

stand a word? [78] Whatever good comes to you, it is from Allah and whatever evil visits you it comes from your own selves. And We have sent you to be a Messenger for the people. And Allah is enough to be a witness. [79]

Commentary

The Background of Revelation

Verse 77 beginning with the words: **أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ** (Have you not seen those to whom it was said, "Hold your hands {from fighting}...) was revealed in a particular background. Before their migration from Makkah, Muslims were regularly persecuted by disbelievers. Harassed Muslims used to visit the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم complaining to him about the high-handed treatment meted out to them and asking for his permission to fight back in self-defence and put an end to the Kāfir reign of terror. He advised patience holding them back from direct confrontation on the plea that he has not been commanded to fight, in fact, he told them, he has been commanded to stay patient, forgo and forgive. He also told them to continue observing the instructions of *ṣalāh* and *zakāh*, already given to them, consistently and devotedly. He impressed upon them the virtues of the present pattern of their behaviour, even though the odds were against them, for the simple reason that, unless man is conditioned to fight against his own evil desires in obedience to the command of Allah and is also used to bearing physical pain and financial sacrifice, he finds joining Jihād and sacrificing his life very difficult a proposition. This was an advice Muslims had accepted. But when they migrated from Makkah to Madīnah, and Jihād was enjoined upon them, they should have been pleased with it, as it was something that had answered their own prayers. But, there were some infirm Muslims around who started fearing the prospects of a fight against the disbelievers as one would fear the punishment of Allah, rather more than this. Caught in that peevish state of mind, they started pining for a little more respite, a possible postponement of the command to fight to some later day which may have given them more time to live and to enjoy. Thereupon, these verses were revealed. (Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī)

Why did the Muslims wish for the postponement of Jihād

The wish for respite expressed by Muslims following the command

to fight was not an objection to the command of Jihād. It was, rather, a benign and subtle complaint. The reason may lie in the usual pattern of human psyche in such situations. When hurt and harassed to the extreme, one is very likely to flare up and go for a revenge. But, once man is used to a life of physical comfort and peace, he does not feel like going out to fight. This is no more than a simple human reaction. So, these Muslims, while they were in Makkah, all fed up with pains inflicted on them by the disbelievers at that time, were naturally looking forward most eagerly for the command of Jihād to come. But, when they reached Madīnah, they found peace and comfort which they had missed for long. Now the command to fight, when it came in that state of theirs, found them no more moved by their old fire, therefore, they simply wished that it would have been better if the call for Jihād was just not there at that point of time. Now, to take this 'wish' as an 'objection' and to attribute an act of sin to those Muslims is not correct. However, this explanation is limited to the assumption that they had pronounced this complaint verbally. But, if they said nothing verbally, and it was simply a thought which crossed their mind, then, thoughts in the mind and doubts in the heart are happenings which the Sharī'ah of Islam simply does not count as sins. Here, both probabilities exist. Then, the word, "Qālū" (They say) in the verse should not lead one to presume that they had said this verbally, for it may be taken to mean that they may have said it within their hearts. (abridged from Bayān al-Qur'ān by Maulānā Thānavī). According to some commentators, in which case, no explanation is called for. (Tafsīr Kabīr).

Self-correction should precede collective reform

In *اقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ* (verse 77), Allah Almighty has first mentioned the command to establish the prescribed prayers and pay the fixed zakāh which are the medium of self-correction. The command of Jihād comes after that, which is the medium of political and collective correction, that is, through it the forces of coercion and injustice are eliminated as a result of which peace prevails in the country. From here we learn that, well before worrying about correcting others, one should start correcting himself. So, seen from the angle of a relative degree of importance, the first command is an absolute individual obligation (*farḍ al-'ayn*) while the second is an obligation which, if performed by some, will absolve others (*farḍ al-kifāyah*). This highlights the impor-

tance of self-correction and makes its precedence obvious enough (Mazhari).

The difference between the blessings of the present world and those of the Hereafter

In this verse, the blessings of the Hereafter have been declared to be more bountiful and certainly better as compared with the blessings of the present world of our experience. Some reasons why this is so are given below:

1. The blessings of the present world are few, while the blessings of the Hereafter are many.
2. The blessings of *dunyā* (the present world) are perishable, while the blessings of *Ākhirah* (Hereafter) are eternal.
3. The blessings of *dunyā* are laced with all sorts of botherations, while the blessings of *Ākhirah* are free of such impurities.
4. The acquisition of the blessings of *dunyā* is not certain, while the blessings of *Ākhirah* will most certainly reach everyone who is God-fearing (*Muttaqī*: the observer of *Tāqwa*). (al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr)

وَلَا خَيْرَ فِي الدُّنْيَا لِمَن لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ
مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي دَارِ الْمَقَامِ نَصِيبٌ
فَإِنَّ تَعَجِبَ الدُّنْيَا رَجَالًا فَإِنَّهَا
مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ وَالزَّوَالُ قَرِيبٌ

There is no gain in *dunyā* for the one who has no share in the eternal abode from Allah. Still, if *dunyā* does attract some people, then (beware) it is a short-lived enjoyment and its decline is near (that is, once eyes close in death, the *Ākhirah* is there to see).

There is no escape from death:

In *أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمُ الْمَوْتُ* (verse 78) (Wherever you will be death will overtake you), Allah Almighty removes any doubts the deserters from Jihād may entertain. They think that, perhaps by dodging Jihād, they can also dodge death. Therefore, it was said that there will be a day of death, a day when it must come, no matter where you are; it will come exactly where you are. When this is settled, there is no sense in backing out from Jihād.

Hāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr, the famous commentator, while discussing this verse, has reported a lesson-filled event on the authority of Mujāhid as narrated by Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Abī Ḥatīm. He recounts the event

concerning a woman from an earlier community. Soon after her pregnancy matured, she gave birth to a child and sent her servant out to fetch some fire. As soon as the servant stepped out of the door of the house, he saw a man appear suddenly before him. He asked: 'What baby this woman has given birth to?' The servant told him that it was a baby girl. Thereupon, the man said: 'You must remember that this girl will sleep with a hundred men and will finally die through a spider.' Hearing this, the servant returned immediately with a knife and slit the abdomen of that girl open. Taking her to be dead, he ran away from the house. But, a little later, the mother of the girl stitched up the skin of the abdomen slit by the servant. Then came the day when this girl grew to be young and beautiful, so beautiful that she was considered to be the jewel of the city.

As for the servant, he escaped overseas where he stayed for a long time and, in the meantime, assembled a fortune for himself. When he planned to get married, he returned to his old city. There he met an old woman. He told her that he was looking for a bride, but that he was eager to marry the most beautiful woman in town. The old woman told him about a certain girl whose beauty was unmatched in the whole city and insisted that he should marry her. The servant, now a rich man, made efforts and finally got married to that girl. While getting to know each other, the girl asked him as to who he was and where did he live. He told her: 'Actually, I belong to this very city, but I had to run away because I had slit the abdomen of a girl open.' Then he narrated the whole event. Hearing this, she said: 'I am that girl.' She showed him her abdomen. The cut mark was still there. Seeing this, the man said: 'If you are the same woman, I disclose two things about you. The first one is that you will sleep with a hundred men.' Thereupon, the woman confessed that she has done that, but she could not remember the number. The man said: 'The number is hundred. And the second one is that you will die through a spider.'

The man who was now rich had a grand palace built for her which was absolutely free of any spider webs. On a certain day, while they were resting in their room in the palace, they noticed a spider on the wall. The woman said: 'Is this the spider you scare me of?' The man said: 'Yes.' Thereupon, she sprang up from the bed saying: 'Then, this

one I am going to kill right now.' Having said that, she downed the spider on the floor and trampled her dead under her feet.

The spider died all right but the poison from her infected her feet and nails and the message of death became all too clear for her. (Ibn Kathīr)

Here was a woman living in a palace, new and very clean, but she died through a spider all of a sudden. Compare her case with many others who spent a life-time in fighting battles yet death did not come to them there. Think of Sayyidnā Khālīd ibn Walīd رضى الله عنه, the famous soldier and general of Islam known by his oft-repeated title, *Saifullāh* - the Sword of Allah. He had a burning desire to die as martyr in the way of Allah. So, he kept fighting all his life, engaging in one Jihād after another and longing to become a Shahīd. He killed thousands of disbelievers on the battlefields, living dangerously and daringly against many a trial, always praying and pleading that he be saved from the fate of dying in bed like women and praying and pleading that Allah favour him with the death of a fearless soldier in the heat of some Jihād. But, as decreed by Allah, he finally died nowhere else but on his own bed in the house.

The lesson is that the arrangement of life and death stays in the hands of our creator whose decisions are final. There is nothing we can do about it. It is He who can, if He wills, give us death on a luxury bed at the hands of a spider; or, if He elects to save us, he can keep us alive amid swinging swords or zooming fires.

Building secure houses is not against *Tawakkul*

Let us now consider: **وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّسَيَّدَةٍ** in verse 78. It says: 'Wherever you will be Death will overtake you, even though you are in fortified castles.' This tells us that building a good and strong house to live with ensured security of person and things is not contrary to the dictates of *tawakkul* or trust in Allah and that it is not against the rules of Shari'ah either. (Qurtubī)

A Blessing comes only by the grace of Allah

In **مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ** (verse 79), translated as: 'whatever good comes to you is from Allah,' the word, '*hasanatin*' means 'blessing' (Mazhari). The verse points out to the fact that any blessing which

reaches man, any good that comes to him, does not get to him as a matter of his right. This is, on the contrary, nothing but the grace of Allah Almighty, His '*faḍl*', in common Islamic terminology. No matter how much, he devotes to the many acts of worship he is obligated with, man cannot claim to deserve that blessing on the basis of his deeds alone. The reason is simple, because the very ability to engage in acts of worship comes from none but Allah Himself, which is known as the *Taufīq* of Allah. Then the blessings of Allah are countless, how could they be 'procured' by limited acts of worship and other expressions of obedience to His commands? Specially so, when whatever we do in the name of the worship of Allah is hardly worthy of the supreme mastery and power of our Lord, the Lord of the universe of our experience and the Lord of universes beyond? This point has been made more succinctly in a *ḥadīth*, where the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been reported to have said:

ما احد يدخل الجنة الا برحمة الله، قيل: ولا أنت؟ قال: ولا أنا

'No one shall enter Paradise unless it be with the mercy of Allah.' The narrator asked: 'Not you either?' He said, 'Yes. Not me either.'

Calamities are the result of misdeeds

In وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَفَبْتُمْ (verse 79), translated as: 'and whatever evil visits you, it comes from your own selves,' the word, '*sayyi'atun*' means: '*muṣībah*', evil, hardship, (misfortune, calamity, disaster) according to Maḥzarī.

Although, calamities are created by Allah, yet their cause lies nowhere else but in the very misdeeds of man himself. Now if this man is a disbeliever, a *kāfir*, the evil that hits him in this mortal world is only an ordinary sample of the ultimate punishment, the punishment of the world-to-come, which is much much more than the worldly punishment. And if this man is a believer, a *mu'min*, all his misfortunes become an expiation (*kaffārah*) of his sins in that case, and thereby become the very cause of his salvation in the Hereafter. Thus, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said in a *ḥadīth*:

ما من مصيبة تصيب المسلم الا كفر الله بها عنه حتى الشوكة يشاكها

'No evil ever touches a Muslim, but it becomes a source of

forgiveness for him - even the pinch of a thorn in his feet."
(Mazhari from Tirmidhī)

In another ḥadīth, reported by Abū Mūsā رضى الله عنه, he said:

عن ابي موسى ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال لا تصيب عبدا
نكبة فما فوقها وما دونها الا بذنب وما يعفو اكثر

"No hardship befalls a servant of Allah, be it light or tough, but it is always due to his sin - and the sins Allah forgives (without afflicting with a calamity) are much more." (Mazhari, from Tirmidhī)

The Prophet of Islam: His Prophethood is Universal

The words: وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا (And We have sent you to be a Messenger for the people) appearing at the end of verse 79 prove that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has been sent as a Messenger of Allah (*Rasūl*) for all peoples of the world. He was not simply a Messenger for Arabs alone.

In fact, his prophethood is universal, open to all human beings of this entire universe, whether they are present at this point of time, or may come to be there right through the *Qiyāmah*, the fateful Last Day of this universe of ours. (Mazhari)

Verse 80

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ
عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِظًا ﴿٨٠﴾

Whoever obeys the Messenger obeys Allah and whoever turns away, then, We did not send you to stand guard over them. [80]

Previous to this, there was the affirmation of prophethood. Now comes the statement which establishes the right of prophethood - it calls for compulsory obedience. In case hostile people refuse to obey, there are words of comfort for the noble Prophet of Islam who has been absolved of any responsibility for their lack of obedience.

The opening statement in the verse presents a very important principle bearing on the authority of the blessed *Rasūl* of Allah. Here, the obedience to the Prophet has been equated with obedience to

Allah. From this it follows that whoever disobeys the Prophet, invariably disobeys the command of Allah. Since, obedience to Allah is obligatory, even rationally - so, obedience to the Prophet also turns out to be equally obligatory. As for the person who, in spite of the truth being all too manifest, elects to turn his back and reject the message given by the Prophet, then, the Prophet has been asked not to worry about the callous behaviour of such people because Allah has not sent His Prophet to stand guard over their behaviour for which he is not responsible. It means that the Prophet of Allah is not duty-bound to see that they do not indulge in disbelief. He is simply not charged with the mission of stopping them from disbelieving. His mission is to deliver the Message. Once this is done, his duty as a Prophet stands fulfilled. After that, if they still go about disbelieving, it is their business for which he is in no way accountable. (Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānāvī, Bayān al-Qur'ān)

Verses 81 - 82

وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ بَيَّتَ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَ
 الَّذِي تَقُولُ وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّتُونَ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ
 عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٨١﴾ أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ
 كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

And they say, "Obedience (we observe)." But when they go away from you, a group of them conspires at night contrary to what they say. And Allah records what they conspire. So ignore them and put your trust in Allah. And Allah is enough to trust in. [81]

Do they not, then, ponder in the Qur'ān? Had it been from someone other than Allah, they would have found in it a great deal of contradiction. [82]

That obedience to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is obligatory was the subject of verse 80. Here, the Prophet was comforted in case the disbelievers rejected his message. Now comes a mention of some hypocrites who used to wriggle out of this obligation.

Commentary

The first verse (81) which begins with the words: وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا مِنْ

عِنْدِكَ بَيِّنَاتٌ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ (And they say, "Obedience (we observe)...") condemns those who practice a policy of double-dealing. They will say something verbally and have something else hidden in their hearts. Once this is established, what should be the attitude of the Messenger of Allah towards such a set of people? The latter part of the verse carries a special instruction about it.

An important instruction for a leader

The verse: فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا refers to the hypocrites who, when they came face to face with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, said that they were quite obedient to him and had accepted what he had commanded them with. But, when they left his company, they got together and conspired as to how they could disobey him. This duplicity of theirs caused great pain to him. Thereupon, Allah Almighty instructed him to ignore them and continue with his mission placing his trust in Allah because Allah is all-sufficient for him.

From here we know that one who leads people has to go through all sorts of hardships. People tend to level absurd allegations against him. Then, there are enemies in the garb of friendship and trust around him. Despite the presence of all such obstacles, this leader must display determination and steadfastness and devote to his mission with full trust in Allah. If his objective and orientation is right, he will, *Inshallah*, succeed.

Deliberation in the Qur'ān

Verse 82 begins with: أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ (Do they not, then, ponder in the Qur'ān?) Through this verse, Allah Almighty invites people to deliberate in the Qur'ān. Noteworthy here are a few points. First of all, the words used are: أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ (Do they not, then, ponder ...) and not أَفَلَا يَتْلُونَ (Do they not, then, recite.) Obviously, there is a delicate hint being given through this verse which is suggesting that if they were to look at the Qur'ān deeply, they would find no discrepancy in its words and meanings. This sense can come only through the use of the word, '*tadabbur*' which means to ponder or deliberate. A plain recitation which is devoid of deliberation and deep thinking may lead one to start seeing contradictions which really do not exist there.

The second point which emerges from this verse is that the Qur'ān

itself demands that every human being should ponder over its meanings. Therefore, to suppose that pondering in the Qur'ān is the exclusive domain of its highest and the ablest exponents (the Imāms and Mujtahids) is not correct. However, it is also true that the levels of deliberation will be different in terms of the different levels of knowledge and understanding. The deliberation of the great exponents will deduce the solution of thousands of problems from every single verse, while the deliberation of a common scholar will reach only as far as the very comprehension of such problems and their solutions. When common people recite the Qur'ān and deliberate in its meanings through the medium of its translation and explanation in their own language, this will impress upon their hearts the greatness of Allah Almighty, develop love for Him and implant there a concern for the life-to-come, the *Ākhirah*. This is the master key to success. However, in order that common people stay safe from falling into doubts and misunderstandings, it is better that they should study the Qur'ān, lesson by lesson, under the guidance of an *'ālim*. If this cannot be done, take to the study of some authentic and reliable *tafsīr* (commentary, exegesis). Should some doubt arise during the course of such study, the wiser course is not to go for a solution on the basis of personal opinion, instead of which, one should consult expert scholars.

No group or individual holds monopoly on the exegesis and explication of Qur'ān and Sunnah, but there are conditions for it

The verse under reference tells us that everyone has the right to ponder in the Qur'ān. But, as we have said earlier, the levels of *'tadabbur'* (deliberation) are different. Each one is governed by a separate rule. Let us take the serious deliberation of a great exponent, the *'tadabbur'* of a master *mujtahid*. Through this methodology, solutions to problems are deduced from the Holy Qur'ān at the highest level. For this purpose, it is necessary that one who is pondering in the Qur'ān, should first acquaint himself with the basic rules employed in such deduction in order that the results he achieves are correct and sound. In case, he fails to arm himself with the basic postulates to begin with, or in case, his education and training in this discipline remain faulty; and in case, he does not ultimately possess the qualifications and conditions that must be found in a *mujtahid* exponent,

then, it is obvious that he would come up with the wrong set of results. Now, this is a situation in which better-equipped scholars may challenge and contradict them, something they would be doing rightfully.

Think of a person who has never even walked the corridors of a medical college, yet he starts objecting as to why only trained doctors have been allowed to hold a monopoly of all medical treatment in the country, and why is it that he as a human being has not been allowed to exercise the right of treating patients?

Or, there may be a person who gags his reason and starts challenging as to why all contracts to build canals, bridges and dams are given to expert engineers only? Since, he is a citizen of the country, therefore, he too is fully deserving of discharging this service!

Or, there may be that person, devoid of reason who stands up raising an objection as to why legal experts alone have been allowed to hold monopoly over the interpretation and application of the law of the land, while he too, being sane and adult, can do the same job? Obviously, to that person, it would be said that, no doubt he has a right to do all such things as a citizen of the country, but it is also true that one has to undergo the difficult stages of education, training and experience for years and years together in order to imbibe the ability to accomplish such tasks. This is not what one can do all by himself. One has to assimilate an enormous body of arts and sciences under expert teachers on his way to established degrees and subsequent recognition in the field. If this person is ready to first go through this grind, and come out successful therefrom, then, he too could certainly become an arm of law in these fields.

But, when this analogy is applied to the interpretation and application of Qur'ān and Sunnah, a highly intricate and very delicate job indeed, we come across a barrage of taunts and accusations that the *'ulama* (religious scholars) hold a monopoly over the job! Is it that the interpretation and application of Qur'ān and Sunnah requires no ability, no qualification? Are we saying that, in this wide world of ours, the knowledge of the Qur'ān and Sunnah alone has come to be so orphaned, so heirless that everyone can start getting away with his own interpretation and application as a matter of right, even though the claimant has not spent even a few months devoted to learning the

great discipline of Qur'ān and Sunnah? This is terrible.

The proof of Qiyās

It is from this verse that we also come to know an important rule, that is, when we do not find an explicit statement in the Qur'ān and Sunnah about a certain problem, we should make the best of efforts to find a solution by a serious deliberation within these. This method is technically known as Qiyās or analogical deduction (Qurtubī).

"A great deal of contradiction"

The last sentence of verse 82: وَلَوْ كَانُ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا translated as 'Had it been from someone other than Allah, they would have found in it a great deal of contradiction' needs some explanation. Here, 'a great deal of contradiction' means: Had there been a contradiction in one subject, the contradiction in many subjects would obviously have become a great deal of contradiction (Bayān al-Qur'ān). But, the truth of the matter is that there is just no contradiction anywhere in the Qur'ān. So, this is the word of Allah Almighty. This perfect uniformity cannot be found in the word of man. Then there is its unmatched eloquence which never tapers. It talks about the Oneness of Allah and the disbelief of men and lays down rules for the lawful and the unlawful, yet there is no inconsistency, no discrepancy in the process. It offers information about the unseen but there is not one bit of information which does not match with reality. Then there is the very order of the Qur'ān which retains the quality of its diction all along, never ever touching a pitch which is low. The speech or writing of man is affected by circumstances. It varies with peace and distraction and happiness and sorrow. But, Qur'ān is free of all sorts of incongruities and contradictions - actually, it is beyond any such thing. And this is a clear proof of its being the word of God.

Verse 83

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ
إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَالِىَ أُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ
يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ
الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

And when there comes to them a matter about peace or fear, they spread it. Had they referred it to the Messenger and to those in authority among them, those of them who were to investigate it would have certainly known it (the truth of the matter). But for Allah's grace upon you, and mercy, you would have followed the Satan, save a few. [83]

Commentary

The Background of Revelation

According to Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās, Daḥḥāk and Abū Mu'adh رضى الله عنهم , the verse: وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ (And when there comes to them a matter about peace or fear, they spread it) was revealed about the hypocrites; and, according to Sayyidnā Ḥasan and many others, this verse was revealed about weak Muslims (Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī).

After having reported events relating to this verse, the famous commentator, Ibn Kathīr has stressed on the importance of referring to the ḥadīth of Sayyidnā 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضى الله عنه while considering the background in which this verse was revealed. According to this, when Sayyidnā 'Umar رضى الله عنه heard that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has divorced his wives, he left his house heading for the Masjid. While still at its door steps, he heard that people inside there were also talking about the matter. Seeing this, he said that this was something which must first be investigated. So, he went to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked him if he had divorced his wives. He said, "No." Sayyidnā 'Umar says, "After having found out the truth of the matter, I returned to the Masjid and, standing on the door, I made an announcement that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has not divorced his wives. Whatever you are saying is wrong." Thereupon, the verse: وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ was revealed (Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr).

To spread rumours, without verification

This verse tells us that hearsay should not be repeated without prior investigation into its credibility. Thus, in a ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: كفى بالمرء كذبا أن يحدث بكل ما سمع . It means that 'for a man to be a liar, it is enough that he repeats everything he hears without first verifying its truth'. In another ḥadīth, he said: من حدث بحديث وهو يرى انه كذب فهو . It means: 'Whoever relates something he thinks is a lie, then, he too is one of the two liars (Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr).

Who are "those in authority"?

Let us now determine the meaning of two expressions appearing in the sentence: *وَكَلِمَةُ الرَّسُولِ وَالْأُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلَّهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْظِرُونَ مِنْهُمْ* which has been translated as: 'and had they referred it to the Messenger and to those in authority among them, those of them who were to investigate it would have certainly known it (the truth of the matter).' Literally, the later word, "*istinbat*" here refers to the act of drawing out water from the depth of a well. When a well is dug, the water that oozes out first is called *mustambat* water. But, the usage in this context means to get to the bottom of something and find out the truth of the matter. (Qurtubī)

As for the correct signification of the expression: *أولو الأمر* (those in authority), positions taken by scholars vary. Sayyidnā Ḥasan, Qatādah and Ibn Abī Lailā, may Allah have mercy on them, say that this refers to Muslim scholars and jurists (علماء و فقهاء). Al-Suddī says that it means rulers and officials (أمرء و حكام). After reporting both these statements, Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ takes a general view and maintains that the expression means both, which is the correct approach, because *أولى الأمر* applies to all of them. However, some scholars doubt the possibility that *أولى الأمر* could refer to Muslim jurists (فقهاء) because *أولى الأمر*, in its literal sense, means people whose orders are carried out administratively. Obviously, this is not what the Muslim jurists (فقهاء) do. Let us look at the reality of the thing. The implementation of authority takes two forms. Firstly, it can be done by using force, coercion and oppression. This is something which can only be done by those in authority. The second form of obedience to authority comes from reliance and trust, and that stands reposed in revered Muslim jurists (فقهاء) only, a demonstration of which has been all too visible in the lives of Muslims in general in all ages where the general body of Muslims have been, by their own free will and choice, taking the decision and authority of religious scholars (علماء) as the mandatory mode of action in all matters of religion. Then, according to the precepts of the Shari'ah, obedience to rules set by them is obligatory (*wājib*) on them as such. So, given this reason, the application of the term *أولى الأمر* (those in authority) to them as well is correct. (al-Ahkām al-Qur'ān by al-Jaṣṣāṣ)

Details on this subject have already appeared under the commen-

tary on verse: *أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ* (Say, "Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you - 4:59).

Qiyās and Ijtihād in modern problems

From this verse, we find out that rulings on problems not specifically mentioned in the authoritative texts (technically, *naṣṣ*) of the Holy Qur'ān or Sunnah will be deduced in the light of the Qur'ān using the principle of Ijtihād and Qiyās because this verse carries the command to turn to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for the resolution of any new problems - if he is present at that time. And if he is not present, the command is to turn to religious scholars and jurists of the Muslim community (علماء و فقهاء), because they have the required ability to extract and formulate religious injunctions from the authoritative texts of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth.

Points of guidance which emerge from the statement made above are:

1. In the absence of *naṣṣ*, explicit textual authority from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, the course of action is to turn to Fuqahā, and 'Ulamā' (Muslim jurists and scholars).

2. The injunctions given by Allah are of two kinds. Some of them are there in the form of explicit textual imperatives (*manṣūṣ* and *ṣarīḥ*). Then, there are some others which are not explicit and carry meanings which are hidden in the depths of the verses as willed by Allah in his infinite wisdom.

3. It is the duty of the 'Ulamā' (religious scholars) to extract and formulate such meanings through the established methodology of Ijtihād and Qiyās.

4. For the great masses of Muslims, it is necessary that they should follow the guidance given by the 'Ulamā' in such problems. (Aḥkām al-Qur'ān by al-Jaṣṣaṣ)

The Prophetic function of deducing injunctions

The statement: *لَعَلَّهُمُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَضِطُّونَهُ مِنْهُمْ* : 'those of them who were to investigate it would have certainly known it (the truth of the matter),' shows that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم too was obligated to the percept of extracting, formulating and reasoning out with proofs all injunctions that needed to be so handled. This is so because earlier in

the verse the command was to turn towards two sources. Firstly, it was to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and secondly, to those in authority (أُولِي الْأَمْرِ). After that it was said: لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَشِيرُونَ (those of them who were to investigate it would have certainly known it.) And this injunction is general which covers both of the two parties cited above. So, it proves that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was also obligated with the function of deducing injunctions. (Aḥkām al-Qur'ān by al-Jaṣṣāṣ)

An important note

If this verse makes someone suspect or assume that it has no relation with deducing injunctions of Shari'ah, it does not say anymore than give an instruction to people that they should not indulge in rumour-mongering in situations of peace and fear when faced with an enemy, instead of which, one should turn to the knowledgeable and trustworthy and act in accordance with the advice they give after due deliberation and that it has no connection with juristic or new legal problems.

In order to answer this doubt, it can be said that the sentence: وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ (And when there comes to them a matter about peace or fear) in this verse makes no mention of an enemy. So, the state of peace and fear is universal. The way it relates to an enemy, so it does with day to day problems as well. This is so because the appearance of a problem before a commoner, a problem about which no textual authority relating to its being lawful or unlawful exists, throws him into a fix and he cannot decide which side to take as both sides hold the probability of gain and loss. The smartest way out devised by the Shari'ah of Islam in this impasse is that one should turn to those capable of extracting and formulating injunctions and act in accordance with the via media laid out by them. (Abridged from Aḥkām al-Qur'ān by al-Jaṣṣāṣ)

The outcome of Ijtihād

The legal ruling extracted by Muslim jurists (نفهاء) from the texts through Istinbāt (and Ijtihād) cannot categorically be declared as being the absolute truth in the sight of Allah. Instead of that, the probability always exists that this ruling might as well turn out to be not true. But, of course, what one gains out of it is positive, overwhelming and weightier opinion about its being true and correct, something which is

good enough to act upon. (al-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān by al-Jaṣṣāṣ and Tafsīr Kabīr)

Verse 84

فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ الْإِنْفُسَ وَحَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكْفِكَ بَأْسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بَأْسًا
وَأَشَدُّ تَنْكِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾

So, fight in the way of Allah. You are not responsible but for yourself. And persuade the believers. It is likely that Allah will prevent the mischief of those who disbelieve. And Allah is the strongest in war and the mightiest in punishing. [84]

Commentary

The Background of Revelation

When the battle of Uḥud came to pass in the month of Shawwāl, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, in keeping with the promised date set by the disbelievers, started preparations to confront them at Badr in the month of Dhi-Qa'dah (historians identify which as the minor Badr). At that time, some people betrayed a little hesitation in going along because of having been recently wounded, while some others did so because of rumours. Thereupon, Allah Almighty revealed this verse where guidance has been given to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he should ignore the infirm and the scared among Muslims and show no hesitation in marching on to Jihād even if it has to be all alone, for Allah is his helper. With this guidance on hand, he went ahead to Badr Minor with seventy Companions as promised to Abū Sufyān after the battle of Uḥud. There it so happened that Allah Almighty put awe and fear in the hearts of Abū Sufyān and his disbelieving accomplices from the tribe of Quraysh. Not one of them showed up for the fight as a result of which they turned out to be false in their solemn promise. Thus, as the text says, Allah Almighty prevented the mischief of the disbelievers and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم returned back with his companions safely (Qurtubī & Mazharī).

The Eloquent style of Qur'ānic Injunctions

The verse begins with the command to the Holy Prophet ﷺ : 'So, fight in the way of Allah'. This direction is addressed to the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which implies that he should fight alone - irrespective of whether anyone is ready to go with him. But, in the second sentence following immediately, it was also said that he should not shelve or surrender the mission of inducing other Muslims to join in the Jihād. However, if they remain unresponsive even after the effort of persuasion, the mission of the prophet has been accomplished who, from that point onwards, will not be responsible for what they do.

In addition to this, the possible danger in having to fight alone has been removed by saying: 'It is likely that Allah will prevent the mischief of those who disbelieve': May be He puts awe in their hearts and they stand subdued and he succeeds all alone. How could such success become possible? The proof follows immediately when it is declared that he is being helped and supported by Allah Almighty whose strength and might at war far exceeds those of such disbelievers, therefore, it is certain that success has got to be his. After that, coupled with this statement about the Divine strength in war, the text relates how Allah is the mightiest in punishing. This punishment may be on the Day of Judgement as obvious, or may come right here in this mortal world as stated by some commentators. Whichever the case, 'Allah is the strongest in war and the mightiest in punishing.'

Verses 85 - 87

مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِّنْهَا ۚ وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقْتَدِرًا ﴿٨٥﴾ وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا ﴿٨٦﴾ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ لِيَجْمَعََنَّكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لِارْتِيبَ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا ﴿٨٧﴾

And whoever makes a good recommendation, there shall be for him a share from it (in the Hereafter). And whoever makes a bad recommendation, there shall be for him a share from it. And Allah is powerful over everything. [85]

And when you are greeted with a salutation, greet with

one better than it, or return the same. Surely, Allah is the reckoner over everything. [86]

Allah: There is no god but He. He shall, certainly, gather you towards the Day of Doom. There is no doubt about it. And who is more true, than Allah, in his word?

[87]

Commentary

The Reality of Recommendation and its rules and kinds

Verse 85 beginning with *مَنْ كَفَّلَ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً* points out to the act of *شَفَاعَةٌ*: '*shafā'ah*' (recommendation) under two heads, the good and the bad, a division which helps clarify its nature. The added message here is that no recommendation is universally good or bad. What has to be realized is that one who makes a good recommendation shall have a share in the reward it brings and whoever makes a bad recommendation shall have a share in the punishment it brings. It will be noted that the word *نَصِيبٌ* : '*nasībun*' (share) has been used with *شَفَاعَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ* : '*shafā'atan hasanatan*' (good recommendation) while the word *كِفْلٌ* : '*kiflun*' (share) has been used with *شَفَاعَةٌ سَيِّئَةٌ* : '*shafā'atan sayyi'atan*' (bad recommendation). Lexically, both words carry the same meaning, that is, a share of something. But, in common usage, '*nasīb*' refers to a good share while the word '*kifl*' is, more than often, used to identify a bad share, although there are occasions when '*kifl*' is also used for a good share as well, like "*كِفْلَيْنِ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ*" (two shares from His mercy) in the Holy Qur'an.

The literal meaning of '*shafā'ah*' is to meet, to join; or, cause to meet or join. This is why the word '*shaf*' means an even number, a pair or couple in Arabic, the antonym of which is referred to as '*witr*' or odd. So, speaking literally, '*shafā'ah*' means the coupling of one's strength with that of a weak seeker of justice and thus making it stronger in appeal. Or, in other words, joining in with some helpless solitary person and thus giving him the strength of a pair.

From here we find out that for recommendation to be fair and permissible the condition is that the claim of the person being recommended be true and permissible. Then, in the second place, it may be that a person cannot carry his claim all by himself to those in authority because of his weakness or lack of resource, something which you may do for him. Thus, we can clearly see that making a

recommendation for what is not true and rightful, or forcibly influencing others to accept it, is included under bad recommendation. Consequently, we also know that pressure or authority exerted through the channels of one's connections and influence is also not permissible because it is an act of injustice. Therefore, this too will be counted as 'bad recommendation'.

To sum up the meaning of the verse, it can be said that one who makes a recommendation following the permissible way for someone's permissible claim or job, will have a share in its reward. Similarly, one who makes a recommendation for something impermissible or uses an impermissible method to do so, will have a share in its punishment.

Having a share means that, should the person to whom the recommendation has been made do the needful for the one oppressed or deprived, the person making the recommendation will be rewarded very much like the official who has listened to the recommendation and removed the injustice or deprivation cited therein. Similarly, one who makes a recommendation for something impermissible will obviously become a sinner - we already know that the reward or punishment of the maker of a recommendation does not depend on his recommendation becoming effective and fruitful; he will get his share in any case.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said: **الدَّالُّ عَلَى الْخَيْرِ كَفَاعِلِهِ** that is, a person who brings someone around to do a good deed gets a reward similar to that received by the doer of the good deed. In another ḥadīth from Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضى الله عنه appearing in Ibn Mājah, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has been reported to have said:

من اعان على قتل مؤمن بشطر كلمة لقي الله مكتوب بين عينيه "أثس
من رحمة الله".

Whoever helps in the killing of a Muslim even by part of a word will face Allah with a sign written (on his forehead) in between his eyes: (This man is) "deprived from the mercy of Allah".

From here we find out that prompting someone to do a good deed is a good deed in its own right and carries an identical reward for having done it and, by the same token, prompting someone to do an evil deed

or to indulge in an act of sin is also a sin of equal gravity.

Towards the end of verse 85, it was said: **وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّنتَبِهًا** which has been translated as: 'And Allah is powerful over everything'. Lexically, the word, **منتبہ**: *'muqtī'* means powerful as well as the observer and the dispenser of sustenance. All these three meanings can be deduced from this statement. In the first sense, the meaning would be that Allah is powerful over everything. For Him the rewarding and punishing of the one who makes a recommendation and the one who executes it is not difficult. Taken in the second sense, the meaning would be that Allah is ever-present observing everything. He knows best who is making a recommendation with what intention, such as, is it being done sincerely to help out some brother-in-faith just for the sake of Allah and His pleasure, or the purpose is to make him a target of self-interest and get some advantage out of him as a bribe. Taken in the third sense, the meaning would be that Allah Almighty is Himself responsible for the dispensation of sustenance; whatever He has written for someone has got to reach him. A recommendation by someone is not going to leave Him choiceless. In fact, He will bestow on whomsoever He wills as much of sustenance as He wills. However, the maker of a good recommendation gets a reward for free because he has extended a helping hand to the helpless.

The Holy Prophet **صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم** has said:

كان الله في عون عبده ما دام في عون اخيه

Allah keeps helping His servant as long as he keeps helping his brother.

It is on this basis that the Holy Prophet **صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم** has said as reported in a ḥadīth of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī:

اشفعوا فلتوجروا ويقضى الله على لسان نبيه ما شاء

Recommend and be rewarded and then be pleased with whatever Allah decides through His prophet.

While this ḥadīth declares recommendation as a source of Divine reward, it also defines the limit of such recommendation. If a weak person cannot carry his problem onward to a higher authority, or is incapable of explaining correctly what he needs, then, you do it for him. Further from that what happens is none of your business. The

recommendation may be accepted or it may be rejected. What a person needs to be done may be done, or it may remain undone. These are possibilities and you should not interfere in the process of decision-making in any manner whatsoever. Should the final outcome turn out to be against the recommendation made, you should never end up being displeased or disgusted. The last sentence of the hadīth quoted above: يقضى الله على لسان نبيه ماشاء means just this. Also, due to this reason, the words of the Holy Qur'an carry a hint in this direction, that is, the reward or punishment on the making of a recommendation does not depend on a successful recommendation. Such reward or punishment relates to the initial act of making a recommendation in the absolute sense. If you make a good recommendation, you become deserving of a reward and if you make a bad recommendation, you become liable to punishment - the approval or rejection of your recommendation does not matter.

The commentators of Tafsīr al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ and Bayān al-Qur'an and several others take the word مِنْهَا: 'minhā' in verse 85 as indicative of cause and see a hint in this direction. Al-Tafsīr al-Maḥzarī reports from the great exegete Mujāhid that one who makes a recommendation will get a reward for having made it, even though the recommendation may not have been accepted. Then, this approach is not specially related to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in person. Any recommendation made to any other human being should be bound by this principle - make the recommendation and be done with it. Moving any further to compel the addressee of the recommendation to accept it is not right and fair. This is illustrated by an incident in the blessed life of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He made a recommendation to Sayyidah Barīrah, a bondwoman freed by Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضى الله عنها that her husband Mughīth from whom she had dissolved her marriage was really disturbed emotionally because he loved her, so she may think of remarrying him. Sayyidah Barīrah رضى الله عنها said: 'Yā Rasūlallah, if this is your command, I am all for it; but, if this is a recommendation, then, I just do not feel like accepting it at all.' The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: 'Yes, this is a recommendation and not a command.' Sayyidah Barīrah رضى الله عنها, may Allah be pleased with her, knew that the Holy Prophet ﷺ will not feel bad about what is against the set rule. Therefore, in all frankness, she said: 'Then I do not accept

this recommendation.' He took it very gracefully and let her stay the way she was.

This was the whole reality behind the act of recommendation, something which brought merit and reward under the legal code of Islam. But, in our day, people have so mutilated the whole thing that no '*shafā'ah*' or recommendation remains what it was intended to be. What we witness now is a pushy exercise of cashing on the basis of connections, acquaintance and VIP influence for which relentless pressure is exerted. This is why people become angry when their recommendation is not accepted. Some would even stoop down to open hostility, although pressurizing a person to a limit where he is compelled to do something against his conscience and good discretion is included under compulsion and coercion and is a grave sin. This is just like someone forcibly usurping the claim, right or property belonging to the other person. Wasn't that person free and independent as established by the law of Islam? Here comes someone who deprives him of his freedom of action by pressing him to do something against his free will and conscience. This would be like stealing from someone and giving it to a destitute in order to fulfil his need.

Receiving Payment against a Recommendation is Bribe and is Absolutely Forbidden

A recommendation against which anything is taken in return becomes a bribe. The ḥadīth declares it to be an ill-gotten property which is *ḥarām* (forbidden). This includes all kinds of bribe whether money-oriented or job-related, for instance, harnessing someone to do a personal chore in return for having done something for him.

According to Tafsīr al-Kashshāf, a good recommendation is that which aims at fulfilling the right of a Muslim, or to bring some permissible benefit to him, or to shield him from harm or loss. Furthermore, this act of recommendation should not be for any worldly expediency. It should be aimed at helping a weak person exclusively for seeking the pleasure of Allah. Then no bribe, financial or physical, should be taken against this recommendation and that this recommendation should also not be about things not permissible. In addition to all that, the purpose of this recommendation should not be to seek pardon for a proven crime the punishment for which stands fixed in the Holy

Qur'an.

It appears in Tafsīr Al-Baḥr Al-Muḥīṭ and al-Maẓharī that praying to Allah that the need of some Muslim be fulfilled is also included under 'good recommendation', the reward for which reaches the maker of the prayer as well. According to a ḥadīth, when someone prays for the good of his brother-in-faith, the angel says: *لك بمنى*, which means - 'may Allah fulfill your need as well.'

Salām and Islām : The Bliss of Muslim Greeting

In verse 86 which begins with the words: *وَإِذَا حُيِّتُمْ بِتَحِيَّاتِهِ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا*, Allah Almighty tells us the etiquette of offering and returning greetings known as Salām among Muslims.

Lexically, تحية: 'Taḥiyyah' means saying *حَيَّاهُ اللَّهُ*: 'Hayyākallāh', that is, 'may Allah keep you alive'. In pre-Islam Arabia, when people met, they used to greet each other by saying 'Hayyākallāh' or 'An'amallāhu bika 'aynan' or 'An'im sabāhan' or other expression of this nature. When Islam came, it changed this style of greeting and replaced it with a standard form of greeting which is السلام عليكم: 'As-Salāmu 'Alaikum'. Commonly, though incompletely, translated in English as 'peace be on you', the greeting means: 'May you remain safe from every pain, sorrow and distress.'

In Aḥkāṁ al-Qur'an, Ibn 'Arabī says: The word Salām is one of the good names of Allah Almighty and 'As-Salāmu Alaikum' means *اللَّهُ رَؤُوفٌ* *عَلَيْكَ* that is, Allah Almighty is your guardian and caretaker.

The Islamic greeting is unique

All civilized people around the world have the custom of saying something to express mutual familiarity or affection when they meet each other. If compared with these broadmindedly, the Islamic form of greeting will stand out significantly for its comprehensiveness because it does not simply restrict itself to an expression of affection alone. It rather combines it with the fulfillment of the demands of love and affection. It means that we pray to Allah that He keep you safe against all calamities and sorrows. Then, this is no bland prayer for long life alone as was the way with pre-Islam Arabs. Instead of that, here we have a prayer for good life, that is, a life which is secure against all calamities and sorrows. Along with it, the Islamic *salām* is an expres-

sion of the reality of our relation with Allah Almighty - that we, the greeter and the greeted, are all dependent on Allah Almighty needing Him all the time and no one can bring any benefit to someone else without His will and leave. Taken in this sense, this form of greeting is an act of worship in its own right and, quite functionally indeed, a medium of reminding a brother-in-faith of Allah Almighty, the object of his obedience and love.

Staying with this line of presentation, let us imagine a person praying to Allah that his acquaintance remain safe against all calamities and sorrows. When doing so, is it not that he is sort of making a promise as well that the person being greeted is safe against his own hands and tongue. In other words, he is saying that he, in his place, is the guardian and protector of the person's life, property and honour.

In Ahkām al-Qur'an, Ibn al-'Arabī has reported the following saying of Imām Ibn 'Uyaynah:

أَتَدْرِي مَا السَّلَامُ؟ يَقُولُ أَنْتَ 'إِمْنٌ مِنِّي

Do you know what *salām* is? The greeter by *salām* says: 'You are safe from me.'

To sum up, it can be said that this Islamic form of greeting has a universal comprehensiveness as it is a medium of the remembrance of Allah while reminding the person greeted of Him. It is a vehicle of expressing love and affection for a brother-in-faith and, in fact, a wonderful prayer for him. Then, it also carries a commitment that the greeted will in no way face harm or discomfort from the greeter as it appears is a sound ḥadīth where the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَكَفِّهِ

A Muslim is the one from whom all Muslims remain safe - (safe) from his tongue and (safe) from his hands. (Tirmidhī, Kitābul-Imān)

At this point one may fondly wish that Muslims would not utter the words of this greeting as some sort of habitual custom which commonly prevails among other people of the world. How beneficial it would be if this greeting is offered out of a full understanding of its reality which, perhaps, may turn out to be enough for the reform of

whole community. This is the reason why the Holy Prophet ﷺ laid great emphasis on popularizing the practice of Muslims in greeting each other with salām, and he identified it as the best of deeds and took time to explain its merits, graces, blessings and rewards. In a ḥadīth of Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim narrated by Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضى الله عنه, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has been reported to have said:

"You cannot enter Paradise until you are a believer and your belief cannot be complete until you love each other. I tell you something which, if you put it in practice, will establish bonds of love among you all, and that is: Make salām a common practice among you which should include every Muslim, whether an acquaintance or a stranger."

Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنه says that someone asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم: 'Out of the practices of Islam which is the worthiest?' He said: 'Feed people and spread the practice of salām, whether you know or do not know a person.' (Bukhārī and Muslim)

The Musnad of Aḥmad, Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd report from Sayyidnā Abū Umāmah رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: 'Nearest to Allah is the person who is the first one to offer salām.'

A ḥadīth from Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه appearing in Musnad al-Bazzar and al-Mu'jīm al-Kabīr of al-Ṭabarānī reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: 'Salām is one of the names of Allah Almighty with which He has blessed the people of the earth. So, make salām a common practice among you because, when a Muslim goes to a gathering of people and offers his salām to them, he is blessed with a station of distinction in the sight of Allah Almighty as he reminded everyone of Salām, that is, reminded everyone of Allah Almighty. If people in the gathering do not return his greeting, others will respond who are better than the people of this gathering, that is, the angels of Allah Almighty.'

In another ḥadīth from Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضى الله عنه the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said: 'A big miser is the man who acts miserly in offering salām. (Ṭabarānī, al-Mu'jīm al-Kabīr)

The effect that those teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had on his noble Companions can be gauged from a narration about Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنه who would frequently go to the bazar

just for the single purpose of having a chance to meet any Muslim there in the hope of offering salām to him and thus become deserving of the reward of an act of worship. Incidentally, he never intended to buy or sell anything while there. This narration from Sayyidnā Ṭufayl ibn Ubayy ibn Ka'b رضى الله عنه appears in Mu'aṭṭā' of Imām Malīk.

Verse 4:86 of the Holy Qur'ān which says: 'And when you are greeted with a salutation, greet with one better than it, or return the same', was explained by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم through his own action in the following manner. Once someone came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and said: 'As-Salamu 'Alaikum Yā Rasūlallāh' (peace be on you, O Messenger of Allah). While returning the greeting, he added a word and said: 'Wa 'Alaikumus-Salām wa Raḥmatullāh' (And peace be on you, and the mercy of Allah). Then someone else came and offered his salām using the following words: 'As-Salāmu 'Alaika Yā Rasūlallāh wa Raḥmatullāh.' In response, he added yet another word and said: 'Wa 'Alaikumus-Salām wa Raḥmatullāhi wa Barakātuh' (And peace be on you too, and the mercy of Allah, and His blessings). Then came a third person. He combined all three salutations in his initial salām and greeted him by saying the whole thing, that is: 'As-Salāmu 'Alaik Yā Rasūlallāh wa Raḥmatullāhi wa Barakātuh.' In response, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said only one word 'Wa 'Alaik' (and on you). Disappointed in his heart, he said: 'Yā Rasūlallāh, ransomed be my parents for you, you said many words of prayer while returning the greeting of those who came before me. But, when I greeted you with all those words, you limited your response to 'wa 'alaik' (and on you).' He said: 'You left nothing for me to add in the response! Since you used up all those words in your initial salām, I found it sufficient to return your greeting on the principle of like for like in accordance with the teaching of the Qur'ān.' This narration has been reported by Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Abī Ḥatīm with different chains of authorities.

There are three things we find out from this ḥadīth: Words appearing in the verse under comment mean that a salām offered should be returned by adding more words to it. If someone says *As-salāmu 'Alaikum* (peace be on you), you respond by saying *Wa 'Alaikumus-Salām wa Raḥmatullāh* (And peace be on you, and the

mercy of Allah). If he says *As-Salāmu 'Alaikum wa Raḥmatullāh* (peace be on you, and the mercy of Allah), then, in response, you say *Wa 'Alaikumus-Salām wa Raḥmatullāhī wa Barakātuh* (And peace be on you, and the mercy of Allah, and His blessings).

2. This addition of words is restricted to three words only as a *masnūn* act, that is, conforming to the blessed practice of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم . Going beyond that is not *masnūn*. The logic behind it is obvious. The occasion for salām requires that the verbal exchange be brief. Any excess in this connection which interferes with ongoing business or which becomes heavy on the listener is not appropriate. Therefore, when the person visiting the Holy Prophet ﷺ combined all three words in his very initial salām, he elected to abstain from any further addition of words. This was further explained by Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās رضى الله عنه by saying that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stopped the man who went beyond the limit of the three words with the following statement : *إِذَا السَّلَامُ قَدِ انْتَهَى إِلَى الْبِرْكَةِ* : (Mazharī from al-Baghawī). It means that salām ends at the word, *barakah*. Saying anything beyond that was not the practice of the blessed Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم . (Ibn Kathīr)

3. If someone makes his salām with three words spoken at the same time, returning it with only one word will be correct. That too comes under the principle of like for like and is sufficient in obedience to the Qur'ānic command *أَوْ رُدُّوْهَا* (or return the same) as the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has, in this ḥadīth, considered a one-word response as sufficient. (Tafsīr Mazharī)

In summation, we can say that it is obligatory on a Muslim to return the salām offered to him. If he fails to do so without any valid excuse admitted by the Sharī'ah of Islam, he will become a sinner. However, he has the option to choose the mode. He can either respond with words better than those used in offering the salām; or, the response could be in identical words.

It will be noticed that this verse very clearly states that returning a salām is obligatory but it is not explicit on the nature of offering a salām initially. However, in the Qur'ānic expression *إِذَا حُيِّئْتُمْ* (And when you are greeted ..) there does lie a hint pointing towards this rule of conduct. That this statement is in the passive voice without identi-

fyng the subject precisely could be suggestive of salām being something all Muslims already do habitually and commonly.

The Musnad of Aḥmad, al-Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd report that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: 'Nearest to Allah is the person who is the first to offer salām.' So, from the emphasis on salām and its many merits you have learnt from the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ cited earlier, we get to understand that offering the initial salām has also been emphasized as part of the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. According to Tafsīr al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ, the initial salām is actually a *sunnah mu'akkadah* (emphasized practice of the Prophet of Islam) as held by the majority of 'Ulama. And Ḥasan al-Baṣrī رحمه الله said: 'السلام تطوع والرد فريضة', that is, 'the initial salām is voluntary while returning it is an obligation.'

Some more detailed explanations of this Qur'anic injunctions about salām and its answer have been given by the Holy Prophet ﷺ which the reader may wish to know briefly. According to a ḥadīth in al-Bukhārī and Muslim, the person riding should himself offer salām to the person walking; and the person walking should offer salām to the person sitting; and a small group of persons walking near a larger group should be the first to offer salām.

According to a ḥadīth in Tirmidhī, when a person enters his house, he should offer salām to the members of his family as this act of grace will bring blessings for him as well as for his family.

According to a ḥadīth in Abū Dāwūd, when one meets a Muslim more than once, he should offer salām every time; and the way offering salām is *masnūn* (a requirement of *sunnah*) at the time of the initial meeting, so it is at the time of seeking leave when offering salām is in line with the practice of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, and a source of reward as well. This rule of guidance appears in Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd as narrated by Sayyidnā Qatādah and Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه .

Now a note of caution about the rule: It is obligatory to answer salām - however, there are certain exceptions to it. For instance, if someone says salām to a person who is offering ṣalāh, an answer is not obligatory. Indeed, it is a spoiler of ṣalāh. Similarly, a person may be delivering a religious sermon, or is busy in reciting the Holy Qur'an, or is calling the *adhān* or *iqāmah*, or is teaching religious texts, or is busy

with his human compulsions - in all such conditions, even offering the initial salām is not permissible, and he is not responsible for answering it as a matter of obligation either.

Towards the end of verse 86, it was said: إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا (Surely, Allah is the Reckoner over everything). It means that with Allah rests the reckoning of everything which includes all human and Islamic rights such as salām and its answer. These too will have to be accounted for before Allah Almighty.

After that comes verse 87 إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لِيَجْزِيََنَّا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَبَّ لَنَا فِيهِ 87 which means that there is no object worthy of worship other than Allah. So, it exhorts: Believe in Him as the only object of your worship and whatever you do let that be with the intention of an act of worship or 'ibādah before Him. He will gather everyone on the Day of Qiyāmah, the fateful Day of Doom, in which there is no doubt. That will be the Day when He will give everyone the return for whatever deeds he will come up with the promise that Qiyāmah will come and the news that there will be reward and punishment at that time is all true. This is true because this 'news' of what will happen is given by Allah, وَمَنْ أَضَدُّ مِنْ أَلَّهِ حَدِيثًا - and whose word can be more true than that of Allah?

Verses 88 - 91

فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِتْنَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَرَكْسَهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا
 أُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَهْدُوا مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ
 سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٨﴾ وَذُو لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً فَلَا
 تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ
 تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ
 وَاَوْلِيَاءَ وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٨٩﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ
 وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصْرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَنْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ
 يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتِلُوكُمْ فَإِنْ
 اعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَالْقَوَا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامُ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ

لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾ سَتَجِدُونَ الَّذِينَ يَرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُبَايِعُواكُمْ
وَيُبَايِعُوا قَوْمَهُمْ كُلَّمَا رُذِّقُوا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا فِيهَا فَإِنْ لَمْ
يَعْتَزِلْوكُمْ وَيُلْفُوا إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ وَيَكْفُرُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُوهُمْ
وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأُولَئِكَ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ
سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا ﴿٩١﴾

So, what is the matter with you that you have become two groups about the hypocrites, while Allah has upturned them because of what they did. Do you want to guide the one whom Allah has let go astray? And the one whom Allah lets go astray, for him you shall never find a way. [88]

They wish that you should disbelieve, as they have disbelieved, and thus you become all alike. So, do not take friends from among them unless they migrate in the way of Allah. Then, if they turn away, sieze them, and kill them wherever you find them, and do not take from among them a friend or a helper. [89] Except those who join a group between whom and you there is a treaty, or who come to you their hearts declining to fight you or to fight their people -- And if Allah had so willed, He would have given them power over you, then they would have fought you -- so, if they stay away from you and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allah has not given you a way against them. [90]

You will find others who want to be secure from you, and secure from their own people. Whenever they are called back to the mischief, they are thrown into it. So, if they do not stay away from you and do not offer peace to you, and do not restrain their hands, then seize them, and kill them wherever you find them, and against these we have given you an open authority. [91]

Commentary

The verses quoted above describe three groups of people about whom two injunctions have been given. The following narrations clarify events surrounding these groups:

1. 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥāmid has narrated from Mujāhid that some

disbelievers of Makkah came to Madīnah. They pretended to have become Muslims and claimed to have come there as emigrants. Later, they turned into apostates. They went to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, told him about their plan to go to Makkah to buy merchandise from there. Having made their false excuse, they departed for Makkah and never returned. There arose a difference of opinion about their behaviour among the Muslims of Madīnah. Some said that they were believers. It was in verse 88: **فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَتْنِينَ** (So what is the matter with you that you have become two groups about the hypocrites) where Allah Almighty declared that they were disbelievers and should be killed.

Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānavī has explained the Qur'ānic word, '*munāfiq*' (hypocrite) by saying that they were hypocrites when they claimed to have become Muslims - they had never believed in their hearts. The fact was that hypocrites were not killed because they concealed their inner disbelief. But, the case of these people was different as their apostacy had come out in the open. As for those who took them to be Muslims, they may have, perhaps, taken a benign view of their action under some interpretation. However, this interpretation was based on sheer opinion not supported by any proof from the Sharī'ah. That is why no reliance was placed on it.

2. Ibn Abī Shaybah has narrated from Hasan that Surāqah ibn Mālīk al-Mudlajī visited the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم after the events of Badr and Uḥud and requested him to make peace with his tribe, Banī Mudlaj. Thereupon, he sent Sayyidnā Khālīd رضى الله عنه to them to conclude a peace treaty. The terms of the treaty were as follows:

"We will not support anyone against the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If the Quraysh become Muslims, We too shall become Muslims. All tribes who enter into alliance with us, they too shall become a party with us in this treaty."

Thereupon, this verse: **وَدُّوا كَذِبًا كَفُورًا (الى قوله) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ اليه** (They wish that you disbelieve like they have disbelieved) was revealed.

3. It has been narrated from Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضى الله عنه that the people mentioned in the verse: **سَتَجِدُونَ الْآخَرِينَ** (You will find others who want to be secure from you) are those belonging to the tribes of Asad and Ghitfān who, when they came to Madīnah, professed Islam outwardly, but to their own people they would confide that they had

really believed in monkeys and scorpions while before Muslims they would piously declare that they were followers of their faith.

However, Dahhāk ascribes this conduct to the tribe of 'Abd al-Dār according to a report from Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās. The first and the second narration appears in Ruḥ al-Ma'ānī, while the third narration can be seen in Ma'ālim.

Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānavī likens the state of those mentioned in the third narration as that of the first one since it proves that they were no Muslims to begin with, therefore, they fall under the injunction governing disbelievers in general, that is, 'do not fight them in the presence of a peace treaty – otherwise, do.' Thus, regarding those mentioned in the first narration, the second verse (89): فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَجُودُوهُمْ رَاقِبُوهُمْ (then if they turn away, sieze them and kill them) carries the injunction that they be arrested and killed, while the statement in the third verse (90): إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ (except those who join a group with whom you have a treaty) gives them a clear exemption in the event of peace, a situation which finds mention in the second narration. This exemption has been emphasised once again in فَإِن اعْتَرَفْتُمُوهُمْ (if they stay away from you) later in the same verse (90).

Regarding those mentioned in the third narration, it has been said in the fourth verse (91): سَتَجِدُونَ الْآخَرِينَ (you will find others) which means that should these people refuse to leave you alone and insist on fighting, then do fight against them. From this, it can be deduced that in the event they make peace, there should be no fighting against them. (Bayān al-Qur'ān)

In short, the three groups mentioned here are:

1. Those who do not emigrate despite their ability to do so in a period of time when emigration was a pre-requisite of faith in Islam. Or, after having emigrated, they go out of the new abode of Islam (Dār al-Islām) and return to the abode of disbelief (Dār al-Kufr).

2. Those who themselves enter a no-war pact with Muslims or those who join hands with those entering into such a pact.

3. Those who make peace to buy time and once there comes an occasion to fight a war against Muslims, they would readily join the enemy camp throwing all treaty obligations to winds.

The injunction governing the first group is similar to that which governs the disbelievers in general. The second groups is exempted from being arrested and killed. The third group deserves the same punishment as fixed for the first. These verses yield a total of two injunctions, that is, fighting in the absence of peace; and not fighting in the event of peace.

Different forms of Emigration and their Rules

Hijrah (Emigration) mentioned in verse 89 has been taken up in detail under the commentary on verse 100 of Sūrah al-Nisā' which appears a little later. At this point, it is sufficient to know that Emigration from the homeland of Disbelief (Dārul-kufr) was enjoined on all Muslims during the early period of Islam. It is for this reason that Allah Almighty has prohibited treating those who fail to carry out this obligation as Muslims. Consequently, when Makkah was conquered, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم declared: لَا هِجْرَةَ بَعْدَ الْفَتْحِ. (There is no Hijrah after the Victory). It means: 'Now that the Conquest of Makkah has made it the Abode of Islam, emigration from there was no more obligatory.' This rule related to the period of time when Emigration was considered to be a pre-condition of anyone's faith. During those days, anyone who did not emigrate despite having the ability to do so was not taken to be a Muslim. But, later on, this injunction was abrogated ¹ and now this mode of Emigration has ceased to exist.

There remains, however, another form of Hijrah which has been identified in a ḥadīth of Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī where it was said: لَا تَنْتَظِعُ الْهِجْرَةَ حَتَّى تَنْتَظِعَ الذَّنْبَ . It means that Hijrah (not in the sense of abandoning one's homeland, but in the sense of abandoning one's sins) will continue to exist until there remains the time to repent.

'Allamāh 'Aynī, the commentator of al-Bukhārī has said about this Hijrah: أَنَّ الْمُرَادَ بِالْهِجْرَةِ الْبِئْسَانِيَّةِ هِيَ هَجْرُ السَّيِّئَاتِ (This later Hijrah means the abandonment of sins). This subject also finds elucidation in a ḥadīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم where he is reported to have said: الْمُهَاجِرُ مَنْ هَجَرَ مَا نَهَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ It means that a Muhājir (Emigrant) is one who emigrates ('hajara': abandon, leave) from everything prohibited by Allah

1. It means that emigration no longer remained a pre-requisite for his being Muslim. However, if a Muslim lives in a non-Muslim country where he cannot fulfill his religious obligations, it is incumbent on him to emigrate if he has the means to do so. (Muḥammad Taqī Usmani)

Almighty (al-Mirqāt, v.1)

The discussion appearing above tells us that, technically, the word, Hijrah is applied in a dual sense:

1. To leave one's homeland in order to save one's faith as was done by the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all - they left their homeland of Makkah and emigrated to Madīnah and Ethiopia.

2. To leave one's sins.

The words of the verse 89: وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وِلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا (and do not take from them a friend or a helper) tell us that seeking help from disbelievers is forbidden (Haram). Pursuant to this, it appears in a narration that the Anṣārs of Madīnah sought the permission of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to seek help from the Jews to offset disbelievers whereupon he said: الْحَيْبُ لَا حَاجَةَ لَنَا بِهِمْ (The bad ones! We do not need them). (Mazharī, v.2)

Verses 92 - 93

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَأً وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا
 خَطَأً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ
 يَصَدَّقُوا فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ
 رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدِيَةٌ
 مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ
 شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا
 حَكِيمًا ﴿٩٢﴾ وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا
 فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَكَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٣﴾

It is not for a believer to kill any believer, except by mistake. And whoever kills a believer by mistake, then, a believing slave has to be freed and the blood money paid to his family, unless they forgo it.

And if he (the victim) belongs to a people hostile to you and is a believer, then, a believing slave has to be freed.

And if he (the victim) belongs to a people between whom and you there is treaty, then, blood money is to

be paid to his family, and a believing slave to be freed. And whoever does not find one has to fast for two consecutive months. This is a relenting from Allah. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. [92]

And whoever kills a believer deliberately, his reward is *Jahannam* where he shall remain for ever and Allah shall be angry with him and shall cast curse upon him and he has prepared for him a mighty punishment. [93]

Commentary

Sequence of Verses

Linked with earlier verses dealing with fighting and killing, all forms of killing, in the first instance, are eight in number because the person killed is covered by one of the four conditions which follow. Either, he is a Muslim; or, he is a Dhimmī (a free, protected, non-Muslim resident of a Muslim state); or, he is beneficiary of a peace pact and has been assured of the protection of his life, property, honour and religion; or, he is a belligerent disbeliever. Then, killing is of two types: intentional, or accidental. Thus, we see that there are only eight possible forms of killing:

1. The intentional killing of a Muslim.
2. The accidental killing of a Muslim.
3. The intentional killing of a Dhimmī.
4. The accidental killing of a Dhimmī.
5. The intentional killing of a person with whom there was a pact of peace.
6. The accidental killing of a peace pact beneficiary.
7. The intentional killing of a belligerent disbeliever.
8. The accidental killing of a belligerent disbeliever.

Injunctions covering some of these situations have appeared earlier; some find mention later, and some others are contained in Ḥadīth. Thus, the injunction relating to the first situation enforceable in this life, that is, the obligatory duty of taking 'even retaliation' (*qiṣās*) from him finds mention in Sūrah al-Baqarah and the injunction applicable to the Hereafter follows a little later in verse 93 beginning

with: *وَمَنْ قَتَلَ* (And whoever kills....). The second situation appears in Verse 92 from *وَمَا كَانَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ* (It is not for a believer to kill any believer) to *وَهُوَ* *مُؤْمِنٌ قَتَحَرُّهُ رَقَبَةٌ* (and if he i.e., victim was a believer...). The injunction covering the third situation appears in a hadīth from Dārquṭnī where the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has been reported to have subjected a Muslim to 'even retaliation' (*qiṣāṣ*) to compensate a *Dhimmī* (non-Muslim resident of a Muslim state) (اخرجه الزيلعي فى تخريج الهداية) The injunction for the fourth situation appears also in verse 92: *وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ* *مِيثَاقٌ* (and if he is from the people with whom you have a peace treaty). The fifth situation has already been taken up in verse 90 of the previous section under: *فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا* (then Allah has not made it permissible for you). The injunction governing the sixth situation has been mentioned alongwith the one relating to the fourth situation because the peace covenant is general and covers the permanent and the temporary both. Thus, it includes *Dhimmī* and *Musta'min* both,¹ irrespective of their permanent or time-bound guarantee of peace and protection. (Al-durr-al-Mukhtār Kitāb al-diyāt)

The injunction relating to situations 7 and 8 is already evident from the very legalization of Jihād itself which has appeared earlier (86) because belligerent disbelievers are killed intentionally. If killed accidentally, its justification will stand proved in a higher degree. (Bayān al-Qur'ān)

Three kinds of homicide and their respective injunctions

1. *Qatl al-'Amad* (Intentional Killing) which is done with obvious intention by a weapon made from iron or is like a steel weapon in its ability to cut off parts, such as, a sharp-edged bamboo or a sharp-edged piece of rock and things like that.

2. *Qatl Shibh al-'Amad* (Quasi-Intentional Killing) which is, no doubt, done intentionally - but, not with a weapon which could cut off parts.

3. *Qatl al-Khaṭā'* (Accidental Killing). It can happen under intention and conjecture when someone aims at a man taking him to be

1. Dhimmī is a non-Muslim person permanently and legally living in an Islamic state while *Musta'min* is a non-Muslim who lawfully enters an Islamic state for temporary stay (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

land game or belligerent disbeliever. Or, it can happen actually when one did aim at land game but ended up striking a man down. Here, *Khaṭā* or accident means intentional. So, this covers the second and the third kind both. Both entail the obligation to pay *diyāh* (blood money), and sin as well. But, the two kinds do differ in the later two consequences. The *diyāh* in the second kind of killing is 100 camels of four types, that is, 25 of each type. The *diyāh* of the third kind of killing is also 100 camels, but it has to be of five types, that is, 20 of each type. However, if *diyāh* is paid in cash, the amount to be realized is ten thousand *dirham* or one thousand *dinār*. This holds good for both kinds. However, the second kind is more sinful because of the intention of killing while it is lesser in the third kind because it is the result of simple heedlessness (as in *Hidāyah*). As such, the obligatory nature of *فَتَحْرِيْرُ رَكْبَةٍ* (to free a slave) and the word, *taubah* (repentance) in the verse 92 support this position. The fact is that the ground reality of these three kinds is conditioned by Islamic laws as promulgated in the mortal world. As for their being intentional or non-intentional in terms of their being sinful, it depends on the volition of the heart and the intention to commit the act. The punishment due against such sin is known to Allah alone. According to His knowledge these terms, the first kind may become non-intentional; and the second, intentional.

Rulings

1. The amount of *diyāh* (blood money) mentioned above applies to a male homicide victim. In case of a woman, it is half of it. (as in *Hidāyah*).
2. The *diyāh* of a Muslim and *Dhimmī* is equal. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said: *دبّة كل ذي عهد في عهد الف دينار* (*Marāsīl of Abū Dāwūd*, as quoted by *Hidāyah*).
3. *Kaffārah* (expiation) in the form of freeing a slave or fasting has to come from the killer himself. As for *diyāh* (blood money), it is the responsibility of those who are his caretakers. In the terminology of the Shari'ah, they are known as *العائلة* : *al-Āqilah*, those responsible for paying blood money.

Let there be no doubt at this point as to why the burden of a crime committed by the killer should be transferred to his guardians and supporters while they are innocent. The reason is that the guardians

of the killer are not totally faultless in this case. Their shortcoming is that they did not take necessary steps to stop him from venturing into such gross heedlessness against human life. Moreover, the fear of having to pay blood money, it is likely, will make them take all necessary precautions in the future so that such recklessness does not repeat itself.

4. In the act of freeing a slave (*Kaffārah*: Expiation), a bondman and a bondwoman are equal. The Qur'ānic word *Raqabah*, denoting a slave, is general. However, their physique should be sound and they should not be deformed in any way.

5. The *diyah* of the person killed shall be distributed as part of the inheritance determined by the Shari'ah. A legal heir who forgives his share will cause the *diyah* to be forgiven upto the limit of his share. If all legal heirs forgive it, the whole *diyah* will stand forgiven.

6. The *diyah* of a person killed who has no legal heir as recognized by the Shari'ah will be retired to the Bayt al-Māl (State Treasury) because *diyah* is inheritance and inheritance is governed by this very ruling. (Bayān al-Qur'ān)

7. As for people bound by a mutual covenant, be they *Dhimmi*s, free non-Muslim citizens of a Muslim country; or, the *Musta'min*, (those given guarantee of peace for a temporary period of time) the *diyah* obligatory in their case is valid only when people belonging to that *Dhimmi* or *Musta'min* are present. If they have no such people, or such people be Muslims, then, given the fact that a Muslim cannot inherit from a disbeliever, this *diyah*, therefore, shall be deemed as non-existent. Thus, should he be a *Dhimmi*, his *diyah* shall be retired into the Bayt al-Māl because the inheritance of a heirless *Dhimmi* - which includes *diyah* - goes to the Bayt al-Māl (as in al-Durr al-Mukhtār); otherwise, it will not be obligatory (Bayān al-Qur'ān).

8. If continuity is broken in fasting due to sickness or some other reason, then, one will have to fast afresh. But, for a woman, this continuity will not be deemed as broken because of her menstruation.

9. If, for some valid excuse, one does not have the strength to fast, then, he should keep repenting until his strength returns.

10. In intentional killing, there is no provision for this *Kaffārah*

(expiation); one should repent. (Bayān al-Qur'ān)

Verse 94 - 96

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا صَرَرْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا
تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ أَلْفَىٰ إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَضَ
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَغَانِمٌ كَثِيرَةٌ ۖ كَذَلِكَ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ
فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
خَبِيرًا ﴿٩٤﴾ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُولَى
الضَّرِّ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۖ فَضَّلَ
اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً ۗ
وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۗ وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى
الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٥﴾ دَرَجَاتٍ مِنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً ۗ وَكَانَ
اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٩٦﴾

O those who believe, when you go out in the way of Allah, be careful, and do not say, to the one who offers you the *salām*¹ "You are not a believer" seeking goods of the worldly life. So, with Allah there are spoils in abundance. In the same state you were before; then Allah favoured you. So, be careful. Surely, Allah is all-aware of what you do. [94]

Those among the believers who sit back, except the handicapped, are not equal to those who fight in the way of Allah with their riches and their lives. Allah has raised the rank of those, who fight with their riches and their lives over those who sit; and to each Allah has promised good. And Allah has given precedence to those who fight over those who sit in giving them a great reward [95] -- high ranks from Him and forgiveness and mercy. And Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [96]

1. Salām: the word prescribed by Islam for greeting, i.e. *Assalamu 'alaykum...*

Commentary

Sequence of Verses

Stern warning has been given against the killing of a Muslim in previous verses. Now it is being said that the apparent profession of Islam is all that is needed for a Muslim to be regarded as a Muslim obligated to observe the laws of the Shari'ah. So, it is necessary to abstain from the killing of a person who professes Islam. Furthermore, it is also not permissible to dig deep into his inward state of belief just because of some suspicion and to keep waiting for a definite proof of his certitude in faith in order that Islamic laws can be applied in his case. This is what happened during some battles with disbelievers when some Companions were unable to observe the fine line of distinction in this rule. On those occasions, there were some people who presented themselves as Muslims but some Companions took their profession of Islam as a lie and killed them, taking their belongings as war spoils. Allah Almighty condemned this indiscretionary practice. However, an admonition was considered sufficient and no severe warning was revealed for them against this act because the Companions did not know the rule clearly till that time. (Bayān al-Qur'ān)

Signs of Islam are sufficient to identify a Muslim:

In the first of the three verses cited above, the guidance given is that in the case of one who professes to be a Muslim, no Muslim is allowed to interpret his declaration of Islam as hypocrisy, without certain knowledge and proof. This verse (94) was revealed in the background of certain episodes relating to some Companions where they had not taken the correct line of action.

So, it has been reported from Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās in Tirmidhī and the Musnad of Aḥmad that a man from the tribe of Banū Sulaym met a group of the noble Companions who were going on a Jihād mission. This man was grazing his goats. He offered salām greetings to the group which was a practical demonstration of his being a Muslim. The Companions thought that this man was just pretending in view of the situation before him. Thus, taking his profession of Islam as a ruse to save his life and property whereby he could get away from them by tricking them with greeting in the Muslim style, they killed him and appropriated the herd of his goats as war

spoils which they took to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم . Thereupon, this verse was revealed. It laid down the rule: Do not take anyone who greets you by offering salām in the Islamic manner as a pretender and never assume, without valid proof, that his profession of Islam was a trick and never take possession of his property as spoils. (Ibn Kathīr)

There is another narration from Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās which has been reported by al-Bukhārī briefly and by al-Bazzār, in details. According to this narration, the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent out a group of mujāhidīn which included Sayyidnā Miqdād ibn al-Aswad. When they reached the designated spot, everyone present there ran away. The only man left there had a lot of valuable things with him. Facing the Companions, the man recited the *kalimah*: أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ (I testify that there is no god but Allah). But, Sayyidnā Miqdād رضى الله عنه , assuming that the man's heart was not behind his verbal declaration of faith and that he was doing it simply to save his life and property, killed him. One Companion from among the group present admonished him for what he had done: He had killed a person who had testified that there is no god but Allah. He declared that he will make it a point to relate this incident before the Holy Prophet ﷺ when and if he would have the honour of returning to him. Finally, the group returned to Madīnah and reported the incident to the Holy Prophet ﷺ who called for Sayyidnā Miqdād and gave him a stern warning. He said: 'What would you say on the Day of Doom when the *kalimah* of لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ will stand as a plaintiff against you?' The verse تَقُولُوا مِنَ الْغَىِّ إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ لَا تَقُولُوا مِنَ الْغَىِّ إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ (do not say to the one who offers you salām, "You are not a believer") was revealed on this occasion.

Other incidents, apart from the two mentioned here, have been reported with reference to this verse, but respected scholars of Tafsīr do not admit of any contradiction in these narrations, for these events as a whole could have been the cause of the revelation.

The words of the verse are: الْغَىِّ إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ (offer you salām). If the word, salām in the text is taken to mean 'salām' in the technical sense (Muslim greeting or salutation), it applies to the first event more suitably. However, if 'salām' is taken to mean submission or surrender to the will of Allah in the literal sense, then, this meaning applies to both events equally. Therefore, salām in the present textual setting has also

been translated in the sense of submission and obedience to Allah.

It is impermissible to take a decision without investigating into related facts of an event

The first sentence of the verse (94) carries a general rule which must be followed by all Muslims: Let no Muslim do anything summarily as based on guess alone. The words of the verse are: **إِذَا صَرَيْتُمْ** إِذَا صَرَيْتُمْ (when you go out in the way of Allah, be careful). Acting on conjecture is likely to land one in trouble. The restriction of travel in the verse is there because these events came to pass during the state of travel. Or, it may be because doubts crop up during travel to previously unvisited places as compared with the city of residence where things and people are generally familiar. Otherwise, the basic rule, in travel or while resident, is general, that is reacting to any situation without proper investigation is not permissible. In a hadīth, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said: "To act sensibly is from Allah and to rush through is from Shaytān" (al-Baḥr al-Muḥit)

The second sentence: **تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَصَ الْخَيْرِ الدُّنْيَا** (seeking goods of the worldly life) in verse 94 is a prescription for weakness which caused this false step. The weakness was their desire to acquire worldly wealth through collecting spoils. But, immediately after, it was pointed out that Almighty Allah has set aside many more spoils destined for them. Why, then, should they bother about material gains? By way of further admonition, they were asked to recollect that there were so many among them who would not have dared to come out openly with their faith in Islam. It was only when Allah favoured them that they were delivered from the encirclement of disbelievers and were able to profess Islam openly. Keeping this situation in mind, would it not be possible that the person who is saying **لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ** at the sight of the Muslim army, might really be an adherent of Islam from the early days but was unable to profess it freely fearing reprisals from the disbelievers. When he saw the Muslim army, he lost no time in doing so. If they looked into their own situation, they would realize that there was the time when they had recited the *Kalimah* and had called them Muslims, the Shari'ah of Islam had never asked them to first prove their being Muslims. There was no such condition. They were never asked to let their hearts be examined. They were not ordered to

produce a proof of their Islam before they could be declared as confirmed Muslims. Quite contrary to all this, the simple recital of the *Kalimah* of Islam: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ was considered good enough to recognize them as Muslims. Keeping this in mind, it was their duty that they should now take anyone who recites the *Kalimah* before them as a Muslim.

The meaning of not taking a Muslim to be a Kāfir

From this verse comes the important ruling that anyone who professes Islam and declares that he is a Muslim - by reciting the *Kalimah* or by associating himself with some marked feature of Islam such as the Adhān and the Ṣalāh - should be treated as a Muslim. All Muslims must deal with him as they would do with any other Muslim. They are not supposed to wait and worry about finding out whether such a person has embraced Islam with all his heart or it has been done out of expediency.

In addition to that, this is a case in which even his doings will not serve as the criterion. Suppose, someone skips Ṣalāh, does not fast and is involved with all sorts of sins - still, no one has the right to say that he has gone outside the pale of Islam or to treat him as one would treat a disbeliever. Therefore, the great Imām Abū Ḥanīfah said: لَا نَكْفُرُ أَهْلَ الْقِبْلَةِ بِذَنْبٍ (We do not call 'the people of the Qiblah' Kāfirs because of some sin). Similar statements appear in hadīth narrations also, such as, 'Do not say that 'the people of Qiblah' are Kāfirs, no matter how sinful and evil-doing they may be.'

At this point, there is something everyone should understand and remember, clearly and particularly. This relates to the authority of the Qur'ān and Sunnah from which it is proved that calling or taking someone who calls himself a Muslim to be a Kāfir is not permissible. It clearly means that until such time he says or does something which provides the positive proof of *Kufr* (disbelief), his profession of faith in Islam shall be deemed as sound and he will continue to be taken as a Muslim and, for all practical purposes, he will be dealt with as one would deal with Muslims. No one will have the right to debate what goes on in his heart or how sincere or hypocritical he may or may not be.

But, there may be a person who professes Islam, attests to faith,

yet disgraces himself by uttering words of disbelief or prostrates before an idol or denies an injunction of Islam which is absolute and obvious, or takes to a religious way or mark of disbelievers - such a person will certainly be declared a Kāfir because of his deeds which prove his infidelity. It will be noticed that, the word تَبَيَّنُوا (be careful or investigate) in the present verse provides a hint to this effect, otherwise, the Jews and the Christians all claimed to be believers. Then, there was Musaylimah, the Liar. He was declared to be a Kāfir with the consensus of Companions, and killed. As for him, he was not only a professor of the Islamic creed but a practicing adherent of Adhān and Ṣalāh as well. In his Adhān, he had the Muezzin say: أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ (I testify that there is no god but Allah) which was duly followed by أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (I testify that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah). But, while he did this, he also claimed to be a prophet and a messenger who received revelations. This was an open denial of the binding injunctions of the Qur'an and Sunnah. It was on this basis that he was declared to be an apostate and a Jihād force was sent against him with the consensus of the Companions.

In short, the correct course of action when faced with this problem is: Take everyone who recites the *Kalimah* and adheres to Islam (*ahl al-Qiblah*: the people of Qiblah) to be a Muslim. Peeking into his heart is not our business. Let Allah be the judge. But, when you see one professing faith yet doing things to the contrary, take him to have become an apostate subject to the condition that such deeds be, absolutely and certainly, contrary to the dictates of Faith and that it admits of no other probability or interpretation.

Finally, we can now see that 'the reciter of the *Kalimah*' (*Kalimah-go*) or *Ahl al-Qiblah* (the people of Qiblah, meaning Muslims who universally turn to the direction of Holy Ka'bah when praying) are technical terms applied solely to one who, after his professing Islam, does nothing by his word and deed which can be classed as infidelity.

Some Injunctions about Jihād

The second verse (95) takes up some injunction related to Jihād. It says that people who do not participate in Jihād without some valid excuse cannot be equal to those who fight in the way of Allah staking everything they have, even their lives. In fact, Almighty Allah has

raised the ranks of those who fight in the way of Allah over those who do not. However, along with this declaration of the precedence of Mujāhidīn, it was also said that Almighty Allah has promised good returns for both groups. Both shall be blessed with Paradise and Allah's forgiveness - the only difference between them will be that of ranking.

According to leading exegetes, this verse tell us that Jihād is *Fard 'ala al-Kifāyah* under normal conditions. *Fard Kifāyah*, as opposed to *Fard 'ala al'Ayn* (an obligation for every individual), is an obligation of sufficiency. It means that should some people fulfill it, the rest of Muslims stand relieved subject to the condition that those engaged in Jihād must be sufficient for that Jihād. If the situation is otherwise, Jihād will become an obligation (*Fard 'Ayn*) on all Muslims living in the neighbouring areas who will have to come forward to help the Mujāhidīn.

The Definition of *Fard Kifāyah*

In the terminology of the Shari'ah, *Fard 'ala al-Kifāyah* refers to obligations the fulfillment of which is not mandatory on every individual Muslim. Instead, if some fulfill it, that will be good enough. Most activities of a collective nature fall under this category. Teaching of religious sciences and their wider dissemination is also an obligation of this nature - if some people are devoted to the fulfillment of this obligation and their number is fairly sufficient, then, other Muslims are absolved of this duty. But, should it be that just about nobody is discharging this obligation wherever there be the need to do so, then, everyone becomes a sinner.

The *Ṣalāh* for the deceased, the bathing and shrouding of the body is also a collective obligation, for a brother fulfills the rights of a Muslim brother and this is how it is supposed to be, a requirement of the Islamic law. The making of *Masājid* and *Madāris* (mosques and religious schools) and running programmes of public welfare are included under this very injunction, that is, if some Muslims do that, the rest stand absolved of the obligation.

Generally, injunctions related to collective needs have been, of necessity, classed as *Fard Kifāyah* by the Shari'ah of Islam so that all duties can be discharged under the principle of distribution of work. Thus, some people would be engaged in Jihād, others in education and

da'wah activities and still others in attending to various other Islamic or human needs.

The statement *وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ الْحُسَيْنَى* (and to each, Allah has promised good) in this verse gives peace of mind to those who are engaged in religious duties other than Jihād. But, this injunction is operative in normal conditions when the Jihād waged by some people is sufficient for defence against the enemy attack. Should it be that their Jihād needs additional support, Jihād becomes an absolute obligation on neighbouring Muslims in the first instance. If this support too turns out to be still deficient, Jihād becomes an absolute obligation on Muslims living nearby in their proximity. Finally, just in case, they too are unable to meet the challenge from the enemy, the mantle of Jihād duty falls on the shoulders of other Muslims to the limit that there may come a time when every Muslim from the East and the West may have to participate in the Jihād as solemn religious obligation.

The third verse (96) too recounts the same degrees of precedence that the Mujāhidīn have over others.

Ruling

Jihād is not obligatory on the lame, the crippled, the blind, the sick and on others who are excusable under the Islamic law.

Verses 97 - 100

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّيْتَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ
 قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضَ
 اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا فَأُولَئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ
 مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾ إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانَ
 لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٨﴾ فَأُولَئِكَ عَسَى
 اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفُورًا غَفُورًا ﴿٩٩﴾ وَمَنْ يُّهَاجِرْ
 فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرَاعًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً وَمَنْ
 يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ
 فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

Those whom the angels take while they had wronged themselves, (to them) the angels said, "What were you (involved) in?" They said, "We were oppressed in the earth." They said, "Was not the earth of Allah wide enough that you might have sought refuge in it?" As for such, their shelter is Jahannam. And it is an evil place to return [97] - except the oppressed, men and women and children, who cannot manage a device nor can find a way. As for such, it is likely that Allah would pardon them. And Allah is Most-Pardoning, Most-Forgiving. [99]

And whoever migrates in the way of Allah shall find in the earth many a place to settle and a wide dimension (of resources). And whoever leaves his home migrating for the sake of Allah and His Messenger and death overtakes him, then, his reward is established with Allah. And Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [100]

Commentary

The Definition of Hijrah

In the four verses cited above, the merits, blessings and injunctions of Hijrah have been described. Lexically, Hijrah, Hijrān and Hajr mean 'being displeased with something and leaving it'. In common parlance, the leaving of one's home country is known as Hijrah. In the terminology of the Sharī'ah, leaving *Dār al-Kufr* (Homeland of disbelievers) and going to *Dār al-Islam* (Abode of Islam) is called *Hijrah* (Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī).

In Sharḥ al-Mishkāh, Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī has said: Leaving a home country for religious reasons is also included under *Hijrah* (Mirqāt, p. 39, v.1).

From the verse الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ (59:8): 'Those who have been driven away from their homes ...' revealed about emigrating Companions, we know if disbelievers of a country forcibly expel Muslims because they are Muslims, this too will be included under *Hijrah*.

From this definition, we learn that Muslims migrating from India to Pakistan who came here out of disgust for *Dār al-Kufr* at their own choice or were driven away by non-Muslims simply because they were Muslims, are all '*Muhājirs*' in the Islamic legal sense. But, those who have moved to benefit from business or employment opportunities are

not entitled to be called '*Muhājir*' in that Islamic legal sense.

Then, there is the ḥadīth from al-Bukhārī and Muslim in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has been reported to have said:

الْمُهَاجِرُ مَنْ هَجَرَ مَا نَهَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Muhājir is one who leaves everything Allah and His Messenger have prohibited.

The full sense of the saying becomes clear from the first sentence of this very ḥadīth which is as follows:

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ

A Muslim is the one from whom all Muslims remain safe - (safe) from his tongue and (safe) from his hands. (Tirmidhī, Kitāb al-Īmān)

As obvious, it means that a 'true and staunch Muslim has to be the one who hurts none. Similarly, a true and successful *Muhājir* is the one who does not consider migration from his home country as the ultimate obligation. He should, rather, leave everything else the Shari'ah has declared to be unlawful or impermissible. Said poetically, it would be saying something like: اپنے دل کو بھی بدل جامہ احرام کے ساتھ (When you change into the *Ihrām* garment, better change your heart too!)

The Merits of *Hijrah*

Just as the verses about *Jihād* are spread out all over in the Holy Qur'an, *Hijrah* too has been mentioned many times in most of the Sūrahs. A cumulative view of these verses shows that there are three kinds of themes in verses relating to *Hijrah*. Firstly, there are the merits of *Hijrah*; secondly, its worldly and other-worldly blessings; and thirdly, warnings against not migrating from *Dār al-Kufr* despite having the ability to do so.

As for the merits of *Hijrah*, there is a verse in Sūrah al-Baqarah:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

As for those who believed and those who migrated and carried out *Jihād* in the way of Allah, they do hope for Allah's mercy and Allah is Forgiving, Very-Merciful - (2:218).

The second verse appears in Sūrah al-Taubah:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ أَكْظَمُ
دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ

And those who believed and emigrated and took up Jihād in the way of Allah with their wealth and lives are greater in rank in the sight of Allah - and they are the successful ones - (9:20).

The third verse belongs to Sūrah al-Nisā' and appears right here as part of the set of verses under study:

وَمَنْ يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ
عَلَى اللَّهِ

And whoever migrates in the way of Allah shall find in the earth many a place to settle and a wide dimension (of resources). And whoever leaves his home migrating for the sake of Allah and His Messenger and death overtakes him, then, his reward is established with Allah. And Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful - (4:100).

According to some narrations, this last verse was revealed about Sayyidnā Khālīd ibn Ḥizām at the time of the migration to Ethiopia. He had left Makkah on his way to Ethiopia with the intention of Hijrah. Enroute, a snake bit him which caused his death. In short, the three verses cited above have clearly emphasized Hijrah from *Dār al-Kufr* (migration from the Abode of Disbelief) and the many merits it has.

In a ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said: *الْهِجْرَةُ تَهْدِمُ مَا كَانَ قَبْلَهَا* meaning: Hijrah will undo all sins which may have been committed before it.

The Blessings of Hijrah

As for blessings, a verse from Sūrah al-Naḥl says:

وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَلَا جَزَاءَ
لِلْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ .

And those who migrated for the sake of Allah after they were subjected to injustice, to them We shall give a good place to be in the world while the reward of the Hereafter is certainly

great - only if they had realized! (16:41)

The fourth verse of the set of four verses (97-100) appearing at the head of this part of the Commentary deals with approximately the same subject. There it has been said:

وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرَافًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً

And whoever migrates in the way of Allah shall find in the earth many a place to settle and a wide dimension (of resources).

The word '*murāgham*' in the verse is a verbal noun which means 'to move from one land to the other' and the place to which one moves and settles is also called '*murāgham*'.

Both these verses quoted above tell us about the open and the hidden blessings of Hijrah where Almighty Allah has promised to everyone who migrates for the sake of Allah and His Messenger that He shall open new opportunities in the world for them and give them a good home to settle. As for the rewards and ranks of the Hereafter, they are beyond any reach of expectation or imagination.

The words *لِكَيْ يَنْتَهُمُ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً* which promise 'a good place to be' in the world have been interpreted variously. Mujāhid explains it as 'lawful sustenance', Ḥasan al-Baṣrī as 'good home' while some other commentators have interpreted it as 'superiority in excellence, honour and power over antagonists.' The truth of the matter is that all these elements are included within the sense of the verse. World history bears witness that whoever has left his homeland for the sake of Allah, to him Almighty Allah has given a home far better than what he had earlier, far more honour and far more comfort. Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام migrated to Syria from his homeland in Iraq - Allah gave him all those things. Sayyidnā Mūsā and the Banī Isrā'īl migrated from Egypt, their homeland for the sake of Allah, then He gave them the land of Syria, a better homeland. Then, they got Egypt too. When our master and the last of the prophets, Sayyidnā Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Companions left Makkah for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, these blessed emigrants found the best of shelter in Madīnah, far better than Makkah. There they had honour and power and peace and prosperity. Of course, this does not include the transitory hardship

faced during the early period of Hijrah. But, soon after that, the blessings, which were showered on these people and which continued through several generations, shall be the proper yardstick in this matter.

Events related to the poverty and hunger of Noble Companions so well-known belong generally to the early period of Hijrah; or, go as what can be called volitional acceptance of poverty, a dignified attitude of readiness to live with less (*Faqr*). In other words, they just did not like worldly wealth and property as a result of which they lost no time in spending what they received, in the way of Allah. This was very much the state in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم lived. His lack of means and patience in hunger were simply voluntary. He just did not choose to be rich. Nonetheless, during the sixth year of Hijrah, after the conquest of Khyber, things had changed and sufficient means of sustenance were available for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his family. The same was the case with all righteous caliphs. When they reached Madīnah, Allah had given them everything they needed. But, when Islam needed their support, Sayyidnā Abū Bakr came forward and donated everything he had in his house. The Mother of the Faithful, Sayyidah Zaynab would give away all her stipend money to the poor and the needy and remain satisfied living indigently. For this reason, she was called 'The Mother of the Needy'. On the other side, no less in number were the rich ones among the Companions who left wealth and property behind. There were many among the Companions who were poor in their home-city of Makkah but Allah Almighty made them rich and happy after Hijrah. Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضى الله تعالى عنه can be cited as a good example. When he was appointed the governor of a province, he used to enjoy talking about his past with unusual relish. He would formally address himself and say: 'O Abū Hurairah, you are the same man, the servant of a tribe. Your salary was what you could eat. Your duty was to walk with those who rode on a journey and your duty was to collect firewood for them when they broke their journey at a certain stage. Today, because of Islam, you are here, so high from so low, and they call you the Commander of the Faithful!

In summation, it can be said that the world has openly witnessed

the fulfillment of the promise Allah has made in the Qur'an. However, the verse has put a condition that they must be 'true emigrants for the sake of Allah', a substantiation of *Hājarū fi-llāh*. This kind of emigrant should have not migrated for the sake of worldly wealth, office, power, recognition, honour or influence. Otherwise, in a ḥadīth of al-Bukhārī, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also been reported to have said: 'Those who migrate for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, their migration is precisely for Allah and His Messenger.' It means that this is the correct mode of Hijrah the merits and blessings of which appear in the Qur'an. As for those who migrate to make money or marry a woman, their compensation against Hijrah is exactly what they migrated for.

In our time, some groups of *muhājirīn* (emigrants) who are living in distress are either in that transitory stage of the early period of Hijrah which is usually marked with hardships, or they are not *Muhājirs* in the real sense. They should correct their intention and take charge of the circumstances under which they live. After their intention and their corresponding deeds have been corrected, they shall witness the truth of Allah's promise with their own eyes.

Verses 101 104

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا
 مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ الْكٰفِرِينَ
 كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ﴿١٠١﴾ وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ
 الصَّلَاةَ فَلْتَقُمْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا آسْلِحَتِهِمْ فِذَا
 سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَى لَمْ
 يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ وَذٰ
 الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ
 عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَدَىٰ مِنْ
 مَطَرٍ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَرَضَىٰ أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ إِنَّ

اللَّهُ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿١٠٢﴾ فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقَعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَاءِ الْقَوْمِ ۗ إِن تَكُونُوا تَأْمِنُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْمِنُونَ كَمَا تَأْمِنُونَ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

And when you travel in the earth, there is no sin on you in shortening your *Ṣalāh* if you fear that the disbelievers would put you in trouble. Surely, the disbelievers are an open enemy for you. [101]

And when you (O prophet) are in their midst, and arrange for them the *Ṣalāh*, then, a party from them should stand with you and should take their arms along. Then, once they performed *Sajdah*,¹ they should move away from you and the other party, which has not yet performed *Ṣalāh*, should come and perform *Ṣalāh* with you, and should take their precautionary measures and their arms. Those who disbelieve would want you to become heedless to your arms and your belongings so they come down upon you in a single move. And there is no sin on you, if you have some inconvenience due to rain or you are sick, in putting your arms aside. And do take your precautionary measures. Surely, Allah has prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment. [102]

And once you have finished your *Ṣalāh*, then, remember Allah while standing, sitting and reclining. And as soon as you are secure, perform the *Ṣalāh* as due. Surely, *Ṣalāh* is an obligation on the believers which is tied up with time. [103]

And do not show weakness in pursuing these people. If you suffer, then, they suffer as you suffer, while you hope from Allah what they do not hope. And Allah is

1. *Sajdah* or *Sujud*, a way of prostration specified by the Shari'ah of Islam as a part of *Ṣalāh*.

All-Knowing, All-Wise. [104]

Commentary

The subject of Jihād and Hijrah were taken up in previous verses. Since travel is involved in Jihād and Hijrah under most conditions, the likelihood of confrontation with the enemy is strong and frequent while making such a trip. Therefore, special mention has been made in the verses cited above of some particular leaves and concessions in the performance of Ṣalāh in due consideration of travel and its dangers.

The concessions given in travel

(In Islamic legal terminology, *Safar* means journey or travel; *Qaṣr* refers to the making of one's Ṣalāh short while in that status. Thus, four obligatory *Raka'āt* of Zuhr, 'Aṣr and 'Ishā are reduced in number and confined to two *Raka'āt* only.)

Rulings:

1. Full Ṣalāh is made in a journey which is less than 48 miles.
2. If, after reaching the destination at the end of the journey, one intends to stay there for less than fifteen days, rules relating to 'journey' will continue to apply to him, that is, the obligatory four *Raka'āt* of Ṣalāh will be reduced to half. This is *Qaṣr*. Now, if one intends to stay at one place for fifteen days, or more, it will become his place or country of residence. Here too, *Qaṣr* will not be observed as it was not observed in his original home country, that is, full Ṣalāh will be performed.
3. *Qaṣr* is done in the *Fard* (obligatory) Ṣalāh of Zuhr, 'Aṣr and 'Ishā only. There is no *Qaṣr* in Maghrib and Fajr, nor in Sunnah and *Witr* prayers.
5. If, there be no fear of possible danger during a journey, *Qaṣr* will still be observed in making Ṣalāh.
6. Some people are troubled by apprehensions of sin when making their Ṣalāh short (*Qaṣr*) in place of the regular full Ṣalāh. This is not correct because *Qaṣr* is also a rule of the Shari'ah following which brings no sin. On the contrary, it brings reward.
7. Verse 102 mentions a special way of offering Ṣalāh in a state where, due to the fear of enemy, all the Muslims cannot pray in a