

## Surah al-Mumtahana, Chapter 60

(The Woman to be Examined)

Section (juz') 28

Number of Verses: 13

### General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*

The Chapter, revealed in Mecca, has thirteen Verses and owes its designation to the tenth Verse treating of the examination of Emigrant women. The blessed Chapter treats of love for God Almighty and forbidding believers from befriending His enemies. Muslims are also enjoined to regard Prophet Abraham (as) as a model.

Nine blessed Qur'anic Chapters, namely 9, 33, 47, 60, 63, 70, 98, 109, and 111, from amongst one hundred and fourteen Chapters, open with the recognition of enemies. Such Qur'anic Verses exceed those of revealed prescripts (ayat al-ahkam).

The Qur'anic instances of the words

***dhull*** ("error"),

***kufr*** ("disbelief"),

***nifaq*** ("hypocrite"),

and

***sadd*** ("aversion")

are attested 191, 521, 37, and 45 times respectively.

## The Merit of Reciting the Chapter

According to a Prophetic tradition, whoever recites Surah al-Mumtahana, all believing men and women will intercede on his behalf on the Day of Resurrection. 1

Other traditions have been narrated on the merits of the recitation of the Chapter; however, such merits fall into the share of those who attend to the blessed Verses of the Chapter in question for the sake of liking, disliking, and waging jihad and application of their contextual meaning in Allah's Cause rather than being content with the passive recitation of the same.

## Surah al-Mumtahana – Verse 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful**

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا بِمَا جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ الْحَقِّ يُخْرِجُونَ الرَّسُولَ وَإِيَّاكُمْ ۚ أَنْ تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ رَبِّكُمْ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ خَرَجْتُمْ جِهَادًا فِي سَبِيلِي وَابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِي ۚ تُسِرُّونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا أَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَا أَعْلَنْتُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْهُ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ

**1. O you who believe! Take not My enemies and your enemies as friends. You befriend them while they have disbelieved in what has come to you of the Truth. Besides they have driven out the Messenger and yourselves [from Mecca] since you believe in Allah, your Lord! If you have come forth to strive in My Cause and to seek My Good Pleasure [, do not befriend them]. You show friendship to them in secret while I am All-Aware of what you conceal and what you reveal. And whoever of you does that, then verily he has gone astray from the Straight Path.**

Occasion of Revelation. The majority of Qur'anic exegetes have explicitly mentioned that the blessed Verse concerns Hatib ibn Abi Bulta'a. In his Majma' al-Bayan, Tabarsi narrates that a certain woman by the name of Sara, from a Meccan tribe, departing from Mecca for Median, came unto Allah's Messenger (S).

The Noble Prophet (S) asked her whether she had converted to the Islamic faith and had come there.

She provided a negative reply.

Upon being asked by the Noble Prophet as to the reason lying behind her departure, she replied:

*"We were descended from you. Now that all my guardians have departed, I have been severely rendered in need. I have come here so that you may provide me with clothes and a mount."*

The Noble Prophet (S) asked inquired:

*"What happened to the Meccan youth?"*

*The question alluded to her profession as a vocalist performing for the youth."*

She replied that following the battle of Badr, no one had asked her to perform on the vocals. The response reflects the severity of the polytheists' defeat at the battle of Badr. Thus, the Noble Prophet (S) ordered the children of 'Abd al-Muttalib to provide her with clothes, a mount, and some money for her travel.

The Noble Prophet (S) was preparing himself for the conquest of Mecca at the time when Hatib ibn Abi Bulta'a, a Muslim of fame who had participated at the battle of Badr and the Ridhwan Pledge (Bay'a) came unto Sara. He wrote a letter and asked her to hand it to the people of Mecca. He also provided her with ten dinars and some brocade.

In his letter, Hatib had informed the people of Mecca that Allah's Messenger intended to confront them and had asked them to prepare themselves for defending themselves. Sara took the letter and headed for Mecca.

Upon being apprised of the story by Gabriel, the Noble Prophet (S) ordered Hadhrat 'Ali (as), 'Ammar Numayr, Zubayr, Talha, Miqdad, and Abu Marthad to mount and head for Mecca. He told them that they would meet with a woman en route who would carry a letter from Hatib to Meccan polytheists. They were ordered to seize the letter.

Upon meeting with her, she denied carrying such letter and swore to the same. They searched her luggage, but they failed to find it.

Therefore, they made up their mind to return, but Hadhrat 'Ali drew his sword saying:

*"Neither the Messenger (S) nor we forge lies. Produce the letter, or else I will behead you."*

Appreciating the seriousness of the issue, she took out the letter from her hair.

The letter was taken to the Noble Prophet (S).

Having summoned Hatib, the Noble Prophet (S) asked him:

*"Do you recognize the letter?"*

He replied:

*"Yes."*

He inquired:

*"Why did you send the letter?"*

He answered:

*"O Allah's Messenger (S)! Since the day on which I converted to the Islamic faith, I have neither disbelieved for a single moment, nor have I betrayed you, nor have I accepted the polytheist's invitation from whom I have separated, but the point is that all Emigrants know people in Mecca who support their families against the polytheists and I am a stranger here and my family are their captives. I intended to curry their favor to ward off harm to my family.*

*However, I was aware that God Almighty would cause their defeat and my letter would do them no good."*

The Noble Prophet (S) accepted his excuse, but 'Umar rose up asking Allah's Messenger to allow him to behead the hypocrite. The Noble Prophet (S) said that he was one of the warriors fighting at the Battle of Badr and God Almighty favored them. Then the blessed Verses in question were revealed and provided Muslims with significant lessons regarding refraining befriending the polytheists and Allah's enemies.<sup>2</sup>

The society of believers should not befriend Allah's enemies. It was mentioned in the occasion of the Revelation of the blessed Verses in question that a Muslim without intending espionage expressed his favor for the enemies of the Islamic faith as a consequence of which the blessed Verses was revealed to warn Muslims not to embark upon such measures.

The blessed Verse opens by addressing the believers saying that Allah's and your enemies are not to be befriended, since they are Allah's and your own enemies. The blessed Verse proceeds to say that you express your affection for them whereas they disbelieve what has been revealed unto you of Truth, namely the Islamic faith and the Holy Qur'an.

They drive you and Allah's Messenger (S) out of your homelands. They are against your beliefs and confront you regarding your greatest glory, i.e. belief in God Almighty as your gravest sin and crime as a consequence of which you have been driven out of your homeland by them. Thus, it would not be befitting had you expressed your affection toward them. It is incumbent upon you to strive beside the mighty army of Muslim warriors to liberate them from Divine Retribution.

The blessed Verse further expounds that if you have emigrated from your homeland to wage jihad in

Divine Cause and Satisfaction, you are not supposed to establish friendly ties with them.

If you truly claim to be Allah's friends, having emigrated from your homeland in His Cause, seeking to wage jihad in His Cause and for His Good Pleasure, God Almighty is All-Aware of your overt and covert intentions and it would be useless to keep secrets from the Omniscient Lord Who is All-Aware of the seen and the unseen.

The blessed Verse closes with a decisive warning to the effect that whoever from amongst you befriends Allah's and your enemies, he has indeed gone astray in that he has deviated from the Straight Path imagining that he may keep something secret from God Almighty and he has also gone astray from the path of faith, devotion, and fear of God Almighty.

## Surah al-Mumtahana – Verse 2

إِنْ يَتَّقِفُوكُمْ يَكُونُوا لَكُمْ أَعْدَاءً وَيَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ وَأَلْسِنَتَهُم بِالسُّوءِ وَوَدُّوا لَوْ  
تَكْفُرُونَ

**2. Should they gain the upper hand over you, they would be your bitter enemies and mistreat you with their hands and their tongues with evil and they desire that you should desist from believing in your faith and disbelieve.**

The Arabic root th-q-f denotes "to find, to confront," connoting that your enemies will not be satisfied unless you disbelieve. The blessed Verse is saying that how could believers befriend their enemies if wherever they find them, they will reveal their enmity through mistreating, slandering, and slaying them. Disbelievers intend that believers desist from believing and turn into disbelievers like them.

In epistle 53 addressed to Malik Ashtar mentioned in Nahj al-Balagha, Hadhrat 'Ali (as) says:

*"Beware of the enemies' stratagems even after concluding the truce, since at times, the enemy approaches you to catch you by surprise."*

In Ghurar al-Hikam, he also says:

*"Do not feel secure from the enemy's harm even if he lauds you..."*

## Surah al-Mumtahana – Verse 3

لَنْ تَنْفَعَكُمْ أَرْحَامُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ ۚ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

**3. Neither your relatives nor your children will benefit you on the Day of Resurrection. He separates you on that Day and Allah is the All-Seer of what you do.**

The blessed Verse provides a response to people like Hatib ibn Abi Bulta'a who replying to the Noble Prophet's (S) inquiry regarding the reason behind divulging the secrets of the Muslims to the polytheists said that they have relatives in hands of Meccan disbelievers and by divulging the intelligence they intended to preserve them.

In this vein, the blessed Verse is saying that your relatives including your descendants will be of no avail to you since disbelieving relatives are neither regarded as fame, nor substance in this world nor a means of deliverance in the Hereafter. Why must believers embark upon certain measures which entail Divine Wrath and severance from His friends.

The blessed Verse further says that God Almighty will separate you and them on the Day of Resurrection. The believers and the disbelievers will tread the paths toward Hell and Paradise respectively substantiating the statement as per which relation ties shall be totally severed on the Day of Resurrection and they shall be of no avail to them.

The contextual meaning of the blessed Verse resembles certain other Qur'anic Verses3:

***"That Day shall a man flee from his brother, and from his mother and his father, and from his wife and his children."***

The blessed Verse closes with reiterates the warning that God Almighty is All-Aware of what you do, your intentions, and your secret intentions.

**Surah al-Mumtahana – Verse 4**

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَاءُ مِنْكُمْ  
وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا  
حَتَّىٰ تُوْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَهُ إِلَّا قَوْلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ لَأَسْتَغْفِرَنَّ لَكَ وَمَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ  
مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۗ رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ

**4. Verily, there has been an excellent example for you in Abraham and those with him when they said unto their people: "Indeed we dislike you and whatever you worship besides Allah, we have**

***rejected you and there will be between us and you enmity and hatred for ever until you believe in Allah Alone" except the saying of Abraham to his father: "Indeed, I will ask forgiveness [from Allah] for you but I have no power to do anything for you before Allah." "Our Lord! In you we put our trust in You and to You we turn in repentance and to You is our final return.***

The Arabic word

***uswa ("model")***

is cognate with ta'assi ("following, emulation"). Imam Husayn (as) is narrated as saying that he is the model in struggling against the enemies of the Islamic faith.<sup>4</sup>

Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his arrival) is quoted as saying:

*"The Messenger of Allah's (S) daughter, Hadhrat Zahra' is my perfect model."*<sup>5</sup>

Since the Glorious Qur'an presents significant examples of the world of humanity to complement Divine Teachings, the blessed Verse, following the strong forbidding against befriending Allah's enemies, makes mention of Prophet Abraham (as) as the great leader respected by all nations, particularly the Arabs, saying that Prophet Abraham (as) and his adherents serve as a good example for your life, as the Arch-Prophet's (as) life is thoroughly a model of worshipping God Almighty, waging jihad in His Cause and loving His Pure Essence.

The Muslim community takes pride in their designation of the nation of Abraham (as) may set him as a perfect example in this respect.

The expression

***"those with him"***

designates the believers, limited in number, who followed him in worshipping God Almighty. Some maintain that the expression connotes the Prophets following his example or those Prophets who were his contemporaries is seemingly far-fetched.

To further expound the meaning, the blessed Verse proceeds to say that on that day when they said unto their polytheist and disbelieving peoples that they dislike them and what they worship besides God Almighty. They neither recognize you as believers nor your beliefs as true beliefs. They dislike both them and their worthless beliefs. To lay further emphasis on their assertions, they said that they disbelieved in them.

According to some traditions, such disbelief is one of the five types of disbelief. They said that they would persist in their denial until they believe in the One God and thereby expressed their dislike of Allah's enemies with utmost decisiveness and assertiveness declaring that such separation was

irrevocable for good, unless they changed their course and convert to monotheism.

However, since there were exceptions in Abraham's life aiming at guiding some polytheists, the blessed Verse proceeds to say that they severed all their ties with the disbelieving people and refrained from expressing affectionate words with them, except for Abraham's (as) promise to his father, or paternal uncle, Àzar, to the effect that the Prophet (as) would ask forgiveness for him from God Almighty, though God Almighty is the Oft-Forgiving and he failed to do anything but invoking Him for forgiveness.

Such exception is truly indicative of Prophet Abraham's (as) and his followers' severance of any ties with idolaters aiming at certain specific circumstances as well as expedience, since the evidence reflects that Abraham (as) had seemingly noticed the preparedness of his paternal uncle, Àzar, to convert to monotheism, but the latter was concerned that if he converted to monotheism, what would happen to his span of life spent in idolatry.

Prophet Abraham (as) assured him that he would invoke God Almighty for forgiving him and stood on his word, though Àzar failed to believe. When Prophet Abraham (as) was certain about Àzar's enmity against God Almighty, he desisted from invoking God Almighty for his forgiveness and severed all his ties with him.

It is worthy of note that that Prophet Abraham's (as) promise to Àzar for invoking God Almighty to forgive him aimed at inviting him to believe in God Almighty rather than for mundane goals.

Thus, the blessed Verse closes by saying that they said:

***"O Lord! We put our trust in You, We turned to You in repentance, and all shall finally return unto You."***

## **Surah al-Mumtahana – Verse 5**

رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَا ۗ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

***5. "Our Lord! Make us not a means of error for the disbelievers but forgive us, Our Lord! Indeed, You are the Omnipotent, the All-Wise.***

The blessed Verse reflects the words of Prophet Abraham (as), Allah's friend, saying:

*"O Lord! Do not make us the trial for those who disbelieved such that they have the upper hand over us and cause torments and troubles for us or make us turn away from the true faith. Forgive our sins and error, O Lord! You are True in your Acts. You are Predominant over all beings. Assist us to rid ourselves of the evils caused by the polytheists and disbelievers."*



## Surah al-Mumtahana – Verse 6

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

**6. Certainly, there has been in them [Prophet Abraham (as) and his followers] an excellent example for one who sets his hopes in Allah and the Last Day. And whoever turns away, indeed Allah is Needless, Worthy of all Praise.**

It is certainly incumbent upon the believers to follow Abraham (as) and his righteous deeds, if they set their hopes on Divine Mercy and attaining to elevated states in the Hereafter.

The reiteration of

**"excellent example"**

reflects following Prophet Abraham (as) whose meritorious deeds and virtues were mentioned in the preceding blessed Verses including his dislike of Allah's enemies and expressing needfulness of the Absolute Needless, reliance and setting one's hopes on Him, and invoking Him for forgiveness.

The blessed Verses closes by saying that whoever disobeys God Almighty and befriends His enemies, has certainly incurred loss and God Almighty is Needless of Him.

## Surah al-Mumtahana – Verse 7

عَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَجْعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ عَادَيْتُم مِّنْهُمْ مَّوَدَّةً ۚ وَاللَّهُ قَدِيرٌ ۚ وَاللَّهُ  
غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

**7. It is hoped that Allah will make friendship between you and those whom you hold as enemies [through their conversion to the Islamic faith upon the conquest of Mecca]. And Allah is Omnipotent, Oft-Forgiving, and Most Merciful.**

The blessed Verse treats of love for God Almighty and severance of ties with polytheists. Since such severance of ties created some emotional vacuum for some Muslims, though the true believers following the Noble Prophet of Allah (S) were steadfast in this vein, to provide them with Recompense and fill such vacuum, God Almighty bears them the glad tidings asking them to entertain no sorrow as the circumstances would change for the better.

The blessed Verse is saying that it is hoped that God Almighty will establish friendly ties between you and your foes through their conversion to the Islamic faith. Such promise was realized in the eighth year after the Noble Prophet's (S) migration to Medina when Muslims conquered Mecca and the people of Mecca embraced the Islamic faith in groups and the leaden clouds of enmity dispersed and faith shone with the warmth of love and friendship.

The point is that when Muslims notice that the beloved of theirs separate from their ideological line, they should not lose their hopes of their return, since the Omnipotent Allah may alter the hearts and He is the One Who forgives the sins and faults of His Servants.

Thus, the blessed Verse closes by saying that

***"And Allah is Omnipotent, Oft-Forgiving, and Most Merciful."***

## **Surah al-Mumtahana – Verses 8-9**

لَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَن تَوَلَّوهُمْ ۗ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

***8. Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion nor drove you out of your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who deal with equity.***

***9. It is only as regards those who fought against you on account of religion and have driven you out of your homes and helped to drive you out that Allah forbids you to befriend them. And whoever will befriend them, then such are the wrong-doers.***

The blessed Verses provide further exposition on forbidding befriendings polytheists. The blessed Verse 8 is saying that God Almighty does not forbid you to do good to and deal justly with those who did not struggle against you owing to your conversion to the Islamic faith nor did they drive you out of your homeland, since God Almighty loves those who deal with equity.

The blessed Verse 9 is saying that God Almighty solely forbids you to refrain from befriendings those who fought against you on account of your faith and drove you out of your homeland or contributed to your

being driven out. God Almighty strictly forbids you from establishing friendly ties with them and whoever befriends them is regarded as a wrong-doer disobeying Allah's Command.

Thus, non-Muslims fall into two groups. There were those who confronted Muslims by drawing their swords against them and driving them from their homeland and demonstrated their enmity against Islam and Muslims through their words and deeds. It is incumbent upon Muslims to sever all their ties with them and refrain from befriending them.

The group is explicitly represented by Meccan polytheists, particularly their chiefs, some of whom perpetrated such misdeeds and some others rendered them support. There were also disbelievers who neither entertained enmity against Muslims nor did they fought them nor contributed to driving them out of their homeland.

There were still non-Muslims who had made treaties of non-intervention with Muslims and befriending them entailed no loss. It was also incumbent upon Muslims to keep their treaties with them and strive toward the administration of justice.

## Surah al-Mumtahana - Verse 10

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا جَاءَكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ مُهَاجِرَاتٍ فَامْتَحِنُوهُنَّ ۚ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ  
بِإِيمَانِهِنَّ ۚ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ ۚ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ  
وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ ۚ وَآتُوهُنَّ مَا أَنْفَقُوا ۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَا  
آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ ۚ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا بِعِصَمِ الْكُوفَرِ وَاسْأَلُوا مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ وَلْيَسْأَلُوا مَا  
أَنْفَقُوا ۚ ذَلِكُمْ حُكْمُ اللَّهِ ۚ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

**10. O you who believe! When believing women [separated from disbelieving husbands] come unto you as emigrants, examine them [in terms of faith]. Allah knows best as to their faith. Then, if you ascertain that they are true believers, send them not back to the disbelievers. They are not lawful for the disbelievers nor are the disbelievers lawful for them. But give them that [amount of money] which they have spent on them. And keep not the disbelieving women as wives and ask for [the return of] that which you have spent [as mahr or bridal gift] and let them [the disbelievers] ask back for that which they have spent [had the women converted to the Islamic faith and had joined you]. That is the Decree of Allah by Which He judges between you and Allah is Omniscient, All-wise.**

### Occasion of Revelation

Some Qur'an exegetes narrate that Allah's Messenger (S) concluded a treaty with Meccan polytheists at

Hudaybiyya as per which any Meccan who joins Muslims should be returned to Mecca, but if any of the Muslims forego his faith and returns to Mecca, he may not be returned.

A certain woman by the name of Subay'a converted to the Islamic faith at the time and joined the Muslims at Hudaybiyya. Her husband went to the Noble Prophet (S) and asked for her return to him as per the newly concluded treaty. The blessed Verse in question was revealed commanding the Muslims to examine the emigrant women in terms of their faith.

Ibn 'Abbas is quoted as saying that they were examined by being asked to take an oath to the effect that their emigration had not been owing to hatred against their husbands nor liking for the new land nor for any other mundane goal but they had emigrated solely for the sake of the Islamic faith. The woman in question took the oath.

Thus, Allah's Messenger (S) reimbursed the mahr paid by her husband and the other expenses borne by him saying that the treaty solely includes men rather than women. Such occasion of Revelation is mentioned in the majority of Sunni and Shi'i exegetic sources.

The blessed Verse depicts a clear picture of the Islamic faith as the one fostering justice. Firstly, the emigrated woman is not left on her own. Secondly, the right of the disbelieving husband is not ignored but the mahr and other expenses borne by him are reimbursed from the Muslim public treasury (bayt al-mal).

Thirdly, the female instinctual and emotional needs and also her financial needs are being met by the two commands

***"marry them"***

and

***"pay them their mahr."***

It is worthy of note that emigration may stem from fleeing from one's husband, liking for living a new life, espionage, gaining possessions, or reunion with relatives. Thus, the incentives are supposed to be clarified.

The blessed Verse in question treats of emigrant women and it includes seven decrees which mainly concerns emigrant women and some of them pertain to disbelieving women as follows:

The first decree regards emigrant women.

Addressing the believers the blessed Verse is saying:

***"O you who believe! When believing women emigrate unto you, do not send them away but examine them."***

Examination of believing women is owing to the point that some of them said the formula of faith, namely

*"There is no god but Allah and Muhammad (S) is Allah's Messenger (S)"*

and thus they joined the believers but their belief was supposed to be ascertained by having them take an oath to the effect that their emigration had been for conversion to the Islamic faith rather than out of enmity against their husbands or love for other men or Medina and the like.

The twelfth blessed Verse of the Chapter in question may provide further exposition on the manner of the examination of emigrant women according to which they were supposed to pledge allegiance to the Noble Prophet (S) to the effect that they refrain from treading the path of polytheism, theft, immoral acts, slaying children and the like but they totally submit to the commands of Allah's Messenger (S).

According to the next decree, when their faith was ascertained and thereby they were recognized as true believers, they are not supposed to be returned to disbelievers. According to the imposed treaty of Hudaibiyya, Muslims emigrating from Mecca to Medina were supposed to be returned to Mecca, but it did not include women. Thus, the Noble Prophet (S) never returned them to disbelievers since women were extremely weak in that society and returning them unto believers was quite perilous.

The third decree which in fact substantiates the preceding one proceeds to say that neither these believing women are lawful for those disbelieving men nor disbelieving men are lawful for these believing women, since belief and disbelief are mutually exclusive and the sacred bonds of marriage may not be established between believers and disbelievers as they tread opposite paths.

The point is that wedlock is supposed to establish some sort of harmony between the two parties and belief and disbelief may never stand in harmony with each other.

It was the common practice amongst Arabs that bridal gift (mahr) was paid in advance. Therefore, the fourth decree is saying that the expenses borne by disbelieving husbands for their marriage should be reimbursed to them.

Even though the husbands are disbelievers, but since the separation is motioned by the woman, Islamic justice necessitates that the husband should be compensated for the losses incurred. The significant point is that the Islamic government and the Muslim public treasury are seemingly supposed to undertake the obligations for which no party has been specified. The plural form of address bears further evidence to the same effect.

The next decree says that there is no sin on your part if you marry such women when you pay their bridal gift. Even though such women have already received their bridal gifts from their former husbands and the money has been reimbursed to them, but the new husbands are supposed to pay the bridal gift to respect the believing women.

It is worthy of note that the believing woman separates from her disbelieving husband without divorce,

but she is supposed to keep the waiting term ('idda) before remarriage whose detailed discussions are to be found in Jurisprudential sources, e.g. Kitab Jawahir, vol. 30, p. 54.

In case the husband converts to the Islamic faith but the wife remains in her disbelief, the marital bond is annulled, as the blessed Verse in question is saying that disbelieving wives are not supposed to be kept. The Arabic word 'asam is the plural form of 'isma denoting hindrance and hereby connoting hindrance to matrimony. The Arabic word kawafir is the plural form of kafira denoting disbelieving woman.

The last decree treats of those women who turn away from the Islamic faith to join disbelievers saying whoever of the women turning away from the Islamic faith is supposed to pay the bridal gift in the same manner as those women who turn to the Islamic faith and whose bridal gift is supposed to be paid to their former husbands.

It reflects justice and mutual respect in Islam. The blessed Verse in question closes by laying emphasis on the foregoing decrees saying that these are Divine Decrees through which God Almighty judges between you and He is the Omniscient, the All-Wise.

Such Decrees spring from Divine Omniscience reflecting His Wisdom. The rights of all people are stipulated in such Decrees and They all stand in harmony with Islamic justice and equity. Taking into account the fact that they have been all decreed by God Almighty is the best security for their implementation.

## Surah al-Mumtahana - Verse 11

وَإِنْ فَاتَكُمْ شَيْءٌ مِّنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ فَعَاقِبْتُمْ فَاتُوا الَّذِينَ ذَهَبَتْ أَزْوَاجُهُمْ مِّثْلَ  
مَا أَنْفَقُوا ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ

**11. And if some of your wives have gone from you to the disbelievers, then you went out for an expedition [against them and] gained booty. Then pay from that booty to those whose wives have gone, the equivalent of what they had spent. And fear Allah in Whom you believe.**

The losses incurred by Muslims owing to their conversion to the Islamic faith should be compensated by the Islamic state. It is in this vein that the blessed Verse is saying that in case some of your wives turn away from the Islamic faith and join disbelievers and you conquer disbelievers and gained booties, those who have lost their wives are to be compensated for their bridal gifts.

The preceding blessed Verse is saying that the bridal gifts of such women are supposed to be borne by disbelievers as it is considered the disbelievers' right to receive compensation for the bridal gifts which they had paid to their former wives who had converted to the Islamic faith and thereby had emigrated to

Medina. Nonetheless, according to some traditions, despite the fact that Muslims acted upon such just decree, Meccan polytheists failed to do the same.

Thus, it was decreed that to compensate the losses incurred by men whose wives had turned away from the Islamic faith and had joined Meccan polytheists, they were supposed to receive booties equivalent to the losses incurred by them and thereafter the remainder of the booties gained from the enemy could be distributed amongst Muslims.

According to Qur'an exegetes, the Arabic verbal form

***fa-'aqabtum*** ("***then you became triumphant***")

connotes the victory of the Muslims over disbelievers and the retribution of the latter and gaining booties.

The blessed Verse closes by calling all Muslims to fear God Almighty saying:

*"Fear Allah in Whom you believe and refrain from disobeying Him."*

## **Surah al-Mumtahana – Verse 12**

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ لَا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأْتِينَ بِبُهْتَانٍ يَفْتَرِينَهُ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعْصِيَنَّ فِي مَعْرُوفٍ ۖ فَبَايِعْهُنَّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

***12. O Prophet! When believing women come unto you to give you the pledge that they will not associate anything in worship with Allah, that they will not steal, that they will not commit illegal sexual intercourse, that they will not kill their children, that they will not utter slander, intentionally forging falsehood, and that they will not disobey you in the religious ordains, then accept their pledge and ask Allah to forgive them. Indeed, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Compassionate.***

The preceding blessed Verses treated of the Decrees concerning emigrant women and the blessed Verse in question expounds the women's pledge with the Noble Prophet (S). Qur'anic exegetes maintain that the blessed Verse was revealed on the day of the conquest of Mecca, when the Noble Prophet (S) was on the Mount of Safa taking men's pledge.

Then, the Meccan women who had converted to the Islamic faith came unto the Noble Prophet (S) to give pledge and the blessed Verse was revealed on that occasion expounding the manner of giving pledge.

Addressing the Noble Prophet (S), the blessed Verse is saying:

*O Prophet (S)! When the believing women come unto you and give pledge on the conditions that they associate no object of worship besides God Almighty, refrain from theft, illegal sexual intercourse, slaying their children, uttering slander, and disobey you, accept their pledge and ask for their forgiveness since God Almighty is Oft-Forgiving and Most-Compassionate.*

Thus the Noble Prophet (S) took their pledge of allegiance regarding whose manner some sources indicate that the Noble Prophet (S) had some vessel filled with water brought to him. He put his hand into water and women put their hands into the other side of the vessel.

According to some sources, he accepted their pledge while a thick piece of fabric or clothes covered his hand. It is also reported that the Noble Prophet (S) held a piece of fabric and the other side was held by women and thereby he accepted their pledge of allegiance. The author of the exegetic work titled Manhaj al-Sadiqin reports that the Noble Prophet (S) asked Ummaya, Khadija's sister, to accept the women's pledge of allegiance.

It is worthy of note that six conditions are stipulated in the preceding blessed Verse all of which are to be accepted by them.

The blessed Verse also reflects that the leader of the Islamic society, irrespective of the sexes of the believers, is available to all and women are regarded as independent, willful, and selective individuals possessing independent real and legal entities such that women talked to the Noble Prophet (S) without any intermediaries and provided him with their feedback.

## **Surah al-Mumtahana – Verse 13**

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ قَدْ يَئْسُوا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ كَمَا  
يَئْسَ الْكُفَّارُ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْقُبُورِ

**13. O you who believe! Befriend not the people who incurred the Wrath of Allah. Surely, they have despaired of the Hereafter, just as the disbelievers buried in graves are hopeless.**

The friend of God Almighty does not befriend those who have incurred His Wrath. It is reported that the blessed Verse was revealed on the occasion that some Muslims from amongst the poor befriended the Jews and divulged the intelligence of the Muslims unto them such that they may receive some remuneration in the form of food, fruit, and money from them.

Addressing the believers, the blessed Verse forbids them to befriend those who have incurred the Wrath



of God Almighty alluding to the point that the believers are supposed to set their hopes onto Divine Graciousness but it is incumbent upon them to desist from befriending those who have incurred Divine Wrath and divulge Muslims' secrets unto them.

The blessed Verse proceeds to present details substantiating such Decree by saying that the disbelievers have totally lost their hope of the Hereafter in the same manner as the disbelievers interred in graves have lost their hope of deliverance on the Day of Resurrection, since the latter are entangled with the consequences of their evil deeds in Purgatory but they have no way out.

Thus they are totally hopeless. Such living disbelievers are so immersed in the mire of sins that they may never hope for deliverance in the same manner that the dead disbelievers are hopeless of revival. Such people are assuredly dangerous and untrustworthy.

Their words, pretence to sincerity, and intimacy are not to be trusted since they have lost their hope of Divine Mercy and are thereby desperate for any crime. How could they be trusted and befriended by Muslims? The opening and the closing blessed Verses of the blessed Chapter in question treat of keeping distance from the enemies of Allah and Muslims.

*O Lord! Preserve us from Your Wrath. Embrace us in Your Mercy and Graciousness.*

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1. Majma' al-Bayan.

2. The report has been narrated in sources, e.g. Ma'ma' al-Bayan, Bukhari's Sahih, Ruh al-Bayan, Fi Halal al-Qur'an and the exegetic works by Qurtubi and Maraghi.

3. 80:34-36

4. Ibn Mikhnaf's Maqal.

5. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 53, p. 18.

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