

Section 1: The Battle of Badr

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 1

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنْفَالِ ۗ قُلِ الْأَنْفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ ۗ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ ۗ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. ***“They ask you about ‘Anfal’. Say: ‘Anfal’, belong to Allah and the Messenger; so be in awe of Allah, and set aright the relations between yourselves, and obey Allah and His Messenger if you do believe’.”***

The Arabic word /su' al (question) and its derivations have been mentioned about 130 times in the Qur'an, where the Arabic phrase /yas' alunaka/ (they ask you) is found in its 15 occurrences.

The Arabic term /' anfal/ is the plural form of /nafil/ with the sense of 'excessive' and 'remission'. A gracious man who remits very much is called in Arabic /nufil/. The progeny which was remitted to Abraham (as) has been counted as a supererogation. The Qur'an says:

“And We gave him Isaac, and Jacob, as a further gift...” (Surah Al-Anbiya, No. 21, verse 72).

In technical terminology of the Islamic jurisprudence, the meaning of the Arabic word 'anfal' encompasses: natural resources' public wealth, the spoils of war, the wealth whose owner is unknown, like a land whose owner has left it out, the properties of the heirless dead, forests, valleys, reed-beds,

unprofitable lands, mines, and so on.

According to what the history denotes, when the Battle of Badr was ended, there remained some spoils of war for the Muslims. The opinions were divided that what should be done with the spoils, to whom they belonged, and who were the first that had precedence.

Then, the Prophet of Allah (S) himself began dividing the spoils of the war. He gave them to all concerning persons justly and equally in order to remove the undue discriminations of the Age of Ignorance, and to support the oppressed, though some individuals were annoyed of that equality.

Since the Surah is wholly about the Battle of Badr, this verse refers to the spoils of war, too, but it does not exclusively belong to it.¹

Explanations

1- Public wealth should be in the authority of the most sacred and the most beloved persons.

“They ask you about ‘Anfal’. Say: ‘Anfal’ belong to Allah and the Messenger...”

2- An Islamic system, or an Islamic government, needs an economical support, and ‘Anfal’ are considered as this support.

3- In an Islamic Community, the source of answering and stating all the public questions and economical affairs is the divine leader. In the societies before Islam, the method of dividing spoils of war was arranged upon the basis of some undue discrimination.

Therefore, in the Battle of Badr, which was the first occasion where the Muslims obtained some spoils of war, they asked this question from the Messenger of Allah (S).

4- In Islam, there are laws for everything, even for the unprofitable deserts.

5- Whatever the Messenger of Allah (S) spends is around the pivot of the divine aims:

“...the ‘Anfal’ belong to Allah and the Messenger...”

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“The share of Allah is spent under the control of the Messenger of Allah (S).”

6- The protection of public wealth needs Purity and piety. The verse continues saying:

“...so be in awe of Allah...”

7- To observe the unity and to make peace between people are obligatory for all believers. The Qur'an says:

“...and set aright the relations between yourselves...”

8– Belief not only exists in the heart, but also has an outward manifestation and practical obedience. The verse says:

“...and obey Allah and His Messenger if you do believe’.”

9– Only taking part in fight is not the sign of Faith. It’s necessary conditions are also to give up hope unto the spoils of war, and observing brotherhood and submission before the divine leader.

“...if you do believe.”

10. Some persons may pass the examination of giving soul by attending the Holy Struggle, but sometimes they fail in the trial of spending wealth and in the trial of division of the spoils of war as well. For, the main principal in the Holy Struggle is the triumph of the Truth against the falsehood. Then, the question of ‘the spoils of war’ is of the secondary importance.

11– The person who wishes and intends to improve his society must himself be of the pious ones:

“...So be in awe of Allah and set aright...”

Basically, among the most important actions in Islam are reconciliation, creation of good relation, wiping out the annoyances and enmities and changing them into sincerity and friendship.

This subject has been taken so important in the Islamic teachings that it has been introduced as one of the most exalted practices.

When Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) was in the bed of martyrdom, as his last testaments to his children, he said:

“Verily I heard from your ancestor, the Prophet (S) who said: ‘Reconciliation is better than the kinds of recommended prayer and fasting’.”²

Some Islamic traditions indicate that the reward of reconciliation between people is much more than that of the recommended prayer and fasting. Imam Sadiq (as) told Mufaddal:

“If there happens a conflict between two persons of our followers, spend out of my wealth and produce reconciliation between them.”³

Surah Al-Anfal – Verses 2-3

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ

إِيمَانًا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

2. “Verily believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts quake, and when His Signs are recited to them, it increases them in faith, and in their Lord (alone) do they trust.”

3. “Those who keep up prayer, and spend (benevolently) out of what We have provided them.”

The true believers are those who are in awe of Allah (s.w.t) because of His glorification and veneration. That is, when the speech is delivered upon Allah's justice, retribution, and power, they dread, and when the speech is about His bounties, kindnesses, graces, and rewards, they feel peace in themselves; as the Qur'an says:

“... now surely by Allah's remembrance are the hearts set at rest.” (Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, verse 28).

Thus, there is no contrast between these two verses, because fear relates to the remembrance of Allah's retribution and peace, but peace and rest relates to the remembrance of Allah's forgiveness and kindness.

Moreover, whenever a believer remembers the Divine bounties and forgiveness of Allah, he obtains a favorable opinion and he rests, but when he remembers his own sins, he becomes inconvenient and anxious. The verse says:

“Verily believers are only those who, when Allah is mention, their hearts quake...”

The Arabic term /wajila/ means ‘to fear, apprehend’ which is accompanied with sadness.

Then the verse continues saying:

“...and when His Signs are recited to them, it increases them in faith...”

In that circumstance, their faith and their certainty will be increased.

“...and in their Lord (alone) do they trust.”

Such people trust in Allah in any conditions and they rely on Him for the affairs of their lives.

Again, believers are those who establish prayer (which is the manifestation of the relation with Allah) and spend in charity and benevolently out of what Allah has given them as their sustenance.

The phrase ***‘they keep up prayer’*** mentioned in the verse, instead of saying ‘they recite prayer’, points to this fact that not only they themselves keep up prayer but also they behave so that this firm relation with Allah will be kept always and everywhere. Here is the verse:

“Those who keep up prayer, and spend (benevolently) out of what We have provided them.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 4

أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا ۚ لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ

4. *“These are the believers in truth; they have ranks with their Lord, and forgiveness, and a noble sustenance.”*

Allah, the Exalted, implies that those who have such qualities are indeed eligible to be called ‘believers’. The verse says:

“These are the believers in truth; they have ranks with their Lord, and forgiveness, and a noble sustenance.”

That is, these persons have some high ranks and degrees of honor in Heaven, and the Lord will provide them with His forgiveness and a great and permanent sustenance. That is why some commentators have said that ***‘a noble sustenance’*** means a permanent sustenance which is vast and pure, and is given them without any reproach. In Hereafter, this noble sustenance will be the eternal Heaven.

By the way, it should be said that these qualities belong to some distinguished and notable believers, not to the totality of the believers. As if it wants to say that the distinguished and chosen believers are those who have these qualities.

Thus, there is no problem that believing persons be equal from the point of Faith, but different from the point of worship. The evidence of this meaning is that the hearty fear is not enjoined, but it is recommended.

The prayer and spending out of sustenance, mentioned in the previous holy verse, are irrespective of the obligatory and recommended ones. Then, it is clear that the verses refer to some distinguished and chosen believers, not to all of the believers.

However, Faith should be accompanied with love and piety; and a humble heart is the source of virtues. It is the heart which trembles and quakes first, and, thereafter, the increase of Faith, keeping up prayer and trusting in Allah come forth.

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 5

كَمَا أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَارِهُونَ

5. ***“Just as your Lord caused you to go forth from your house with the truth, through a party of the believers were certainly averse (to it).”***

As the scarcity of forces and possibilities caused some early Muslims to feel difficult and heavy to go to Holy War against the enemy, dividing the spoils of the Battle of Badr was heavy, too. These annoyances pass away, of course, The Messenger of Allah. However, must think of the real interests and the fulfillment of Allah’s command, else, the dislike of this and that always exists.

The verse says:

“Just as your Lord caused you to go forth from your house with the truth, through a party of the believers were certainly averse (to it).”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 6

يُجَادِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَمَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ

6. ***“They dispute with you about the truth after it became clear, as if they see they are being driven unto death. “***

The dispute of a group of Muslims with the Prophet (S) was alongside the Battle of Badr. They said that since they had not enough possibilities and troops, they could go out for taking possession of the properties of the merchants of Quraysh, not for fighting against the forces of Quraysh.

Some of them delivered some reasons for the lack of conflict, while some others, like Miqdad, said that they would not treat like the people of Moses (as), sitting and saying that you go for fighting, but they themselves were fighters and whatever the Prophet (S) commanded they would accept.

But, in this course, the coward persons, who were not ready to fight, disputed with the Prophet (S).

However, not the whole companions of the Prophet (S) were just and obedient to the command of the Prophet (S) as the verse says:

“They dispute with you about the truth after it became clear...”

In order to flee from taking part in fight, always the coward and self-indulgent persons attack to dispute and justification, and they seek for excuses.

Therefore, if the spirits end motives are not safe and sound, the march of such soldiers towards fight is not more than carrying corpse. The verse says:

“...as if they see they are being driven unto death.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 7

وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ الشَّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ
وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ

7. “And (remember) when Allah promised you one of the two parties should be yours, and you loved that the one unarmed should be yours; but Allah desires to verify the truth by His words and to cut off the roots of infidels.”

The Arabic term /saukat/ means ‘thorn and bayonet’, and it is the symbol of an armed group. The objective of the Qur'anic phrase /qayra oati-sh-saukat/ is the very unarmed merchants. The verse says:

“And (remember) when Allah promised you one of the two parties should be yours, and you loved that the one unarmed should be yours...”

It happened that once Abu Sufyan, as the chief of a commercial caravan, set out to travel. Before that, the pagans of Mecca had confiscated the properties of the immigrant Muslims. So in order to weaken the power of the pagans and to recompense that transgression, the Prophet (S) made some Muslims prepared to attack the commercial caravan.

Abu Sufyan was informed of the matter and immediately made the people of Mecca aware of it. There were gathered about one thousand equipped fighters to defend that commercial group which consisted of forty people.

In the desert, at a place located between Mecca and Medina, three groups met face to face, (Muslims, the pagan troops, and the merchants). In spite of the fact that Muslims had not come out with the aim of fighting and they had not any martial equipment with them, but Allah assisted them with some unseen helps and, finally, the Muslims won the battle.

In the Battle of Badr, which occurred on seventeenth of Ramadhan in the second year of Hijrat, the numbers of Muslims were 313 strivers while the number of pagans was thrice as much they were, where Abujahl and seventy other pagans were killed, and, also, seventy pagans, together with him, were taken

as captives.

Thus, sometimes the Divine Will may be fulfilled by the (hands of the believers, and the fact is that the remembrance of the divine helps can be a factor in strengthening the Faith.

We must also know that the victory of the truth over falsehood is more magnificent than the economical income, and triumph is not only that which comes forth with some fighters and war equipments, the main factor is Allah's Will.

So, the aim of Holy Struggle in Islam is the manifestation of the truth and destruction of falsehood. And, it also should be known that the manifestation of the truth can be done by means of the Divine Statements, the Divine saints, and Allah's laws, agents and ways of treatment.

Therefore, victory and honor may be obtained under the shade of Holy Struggle and (self –sacrifice, not with political discussions and collusions; which are performed by the help of deceits and trickeries. The verse says:

“...but Allah desires to verify the truth by His words and to cut off the roots of infidels.”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 8

لِيُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْبَاطِلَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ

8. “That He might verify the truth and bring vanity to naught, though the guilty were averse (to it).”

This verse works as the most important encouragement for Muslims. The Divine promises are not for the sake of personal material interests of the individuals, but they have been decreed for the verification of the truth and the destruction of falsehood. The verse says:

“That He might verify the truth and bring vanity to naught...”

You should not think of the hate and the wrath of the disbelieving enemy. Allah will verify His Will, although the sinners do not like it. The verse says:

“...though the guilty were averse (to it).”

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 9

إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُمْ بِأَلْفٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرَدِّفِينَ

9. ***“(Remember) when you were calling upon your Lord for succor, and He answered you (saying): ‘I shall assist you with a thousand of the angels following one another’.*”**

The Qur’anic term /murdif/, mentioned at the end of the verse, is derived from the Arabic term /irdaf/ in the sense of ‘row’, and ‘following one after another’. Here in this verse, it means that these helps are continued. These very helps are also referred to in Surah Al-i-‘Imran, verse 124 as ***‘three thousand of angels’*** and in its following verse, the words about the Divine help are said:

“with five thousand of angels distinguished”.

Perhaps, these divine helps had been bestowed upon them because of their perseverance. That is, the more Muslims persevered in that Battle, the more unseen helps were added for them.

As it was said before, (*verse 7 of the current Surah*), the number of Muslim strivers in the Battle of Badr was one third of that of pagans. Moreover, their war-equipments as well as their spiritual preparation were very little. Therefore, the Messenger of Allah (S) invoked, saying:

“O’ Allah! do manifest whatever You promised me. O’ Allah! If this group (of Muslims) be killed, You will not be worshipped in the earth.”

Explanations

This holy verse attracts our attention to several points as follows:

1- Allah (s.w.t) is the key of answering supplications. The verse says:

“(Remember) when you were calling upon your Lord for succor, and He answered you...”

2- Allah may remit without any invocation, but invocation is one training way out of divine ways.

3- The supplications and invocations which are offered by strivers in the midst of battlefields are effective, because their invocations will be answered.

4- Do not forget the days of affliction and the helps of Allah (s.w.t), since; the remembrance of Allah's bounties elevates the spirit of thanksgiving in man. The verse concludes:

***“... (saying): ‘I shall assist you with a thousand of the angels following one another’.*”**

Surah Al-Anfal – Verse 10

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

10. “And Allah did not appoint it, save as good tidings and that your hearts thereby might be at rest; and no victory is there save from Allah, surely Allah is the Mighty the Wise.”

The descent of the assisting angels for helping the believers has been repeatedly mentioned in the Qur’an. Even at the time of death and giving soul, Allah sends an angel to protect the believers from the satanic temptations by inspiring the Truth to them.

There are two kinds of inspiration in the creation of Allah. One of them is from the side of Allah's angels, which inspires calmness, like the current Surah, verse 12, which says:

“(And remember) when your Lord revealed unto the angels, (saying): ‘Verily I am with you, so confirm those who believe. I will cast fear into the hearts of those who disbelieve...’”

Another kind is the inspiration of dread which is done by Satan. For example, the Quran says:

“It is only Satan that causes his friends to fear...” (Surah’ Al-i- Imran, No. 3, verse 175).

Explanations

The assisting angels came down to increase spiritualities of the believers, not to destroy the pagans.

The verse says:

“And Allah did not appoint it, save as good tidings...”

(Historically, it is clear who was killed and who was the killer of the slaughtered, but, in the Battle of Badr, the majority of the slaughtered among the pagans were killed by the sword of Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as)).

The victory of the believers in the Battle of Badr was obtained neither as a result of their originative faculty and martial design, nor for their arms, nor because of the angels, but it was only from the side of Allah. The verse says:

“and that your hearts thereby might be at rest; and no victory is there save from Allah, surely Allah is the Mighty the Wise.”

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1. Al-Mizan, the commentary.
 2. Nahj-ul-Balaghah
 3. Usul-I-Kafi, Chapter 'Reconciliation', tradition No.2

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