

Commentary

The previous verses have maintained that causing pain to any Muslim, man or woman, is forbidden and is a major sin, and in particular, inflicting pain on the Holy Prophet ﷺ is an act of infidelity, liable to Allah's curse. Now, there were two kinds of pain caused by the hypocrites to all Muslims and to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Preventive measures against these have been provided in the verses cited above. As a corollary, stated

there are a few additional injunctions in a certain congruity to be unfolded later on. One of these two kinds of pain caused was at the hands of vagabonds from among the general run of hypocrites who used to molest bondwomen from Muslim homes when they came out to take care of family chores. Then on occasions, they would mistreat free women under the impression that they were bondwomen because of which pain was caused to Muslims at large and to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

On the other hand, the Shari'ah of Islam has maintained a difference between free women and bondwomen in the matter of Ḥijāb. The limits of Ḥijāb prescribed for bondwomen are the limits observed by the free women before their *mahrams* (marriage with whom is forbidden), for example, as leaving the face open before their *mahrams* is permissible for free women, the same was permissible for bondwomen even when they went out of their homes, because their very job was to serve their masters, an occupation that took them out of the home repeatedly which made it difficult for them to keep their face and hands hidden. This is contrary to the case of free women who, even if they have to go out for some need, would be doing so rarely, an eventuality in which the observance of full Ḥijāb should not be difficult. Therefore, the command given to free women was that the long sheet with which they cover themselves when going out should be pulled from over their head downwards before their face, so that it does not get exposed before male strangers. Two things were accomplished thereby. It made their own Ḥijāb come out perfect while covering their faces served another purpose of distinguishing them from bondwomen, because of which they automatically became safe from being teased by wicked people. As for the arrangements made to keep bondwomen protected, the hypocrites were served with a warning to the effect that, should they fail to abstain from their low behavior, (the torment of the Hereafter aside) Allah Ta'ālā would have them punished at the hands of His Prophet and Muslims in this world as well.

The words used in the command about the Ḥijāb of free women in the verse under study (59) appear as follows: يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ in which the word: يُدْنِينَ (*yudnīna*) has been derived from: إِذْنًا (*idnā*) which literally means to draw, pull or make come closer. The second word: عَلَيْهِنَّ (*'alaihinn*) means 'on' or 'over themselves' (hanging as a screen for the face). The third word: جَلَابِيبَ (*jalābīb*) in: جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ (*jalābībihinn*) is the plural

form of: جِلْبَاب (*jilbāb*) which is the name of a particular long sheet. Sayyidnā Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه identified the form of this sheet as the one that is worn over the scarf (Ibn Kathīr) and Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه described its form in the words given below:

أَمَرَ اللَّهُ نِسَاءَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا خَرَجْنَ مِنْ بُيُوتِهِنَّ فِي حَاجَةٍ أَنْ يَغْطِينَ وُجُوهُهُنَّ مِنْ
فَوْقِ رُؤُسِهِنَّ بِالْحِجَابِ وَيُبْدِينَ عَيْنًا وَاحِدَةً (ابن كثير)

"Allah Ta‘ālā commanded women of the believers that, when they go out of their homes to take care of some need, they hide their faces with the long sheet (hanging down) from over their heads leaving only one eye open (to see the way)." - (Ibn Kathīr)

And Imām Muḥammad Ibn Sirin says: 'When I asked ‘Ubaidah Salmānī رضي الله عنه about the meaning of this verse and the nature of Ḥijāb, he demonstrated it by hiding his face with the long sheet pulled from the top of his head and left to hang in front of it - and thus, by keeping only his left eye open to see, he explained the words: *idnā’*: (bring close) and: *jilbāb* (long sheet or shawl) practically.'

'To have the long sheet come from over the head and hang on, or in front of, the face' which appears in the statement of Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه and ‘Ubaidah Salmani رضي الله عنه رحمة الله تعالى is the explanation (Tafsīr) of the Qur’ānic word: عَلَيْهِنَّ (*‘alaihinna*: over them), that is, the sense of bringing the sheet close over them is to let the sheet come from over the head and hang on, or in front of, the face.

This verse commands the hiding of the face with ample clarity which comprehensively supports what has been stated under the commentary on the first verse of Ḥijāb appearing earlier. There it was said that, though the face and the palms of the hands are not included under *satr* as such but, under the apprehension of *fitnah*, hiding these too is necessary. Only situations of compulsion stand exempted.

A necessary point of clarification

This verse instructs free women to observe Ḥijāb in a particular manner, that is, they should hide their face by bringing the sheet from over the head to hang on, or in front of, the face so that they could be recognized as distinct from bondwomen in general, and thus could stay protected from the *fitnah* of wicked people. The statement referred to immediately earlier has already made it very clear that it never means

that Islam has allowed some difference to exist between free women and bondwomen in the matter of providing protection to the chastity and honor, and has protected free women and left bondwomen (to fend for themselves). Instead, the truth of the matter is that this difference was made by these wicked and low people themselves, as they simply did not dare act high-handedly against free women, but chose to tease bondwomen. The Sharī'ah of Islam took a functional advantage from this difference put into practice by them by ordering the free women to distinguish themselves, so that the majority of women becomes automatically protected through their own standing conduct in this matter. As far as the matter of bondwomen is concerned, the protection of their chastity and honor is as much necessary in Islam as that of free women. But, it could not be carried out except by using the legal authority. So, the next verse spells out that those who violate the law will not be forgiven - in fact, as and where they are found, they will be caught and killed. This is what provided a security shield for the chastity and honor of bondwomen as well.

This submission makes it clear that the interpretation offered in this verse by 'Allāmah Ibn Ḥazm and others - as different from the majority of scholars and in an effort to escape the doubt mentioned above - is something just no necessary. A doubt could have come up only when no arrangement was made for the protection of bondwomen.

A person who turns an apostate (*murtadd*) after having embraced Islam is killed in punishment

Two mischiefs made by the hypocrites have been mentioned in the cited verse and it has been said that should they fail to abstain from indulging in these any further, the punishment they shall face will be: *مَلْعُوبِينَ أَيْنَمَا تُقْبَلُوا أُجْدُوا وَقْتَلُوا تَقْتِيلًا* (Wherever they are found, they shall be seized, and shall be killed thoroughly - 61). This punishment is not meant for disbelievers at large. Numerous textual authorities from the Qur'ān and Sunnah bear it out that this is not the law of the Sharī'ah of Islam for disbelievers. In fact, the law is that they should first be invited to embrace Islam along with sincere efforts to remove any doubts they may have. If, even then, they elect not to enter the fold of Islam, they should be asked to live as Dhimmī subjects of the Muslim state. If they accept that, the protection of their life, property and honor becomes obligatory on Muslims very much like that of Muslims themselves. Yes, if there are

those who do not accept this too, and choose the option of fighting, then, the command is to fight back against them.

The reason why this punishment to seize and kill them has been awarded in an absolute sense in the present verse is because this matter related to the hypocrites who used to call themselves Muslims - and when a Muslim starts demonstrating open hostility to and denial of Islam, such a person is called: *Murtadd*: apostate) in the terminology of the Sharī'ah. With such a man, there is no compromise in the Sharī'ah of Islam - except that he repents and reverts to Islam and accepts the injunctions of Islam in word and deed. Otherwise, this person will be killed as it stands proved from clear statements of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the collective practice of the noble Ṣaḥābah. The Jihād waged against the Liar Musaylimah and his cohorts with the collective approval of the Ṣaḥābah and the consequent killing of Musaylimah is sufficient as its proof. Then, in the last verse as well (62), this has been cited as the customary law and practice of Allah Ta'ālā which tells us that the punishment of an apostate (*murtadd*) in the religious laws of past prophets was no other but killing.

Some Rulings:

This verse proves that:

(1) When women have to go out of the house to take care of some need, they should go with their whole body covered with a long sheet and walk face-hidden with this sheet brought from over the head to hang on, or in front of, the face. The common '*burqa*' also serves the same purpose.

(2) Spreading rumors among Muslims that subject them to anxiety or worry or cause harm is *ḥarām* (forbidden, unlawful).

Verses 63 - 68

يَسْتُلْكَ النَّاسُ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ
لَعَلَّ السَّاعَةَ تَكُونُ قَرِيبًا ﴿٦٣﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَنَ الْكُفْرِينَ وَاعَدَّ لَهُمْ
سَعِيرًا ﴿٦٤﴾ خَلْدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۗ لَا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٦٥﴾
يَوْمَ تَقَلَّبُ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ يَقُولُونَ لِيَلَيْتَنَا أَطَعْنَا اللَّهَ وَأَطَعْنَا
الرَّسُولَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّا أَطَعْنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكُبَرَاءَنَا فَأَضَلُّونَا

السَّبِيلَا ﴿٦٧﴾ رَبَّنَا اتِّهِمْ ضِعْفَيْنِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ وَالْعَنُومُ لَعْنَا كَبِيرًا
 ﴿٦٨﴾

People ask you about the Hour (i.e.the Day of Judgment). Say," Its knowledge is only with Allah." And what can let you know? It may be that the Hour is near. [63]

Surely, Allah has cursed the infidels, and has prepared for them a flaming fire, [64] wherein they will live for ever, finding no one to protect or to help. [65] The Day their faces will be rolled in the fire, they will say, " Oh, would that we had obeyed Allah and obeyed the Messenger !". [66] And they will say, " Our Lord, we obeyed our chiefs and our elders, and they made us go astray from the path. [67] Our Lord, give them twice the punishment, and send a curse on them, an enormous curse. [68]

Commentary

Those hostile to Allah and the Messenger were warned of and alerted to curse and punishment in the present world and in the Hereafter while many factions among the disbelievers, in their own place, simply denied the eventuality of any Qiyāmah (Doomsday) or 'Ākhirah (Hereafter) and, because of their denial, used to mockingly ask: When would that Qiyāmah come? An answer to their question has been given in the cited verse, that the Doomsday may be in near future. It has been said so because nobody knows the exact date of the Doomsday, and therefore everyone should be prepared for it as if it were very close. Another reason for its being declared as close is that after facing the horrible incidents of Qiyāmah the entire worldly life of thousands of years will seem to be very short (and the Qiyāmah very close to it).

Verses 69 - 71

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ آذَوْا مُوسَى فَبَرَّاهُ اللَّهُ مِمَّا قَالُوا وَكَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَجِيهًا ﴿٦٩﴾ يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ

ذُنُوبِكُمْ ط وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ، فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾

O those who believe, do not be like those who caused pain to Musa, then Allah cleared him of what they said. And he was honorable in the sight of Allah. [69] O those who believe, fear Allah, and speak what is straight forward. [70] Allah will correct your deeds for your benefit, and forgive for you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger achieves a great success. [71]

Commentary

That causing pain to Allah and His Messenger brings fatal consequences was the subject of the previous verse. The present verse instructs Muslims that they should particularly guard against falling into any stance of hostility to Allah and His Messenger because it causes pain to them.

In the first verse (69), by mentioning an event relating to Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, an event in which his people had caused pain to him, Muslims have been warned that they should never do something like that. From this, it does not necessarily follow that Muslims may have actually done so. Instead of that, by relating this incident, they have been forewarned as a matter of precaution. As for the incident of some Ṣaḥābah reported in a narration, it is likely that they would have not realized at that time that the word being said would cause pain to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. That a Ṣaḥābī would intentionally cause pain to the Holy Prophet ﷺ is not possible. Whatever incidents of intentional causing of pain there are, they all relate to hypocrites. Then, by citing the incident relating to Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself explained the meaning of this verse as it has been reported by Imām al-Bukhārī from Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه in Kitabut-Tafsīr and Kitabul-Anbiya'. There it is said that 'Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام was a man of modesty and very particular in keeping his body properly covered. No one had the occasion to see his body uncovered. Whenever he needed a bath, he would take it inside a screened place. Conversely, his people, the Bani Isrā'īl, had a common custom of their own. Among them, men would bathe naked before everybody. So, some of them started saying that the reason why Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام would not take a bath before anyone is that he had

some defect in his body, either leprosy or enlarged testicles or some other evil-fated deformity because of which he preferred to remain hidden. Allah Ta'ālā willed that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام be cleared from the attribution of such defects. On a certain day, Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام went in for a bath in private while he put off his clothes and placed these on a rock. When done with his bath, he moved to pick up his clothes from the rock. At that time, this rock (moving under Divine command) started running away. Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام, with his staff in hand, went after the rock saying: *تُوبِي حَجْرُ تُوبِي حَجْرُ* (O rock, my clothes! O rock, my clothes!). But the rock kept moving until it stopped at a place crowded with the people of Banī Isrā'il. At that time, when the Banī Isrā'il saw Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام undressed from the head to the feet, they saw a body that was perfect (having no defect attributed by them). Thus, Allah Ta'ālā made it clear before everyone that Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام was free from these supposed defects. The rock had stopped at this place. Once Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام had picked up his clothes and put these on, he started beating up the rock with his staff. "By Allah," said the Holy Prophet ﷺ "the strikes of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام against the rock left some three or four or five traces on it!"

After having recounted this event, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: This is what this verse of the Qur'ān means, that is, the verse under study: *كَالَّذِينَ أَذَوْا مُوسَى* (Like those who caused pain to Mūsā.. - 33:69). The explanation of the pain caused to Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام in this incident has been reported from the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself. There is yet another story relating to the pain caused to Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام reported from the noble Ṣaḥābah which is also necessarily appended to it. But, the weightier Tafsīr or explanation is the the one that is present in the Ḥadīth reported from the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself.

At the end of verse 69, it was said: *وَكَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَجِيهًا* (And he was honorable in the sight of Allah). The Arabic word used for Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام *wajih* denotes the honor and elegance of someone who deserves regard and consideration. When used with: *'indallāh*: in the sight of Allah), it would mean a person whose prayer is answered by Allah Ta'ālā and whose wish He does not turn down. Hence, the station of Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام as a person whose prayers were answered (popularly known as: *mustajab-ud-da'awāt*) is proved from many events mentioned in the

Qur'ān where he prayed to Allah for something and He answered it the way he wanted it to be. Most unique of these is the prayer he made about Sayyidnā Hārūn (Aaron) عليه السلام where he wished that he be made a prophet. Allah Ta'ālā accepted his prayer and made him a co-prophet with Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام - although, the high office of prophethood is not given to someone on someone's recommendation. (Ibn Kathīr)

Customarily, Allah Ta'ālā keeps prophets free from physical defects causing aversion

In this event, Allah Ta'ālā has demonstrated such unusual concern to have Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام absolved of the blame imputed to him by his people which took no less than a miracle whereby a rock ran away with Sayyidnā Mūsā's clothes and he, compelled by circumstances beyond his control, came out undressed before the people. This extra-ordinary care shown by Allah Ta'ālā to free his prophet from this blame points out to the fact that Allah Ta'ālā keeps even the bodies of His prophets generally free and pure from defects that appear repulsive and undignified - as it stands proved from the Ḥadīth of Bukhārī that all prophets are lineally high-born. The reason is that it would be hard to agree to listen to, accept and follow someone from the line and family regarded by people as customarily low. Similarly, the history of prophets does not bear out that any prophet was blind, deaf, dumb or handicapped. As for the case of Sayyidnā Ayyūb عليه السلام, it cannot be used to raise any objection, for what happened to him was the dictate of Divine wisdom, a particular trial, a temporary discomfort which was eliminated later on. Allah knows best.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

O those who believe, fear Allah, and speak what is straight forward. Allah will correct your deeds for your benefit, and forgive for you your sins. (33:70-71)

The original word used in the text for "what is straight forward" is 'sādīd' which has been explained by some exegetes as what is the truth. Others explain it as straight, while still others, as correct. Quoting all of these, Ibn Kathīr calls all these true (on the beam hitting the target). The Holy Qur'ān has chosen this word, instead of *ṣādiq* or *mustaqīm*, because the present word holds all these attributes of ideal speech within itself. It

was for this reason that Kāshifī said in Rūḥ-ul-Bayān: *Qawl Sadīd* is the saying of what is true having no trace of falsity; correct having no trace of error, right thing being no joke or fun; spoken softly, not harshly.

Correct use of one's power of speech is an effective source of correcting all deeds issuing forth from other parts of the body

The basic command given to all Muslims in this verse is: *اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ* (Take to *taqwa*, that is, fear Allah and act accordingly). The reality of *taqwā* lies in one's total obedience to all Divine injunctions whereby one carries out everything enjoined and abstains from everything declared prohibited and repugnant. And it is obvious that doing so is no easy task for human beings. Therefore, immediately after the main guideline of *اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ* (*ittaqaullāh*: Fear Allah and act accordingly), there appears an instruction to start doing something particular, that is, the correction and reform of one's speech. Though, this too is nothing but a part of *taqwa* itself, yet it is one such part of it that, should this thing come under control, all other remaining components of the comprehensive requirement of *taqwā* would start becoming achievable automatically, as the verse itself has promised that, as a result of one's making his or her speech truthful and straight, Allah will correct his deeds. In other words it means that, 'should you succeed in holding your tongue and avoiding errors of speech and get used to saying what is correct, straight and right, Allah Ta'ālā will correct every other deed you do and make all of them better.' Then, concluding the verse, another promise was made and it was said: *يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ* (and He will forgive for you your sins). It means: 'One who gains control over his tongue, learns to harness his or her power of speech and becomes used to saying what is true and right, then, Allah Ta'ālā will take care of the rest of his or her deeds, have them corrected and made better as well as forgive any errors or slips made therein.'

Injunctions of the Qur'ān were made easy to follow

Deliberation in the general style of the noble Qur'ān shows that at a place where acting upon a Qur'ānic injunction seems to be difficult, a method has also been suggested along with it to make it easy. And since *taqwā* is the essence of the entire religion of Islam and fulfilling its dictates on all counts is very hard indeed, therefore, speaking generally, wherever the command to observe *taqwā* (*'ittaqaullāh'*) has been given, there appears soon after, the suggestion to do something that facilitates

acting in accordance with the rest of the elements of Taqwā, something that comes from the side of Allah as His grace and *taufīq*. An apt and ready at hand example of it lies in this very verse where the suggestion of: *اقْتُوا* (say the right thing) follows soon after the command of: *اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ* (*ittaqullāh*: Fear Allah). And immediately earlier too, in verse 69, after saying: *ittaqullāh*:(Fear Allah), it was said: "Do not be like those who caused pain to Mūsā) whereby people were reminded that causing pain to righteous and favoured servants of Allah is the most serious impediment in the achievement of *taqwa* and, once this impediment was removed, the way to *taqwā* will become easy.

Similarly in another verse the command to observe Taqwā has been supplemented by the direction of having the company of 'truthful persons' (9.118) which means that the easiest way to acquire the quality of *taqwā* is to remain in the company of righteous people. At another place the command of *taqwā* is followed by the direction of pondering on what one has sent ahead for the Hereafter, because it leads one to observe Taqwā (59.18).

Saying what is right leads to doing what is right both here and Hereinafter

Shāh ‘Abdul-Qādir of Delhi رحمه الله تعالى has translated this verse in a way that leads to the conclusion that the promise of correction and betterment of deeds made to those who get used to speaking in straight forward manner is not restricted to religious deeds alone. In fact, everything one does in this material world is also included therein. Anyone who gets used to saying the right thing - that is, never lies, speaks with deliberation without erring or wavering, does not deceive anyone and does not say what would hurt - shall find his spiritual deeds for his eternal life in the Hereafter, also come out right for him. As for the things he must do to live in this mortal world, these too will turn for the better. (The Urdu speaking readers should refer to the original translation of Shāh Abdul Qādir to have a taste of its sweetness-editor)

Verses 72 - 73

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا

وَأَشْفَقْنَا مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا ﴿٧٢﴾
 لِيُعَذِّبَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكَاتِ وَيَتُوبَ
 اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٧٣﴾

We did offer the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear its burden and were afraid of it, and man picked it up. Surely, he was unjust (to himself), unaware (of the end), [72] with the result that Allah will punish the hypocrites, men and women, and the Mushriks, men and women, and will accept the repentance of the believing men and women. Surely Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [73]

Commentary

Emphasis has been placed in this entire Sūrah on the reverence of the Messenger of Allah and on the obligation of obeying him. Now in the later part of the Sūrah, the great station and rank of this obedience has been identified. Here, the obedience to Allah and His Messenger and the implementation of their commands has been expressed through the word: *amanah*: (Trust), the reason of which will appear later.

What does "amanah" mean?

What is meant by the word: *amānah* at this place? many views of the leading exegetes among Ṣaḥābah and Tabi'īn, and others, have been reported to answer this question. Different things have been held to be the 'amānah', such as, Islamic Legal Obligations, Protection of Chastity, Properties held under Trust, Removal of Impurity through having bath, Ṣalāh, Zakāh Fasting, Ḥajj etc. Therefore, the majority of commentators have said that all areas of religious conduct are included in it. (Qurṭubī)

In Tafsīr Mazharī, it was said: The whole package of all obligations and prohibitions set by the Sharī'ah is *amanah*. In Al-Baḥr-ul-Mūḥīṭ, Abū Ḥayyān said:

الظَّاهِرُ أَنَّهَا كُلُّ مَا يُؤْتَمَنُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَمْرٍ وَنَهْيٍ وَشَأْنٍ دِينِيٍّ وَدُنْيَا وَالشَّرْعُ كُلُّهُ أَمَانَةٌ
 وَهَذَا قَوْلُ الْجَمْهُورِ

Apparently every thing one is trusted with (by the Sharī'ah) from obligations and prohibitions, and every state of life which relates to this world or the Hereafter - in fact, the Sharī'ah, all

of it, is *amanah*. And this is the position the majority of Muslim scholars has taken.

In short, *amānah* (trust) means to be obligated with the precepts and injunctions of the Sharī'ah and being under command to carry these out. Once this is accomplished to the best of one's ability, the eternal blessings of Jannah (Paradise) have been promised, and on any contravention or shortcoming, there shall be the punishment of Jahannam (Hell). Some early commentators have said that *amānah* (trust) refers to the capability of fulfilling the heavy responsibility placed by Divine injunctions, something that depends on a particular degree of reason and awareness - and moving forward therein and deserving Divine vice-regency depends on this very capability. The species of creation that do not have this capability, no matter how high or superior their placement, simply cannot advance from their given place. For this reason, the skies and the earth, even angels, have no inherent ability to go forward from the place they are in. Everything from these creatures is restricted to whatever station of nearness (to the Creator) it has. Their state is aptly pointed to in a verse of the Qur'an where it was said: *مَآئِمًا إِلَّا لَهُ، مَقَامٌ مَّعْلُومٌ* (There is no one among us who does not have a known station - As-Ṣāffāt, 37:164)

Under this sense of *amānah* (trust), all narrations of Ḥadīth about *amānah* turn out to be symmetrical and the sayings of the majority of commentators also converge on almost a mutual agreement.

In the Ṣaḥīḥs of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, and in the Musnad of Aḥmad, there is a narration from Sayyidnā Ḥudhaifah رضي الله عنه saying that, 'the Holy Prophet ﷺ had told us about two things. One of these we have already witnessed with our own eyes. The unfolding of the other is still awaited. The first thing was that, "First of all, *amānah* was sent down into the hearts of the men of faith. Then, the Qur'an was revealed and then the people of faith acquired knowledge from the Qur'an, and practice from the Sunnah".

After that, he narrated the other Ḥadīth as follows: "A time will come when no sooner does a man rise from sleep, *amanah* (trust) will be confiscated from out of his heart leaving some of its traces behind, just like you would roll down an ember from the fire on your feet (and this ember will certainly roll away but) its traces will survive in the form of

inflammation or blister - although, no constituent element of the fire itself is left out there. So much so that people will enter into mutual transactions and contracts, but no one will fulfill the obligations of amanah due against him and (there will be such a dearth of trustworthy men that) people will be found saying that there is a trustworthy man in such and such tribe!"

In this Ḥadīth *amānah* has been declared to be something which relates to the heart and this alone has the ability of fulfilling the obligations and duties imposed by the Sharī'ah of Islam.

And according to a narration of Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr رضي الله عنه appearing in the Musnad of Aḥmad, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been reported to have said, "There are four things which, if you come to have them, and you have nothing out of so many worldly things, you are still no loser. (Those four things are): Guarding of trust, telling the truth, good morals and lawful sustenance. (From Ibn Kathīr)

An investigation into the way the 'trust' was 'offered'

In the cited verse (72), it was said that Allah Ta'ālā placed this *amānah* (trust) before the heavens, the earth and the mountains and all of them refused to bear the burden of this responsibility shrinking from it out of the danger of not being able to fulfill its due right - but, man did.

Here, it is worth pondering that the heavens, the earth and the mountains that are inanimate and, obviously devoid of knowledge and consciousness, how then would it be possible to rationalize the presentation of such an offer before them and that of their response to it? Some early commentators have taken this to be a figure of speech - as the noble Qur'ān has said elsewhere by way of comparison: لَوَأَنزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْنَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ (Had We sent down this Qur'ān to a mountain, you would have seen it humbled, burst apart out of awe for Allah - Al-Ḥashr 59:21). It is obvious that this example has been given as a matter of supposition - not that it was really revealed to or on a mountain. So, these commentators have taken the 'offer' of 'trust' to the heavens etc. also in a figurative or metaphorical sense.

But, in the sight of the majority of Muslim scholars, it is not correct, because in the verse of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr, the Qur'ān has itself made it clear, by initiating the statement with the word: 'if,' that it is just a

hypothetical statement. On the contrary, the present verse is an affirmation of an incident in a descriptive style, and it is not permissible to take it in figurative or metaphorical sense without any proof. And if it is argued that these things have no senses and therefore no question can be asked from them and no answer is expected from them, then this argument stands rejected on the basis of other express statements of the Qur'ān. The reason is that the Qur'ān has explicitly said: **وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ** (And there is not a single thing that does not extol His purity and praise - Al-Isra', 17:44). And it is obvious that knowing Allah Ta'ālā, realizing that He is the Creator, the Master, the highest and the best, and glorifying Him consequently is something not possible without knowledge and consciousness. Therefore, it stands proved from this verse that knowledge and consciousness do exist in all elements of creation to the extent that these are also there in what is considered to be inanimate. On the basis of this knowledge and consciousness, these can be addressed and a response can be expected from them. Their response could take different forms. It could take the form of words and letters and - it is not rationally impossible - that Allah Ta'ālā could bestow on the heavens and the earth and the mountains the functional ability to verbalize and speak. Therefore, in the sight of the majority of the learned among the Muslim Ummah, the phenomenon of this 'ard of *amānah* (the placement or offer of trust) came to pass in reality and these entities expressed their inability to bear the burden of this responsibility - also in reality. There is no simile or metaphor at work here.

The acceptance of the offer of the 'trust' was optional, not mandatory

A question may be asked here. When Allah Ta'ālā personally made the offer of this great trust before the heavens and the earth and the mountains, how could they dare refuse it? If they had contravened the Divine order, they would have been destroyed totally. In addition to that, the obedience of the heavens and the earth to divine orders is also proved from the verse: **آتَيْنَا طَائِعِينَ** (we come in obedience - Fuṣṣilat, 41:11) which means: When Allah Ta'ālā ordered the heavens and the earth to come to implement His command, be it willingly or unwilling, both of these responded by saying that they were pleased to come to obey His command.

The answer is that, in the cited verse (41:11), the command given had a

mandatory command with it where it was also said that they were to come with pleasure, or without it but, no matter what is the case, they had to obey the command. This is contrary to the present verse featuring the offer of the trust where following its presentation, they were given the choice of taking or not taking this awesome responsibility.

Ibn Kathīr has, with the support of various authorities, reported from several Ṣaḥābah and Tabi'īn - Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās, Ḥasan al-Baṣri, Mujāhid and others - the following details of this offer of the trust:

'What Allah Ta'ālā offered first to the heavens, then to the earth, and then to the mountains as a matter of choice was: Would you undertake to carry out the responsibility imposed by this trust (obedience to given injunctions) from Us against a return fixed for it?' Everyone asked, 'What is the return?' It was said, 'If you fulfill the demands of this trust (obedience to given injunctions) to the best of your ability, you will have the best of reward, and particularly the honor of having nearness to Allah, and if you failed to implement these injunctions, or fell short in it, you will be punished.' Hearing this, all these huge big bodies responded by saying, 'O our Lord, we are operating under Your command even now. But (now when we have been given a choice), we find ourselves weak and unable to bear the burden of this heavy responsibility. As reward, we do not want it, and as for punishment, we cannot bear it.' And Tafsīr Qurṭubī, with reference to Hakim Tirmidhi, has reported from Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: '(After the offer of the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and after their response), Allah Ta'ālā addressed Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام and said: 'We offered Our trust to the heavens and the earth but they expressed their inability to bear the burden of this responsibility. Now, would you assume this responsibility knowing that which goes with it?' 'Ādam عليه السلام asked, 'O Lord, what is it that goes with it?' The answer was: 'If you succeeded in fulfilling the demands of this trust to your best (that is, remained obedient to your best), you will be rewarded (which will be in the form of the nearness and pleasure of Allah and the eternal bliss of Jannah (Paradise), and if you let this trust go to waste, you will be punished.' 'Ādam عليه السلام (eager to advance towards nearness and pleasure of Allah Ta'ālā) went ahead and assumed this responsibility. However, from the moment he assumed the burden of this heavy trust, not much time had passed, not even that much as is between the Ṣalāh of 'Aṣr and Zuhr,

within which the Satan snared him into that well-known slip and he was made to leave Jannah.

During which period of time did this event of the offer of trust take place?

From the narration of Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه which has appeared immediately above, it seems that this offer of trust made to the heavens and the earth and the mountains was made before the creation of 'Ādam. Then, following the creation of Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام, it was also said before him that this trust was also offered to the heavens and the earth earlier, and that they did not have the ability to bear the burden of this responsibility, therefore, they excused themselves out of it.

And what is apparent here is that this event of the offer of trust came before the Covenant of Eternity, that is, the Covenant of 'Alast because the Covenant of أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ (Am I not your Lord?) is a phase of this very acceptance to carry out the responsibility of fulfilling the trust - and stands for taking a solemn pledge to hold and discharge the responsibilities enjoined by an office.

For vicegerency on the earth, the ability to bear the responsibilities of the great trust was necessary

As eternally predestined, Allah Ta'ālā had already decided to appoint Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام His Khalīfah (vicegerent) on the earth and this Khilafah (vicegerency) could only be entrusted with one who bears the responsibility of upholding the essential obedience to Divine injunctions - because, it is the very objective of this Khilafah that the Law of Allah be implemented on the earth and that the creation of Allah be induced to obey Divine injunctions. Therefore, as a matter of creational imperative, Sayyidnā 'Ādam عليه السلام agreed to bear the burden of the responsibility of this trust - although the inability of other humongous units of creation to bear it was already in his knowledge. (Maḥzarī and Bayān-ul-Qur'ān).

In the last sentence of verse 72: إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا : Surely, he was unjust (to himself) unaware (of the end), the word: 'Zalūm' means one who is unjust to himself, and 'jahūl' means one who is unaware of the end. From this sentence, it is generally assumed that it has appeared here blaming man in an absolute sense, that is, so ignorant was man that he went ahead inflicting injustice upon himself by accepting to carry such a big burden of responsibility, something beyond his power. But, in the light of

explicit statements in the Qur'ān, this is not actually so because 'man' may mean either Sayyidnā 'Ādam ﷺ or whole mankind. Now Sayyidnā 'Ādam ﷺ is, as a prophet, protected by Allah from committing sins. The burden of responsibility which he had assumed was carried out by him duly and certainly. As a result of this, he was made a vicegerent of Allah (Khalīfatullāh) and sent to the earth. He was made the object of prostration by angels and, in the Hereafter, his station is far higher than that of the angels. And if 'man' must mean mankind, then, in this class, there are several hundred thousands of noble prophets عليهم السلام and several millions of the righteous and the men of Allah (awliya' Allah) even angels emulate - those who proved by their conduct in life that they were capable of handling and deserving this Divine trust. It was because of the basis laid out by these very noble souls, who duly vacated the rights and demands inherent in the great trust, that the Holy Qur'ān declared mankind to be the noblest of Divine creation: وَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ (And We bestowed dignity on the Children of 'Ādam - Al-Isra', 17:70). This proves that neither is Sayyidnā 'Ādam ﷺ blameworthy, nor the mankind as a whole. Therefore, commentators have said that this sentence is not there to impute a blame, rather, it appears there as the description of the actual event with regard to the most of individuals in the class. As such, the sense is that the majority of human kind proved to be *zalūm* (one who inflicts injustice upon himself) and *jahūl* (one who is unaware of the end) that failed to fulfill the rights and demands of this trust and fell into the abyss of loss. And since this was the state of affairs with the majority, therefore, it was attributed to humankind.

In short, in the verse, the two words (*Zalūm* and *Jahūl*) mentioned above have been used for those particular individuals among human beings who did not obey the injunctions of the Sharī'ah as they were expected to, and failed to fulfill the right entailed by the *amānah* or trust placed with them - that is, the disbelievers, hypocrites, transgressors, the wicked, and sinning Muslims of the community. This Tafsīr has been reported from Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه, Sayyidnā Ibn Jubayr رضي الله عنه, Ḥasan Al-Baṣri رحمه الله تعالى and others. (Qurtūbī)

And there are others who have said that *Zalūm* and *Jahūl* has been used at this place in the sense of 'naïve', as an affectionate form of address carrying the thought that man, brimming with love for his Creator and in quest of the station of nearness to Him, simply forgot the

end of the whole thing. Similarly, these words could also be taken to have been spoken for the entire humankind. In Tafsīr Mazḥarī, details of this aspect have been reported from Mujaddid Alf Thāni and other noble Ṣufīs.

لُعَذِّبَ اللَّهُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتِ (with the result that Allah will punish the hypocrites, men and women, and the Mushriks, men and women, and will accept the repentance of the believing men and women. Surely Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [73]) The letter 'lam' used in the beginning of this verse is not for mentioning the cause or aim, as generally understood in common usage, but it is the lam of 'aqibah in the terminology of Arabic linguistics. It points out to the end of something, as it appears in a line of Arabic poetry which reads:

لِدُّوْا لِلْمَوْتِ وَابْنُوْا لِلْخَرَابِ

'Be born only to be dead and build only to be ruined'

It does not mean that the aim of one's birth was to be dead or that the aim of constructing of a building was that it could be ruined, but it simply means that the end of everyone born is death and the end of every building is falling into ruins.

The sense of the verse is that, as a result of man's assumption of responsibility for the trust, mankind will split in two groups: (1) Disbelievers, hypocrites and others who will rebel against Divine orders and become wasters of the great 'trust'. They will be punished. (2) There will be believing men and believing women who, through their obedience to Divine injunctions, will fulfill the dictates of the trust reposed in them. They will be treated with mercy and forgiveness.

The Tafsīr of the two words: Ḥalūm and Jahūl that has been reported above from most Tafsīr authorities finds additional support in this last sentence as well - that these words are not meant for the whole mankind. In fact, they particularly refer to those individuals who wasted away the Divine trust reposed in them. And Allah, Pure and High, knows best.

**The Commentary on
Sūrah Al-Aḥzāb ends here
With the help of and praise for Allah Ta'ālā**

Sūrah Saba'

(Sheba)

Sūrah Saba' is Makkī. It has 50 Verses and 6 Sections

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

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

Verses 1 - 9

الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِیْ لَهُ مَا فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِی الْاَرْضِ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِی
الْاٰخِرَةِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْحَكِیْمُ الْخَبِیْرُ ﴿١﴾ یَعْلَمُ مَا یَلِجُ فِی الْاَرْضِ وَمَا
یَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا یَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ وَمَا یَعْرُجُ فِیْهَا ۗ وَهُوَ الرَّحِیْمُ
الْغَفُوْرُ ﴿٢﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِیْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَا تَاْتِیْنَا السَّاعَةَ ۗ قُلْ بَلٰی وَرَبِّیْ
لَا تَاْتِیْنٰكُمْ ۗ عَلِمَ الْغِیْبُ ۚ لَا یَعْرُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَلَا
فِی الْاَرْضِ وَلَا اَصْغَرُ مِنْ ذٰلِكَ وَلَا اَكْبَرُ ۗ اِلَّا فِی كِتٰبٍ مُّبِیْنٍ ﴿٣﴾
لَیَجْزِی الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّٰلِحٰتِ ۗ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَّرِزْقٌ
كَرِیْمٌ ﴿٤﴾ وَالَّذِیْنَ سَعَوْا فِی اٰیٰتِنَا مُعْجِزٰتٍ ۗ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِّنْ
رَّجْزٍ اَلِیْمٍ ﴿٥﴾ وَیَرٰی الَّذِیْنَ اٰتُوْا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِیْ اُنزِلَ اِلَیْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ
هُوَ الْحَقُّ ۗ وَیَهْدِیْ اِلٰی صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِیْزِ الْحَمِیْدِ ﴿٦﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِیْنَ
كَفَرُوْا هَلْ نَدُلُّكُمْ عَلٰی رَجُلٍ یُّنَبِّئُكُمْ اِذَا مَرَقْتُمْ كُلَّ مُمَرَّقٍ ۗ اِنَّكُمْ
لَفِیْ خَلْقٍ جَدِیْدٍ ﴿٧﴾ اَفْتَرٰی عَلٰی اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا اَمْ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ ۗ بَلِ الَّذِیْنَ
لَا یُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ فِی الْعَذَابِ وَالضَّلٰلِ الْبَعِیْدِ ﴿٨﴾ اَفَلَمْ یَرَوْا اِلٰی

مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنَّ نَشَأَ نَحْسِفُ
 بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ أَوْ نُسْقِطُ عَلَيْهِمْ كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً
 لِّكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُّنِيبٍ ﴿٩﴾

Praise be to Allah, to whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth. And for Him is the praise in the Hereafter. And He is the Wise, the All-Aware. [1] He knows all that goes into the earth and all that comes out therefrom, and all that comes down from the sky and all that ascends thereto. And He is the Very-Merciful, the Most-Forgiving. [2] And said those who disbelieve, "The Hour (i.e. the Day of Judgment) will not come to us." Say, "Why not? By my Lord, the knower of the Unseen, it will come to you. Nothing in the heavens and in the earth, even to the measure of a particle, can escape Him, nor is there anything smaller than that or bigger, that is not recorded in a manifest book. [3] (The Hour will come,) so that He rewards those who believed and did righteous deeds. For such people, there is forgiveness (from Allah) and a noble provision. [4] And those who strived against Our signs to defeat (the messenger), for such people there is a painful punishment of the divine wrath. [5] And those blessed with knowledge see that what is sent to you from your Lord is the truth and it guides (people) to the path of the All-Mighty, the All-Praised. [6] And the disbelievers said, "Shall we point out to you a man who informs you that, when you are totally torn into pieces, you will certainly be (raised) in a new creation? [7] Has he forged a lie against Allah, or is there a madness in him?" No, but those who do not believe in the Hereafter are in torment and far astray from the right path. [8] Have they not, then, looked to the sky and the earth that lies before them and behind them? If We so will, We would make the earth swallow them up, or cause pieces of the sky fall upon them. Surely, in this there is a sign for a slave of Allah who turns to Him.[9]

Commentary

عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ (the knower of the unseen). This is an attribute of the Rabb (Lord) in whose name an oath has been taken in verse 3. At this place, out of the many attributes of Allah Ta'ālā, the attribute of all-encompassing knowledge and the knowledge of the unseen has,

perhaps, been mentioned particularly because the text is dealing with the matter of the deniers of the day of Resurrection. The major reason why the disbelievers rejected the inevitability of Qiyāmah, the day of doom, was their inability to comprehend how the whole thing would work out. When all human beings die, and become dust, and the particles of this dust get scattered all over the world, they wondered, how would it be possible to collect all these particles, separate the particles belonging to each human being from the particles of all others, and then go on to put the relevant particles back into the frame of everyone's existence? And they took it as impossible because they had very conveniently taken the knowledge and power of Allah Ta'ālā on the analogy of their own knowledge and power! Allah Ta'ālā has told them that His knowledge encompasses the entire universe in a manner that He knows everything in the heavens and the earth to the extent that He also knows where and in what state it is. Not a single particle of what has been created remains outside His knowledge - and this comprehensive and all-encompassing knowledge is hallmark of Allah Ta'ālā. No created entity, whether an angel or prophet, can ever have such an all-encompassing knowledge that no particle of this universe remains outside it. Then, for a Being that has such an all-encompassing knowledge, why would it be difficult to reclaim the scattered particles of a human being from all over the universe, each separate from the other, and reconstitute their bodies from these once again?

لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

(So that He rewards those who believed - 4)

This sentence is connected with the earlier one: *لَتَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ* that is, al-Qiyāmah or the Doomsday is bound to come and its purpose will be to reward believers and to provide for them the best sustenance from Jannah (Paradise). And in contrast to them stand: *الَّذِينَ سَعَوْا فِي آيَاتِنَا* (5) i.e. those who made efforts to find faults with Our verses and tried to stop people from believing in them.

The word: *مُعْجِزِينَ* which appears immediately after the verse cited above means that this effort by them was as if they would render Us helpless in seizing them and would thus go scot-free from having to be present on the last day of Qiyāmah.

The sentence that follows immediately after: **أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِّن رَّجْزِ أَلِيمٍ** means that these people shall receive punishment, a severe punishment that will be painful.

Verse 6: **وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ (34:6)** talks about believers in contrast with those who denied the coming of the Qiyāmah. The former had put their faith in it and became the beneficiaries of the knowledge given by Allah Ta'ālā to the Holy Prophet ﷺ by revelation.

Reported in verse 7: **وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَلْ نَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى رَجُلٍ يُنْبِئُكُمْ إِذَا مُرِّقْتُمْ كُلَّ مُمَرِّقٍ لَا** **إِنَّكُمْ لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ** (Shall we point out to you a man...). There is a statement of disbelievers who denied the coming of Qiyāmah. In an exercise of mockery, they used to say, 'come, let us identify an unusual person for your benefit, a person who loves to tell you how, when you die and become dust, totally powdered into countless particles, even after all that, you will be brought into a new creation - and that you, all reshaped into the form you once were, will be made to stand up alive!'

It is obvious that the person alluded to here is no other but the Holy Prophet ﷺ who used to tell people that Qiyāmah will come when the dead will become alive once again, and exhorted people to put their faith in it. All these people who were deriding him knew him perfectly well, but in the present context, they have mentioned him in a manner as if they knew nothing else about him - nothing else but that he tells people about the dead rising alive on the day of Qiyāmah. They had purposely elected to refer to him in that manner just to mock and deride him.

The word: **مُرِّقْتُمْ** (when you are totally torn into pieces) is a derivation from: **مَرَّقَ** (*mazqa*) which means splitting apart and rendering to pieces, and: **كُلَّ مُمَرِّقٍ** (*kulla mumazzaq*: (totally torn) means the disintegration of the human body in a manner that all its particles get dispersed separately. Onwards from here, they take up another mode to comment on his statement relating to the Qiyāmah.

They say: **أَفَتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَمْ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ** (Has he forged a lie against Allah, or is there a madness in him?"- 34:8). The drive of their remark is that the idea that all totally disintegrated particles of the body will stand reassembled together, turn into the human body once again and be alive as well, is so unreasonable, to start with, that there remains practically no question of entertaining or accepting it. Therefore, this claim of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

is either a deliberate attempt to fabricate a lie against Allah Ta'ālā, or the person who says so is insane and no premise of his statement is correct.

The last verse (9): أَفَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى مَآبَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ (Have they not, then, looked to the sky and the earth that lies before them and behind them?) carries two chastening messages:

(1) It proves that one can come to believe in the coming of the Qiyāmah by pondering over what has been created in the heavens and the earth, and once the perfect power of Allah Ta'ālā becomes visible through observation, the element of improbability which prohibited its deniers from accepting it could stand removed.

(2) Then, right along with this positive invitation to see and learn on their own, the deniers have also been served with a warning of punishment. They have been told that should they continue to hold firmly to their attitude of rejection and denial, then, they should also realize that it is within this power of Allah Ta'ālā which could make the very same blessings to become a punishment for them, such as, the earth swallows them, or that the sky cracks apart and falls on them.

Verses 10 - 14

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا ۖ يُجِبَالٌ أَوْبَىٰ مَعَهُ وَالطَّيْرَ ۗ وَآلْنَا لَهُ
الْحَدِيدَ ﴿١٠﴾ ۖ أَنْ أَعْمَلَ سَبْعِينَ وَفِي السَّرْدِ وَعَامَلُوا صَالِحًا ۗ
إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾ ۖ وَلَسَلِمْنَا مِنَ الرِّيحِ غُدُوهَا شَهْرٌ
وَرَوَّاحَهَا شَهْرٌ ۖ وَأَسَلْنَا لَهُ عَيْنَ الْقِطْرِ ۗ وَمِنَ الْجِنِّ مَن يَعْمَلُ بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِ ۗ وَمَنْ يَزِغْ مِنْهُمْ عَنْ أَمْرِنَا نُذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ
﴿١٢﴾ ۖ يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ مِنْ مَّحَارِبٍ وَتَمَاثِيلَ وَجِفَانٍ
كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رَّسِيتَ ۗ إِعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا ۗ وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ
عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ ۖ فَلَمَّا فَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَوْتِهِ
إِلَّا دَابَّةُ الْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِنسَاتَهُ ۗ فَلَمَّا خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ الْجِنُّ أَنْ لَّو كَانُوا

يَعْلَمُونَ الْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُوا فِي الْعَذَابِ الْمُهِينِ ﴿١٤﴾

And surely We bestowed grace from Us on Dāwūd." O mountains, pronounce with him Allah's purity repeatedly – and you too O birds!" And We made the iron soft for him [10] (saying to him,) "Make coats of armour, and maintain balance in combining (their) rings, and do, all of you, righteous deeds. Surely I am watchful of what you do." [11] And for Sulayman (We subjugated) the wind; its journey in the morning was (equal to the journey of) one month, and its journey in the afternoon was (equal to the journey) of another month. And We caused a stream of copper to flow for him. And there were some Jinns who worked before him by the leave of his Lord. And whoever of them would deviate from Our command, We would make him taste the punishment of the blazing fire. [12] They used to make for him whatever he wished of castles, images, basins as (large as) tanks and big cook-wares fixed (in their places). "Do good, O family of Dāwūd , in thankfulness. And few from My slaves are thankful." [13] So, when We decided (that) death (should come) upon him, nothing gave them any indication of his death, except a creature of the earth that had eaten up his sceptre. So, when he fell down, the Jinns came to know that if they had the knowledge of the Unseen, they would not have stayed (so long) in the humiliating punishment. [14]

Commentary

The preceding verses have addressed the arguments of those who denied the possibility of the life after death, and believed it to be irrational that a person may be revived after he has died and the parts of his body are decomposed and turned into dust. Now the stories of Sayyidnā Dāwūd and Sulaymān عليه السلام have been narrated in the present verses to show that Allah Ta'ālā has already demonstrated His power by the miraculous acts that were deemed by people to be impossible, like making iron as soft as wax, subjugating the wind and making copper as liquid as water.

The word: فضل (*faḍl*) in the opening sentence of verse 10: وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا (And surely We bestowed grace from Us on Dāwūd) means excess, favor or grace. The reference is to particular attributes bestowed on him in excess of others. Allah Ta'ālā has blessed every prophet with some

unique attributes that are considered to be their distinctive excellence. Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام was given a few of his own. Besides being a prophet and messenger of Allah, he was also blessed with power over the world of his time. Then there was his gifted voice. When he was busy with the dhikr of Allah or the recitation of Torah, the birds flying above would converge over him to listen. He was blessed with similar other miracles which find mention a little later.

The word: *أَوْبِي* (*awwibi*) in the direct address appearing next: *يَا جِبَالُ أَوْبِي* (*ya jibalu awwibi*) is a derivation from: *تَأْوِب* (*ta'wib*) which means to return or repeat. The sense is that Allah Ta'ālā had commanded the mountains that once Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام starts making Dhikr and Tasbiḥ (the glorification of Allah), the mountains too should start reciting the same words after him.

Similar to this is the tafsir of Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه who has explained: *أَوْبِي* (*awwibi*: return, or repeat after) as being in the sense of: *سَبَّحِي* (*sabbihī*: glorify, recite the praise of Allah). (Ibn Kathīr)

This Tasbiḥ (glorification of Allah) the mountains used to do along with Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام is in addition to the universal Tasbiḥ done by the entire creation of Allah that goes on everywhere, all the time, in every age - as said in the noble Qur'an: *وَأَنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ* (And there is not a single thing that does not extol His purity and praise, but you do not understand their extolling - 17:44). The tasbih mentioned here has the status of a miracle shown at the hands of Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام. For this reason, it is obvious that common listeners would be hearing and understanding this Tasbiḥ. Otherwise, it would have just not been a miracle.

From here we also learn that the mountains synchronizing their voice with the voice of Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام and repeating the Tasbiḥ after him was not in the manner sound reverberates, something commonly heard when someone calls inside a dome or well or elsewhere and the voice reverberates or returns. The reason is that the noble Qur'an has mentioned the manifestation of this phenomenon as a special gift and grace bestowed upon Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام. The reverberation of sound is a physical thing. It has nothing to do with someone's excellence. It will work for anyone, even for a disbeliever. At a place where sound

reverberates, his or her voice too will shoot back.

The word: وَالطَّيْرَ (*waṭṭair:* and you too O birds) refers to the phenomenon of birds joining up in the air at his voice and doing tasbih like the mountains - as it has been mentioned in another verse of the Qur'an: إِنَّا سَخَرْنَا الْجِبَالَ مَعَهُ يُسَبِّحْنَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِشْرَاقِ وَالطَّيْرَ مَحْشُورَةً (We had subjugated the mountains to join him (in) making *tasbiḥ* (i.e. pronouncing Allah's purity) at evening and sunrise, and the birds as well mustered together 38:18).

In the last sentence of verse 10 and the first sentence of verse 11, it was said: وَالنَّالَةَ الْحَدِيدَ أَنْ أَعْمَلَ سَبْعَتِ وَقَدِيرٍ فِي السَّرْدِ (And We made the iron soft for him (saying to him,) "Make coats of armour, and maintain balance in combining (their) rings,' - 34:10). This is another miracle that iron was made soft for him. Early tafsir authorities - Ḥasan Baṣri, Qatādah, A'mash, and others - said that Allah Ta'ālā had, by way of a miracle, turned iron soft as wax for him. To make something out of it, he needed no fire, or hammer, or any other tools. The part of the statement appearing in verse 11 goes on to state that the iron was made soft for him so that he could easily make coats of mail with iron. In another verse, it has also been mentioned that Allah Ta'ālā had Himself taught him the making of coats of mail: وَعَلَّمْنَهُ صَنِعَةَ لُبُوسٍ لَكُمْ (And We taught him making of armour as dress for you - 21:80). And what appears later in this very verse 11: قَدِيرٍ فِي السَّرْدِ (and maintain balance in combining (their) rings) also leads to the final stage of training in this craft. The word: قَدِيرٌ (*qaddir*) is derived from: تَقْدِيرٌ (*taqdīr*) which means making on a certain measure while the word: سَرْدٌ (*sard*) literally means to weave. The sense thus released is to make a coat of mail in a manner that its links come out balanced and proportionate without one being small and the other being big, so that it turns out strong as well as looks good when seen. This tafsir of: قَدِيرٌ فِي السَّرْدِ (and maintain balance in combining (their) rings) has been reported from Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه. (Ibn Kathīr)

Special Note

1. This also tells us that the consideration for apparent beauty in man-made things is desirable, since Allah Ta'ālā has given a particular instruction for it.

2. Some early commentators take taqdir in: قَدِيرٌ فِي السَّرْدِ (*qaddir fi 's-sard:* and maintain balance in combining (their) rings) to mean that

there should be a fixed measure of time devoted to this craft, lest most of the time is consumed in that single pursuit causing disruption in duties of 'ibadah and responsibilities of the office and state. In the light of this tafsir, we come to know that people in areas of industry and labor should also spare some time for 'ibādah and personal enrichment while remaining duly organized as far as the necessary management of time is concerned. (Rūḥ ul-Ma'ānī)

The merit and grace of inventing, making and producing things

The verse under study proves that making and manufacturing things of need is so significant that Allah Ta'ālā has taken it upon Himself to teach its mores to His great prophets. That Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام was trained to make coats of mail already stands proved from this very verse. Then, this is how Sayyidnā Nūḥ عليه السلام was inducted into boat building. He was told: **وَاصْنَعِ الْفُلَکَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا** : "Build the boat before Us" [literally, 'with Our Eyes' or 'under Our Eyes'] - 11:37. 'Build before Us' simply means 'build the way We tell you to.' That some other prophets were also taught the making of different things in a similar manner stands proved from some narrations of Ḥadīth. There is a published book with the title of al-tibb al-nabawii attributed to Ḥadīth authority, Ḥafīẓ Shamsuddīn adh-Dhahabi. It contains a narration to the effect that the making of almost all important and necessary things in human life - such as, house-building, cloth-weaving, tree-planting, food-processing and wheel-based conveyances for transportation etc. - was taught by Allah Ta'ālā to His prophets عليهم السلام through the medium of wahy (revelation).

It is a sin to take the labourers as low in rank

In Arabia, different people used to go in different professions. No profession or occupation was considered low or disgraceful and no one was taken to be any better or worse on the basis of work, trade, or occupation, nor would brotherhoods and communities rise solely on the basis of occupation. The promotion of the idea of such communities as based on occupation and the attitude of taking some professions low and mean as such was alien there. This was a product of Hindu India. Having lived there with them, Muslims too were influenced by it.

The wisdom of having Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام trained into the making of coat of mail

From a narration of the Ḥadīth authority, Ḥafīẓ Ibn 'Asākir, it has

been reported in Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr that during the period of his rule, Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام used to visit bazaars and public places while in disguise and would ask people coming in from different sides as to what they thought about Dāwūd. Since, justice reigned in the kingdom of Sayyidnā Dāwūd, people were living a good life, no one had any complaints against the government of the time, therefore, whoever he asked, the addressee would have words of praise for him and express his gratefulness for the prevailing equity and justice.

It was for his education and grooming that Allah Ta'ālā sent an angel in the shape of a man. When Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام came out on his routine quest for truth, this angel met him. As usual with him, he put the same question to him. The angel said, 'Dāwūd is a very good man and as compared to everyone, he is doing better for himself and better for his people and subjects too. But, he has one habit which, if it were not there, he would have been perfect.' Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام asked, 'What habit is that?' The angel said, 'He takes the expenses on himself and his family from the property of Muslims, that is, from the Baytul-Mal (The Public Treasury of a Muslim State).'

Hearing this, Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام made it a point to immediately turn to Allah subhanahu wa Ta'ālā with self-reproach, lamentation and prayer, saying, 'Teach me to do something for which I have to work with my own hands and support myself and my family with wages from it while working gratis (free, without compensation) to serve Muslims and run their state.' Allah Ta'ālā answered his prayer and taught him the art of making coats of mail and the honor, befitting a prophet, He bestowed on him was that iron was made wax for him so that it became unusually easy for him to earn his sustenance within a short period of time and thus use the rest of his time for 'Ibadah (worship) and obligations of state management.

Ruling

For a Khalifah (Muslim head of an Islamic state) of the time, or a king, or ruler who spends all his time in taking care of state affairs, it is permissible in the Shari'ah of Islam that he takes his average living expenses from Baytul-Mal. But, should there be some other means of livelihood available, then, that would be more desirable - as it was with Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام. Allah Ta'ālā had put the treasures of the whole

world at his disposal. Gold, precious stones and everything needed was available to him in abundance. Then Allah Ta'ālā had also allowed him to expend whatever he wished from the holdings of the Baytul-Mal, and according to the verse: *فَأْمُنْ أَوْ أْمِسْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ* (So, do favour (to someone) or withhold (it) with no (requirement to give) account - 38:39), he was also given the assurance that he could spend in whatever manner he wished and that he did not have to account for it. But, this event came to pass because Allah Ta'ālā, in His wisdom, would have the noble prophets occupy a very high station and, it was after that, that Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام - despite being the ruler of an empire - used to earn his living with his own hands, and was always satisfied with it.

'Ulama' (religious scholars) who serve the religious cause of education and communication (Ta'lim and Tabligh) without remuneration, and the Qāḍī (judge) and Mufti (juri-consult, Muslim jurist highly trained to deliver authenticated rulings on problems and issues for the benefit of the community at large) who spend their time in public service are also governed by the same injunction, that is, they can take their living expenses from the Baytul-Mal. But, should there be some other way to eke out a living - which does not hinder the ongoing religious service being performed - then, that would be better.

Special Note

From this conduct of Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام, whereby he demonstrated the great concern he had to find out the informal, free and totally unfettered opinions of people about his ways of doing things, it is proved that one usually does not know his own shortcomings, therefore, this should be found out from others. The well-known jurist of Islam, Imām Mālik رحمه الله تعالى also paid particular attention to find out what common people thought about him.

We can now turn to verse 12: *وَلِسْلَيْمَانَ الرِّيحَ غُدُوها شَهْرٌ وَرَوْاحُها شَهْرٌ* (And for Sulaymān: (We subjugated) the wind; its journey in the morning was (equal to the journey of) one month, and its journey in the afternoon was (equal to the journey) of another month). After having mentioned the blessings bestowed upon Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام, the text refers to Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام. It was said that the way Allah Ta'ālā had subjugated mountains and birds for Sayyidnā Dāwūd عليه السلام, similarly, the Wind was subjugated for Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام. It would take the

throne of Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام on which he was seated with a large number of his courtiers to wherever he wished always under his command. Early exegete, Ḥasan al-Baṣri has said that the miracle of the subjugation of the Wind was bestowed upon Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام in return for what he had done once while inspecting his stable of horses. So engrossed he became in this activity that he missed the Ṣalah of al-'asr. Since the horses became the cause of this negligence, Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام decided to eliminate the very cause of negligence. He sacrificed these horses by slaughtering them (since the sacrifice of horses was also permissible in the law of Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام very much like the cows and oxen) and since these horses were owned by Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام, the question of bringing loss to the Baytul-Mal simply does not arise, and the doubt of wasting personal property because of the sacrifice also does not hold good. Full relevant details about it will appear in the commentary on Sūrah Sad (38:30-40, appearing later in this very Volume VII). In short, because Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام sacrificed the horses he rode, Allah Ta'ālā blessed him with a better ride. (Qurtūbī)

In the other part of the verse taken up immediately earlier: عُدُّوْهَا شَهْرٌ and وَرَوَّاحُهَا شَهْرٌ (34:12), the word: عُدُّوْ (*ghuduww*) means moving in the morning and the word: رَوَّاحٌ (*rawaḥ*) means moving in the evening. Thus, the sense of the verse comes to be that this throne of Sulaymān perched on the wings of the wind from the morning to the afternoon would cover the travel distance of one month, and then, from early evening to late night, that of another one month. In this way, it used to cover the travel distance of two months in one full day.

According to Ḥasan al-Baṣri رحمه الله تعالى, Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام would leave Baytul-Maqdis in the morning, reach Istakhr by afternoon and had his lunch there. Then he would leave after Zuhr and by the time he got to Kābul, it would be night. The travel distance between Baytul-Maqdis and Istakhr is something a swift rider could cover in a month. Similarly, the travel distance from Istakhr to Kābul is also what a swift rider could cover in a month. (Ibn Kathīr)

To explain the next sentence of verse 12: وَأَسَلْنَا لَهُ عَيْنَ الْقِطْرِ (And We caused a stream of copper to flow for him), it can be said that Allah Ta'ālā made a metal as hard as the copper turn into a liquid flowing like water, even gushing forth like a stream of water, and was not hot either - so

that, utensils and other things of need could be easily shaped from of it.

Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه said that this stream started flowing as far as it would take a travel of three days and three nights to cover that distance. And this was located in the land of Yemen. Then, in the narration of Mujahid, it appears that this stream started from San'a' in Yemen and continued to flow like a stream of water up to a travel distance of three days and three nights. Famous grammarian, Khalīl Nahwi said that the word: قَطْرَ (*qitr*) mentioned in this verse means molten copper. (Qurṭubī)

The next sentence: وَمِنَ الْجِنَّ مَنْ يَعْمَلُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ (And there were some Jinns who worked before him by the leave of his Lord - 34:12) is also connected with the ellipsis (محدوف : maḥdhuf) of : سَخَّرْنَا (*sakhhkharna*: We subjugated). The sense is that 'We subjugated for Sulaymān عليه السلام such people from among the Jinns who would do the chores he assigned to them before him - as commanded by their Lord. The addition of the expression: بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ (*baiyna yadaihi*: before him) may, perhaps, be there to make it clear that the subjugation of Jinns was not of the kind mentioned in the Qur'an where the text talks about harnessing the Moon and the Sun into the service of human beings. Instead, this subjugation was in the nature of mastery over the Jinns who worked before him like vassals busy doing chores assigned to them.

The matter of the subjugation of Jinns

As for the subjugation of Jinns (for Sulaymān عليه السلام) mentioned at this place, it was by the command of Allah Ta'ālā and there can be no doubt about its possibility. Similarly, what has appeared in some narrations about some noble Sahabah that they had Jinns made subservient to them, it was the same kind of subjugation by the leave of Allah with which they were blessed as a Karamah. It was not based on any act or recitation (Wazifah) on their part - as mentioned by 'Allamah Sharbini in Tafsīr As-sirājūl-Munīr under his commentary on this verse. He has cited several events relating to Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah, 'Ubaiyy Ibn Ka'b, Mu'adh Ibn Jabal, 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭab, Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, Zayd Ibn Thabit and others رضي الله عنهم اجمعين which prove that the Jinns used to be at their service. But, it was nothing but the grace and mercy of Allah Ta'ālā that, like Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام, He made some Jinns subservient to these blessed souls.

But, the particular 'subjugation' through incantations and correlated sets of self-invented actions popular among 'amils or practitioners of this line of activity is something one should take with a pinch of salt and first find out the Islamic rule of guidance in this matter. Qadi Badruddin Shibli al-Ḥanafī who is one of the scholars of the eighth century has written a book, 'Akam- ul-Marjan fi Aḥkām- il-Jann' on this subject. According to him, it is Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام who has been the first one to have the Jinn into his service with the leave of Allah and as a miracle. And the people of Persia attribute this to Jamshaid Ibn Onjahan as being served by the Jinns. Similarly, there are events on record about 'Asif Ibn Barkhiya and others who were connected with Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام which indicate that they too had Jinns subservient to them. Then, the most famous among Muslims are Abū Naṣr Aḥmad Ibn Hilal al-Bukail and Hilal Ibn Wasif attributed to whom there are many unusual events of the subservience of the Jinns to them. Hilal Ibn Wasif has written a full book in which he has put together what the Jinns said to Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام and the pledges Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام took from them.

Qāḍī Badruddīn has written in this very book that generally the 'amils who do their thing to subjugate the Jinns use satanic words of infidelity (Kufr) and sorcery (Seḥr) liked by infidel Jinns and satans. The secret of why they would accept to become their vassals is nothing but that they stand placated by their deeds soaked in kufr and shirk and go on to do a few jobs for them by way of bribe. This is the reason why in doing things of this nature, they would write the Holy Qur'ān with blood and other impurities. Hence, the disbelieving Jinns and satans, pleased with their evil offering, would do what they want them to do. However, about a person named Ibn al-Imām, he has written that he lived during the period of Khalifah Mu'tadid bil-lah and he had subjugated the Jinns through the effective use of Divine Names. As such, there was nothing in his recitations that would go counter to the Sharī'ah. ('Akam-ul-Marjan, p. 100)

In short, if the Jinns get subjugated for someone, without his own intention or motivated action, solely being something from Allah, as it stands proved in the case of Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام and some noble Ṣaḥabah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, then, that is included under Mu'jizah

(miracle shown at the hands of a prophet of Allah) or karamah (working of wonder in the nature of a miracle shown at the hands of men of Allah). And such subservience when achieved through bland pragmatism of formula incantations (*'amaliyāt*) would be judged on the basis of its active content. If it contains words of Kufr, or deeds of kufr, it will be nothing but kufr (disbelief, infidelity) - and if it is composed of disobedience or sin only, then, it is a major sin. Then, there are strange words used in such formula invocations and actions. Their meanings are not known. These too have been classed by Muslim jurists as impermissible on the basis that the possibility of such words being loaded with words that contain kufr, shirk and sinfulness cannot be ruled out. In 'Akam-ul-Marjan, Qāḍī Badruddīn has written that the use of words the meanings of which are not known is also impermissible.

And if this act of subjugation be through Divine Names or Qur'ānic Verses and there also be no such sin like the use of impurities in it, then, it is permissible with the condition that the aim thereby should be to remain personally safe against harm caused by the Jinns, or save other Muslims from it. In other words, the aim should be to remove harm, and not to secure benefits, because if it is adopted as a profession to earn money, it amounts to the enslavement of someone created free and to exacting forced labour without remuneration, hence prohibited (*ḥarām*). Allah knows best.

The last sentence of verse 12 is: *وَمَنْ يَزِغْ مِنْهُمْ عَنْ أَمْرِنَا نُذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ* (And whoever of them would deviate from Our command, We would make him taste the punishment of the blazing fire.) Most commentators have taken this to mean the punishment of Jahannam (Hell) in the hereafter. Some others have said that, in this world as well, Allah Ta'ālā had set an angel upon them who, in case they fell short in obeying Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام, would beat them with burning lashes and force them to work. (Qurtubī) The doubt that the Jinns are made of fire after all and the fire would hardly affect them is not worth entertaining here. The reason is that the Jinns are made of fire in the same sense as man is made of dust. It means that the preponderant element of man is dust. Still if man were to be hit by a clod of clay, or stone, it would hurt him. Similarly, the preponderant element of the Jinns is fire. But, pure and potent fire would burn them too.

In verse 13: **يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ مِنْ مَحَارِبَ وَتَمَاثِيلَ وَجِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رَاسِيَتٍ** (They used to make for him whatever he wished of castles, images, basins as (large as) tanks and big cook-wares fixed in their places), there is a somewhat detailed description of the jobs Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام assigned to the Jinns. The word: **مَحَارِبَ** (*maḥarib*, translated above as 'castles') is the plural form of: **مِحْرَابٍ** (*miḥrab*) and is used to identify the noblest part of the house. When kings and men of authority make a state operation chamber, sort of power niche for themselves, it is also known as mihrab. Then the word: is a derivation from: **حَرْبٍ** (*ḥarb*) meaning war. One makes a seat of power for himself, keeps it safe against being approached by others, and should anyone resort to any high-handedness, he would fight against the aggressor. Given this congruity, the special section of a mansion is called mihrab. Then the masajid or mosques as such are, on occasions, referred to as maharib. When reference is made to the maharib of sahabah from among the maḥarib of Banī Isrā'il and Islam, it means their Masajid or mosques.

The injunction of having a separate place for making a Miḥrab in Masajid

As far as the blessed period of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the rightly-guided Khulafa' is concerned, the custom of making the place where the Imām stands as a separate special unit just did not exist. After the early centuries of Islam, the kings promoted this custom for their security and, among common Muslims, it found currency due to the expedient consideration that the whole row where the Imām stands remains empty. It is in view of the large number of people praying in the congregation of masajid already short on space that only a place for the Imām to stand is made by going in depth toward the wall facing the Qiblah so that full rows could be formed behind him. Since this method did not prevail during the early centuries of Islam, some 'Ulama' have dubbed it as *bid'ah* (innovation in the established religious practice of Islam). Shaykh Jalaluddin as-Suyūṭī has written a regular treatise entitled: *I'lam-ul-'Aranib fi Bid'atil-Maḥarib* on this issue. However, the correct position in this matter is that, should mihrabs of this nature be made for the convenience of the people praying, and in the best interests of the masjid - without taking it to be the desired Sunnah - then, there is no reason to call it a *bid'ah* (innovation in established religion). Yes, if

this is made to be the desired Sunnah, and whoever does anything against it gets to be censured, then, this excess (*ghuluww*) can make such an action fall under the purview of *bid'ah*.

Ruling

If *miḥrab* is made in the form of a regular place for the Imām to stand and lead the prayers, it is incumbent on the Imām that he stands slightly outside the *miḥrab* in a manner that his feet remain out of the *miḥrab*, so that the place in which the Imām and the *muqtadis* (those praying behind the Imām) can be counted as one. Otherwise, reprehensible and impermissible is the situation in which the Imām stands alone in a separate place and the rest of the *muqtadis*, in another. Some *masajid* would make a *miḥrab* so spacious that it would be good enough to hold a small row of *muqtadis* within it. In a *miḥrab* such as this, should a row of *muqtadis* also stand in the *miḥrab* and the Imām stands ahead of them, being fully inside the *miḥrab*, then, because of the Imām and the *muqtadis* being on common grounds, the element of *karahah* (reprehensibility) will no more be there.

The next word: *تَمَائِيل* (*tamathīl*, translated above as 'images') is the plural form of: *تَمَثَال* (*timthal*). It appears in the Arabic Lexicon, al-Qamus, that: *تَمَثَال* (*tamthāl*) with a fathah on the letter: *التاء* (*ta'*) is a verbal noun, and the word: *تَمَثَال* (*timthal*) with a kasrah on the letter: *التاء* (*ta'*) denotes a picture. In *Aḥkam-ul-Qur'ān*, Ibn-ul-'Arabi has said that *timthal*, that is, a picture is of two kinds: (1) The picture of animate and living things, (2) that of inanimate and lifeless things. After that, inanimate things are further divided in two kinds: (1) *Jamad* or inorganic in which there is no increase and growth, such as, rock or soil, (2) *nami* or organic in which increase and growth go on, such as, trees and crops. The Jinns used to make pictures of all kinds of these things for Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام. To begin with, the very generality of the Qur'ānic word: *تَمَائِيل* (*tamathīl*: images) lends support to the view that these pictures were not those of some particular kind, instead, were common to all kinds. Then there are the historical narratives in which the presence of the pictures of birds on the throne of Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام has also been mentioned.

The prohibition of making and using pictures of the living in Sharī'ah

The cited verse (12) tells us that making and using pictures of the

living was not haram (forbidden) in the Shari'ah of Sayyidnā Sulaymān عليه السلام. But, experience bore out that pictures of people were made among past communities to pay homage to them, then they were put in their houses of worship to serve as reminders of their devotion in the hope that it might enable them too to devote likewise. This did not happen. Gradually, what really happened was that these people made these very pictures the objects of their worship and thus began the worship of idols and icons.

In short, the pictures of the living creatures made in past communities became the conduit of idol-worship. Since it is divinely destined that the Shari'ah of Islam must stay and survive right through the Day of Judgment, therefore, particular attention has been paid there to block the intrusion of the undesirable. Hence, the way sins and initially haram things have been made unlawful, similarly, their conduits and close causes have also been made unlawful by appending these to main sins and haram things. Of crimes, the real one, and the most serious, happens to be shirk and idol-worship. When this was forbidden, the law of Islam did not leave the ways and means that could smuggle idol-worship in it unchecked. It was boldly and wisely checked when the conduits and close causes of idol-worship were also prohibited. Making and using pictures of the living was made prohibited on this very basis. That it is unlawful stands proved on the authority of the aḥādīth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, aḥādīth that are sound, authentic, and have been transmitted in an uninterrupted succession.

Similarly, when liquor was made haram, also made haram were its buying and selling, wages to deliver or carry it, and its making, everything about it, being the conduits of drinking. When theft was made haram, the very entry in someone's house without permission, in fact, even peeping in from outside the house was prohibited. When zina (fornication, adultery) was made haram, even casting a look intentionally at a non-mahram was also made haram. Comparable examples of it abound in the Shari'ah of Islam.

The prohibition of pictures: A common doubt and its answer

It can be said that the use of pictures during the blessed time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ could have become a source of idol-worship. But, in our time, pictures serve many purposes, such as establishing identity of