

Part 8

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصِبُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ. وَاعْلَمُوا أَن فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ﴾

“O you who believe! If an evildoer comes to you with a report, look carefully into it, lest you harm a people in ignorance, then be sorry for what you have done. And know that among you is Allah’s Apostle... (49:6-7)”

It is mentioned that this Holy verse was revealed by Allah in the context of the transgressor Walid and Bani Mustaliq; that some Muslims provoked the Prophet to send an army for killing the tribe (Bani Mustaliq). Then this verse was revealed:

O those who believe! If a transgressor who crosses all limits and who does not obey God’s commands brings any news to you, you must not be impressed by him. Perhaps you may, through ignorance, inflict undue harm – Walid came and brought for you such falsehood and untrue allegations. You have no right to believe them and to send an army for fighting. Make investigation and see that this man lies; he may be avenging his past dealings, he may be showing selfishness. That (the other) group may be faultless and may not have the alleged faults. So make inquiries.

Khalid goes for investigation

It is written in commentary of Qur’an that the Holy Prophet, in this dispute, sent Khalid and told him. Go and see how the behavior of these people is. Does Walid tell the truth? Have they left Islam or not? Khalid went alone, met the tribe and saw strange things! In the afternoon came the sound of the call for prayer (Allaho Akbar). Immediately after sunset also he heard this call. They all came and lined up in the mosque for prayers. Then he returned and informed the Holy Prophet of this. Walid became disgraceful and so also all those who had said that Walid told the truth and that army should be sent to Bani

Mustaliq.

Almighty God now gives an eternal command for all time to come that believers must never accept any allegation against any believer until they became certain about the matter. If someone comes and says such and such Muslim has become a disbeliever or transgressor it must not be believed instantly. If you Muslims believe him at once, you know how dangerous it is. They say such and such man is a Sufi. Let it no be so that you should believe whatever he says. How do you know what is the intention behind such words, jealousy or hatred. Perhaps who did this wrong, did it for monetary gain. They did not get what they had hoped. Why should you give up your faith? He makes an error because of selfishness or Satanic misguidance but why should you believe him and give away your faith!

Undue benefit of people's ignorance

Now what should be done if someone is like this? It was so in the time of Ali bin Abi Talib. Muawiyah took undue benefit of people's ignorance. You must have heard that he propagated in Syria that Ali does not offer prayers. Did he not propagate this where Ali died? This is lying and falsehood. They told lies about the Holy Prophet too and people of Syria believed in it. Had you been there you would also have believed it. Today you accept whatever anybody says. Had you lived in those days in Syria you also would have said, "Yes! It is right that Ali does not pray." How is it that everyone in Syria accepts the word that Ali does not pray? Nobody went for inquiry. Their only foundation was that they heard a thing and believed in it instantly. Not only this, he also says that I heard it from a holy person.

Lying about Imam's word against the Imam himself!

It is narrated that one day Ja'far bin Sadiq was sitting in a gathering in Masjid Khashaaf Haqaaq. Some of his companions brought a traveler who was claiming that he was a scholar of traditions. He claimed, "I acquire traditions from every city I visit. I have learnt thousands of traditions by heart. I remember the words of all great men, even of Ja'far bin Sadiq." He did not know that he was talking to Ja'far bin Muhammad himself.

The Imam asked him, "What do you remember from the words of Ja'far?" He said, "One of his sayings is, 'If one is on a journey and one makes ablution without taking out the socks and does wiping (Masah) on those socks, it is sufficient.'" The Imam asked, "From whom did you hear this?" He replied, "From a man who says that he heard it from Imam Ja'far Sadiq." The Imam asked, "If Ja'far Ibn Muhammad says that he never said so?" He replied, "I will not believe it." The Imam said, "I am Ja'far bin Muhammad and I say that I did not say so." That man replied, "I will not believe it because I have heard it from a good man that you have said so. Now how can I believe you?"

Most of the people are like this.

Were all the companions of the Prophet just?

The Sunnis, especially the Wahabis, as one of their objections against the Shias, say that the Shias dare to offend the companions of the Holy Prophet while all the companions of the Prophet were just. The Shias consider them all bad and curse them.

In reply we say, “O Sunni gentleman! Why do you make allegations? May God curse the one who offends the true and real companions of Muhammad.” In *Sahifa Sajjadiya*, the fourth supplication is for invoking blessings on the companions of the Holy Prophet. Our Imam sends Salawat on the companions of the Holy Prophet. We do not close our eyes and we do not send Salawat on all the companions indiscriminately. Likewise, we do not close our eyes and speak ill of all of them. We do not send Salawat on every Muslim of the Prophet’s time, who lived near or around him or remained in the mosque with him. May Allah forgive us – Dust on our heads if we do like this. We are behind Imam Zainul Abideen. Our Imam has said: O! Lord Bless the companions of Muhammad. Thy peace and mercy on him and his descendants in particular, (Bless) those who were good companions of his. 1

Not everyone who became a Muslim, not everyone who came to the mosque was really a companion of Muhammad. No, instead, everyone who obeyed Muhammad, whoever became his follower and who did not obey his desires and passions, who never put off a compulsory or obligatory deed, who did not commit any unlawful deed was a true companion of the Prophet. Can we come and praise Walid, the transgressor, whom the Qur’an calls a transgressor. How can we say: Since he was one of the companions of the Prophet should we send Salawat on him? Even though after the Holy Prophet he makes mischiefs? You ask us: Why do you offend the companions of the Prophet? Was Walid a companion of the Prophet? No, he was a companion of Satan.

You are obedient not commanders

The following verse of Qur’an says so. It addresses the people:

﴿وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُمْ﴾

“And know that among you is Allah’s Apostle; should he obey you in many a matter, you would surely fall into distress... (49:7)”

Know that Walid was not alone in lying and mischief making. A group of Muslims had also joined him. They instigated the Prophet and wanted that the fire of enmity should arise. God Almighty, in this verse, addressing Muslims says: Know that between you is the Messenger of God, Muhammad. How should you behave with Muhammad? You should come to him and say: O Messenger of Allah! What is your command?

So that he may issue orders to you. Not that you should come and start making a move saying: O Messenger of Allah! Walid has told the truth – kill, and arrest. Suggesting things for the Prophet of God! If it so happens that Muhammad starts believing in whatever you say and begins to move and declares people disbelievers and transgressors and if he is impressed by you then you yourselves will be destroyed and you will fall into trouble, and be involved in reckless bloodshed and thus finally you will be oppressed. Muhammad is the Prophet of God. You must have Faith. What is the demand of true Faith? It is to obey Muhammad. You, instead, come with your ugly sins and want to instigate the Holy Prophet, to fan the fire of mischief and corruption in land. Just listen to this fine point.

God sent faith for you

God has favored some of you:

﴿وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ﴾

“...but Allah has endeared the faith to you and has made it seemly in your hearts... (49:7)”

The address is to “you”, but what is meant is “some of you” as understood from the last part of this Holy verse:

﴿أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُونَ﴾

“...these it is that are the followers of a right way... (49:7)”

This is also accompanied with additional qualities:

﴿وَكَرِهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ﴾

“...and He has made hateful to you unbelief and transgression and disobedience...”

Thus it means: O Muslims! Rightly guided, successful and fortunate are those Muslims in whose hearts God makes Faith sweet and dear – Faith becomes the most beloved thing in their sight, they never give preference to desires over Faith; that is, they do not sell faith in exchange of worldly benefits (whatever is in the world) so much so that they are ever ready to sacrifice their lives, but they would never part with Faith. This is a true believer. But Walid and his like were in a pit of hatred and enmity, which they had

from pre-Islamic times against the tribe of Bani Mustaliq. What did they want? Why should blood of innocent people flow unnecessarily due to this hatred? Why should Muslims be branded disbelievers? This should never happen. You must be of those who love their Faith. So there also were such Muslims who loved Faith more than they loved their lives.

Sumaiyah was bravery personified

A woman is weak in comparison to a man, but what can she not do with the strength of Faith? Look at Sumaiyah. Actually, she was the first woman in the Muslim world who gave a grand sacrifice; that is, she gave away her life but did not give up her Faith (May God's blessings be on her). She was the mother of Ammar and the wife of Yasir. When Abu Jahl, the cursed, Abu Sufyan and other polytheists caught them and were torturing these faithful ones terribly in the outskirts of Mecca, all they wanted was that they should stop saying: There is no god except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Yet they remained steadfast on it.

They threatened them with death but both the courageous man and woman said: We will give away our lives but never leave the religion of Muhammad. So both of them were tortured to death, especially, they assassinated this Faithful lady in the worst brutal and atrocious manner. They brought two camels, tied her two legs to two different camels and with a stroke drove them in opposite directions, tearing her up into two pieces. Sumaiyah made her powerful honor manifest, declaring that honor is in "There is no god except Allah" and the most beloved is Muhammad the Messenger of Allah.

Now, are these faithful persons the Companions of Muhammad or Walid the transgressor and his like? So, it is now known that Yasir, Ammar and Sumaiyah and their like are the true companions of Muhammad and Walid and his like are the companions of Satan, who are in the path of desire, passion, jealousy, hatred and viciousness. A liar and a slanderer, unless he gives up faith and belief in the Day of Judgment, do not fabricate a false allegation against him. Even if it is apparently a man who prays and looks like a Muslim. This Walid was also offering prayer, attending the Mosque and saying: "There is no god except Allah", but was surely unaware of Faith. He loved desires and passions.

Sins are bitter to the Faithful

Pay full attention to this Holy verse. What points does Almighty Allah present in this verse:

﴿وَكْرَهَ إِلَيْكُمْ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ﴾

"...and He has made hateful to you unbelief and transgression and disobedience... (49:7)"

Meaning: A true believer, a nice faithful person, a lucky one is such that God, by His Grace, helps him as

a result of which a sin becomes bitter to him. If it is like this only then can he become a righteous man and a true companion of Muhammad even if there is a distance of a thousand years between him and Muhammad. Only now you can reach the point when Faith tastes sweet to you and sins become bitter. (made hateful to you unbelief) Here unbelief is in the meaning of denial and transgression is in the meaning of stepping out of obedience and sinning limitlessly greater sins and disobedience is absolute sin.

After a believer attains the stage in which a sin tastes bitter to him, if ever he commits a sin it is merely by chance. If incidentally his tongue speaks an indecent word, he himself feels very bad about it and he strikes his head with his hand. Every sin tastes bitter to him and hence very difficult to commit. If his eye falls on a sin he becomes disgusted. Here is something more. A point that there should not arise a doubt regarding compulsion that one is compelled to refrain from sin because it is bitter for him.

God makes you taste the sweetness of Faith

Faith becomes dear to someone it is from God. Man, by himself, is not capable to make faith dear to him. God becomes merciful to him in this regard. He makes him feel the sweetness of His remembrance. Once he tastes the delight of the Oneness of God, he never forsakes it. “Make me taste the sweetness of Your remembrance.” (Supplication) Faith becomes dearer to you than your life, extremely dear, praiseworthy and honorable. May God give it to us all. Likewise how a sin becomes detestable to human nature? Usually heart likes a sin. How can it become bitter to your mouth? It is impossible except by the Grace and kindness of God Almighty. So thereafter Allah says: God by His Grace favors a believer. He makes Faith dear to his heart and makes sin bitter for him.

Delight of faith for those who want it

It is possible that you may say: It is a kind of force, as He wanted that sin should become detestable to me so that I may not do it; that He wanted to make faith increase in my heart etc. The reply to this doubt is in the last phrase of this Holy verse:

﴿فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

“By grace from Allah and as a favor; and Allah is Knowing, Wise. (49:8)”

He does not make one taste the delight of faith for nothing and baselessly and likewise, He also does not give dislike for sin to anyone at random. It is not so. God is All wise. He only turns towards one who has a will and who himself walks on His path willfully, who fights with his heart’s desires, who does so much struggle with his desires and passions and keeps so much off sinning and prays so much to God in this matter that he becomes deserving of it. In this holy month of Ramadhan he says: O Lord! Grant

me a faith, which sticks to my heart, which never changes, which never goes away, a faith that becomes most honorable in my sight. Allah “has endeared the faith to you and has made it seemly in your hearts”. It does not happen until you are prepared for it. God does not give anything forcibly to anyone. Unless and until you extend your hand for begging from Him, nothing is granted.

Nothing until you ask for it

According to a report in *Usul al-Kafi*, Imam Sadiq told Maisar: O Maisar! Do not say that whatever is destined happens. If a servant did not pray and did not ask for a thing from God, he does not get it.² Nothing is forced upon anyone. For example, if one wants water, can it be given to him by force? If one is thirsty and he asks for water, water is given to him.

Seek faith – unless you seek Faith it is not available. One of the supplications prayed while circumambulating the Ka’ba during Hajj is the subject of this Holy verse: O Lord! Make faith dear most to my heart; make it so beautiful that I may give up everything but never give up the faith. My Lord! Make disbelief so indignant and bitter for my heart that I may choke at the very thought of sinning. That I may become righteous. Resentfulness of sin is not something that can ever be forced upon anyone. Until a man does not develop qualification for this gift, it is not given. It is a situation of loftiness, a robe of honor, which is offered at the time of protecting oneself from sinning. This is what must be sought from God. O God! Give light to my heart with which I may realize the evil of a sin. Grant me a taste, which makes me realize the bitterness of sin. This is called “evidence of the Lord”.

﴿وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ؛ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنْ رَأَى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ﴾

“And certainly she made for him, and he would have made for her, were it not that he had seen the manifest evidence of his Lord...”³

It cannot be achieved without demand in earnest and qualification. Thus there is no force. It is not granted without the labor and request of man himself.

﴿وَأَنْ لَيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى﴾

“And that man shall have nothing but what he strives for;”⁴

Seek earnestly and sincerely and then see how God deals with you. It is likely that even in the most difficult situations, God helps you in such a way that the divine help astonishes you.

﴿وَكْرَهُ إِلَيْكُمْ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ﴾

“...and He has made hateful to you unbelief and transgression and disobedience...”

Here it is better if I, for a little change in the subject, quote a relevant tradition and story.

A thief, while sinning, gives guidance to others

In the book *Dua Al-Kafi*, it is narrated from the fourth Imam Zainul Abideen that he narrated this story: In olden days a merchant sailed in a ship with his family and trade goods for business. They faced a severe mid-sea storm, which wrecked their ship. Everyone in that ship including the businessman, his sons, voyagers and their goods were drowned. Only the wife of the trader caught hold of a wooden plank and the waves of the sea carried her to a shore. The woman who survived was bare, hungry and had nothing with her. No human could be seen there but she found some grass to eat and remove her hunger to some extent, as she had not ate anything for several days. So she devoured grass, weeds and leaves. At night she took shelter under a tree for fear of wild animals and hid herself between its branches. Next morning a thief saw her from a distance. No woman was ever seen at this place before. When he approached the woman having no proper clothes, it can be imagined what would be her condition as she was also beautiful and young. The forest thief was also young. They were in a wilderness and no one else was around.

The brute did not give any chance to the woman, he grabbed her and felled her on the ground. The poor screamed and the cry and trembling of the woman was so terrible that it moved the heart of the thief. He asked her, “What happened? Why are you trembling and shivering so much?” She replied, “Why should I not fear, I have never committed such a sin before, in front of God. I am terribly afraid of Him.” She is in the midst of a dense forest but experienced shame in before God. This abhorrence in the heart of a faithful lady is a great favor of God. She shivers due to sinning. A sin is really detestable and extremely bad in her eyes.

﴿وَكْرَهُ إِلَيْكُمْ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ﴾

“...and He has made hateful to you unbelief and transgression and disobedience... (49:7)”

In fact, she was trembling at the sin, not due to the fear of punishment. Suppose no punishment was involved, even then she hated sin. This indeed is only God’s favor. God’s favor also is based on wisdom. It is not given to all indiscriminately without any reason or base, unless one has made oneself deserving for it. This tradition is interesting and I conclude it here. So much light (noor) of the proof of the Lord shone in this woman that it made a wild thief bow down and also drew him towards God. Really, this is

wonderful. One is young. The woman is also beautiful. There is no deterrent.

He even holds her once. This is extraordinary. He said, "It is I, the unlucky one who should shiver, not you who are blameless. I should beat my head. I should be afraid. I am the cause of your sin, not you." Finally he moves away, without disturbing her. He also repents and seeks pardon. Then he arrives to a city with an intention to approach a scholar and to repent before him. So he decided to give up stealing and all other sins and evil deeds and reform himself thoroughly. On his way he met a worshipper. Thus worship and piety came together and began to walk. Both were facing a very hot sun. The worshipper looked at the thief and said, "Come let us pray to God so that He may provide the shade of a cloud as we are burning in this hot sun." The thief said, "I have no honor in the High Court of God, I am a sinner. My prayer is not likely to be answered." Let us be sacrificed for a sinner whom his sin makes him to bow down in extreme humility before God. Woe unto the worship, which makes one proud whereby he imagines being a rightful and a great person. If one thinks due to his worships that: I am a servant of Imam Husain; that I am a Sayyid; I am a scholar, I hold meetings, I discuss problems, I make charities. Woe unto the worship, which thus makes a man egotist and makes him imagine that his prayer would be answered.

The worshipper said, "All right, then I will pray and you say: Amen." Then the worshipper raised his hands saying, "O Lord! Today, in this desert, the burning sun has made us restless. Kindly send a cloud to give us shade and save us from this unbearable heat." The thief said, "O my God, Amen." Suddenly a cloud appeared in the sky and gave shade to both the travelers and both thanked Allah. They continued to walk and reached a crossroad where each one had to take a different route. So when they separated, the cloud continued to shade the thief. The worshipper wondered.

In his own imagination, he may be a great worshipper, pious person and a jurist but the House of God requires true humility and lowliness. Your outward may be nice but what Almighty Allah desires is a sincere heart. It is the ego of man, which makes him such that he does not become humble before God.

Imam Zainul Abideen addresses Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan

Once, when Imam Zainul Abideen came to Abdul Malik Marwan his (Imam's) eyes were sunken due to frequent weeping. His cheeks had turned yellow because of night vigils and his forehead was swollen as a result of making frequent prostrations. His body looked like a dried up water skin. This extreme weakness of the Imam, made Abdul Malik also weep. He came down from the throne of caliphate, sat near the feet of the Imam and asked, "O son of the Holy Prophet! Why so much painstaking and difficult worship? Paradise is for you, as it belongs to your grandfather. Why are you troubling yourself so much?" The holy Imam replied, "People used to say the same to my grandfather and he had replied, 'Should I not be a grateful servant?' A servant must always be thankful to his Lord", and then said (summary of narration): If I get a life extending from the first day of creation until the Day of Judgment and if I fast daily and prostrate often, until I turn into a skeleton; and if I weep so much that my eyes are

washed away and if my food is only straw, I would not have done even a tenth of thanksgiving for the innumerable bounties of God.⁵ Just look at this very bounty called the eye, the tongue, the bread, which nourishes you etc. The Bounties of God can never be counted.

Imam says: I have not thanked for even a tenth of the Lord's bounties. This is the meaning of 'Knowing God' (Marefat). Not that an ignorant worshipper prayed and imagined he had a right over God!

'Amen' of a sinner is better than the prayer of a worshipper

When the worshipper saw that the cloud went with the other person he understood that it was not the result of his invocation. The thief continued to be humble and say, "I am a sinner, and my prayer is not answerable." The worshipper bowed down. Then he came to realize that it was due to the bliss of the thief who had sincerely said, 'Amen' who had repented and returned to God. Then the worshipper asked his fellow traveler, "For God's sake, tell me who and what you are as the shade came because of you, not me." The sinner said, "I am no more than a sinful thief." The worshipper said, "It is not possible. You have done something great. Please tell what it is?" Then he related the story of the God-fearing lady, her determination and his repentance etc.

One who comes to the most supreme court of Only One God with humility earns honor if his sins make him shiver, tremble and frighten and humiliate himself in his own eyes.

Trembling of Hurr on the Day of Ashura⁴⁶

How nice has Shaykh Shustari said, "You imagine that the value of Hurr bin Yazid Riyahi on the ground of Kerbala was less than that of Habib bin Mazahir as Hurr stalled the path for Husain. But have you heard his trembling voice on the Day of Ashura?"

Hurr was a colonel having 4000 soldiers under his command. He has all the comforts, the water of Euphrates, tents, shade, food, rights and also a promise that he would be promoted in rank. Then he sees Husain coming to Ibn Saad and telling him, "O Ibn Saad! Do you intend to kill me?" (Will you kill me when you know whose son I am)? Then he gave some admonitions, which made Hurr tremble. Hurr came to Ibn Saad and said, "What do you want to do with Husain?" Ibn Saad replied, "I want to fight with him and at least, to cut his hands and severe his." Hurr asked, "Is it the final decision?" "Yes," Ibn Saad replied, "a firm and a final decision." Then Hurr said, "All right." He returned, but went aside, not to his army in such a manner that one could know his intention. Then he came back from behind the army and approached Husain. Now Hurr was ashamed. Shaykh Shustari says this shame is very precious. Let us be sacrificed for such a sinner. When his eye met Husain's eye, he turned his sword upside down in such a way that it showed he had come for submission. He looked at Husain's feet.

The Master said: Raise your head, O gentleman! Who are you? What do you want? What do you want to say?

Keeping his eyes at Husain's feet, Hurr said, "I am that unfortunate fellow who obstructed your way. O

Master! I never knew that matters would come to such a stage. I had never imagined that they would be so much harsh on you. Will my repentance be accepted?” “Yes”, replied the Imam, no one returns deprived from this door.

Come back, come back, whoever and whatever you are, come back. Come back even if you are a denier, an infidel or an idol worshipper. This door of ours is not a door of despair. Come back even if you have broken repentance a hundred times. (Persian couplets)

O sinner men and women! This is the holy month of Ramadhan. This is the month of repentance. Look at some of your sins, which made you bow down in shame so that your head may be high. Remember some of your sins, which made you tremble, so that God may grant you amnesty.

I showed disrespect for a long time. Now I have awakened from my sleep. (Persian couplet)
Sins have disfigured my heart. O Lord! Now grant me repentance. O my God! From this day, make sins feel bitter to me forever.

﴿وَكْرَهَ إِلَيْكُمْ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ﴾

“...and He has made hateful to you unbelief and transgression and disobedience... (49:7)”

So that committing sins may become abhorring to me. Please cleanse me from my past and save me in the future.

There are numerous prayers of the holy Infallibles (Masoomeen) in this respect. In these days of Ramadhan you recite: O Lord! Today, forgive my past sins. For the sake of Your Honor and Might, kindly keep me sinless in future also. Grant me strength, grant me reasoning, grant me light (Noor). Give me abhorrence towards sins so that every sin may become hateful to my nature.

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1. Sahifa Sajjadiya, 4th Supplication
 2. Usul al-Kafi, Book of Supplication
 3. Surah Yusuf 12:24
 4. Surah Najm 53:39
 5. Biharul Anwar, vol. 11; Account of Imam Sajjad

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