

## Section 14: The True Believers

### Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 111

إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بَأْنَ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِي التَّورَاةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا بِبَيِّنَكُمُ الَّذِي بَأْيَعْتُمْ بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

111. “*Verily Allah has bought from the believers their souls and their Properties for Paradise to be theirs: they fight in the way of Allah, so they slay and they are slain, (this is) a promise binding on Him in the Turah, and the Evangel and the Qur'an. And who is more faithful to his promise than Allah? Rejoice then in your bargain that you have made; and that is the great success.*”

In many occurrences of the Qur'an, whenever it says something concerning the infidels, or polytheists, or hypocrites, immediately next to that, it refers to the believers in order that a comparison between these two groups be performed.

Here, after delivering some explanations about the hypocrites and their evil conspiracies, the Qur'an refers to the believers and their specialties.

In this verse, by applying a delicate simile, the Qur'an points to the intensive love of the believers to Holy Struggle in the way of Allah. It similizes their deed to a transaction and a bargain. Usually, there are four essential elements in every bargain.

These four factors are: seller, customer, the ware to be transactioned, and price. In this splendid spiritual transaction, the seller is a believer, the customer is Allah, the ware to be transactioned is the soul and the wealth of the believers, and its price is the etetnal Paradise.

These believers fight in the way of Allah where they slay and are slain. Whether they defeat the enemy or they suffer martyrdom, both are counted felicity for them, and both of them are sought by a believer. The verse says:

***“Verily Allah has bought from the believers their souls and their properties for Paradise to be theirs: they fight in the way of Allah, so they slay and they are slain...”***

Imam Sadiq (as) in a tradition says that there is no price for your bodies save Paradise. Then you should not sell your selves for less than Paradise. 1

Next to that, the Qur'an introduces the document of this transaction, where it says:

***“... (this is) a promise binding on Him in the Turah, and the Evangel and the Qur'an...”***

In all these Heavenly Books, believers have been promised Paradise, and the texts of these Divine Books are counted as a document for the believers in this bargain. 2

Then, as a further emphasis, the Qur'an asks:

***“...And who is more faithful to his promise than Allah?...”***

Therefore, regarding that you have transacted the best bargain and with the most faithful One, Who is Allah, you must be very happy with this transaction, and this is the great felicity. The verse says:

***“...Rejoice then in your bargain that you have made; and that is the great success.”***

## **Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 112**

**الْتَّائِبُونَ الْعَابِدُونَ الْحَامِدُونَ السَّائِحُونَ الرَّاكِعُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ الْأَمْرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
وَالنَّاهِرُونَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَافِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ وَيَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ**

**112. “(The believing strivers are those who) turn repentant (to Allah), worship (Him), make a journey, bow, prostrate (in prayer), bid what is right and forbid what is wrong, and keep the limits of Allah, and give good news to the believers.”**

Besides the aforementioned attribute, i.e. striving in the way of Allah, the Qur'an defines nine epithets for such believers, who have bargained with their Lord. Thus, counting that one, they will be totally ten attributes. These nine epithets are as follows.

1. ***“(The believing strivers are those who) turn repentant (to Allah)...”***

Whenever they commit a fault, they immediately regret and turn to Allah and repent.

## 2. "...worship (Him)..."

They always worship the Lord and assume worshipping as an obligatory manner upon themselves. Worshipping Allah is a sign of good Faith in a high level. It trains the soul of man and furnishes his heart and spirit with a peculiar serenity and luminosity.

## 3. "...praise (Him)..."

They always praise Allah for the bounties He has bestowed upon them, and they do perform His praise and tribute.

## 4. "...make a journey..."

That is, in the way of Allah and for fulfilling their religious duties, they are always busy moving and endeavouring. For instance, they pave a distance to go into a mosque to establish their prayer, or, in order to settle reconciliation between two Muslims, they go to their houses. Or, even for taking an example from the traces of the ancient people, they make a journey.

It must also be noted that some of the commentators have taken the Qur'anic word /s̄'ih̄n/ in the sense of 'fasting'.

## 5. "...bow..."

They bow down in the prayer before Allah. It is such as bowing, humility, and veneration.

## 6. "...Prostrate (in prayer)..."

They put their foreheads on the ground of abjectness before Allah, and this is the utmost humiliation in front of Him. The Qur'an has referred to only these two acts from the whole acts of prayer, because the most distinguished actions in prayer are 'bowing and prostration'.

## 7. "...bid what is right..."

Besides that they themselves are generally good, they invite others to goodness, too. They are always the encouragers of others in doing good deeds.

## 8. "...and forbid what is wrong..."

They not only themselves do not approach committing sins, but also dissuade others from perpetration of vices and becoming polluted with wrong actions.

## 9. "...and keep the limits of Allah..."

They ceaselessly try to protect the limits of the ordinances of Allah and not to transgress them. This epithet is one of the important qualities of a believer.

He must be careful of his own deeds and treatment, so that never he violates the religious laws and that the limits of religion not to be broken. This subject is of great importance, and it has been referred to in the Qur'an, too. For example, Surah At-Talq, No. 67, verse 1 says:

***"...and whoever goes beyond the limits of Allah, he indeed does injustice to his own soul..."***

Therefore, in order to protect the limits of Allah, we must both fight against the outward enemy and struggle for effacing the inward corruptions.

However, the first six epithets, out of the nine epithets mentioned in this verse, relate to the personal private life of a believer, which he ought to individually create in himself. Two epithets concern the social life of a believer; and the last epithet envelops all the duties of a believer, whether they are personal and social, including giving the obligatory rights.

Next to mentioning these nine epithets, in order to make the believers happy, the Qur'an implies that such believers are always in goodness and felicity, and they have a good end. They will enter Paradise in the Hereafter. The verse continues saying:

***"...and give good news to the believers."***

## **Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 113**

مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أُفْلَى قُرْبَى مِنْ  
بَعْدِ مَاتَبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ

**113. "It is not (fit) for the Prophet and those who believe to seek forgiveness for the polytheists, after it has become clear to them that they are the inmates of Hell, even though they be (their) relatives."**

At the beginning of the current Surah, the Qur'an announced the immunity towards the polytheists. Then, there were some verses revealed upon the strictness and severity in action towards the polytheists. Now, the verse remarks that it is the same that the polytheists be alive or dead.

The verse says:

***"It is not (fit) for the Prophet and those who believe to seek forgiveness for the polytheists, after it has become clear to them that they are the inmates of Hell, even though they be (their)***

*relatives.”*

## **Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 114**

وَمَا كَانَ اسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَنْ مَوْعِدٍ وَعَدَهَا إِيَّاهُ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ أَنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ  
لِلَّهِ تَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُ ۖ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ

**114. “And Abraham’s seeking forgiveness for his father was only because of a promise he had made to him. So when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allah, he declared himself quit of him. Verily Abraham was tenderhearted and forbearing.”**

The previous verse denoted that the Prophet (S) and the true believers have not any pray for the polytheists, even though they are from their relatives. This verse answers to a dubious thing that why Abraham (as) gave his uncle a promise of asking for forgiveness, saying

**“...I will pray to my Lord forgive you...” (Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 47).**

The abovementioned verse indicates that Abraham’s promise was with the hope that he might be guided, but when he saw that his uncle was in the state of disbelief, Abraham left asking forgiveness for him. The verse says:

**“And Abraham’s seeking forgiveness for his father was only because of a promise he had made to him. So when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allah, he declared himself quit of him. Verily Abraham was tenderhearted and forbearing.”**

Another question is why Abraham prayed for him after his death, and he said:

**“O’ our Lord! Forgive me and my parents...” (Surah Ibrāhīm, No. 14, verse 41).**

The answer to this question is that the Arabic word /wālid/ is applied in the sense of the real father, while the term /'ab/ is used in the sense of either father, teacher, father-in-law, and grand father.

This supplication of Abraham was for his real father, not for his uncle who was a polytheist. So, the Qur’ān in its eleven verses refers to Abraham’s uncle by using the word /'ab/ in order that it makes clear that Abraham (as) had been under the guardianship of what kind of a person, but he had not been affected.

## Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 115

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضْلِلَ قَوْمًا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَاهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ مَا يَتَّقُونَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

**115. “Nor is it Allah to lead a people astray after He has guided them, until He makes clear to them what they should beware of; verily Allah is aware of all things.”**

This verse is about those persons who embraced Islam. But, before that all the ordinances of the religion would be sent down, they died. For instance, they prayed towards the first direction of Qiblah; or they asked forgiveness for their fathers while they were polytheists, and the ordinance upon these subjects had not been sent down in the time when they were living. The verse says:

**“Nor is it Allah to lead a people astray after He has guided them, until He makes clear to them what they should beware of...”**

The purpose of the holy phrase: ‘**to lead astray**’, here, means ‘to chastise’ and to take them into Hell. Therefore, they would not be chastised for the lack of performing those ordinances as long as they were not conveyed to them.

The reason of it is that they have believed in Islam and were not informed of those laws. So, punishing a person for the sake of the ordinances which were issued after them, is far from Allah’s justice; and, as ‘theoreticians in law’ say, chastisement without statement is not permissible.

At the end of the verse, the Qur’<sup>n</sup> implies that Allah knows every thing. That is, He knows that He ought not to take to task a person for the crime he has not committed. The verse says:

**“...verily Allah is aware of all things...”**

## Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 116

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ

**116. “Verily to Allah belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and causes to die, and, besides Allah, you have not any guardian or any helper.”**

The words in this verse are upon the sovereignty and Power of Allah. The Qur'an implies that the kingdom of the heavens and the earth is Allah's. It is He Who gives life and causes to die, and you have not any friend, or any helper, save Allah.

Therefore, you should not rely on anybody besides Allah, and do not take the enemies of Allah as your shelter and your guardians, or that you be interested in them.

The verse says:

**"Verily to Allah belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and causes to die, and, besides Allah, you have not any guardian or any helper."**

## **Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 117**

لَقَدْ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ فِي سَاعَةِ الْعُسْرَةِ  
مِنْ بَعْدِمَا كَادَ يَرِيْغُ قُلُوبُ فَرِيقٍ مِّنْهُمْ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّهُ بِهِمْ رَوُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

**117. "Allah has turned (mercifully) towards the Prophet and the Emigrants and the Helpers who followed him in the hour of difficulty, after the hearts of a part of them were about to swerve. Then He turned towards them (mercifully). Verily He is Full of pity, Merciful to them."**

The process of the Battle of Tabuk was very hard and tiresome for the Prophet (S) and the Muslims. It was a difficult circumstance for them. On one side, the weather was terribly hot and, on the other side, it was the season of picking off the fruits.

The Muslims, who had laboured for one year, had to leave off their crops because they had not opportunity to gather them. And, on the other side, they were quietly poor, so that they had not enough food to eat.

An Islamic tradition denotes that they had not even enough water, and sometimes it happened that several of them only tasted a single date. In such hard and difficult circumstances, the Prophet (S) and the Emigrants and the Helpers (Ansar) went to Holy Struggle in the way of Allah.

In this verse, the Qur'an has spoken of the grace, favour, regard and attentiveness of Allah upon the Muslims who went forth for Holy Struggle in that difficult situation. It says:

**"Allah has turned (mercifully) towards the Prophet and the Emigrants and the Helpers who followed him in the hour of difficulty..."**

The circumstance was so hard that some of the Muslims were incapable to bear it any longer and

intended to return. But Allah promoted their spirit and they could tolerate and remained.

That is why the Qur'an implies that this matter happened after that the hearts of some of them were nearly to swerve; but Allah caused them to succeed to repent, and He accepted their repentance since He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.

The verse continues saying:

***"...after the hearts of a part of them were about to swerve. Then He turned towards them (mercifully). Verily He is Full of pity, Merciful to them."***

## **Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 118**

وَعَلَى الْتَّلَاثَةِ الَّذِينَ خَلُفُوا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا ضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحِبَتْ وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ وَظَنَنُوا أَن لَامْلَجَأَ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَتُوبُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ التَّوَابُ الرَّحِيمُ

**118. "And to the three who were left behind, until when the earth, with all its expanse, became narrow for them, and their own souls were straitened for them and they knew that there was no refuge from Allah save toward Him, then He turned towards them (mercifully) that they might turn (repentant unto Him). Verily Allah is Oft-Pardoning, the Merciful."**

As it was said before, in the course of the Battle of Tabuk, there were some hard and difficult conditions for Muslims, the most considerable of them was the heat of the weather and the approach of the time of harvest, specially fruits.

The hypocrites did not take part in this Battle, but the true Muslims, in any way they could, participated in the expedition of Tabuk, except those who were really excused. There were three persons among the Muslims who were absent from the expedition of the battle-field.

They were: ka'b-ibn-Malik, Mararat-ibn-Rabi', and Hilal-ibn-'Umayya. They wanted to take part in the Holy Struggle, but they procrastinated and acted listlessly until when, at last, the Battle of Tabuk ended and the Prophet of Allah (S), accompanied with the Muslims, returned to Medina.

These three persons immediately presented themselves to the Prophet (S) and, after greeting, they asked about his health. But the Prophet (S) turned his face from them and did not speak with them.

When the Prophet (S) behaved like that, all the Muslims ceased communication with them and did not reply their questions and, as the Prophet (S) commanded, their wives also got separated from them.

Therefore, they felt themselves completely deserted and alone. This general strike against those three men caused that they were put in a tight straitened circumstance. In order to follow the command of the Prophet (S), they themselves did not speak even with each other either.

It has been said that this news reached the Romans. They secretly sent someone to those three persons and wanted them to go to Byzantine and live peacefully under the security of the government of Byzantine.

But those men, who were really Muslims, rejected that suggestion. They became very inconvenient of that happening by which the disbelievers expected them like that. So, they left the habitation in the city and stationed themselves in the wilderness inside the far deserts and mountains, and used to pray weeping and crying to Allah, asking Him to accept their repentance.

There passed fifty days in that state and, finally, their repentance was accepted. Allah announced that those three persons, who had disobeyed, were forgiven, and their instructive story became eternal in this verse.

A part of difficulties that they tolerated are stated in this revelation. It says:

***“And to the three who were left behind, until when the earth, with all its expanse, became narrow for them, and their own souls were straitened for them and they knew that there was no refuge from Allah save toward Him, then He turned towards them (mercifully) that they might turn (repentant unto Him). Verily Allah is Oft-Pardoning, the Merciful.”***

This event shows that if the people of a society be good, no vicious persons have any room in that society. They have to improve themselves. Thus, the action that the Muslims performed was the best style for improving the polluted minority, and a general strike against the vicious may make them improved.

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1. Majma‘-ul-Bayan, the Commentary

2. Strivers, Holy Struggle, and martyrdom have been counted worthy not only in Islam but also mentioned in the Turah and the Evangel: “...in the Turah and Evangel.” Now, if this meaning is not found clearly in these two present Holy Books, it shows some distortions in them.

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